

N.J. senator fights for 'justice'

# Abscam charges to be appealed

United Press International  
UNIONDALE, N.Y. — Sen. Harrison Williams, (D-N.J.), sentenced to three years in jail and fined \$50,000 for his conviction on Abscam corruption charges, says he will appeal the sentence and fight his possible expulsion from the Senate.

"I am fighting for justice on every battlefield," he said outside the courtroom after his sentencing Tuesday afternoon.

"My wife and I feel very

strong because we know that we are right." His wife, Jeannette, stood by his side.

Williams became the first sitting senator to be convicted of a felony in more than 70 years and the third to be convicted of a crime while in office. He also could become the first senator to be expelled from the chamber since the Civil War. The expulsion proceedings begin next week.

U.S. District Judge George

Pratt stayed execution of the sentence pending appeal.

Moments before the sentence was announced, Williams reaffirmed his innocence.

"I came into your court feeling deeply, indeed knowing, that I am innocent of these crimes," he said. "I leave this court knowing that I am innocent of the crimes charged."

George Koelzer, the senator's lawyer, pleaded for leniency and said Williams' indictment and

conviction has already "destroyed him."

But prosecutor Thomas Puccio called Williams a liar who had betrayed his public trust.

"He put his office up for sale," Puccio said. "He boldly lied in an attempt to avoid his conviction and saw fit to engage in a massive media campaign to divert attention from himself."

Williams is one of seven congressmen and the only senator convicted of political corruption charges during the Abscam investigation. He also is the last major Abscam defendant to be sentenced.

Eighteen people have been

convicted in the political corruption investigation in which FBI agents posed as Arab sheiks and offered bribes to legislators in return for favors. All 18 are appealing the guilty verdicts.

Williams was convicted last May of promising to use his influence to obtain government contracts for a Virginia titanium mine in which he held a concealed 18 percent interest.

Williams has said he was victimized by a government conspiracy to "put words" in his mouth.

On Jan. 26, Williams' co-defendant, Alexander Feinberg, 73, was sentenced to three years in jail and fined \$40,000.

# Mrs. Reagan tells parents to fight kids' drug abuse

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — Nancy Reagan promises to move out in her fight against youth drug abuse, but warns parents not to lean too heavily on government because "that child is your responsibility."

Mrs. Reagan returned to Washington Tuesday after a two-day visit to four drug programs in Florida and Texas. She said she hopes her trip stirs up family involvement.

"Last year it was difficult to do anything," Mrs. Reagan told the Texas' War on Drugs Committee in Dallas, referring to the attempt on her husband's life that curtailed travel outside Washington. "But this year I can start to move out."

The Texas group successfully lobbied for tough anti-drug laws including a ban on head shops that sell drug paraphernalia. Mrs. Reagan said, however, legislation

alone will not solve the problem.

"I think the idea of turning to somebody else, some other agency, for the answer," Mrs. Reagan said in an interview with TV. "You can't always do things like the school or the government."

"In the final analysis, it gave birth to that child, that child is your responsibility, and you've got to do something about it."

Mrs. Reagan said she should spend more time with their children and learn warning signs of drug abuse.

She said of the present interest in drug programs. "He's just as concerned as I am."

Mrs. Reagan passed up two dozen sign-carrying testers concerned about a child lead-poisoning program as she walked lunch with the War on Drugs Committee.

# District attorney cleared in case

United Press International  
AUSTIN — The Texas Supreme Court said Wednesday the Tarrant County district attorney could not be forced to pay damages for failing to protect two wives who were killed by their husbands in separate incidents.

The Supreme Court upheld a lower-court ruling that said the prosecutor was immune from prosecution and suits against him had failed to show a cause of action.

Mary Wynell Miller and Gerald Murrell, both residents of Tarrant County, had asked Tarrant County District Attorney Tim Curry for protection because of physical and mental abuse by their husbands.

At the time of their deaths, Mrs. Miller was seeking a divorce from her husband, John W., and Mrs. Murrell had been granted a divorce from her husband, Getzell.

The women claimed that their civil and constitutional

rights had been violated by Curry and the Fort Worth department failed to protect them from their husbands.

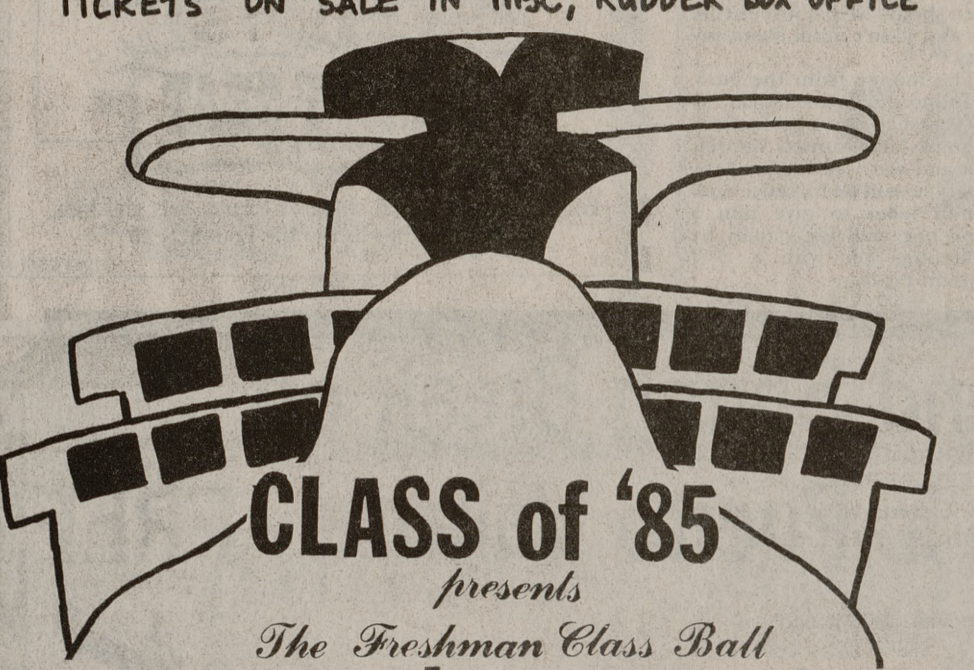
In their suit, the women claimed it was the point district attorney's office to prosecute cases involving al disputes.

Both women were killed later by their spouses after numerous reports of abuse and threats. Their children brought the suits and sought \$800,000 in punitive damages and \$13,000 in actual damages.

The courts held the women had failed to state a claim under civil rights statutes that the prosecutor was immune from prosecution.

Testimony in the suit stated that although Mrs. Murrell had complained to Curry about her former husband's threats, she had declined charges against him.

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