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MILLARD COUPLE ACQUITTED OF JURY-TAMPERING CHARGES

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A jury has cleared former Millard County administrator Robyn Pearson and his wife, Karen, of jury-tampering charges.

Millard County prosecutors had alleged that the Pearsons contacted Vince Crawford of Delta after seeing his name on a list of potential jurors. The felony charges were filed even though as a close friend of the Pearsons, Crawford would never have been called as a juror in the public corruption case against Pearson that went to trial last May.

In acquitting the couple this week, 4th District Judge Boyd Park said the contact was ill-advised but not criminal, since there was no evidence the Pearsons ever hoped to sway Robyn's jury.

"The evidence is squarely to the contrary, that there was no intent," Park said after hearing testimony from Crawford and the Pearsons.

Monday's acquittal means Deputy County Attorney Dexter Anderson is 0-3 in his 1 1/2-year legal war with Pearson and defense attorney Kenneth Brown.

In several separate cases, Anderson charged Pearson, 45, with abusing his position as the county's top paid staffer in the early 1990s to line his pockets with \$12,000 garnered through outside contracts.

But one case was thrown out of court and a jury - the one the Pearsons allegedly tried to corrupt - acquitted Pearson at the May trial.

Pearson is awaiting trial in two other corruption cases involving his consulting contracts with outside agencies. Anderson alleges Pearson used county resources to perform these tasks, which already were compensated by his county paycheck.

The jury-tampering case, which barely survived a preliminary hearing in August, is an example of how Millard County authorities are distorting justice to settle a political score with Pearson, defense attorneys alleged.

"I've never seen such a petty and vindictive prosecution," said Karen Pearson's attorney, James Bradshaw. "The taxpayers of Millard County should be outraged that their money is being spent on meritless cases like this one."

At Monday's trial, Karen Pearson conceded calling Crawford, a confidant who kept an eye on the Pearsons' Hinckley residence while Robyn was away from home on his new economic-development job with Wasatch County.

Crawford also was a bishopric member in the Pearsons' LDS ward. Robyn testified he wanted to see if his friend's extensive knowledge of Millard County families would help him identify people on the jury list who would be predisposed for and against him.

Before Crawford was summoned for jury duty, the Pearsons had discussed Robyn's legal troubles with him. He testified Robyn made no attempt to sway him during the phone call.

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