

Defendants in cop's killing acquitted in robbery, kidnapping trial



Eloyn Ingraham applauds after learning a Broward jury acquitted him and co-defendant Bernard Forbes of robbery and kidnapping charges Friday. (Rafael Olmeda)



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Defendants in cop's slaying score a victory in court, but Broward murder trial is next on prosecutors' agenda.

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Two of three men accused of murdering a Broward sheriff's deputy in 2006 won a major victory Friday when a jury found them not guilty of an unrelated robbery and kidnapping.

Eloyn Ingraham, 37, and Bernard Forbes, 31, were accused of holding up a Tamarac clothing store on Oct. 21, 2006, holding the manager and three customers hostage while they stole cash and clothes.

Jurors deliberated for a day and a half before concluding there was not enough evidence presented during the monthlong trial to tie Ingraham and Forbes to the crime, parts of which were caught on surveillance footage.

Defense lawyers Hilliard Moldof and Daniel Aaronson chipped away at numerous inconsistencies in the prosecution's case, which relied heavily on the surveillance footage, victims' testimony and evidence collected during the defendants' arrest.

Ingraham and Forbes, along with a third man, were originally suspected in the Nov. 12, 2006, slaying of Broward Sheriff's Deputy Brian Tephford, who was gunned down during an attempted traffic stop in Tamarac. Investigators uncovered evidence of the robbery after the men were arrested.

Prosecutors did not suspect or charge the third man, Andre Delancy, with the robbery. But all three are scheduled to go on trial early next year in the murder case.

Ingraham clapped his hands after Friday's verdicts were read, and both defendants embraced their lawyers. But Broward Circuit Judge Paul Backman reminded them that they will remain in custody until the outcome of the murder trial.

According to police and court records, Tephford was working an off-duty security detail at Versailles Gardens in Tamarac when he stopped a car that appeared to have the wrong tag. Ingraham, a passenger in the vehicle, is accused of firing at Tephford and a second deputy without warning.

The other two men were originally accused of being accomplices after the shooter, but investigators later determined that they, too, fired at Tephford and the surviving deputy, Corey Carbocci.

All three are charged with murder, conspiracy and attempted murder.

Had Ingraham and Forbes been convicted, the robbery and kidnapping charges would have guaranteed life sentences regardless of the outcome of the murder trial.

Broward State Attorney Mike Satz is expected to personally handle the murder prosecution.

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