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Daily News
Mexico, Texas

JUN 16 1987

Veteran Waco lawyer tells of deal with DA

By GARTH JONES
Associated Press Writer

AUSTIN (AP) — Veteran Waco attorney Don Hall testified that McLennan County District Attorney Vic Feazell threatened him and his law partner with state prosecution when he found out they were becoming federal witnesses.

Hall, a Waco attorney for 36 years and a former district attorney, is the last scheduled government witness in Feazell's bribery trial.

Hall returned to the witness stand today as the trial of the 35-year-old prosecutor continued into its fourth week.

Both Hall and his partner, Dick Kettler, have testified that Feazell asked and got from them one third of all their legal fees in drunken driving cases where Feazell got cases dismissed or reduced.

Hall said Monday that shortly before he and Kettler declared they would testify for the U.S. government, Feazell threatened to get Attorney General Jim Mattox to file state charges against them.

"He told Kettler that we could still be prosecuted by the state," Hall said, "and he would have his good friend Jim Mattox do it. He said government immunity would not extend to the state.

"I took it as a threat against the both of us," Hall said.

Hall described earlier Monday how Feazell asked for a share of legal fees.

"He told me that he wanted to participate in our fees," testified Hall, who was district attorney in 1963-66 and a former law partner

of Feazell. "He said he had done us a lot of favors and we had made money as a result of those favors.

"I asked him what he meant," said Hall. "I was astounded. I had never shared a fee with anyone nor had I taken one when I was in public office."

Hall testified Feazell finally asked for one-third of the fees that Hall's law firm received in cases where Feazell became involved in getting charges dismissed or reduced.

Hall said he and his partner, Dick Kettler, discussed Feazell's demands.

"He was astounded too," Hall said Monday. "We never reached a conclusion on the matter. The next time a case came along, we just cut him out a third and gave it to him."

Kettler testified for three days last week, telling of numerous instances in which he and Hall agreed to give Feazell one-third of the cases that Feazell "handled."

Feazell is accused of taking \$19,000 in bribes from a circle of Waco attorneys in exchange for dismissing charges against their clients. The 10-count federal racketeering indictment also charges him with mail fraud.

Feazell has said the charges are false and were initiated by the Department of Public Safety, which he said was seeking revenge because of Feazell's investigation into the confessions made by Henry Lee Lucas, who claimed to be a mass murderer. Lucas later recanted many of the confessions, which had been used by local authorities to clear up unsolved murders.