



Barbuto Hoover Gearinger Burdon Pierce McMonagle

Chief figures in Barbuto trial

Here are the principal people involved in the trial of Summit County Probate Court Judge James V. Barbuto.

• Barbuto, 38, is accused on 17 sex-related counts including bribery by accepting sex in return for judicial favors. Barbuto was Summit County prosecutor from 1965 to 1970, when he was elected to the Common Pleas bench. In 1978 he was elected probate judge and began his duties in February, 1979. He was arrested March 20 and indicted on the charges on April 2.

• Orval Hoover, a Cuyahoga Falls lawyer in private practice, was selected by the county's Common Pleas judges in March as a special assistant prosecutor to present evidence in the case to the grand jury. Hoover first worked under Summit County Prosecutor Stephan Gabalac's office, but he had differences with Gabalac and resigned after the indictments were returned. The judges persuaded him to return as an independent special prosecutor to try the cases.

• Bradford Gearinger, an Akron lawyer highly regarded in local cases, was selected by Hoover to aid him in the prosecution after Hoover agreed to return as an independent special prosecutor.

• James Burdon is chief defense lawyer for Barbuto. Burdon, who was an assistant prosecutor under Barbuto, has a reputation as one of the top criminal defense lawyers in Akron.

• Edwin Pierce, a law partner with Burdon, is assisting in the defense. Pierce also was an assistant prosecutor under Barbuto.

• Judge George J. McMonagle, a retired Cuyahoga County Common Pleas judge, was assigned to hear the Barbuto case by the Ohio Supreme Court after all five Summit County judges disqualified themselves. McMonagle retired in 1973 but has continued to carry a full load of cases in Cuyahoga County. He has a solid reputation among lawyers and judges in Cleveland.