

## Reporter beats illegal recording rap

In early January, an Oregon reporter who served as his own attorney at trial was acquitted of violating a state law prohibiting surreptitious recording of in-person conversations.

Paul Knobel, a reporter for the now-defunct *Freedom to Express* in Josephine County, Ore., was convicted in February 1987 for taping an interview with Deputy Sheriff Richard Graves without first obtaining consent. However, the state Supreme Court sent the case back for retrial in July 1989, saying that the trial judge improperly excluded testimony of Graves' personal bias against Knobel and evidence that Graves continued answering questions after becoming aware of the tape recorder. (*Oregon v. Knobel*)(See *The NEWS Media & The LAW, Winter 1990*)