

Boxscore on Conspiracy Trial Results

Gainesville

The Gainesville conspiracy trial was the latest in a series of prosecutions of antiwar activists on conspiracy charges. The government has yet to gain a conviction in a major case.

As in most of the other cases, the bulk of the government's case against the eight Vietnam Veterans Against the War found innocent yesterday was based on testimony from informers.

Here is a capsule view of some of the conspiracy trials:

CHICAGO SEVEN:

Anti-war activists were charged with conspiracy to cross state lines to incite riots during the 1968 Democratic National Convention. A jury in February 1970 acquitted them of conspiracy, but convicted them of crossing state lines to incite rioting. In 1972, the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed the convictions and ordered the case remanded to Chicago. The Justice Department declined to renew charges against the seven. All defendants and two lawyers will be retried in October on contempt charges levied against them by Judge Julius J. Hoffman. All informers who testified had been employed by local police agencies.

HARRISBURG SEVEN:

The Rev. Philip Berrigan and six other defendants were accused of plotting to kidnap presidential adviser Henry A. Kissinger, blow up heating tunnels in Washington and vandalize draft boards across the country. The jury deadlocked on the charges, and the judge decided not to try the defendants again. The alleged plot was supposed to have been hatched while Berrigan was an inmate at Lewisburg, Pa., during the spring and summer of 1970. A major witness at the 1972 trial was a prison mate of Berrigan's who served as an FBI informer.

CAMDEN SEVENTEEN:

Seventeen war protesters charged with conspiracy stemming from an August 1971 raid on the draft board in Camden. The 17, including four priests, were found innocent in May 1973. An FBI informer testified the raid wouldn't have taken place "without the FBI and me." The participation in the raid's planning by the informer caused the judge to rule the jury could find the defendants innocent because of "overreaching participation by government agents or informers."

SPOCK-COFFIN:

Four persons, including Dr. Benjamin Spock and Yale Chaplain William Sloane Coffin, were convicted in Boston in 1968 of conspiring to counsel, aid and abet young men to refuse military service. One person, Marcus Raskin, was acquitted. On July 11, 1969, the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals set aside the convictions of Spock and Michael Ferber. It ordered new trials for Coffin and Mitchell Goodwin. The government dropped the cases.

SEATTLE SEVEN:

The defendants, members of the Seattle Liberation Front, were charged with conspiracy and violation of the federal antiriot act in connection with a demonstration at the U.S. Courthouse, Seattle. Government witnesses were FBI undercover agents and paid informers. A mistrial was declared by the judge when a defendant addressed the jurors directly. The defendants got six months in jail for contempt, but were released later on bail. The original charges were dismissed in March 1973 after the government failed to push for a new trial.

PENTAGON PAPERS:

The government charged Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo with conspiracy, espionage and theft in connection with copying a secret study of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war. All charges were dismissed in the lengthy trial after the judge ruled the government had irreparably damaged the defendants' right to a fair trial. The decision came after it was revealed that Ellsberg's psychiatrist's of-

fice was broken into with the knowledge of White House staff members. The government announced later it would not seek to pursue prosecution in the case.

KANSAS CITY FOUR:

Four anti-war activists charged in July 1971 with conspiracy in the bombing of various sites in the Kansas area. The main prosecution witness was an unindicted coconspirator serving a ten year prison term for possession of a pipe bomb. His sentence was reduced to five years for his testimony. Three of the four were found guilty and await sentencing. A fourth had his case dismissed for lack of evidence.

EVANSTON FOUR:

Four defendants were convicted in 1971 of conspiracy to destroy draft records. The four admitted pouring blood over the records. Their conviction was overturned yesterday by the U.S. District Court jury which said that portion of the Selective Service Act under which the defendants were charged is unconstitutional because it is vague. The three-judge panel also said the act failed to give adequate guidance to both violators and to law enforcement officials.

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