

# Wife of judge's murderer accused of lying to jury

United Press International  
SHREVEPORT, La.— Jo Ann Harrelson purchased a rifle believed used in a contract killing of a federal judge, ranged for the pickup of payoff money and then told grand jury "old and calculating lies" to a grand jury, a prosecutor said Wednesday.

Harrelson was charged with lying five times to a grand jury investigating the May 1979 assassination of U.S. District Judge John Wood Jr. in San Antonio.

In exchange for her cooperation with the grand jury, Harrelson was guaranteed her testimony would not be used against her unless she committed perjury before the panel.

"The government will prove the answers that she gave (to the

grand jury) were cold and deliberate and calculating lies," Assistant U.S. Attorney Ray Jahn told jurors in an opening statement.

Harrelson, 42, is the wife of contract killer Charles Harrelson, who was convicted in Wood's slaying by the same jury that found Mrs. Harrelson guilty of obstructing justice.

A third defendant, Elizabeth Chagra, was convicted of conspiring to commit murder. Her husband, El Paso gambler Jamiel Chagra, was found innocent in a Florida trial of hiring Harrelson to kill Wood but was convicted on a marijuana distribution charge.

Harrelson is serving a 40-year Texas prison term on weapons charges, and Chagra is jailed for continued criminal enterprise

and cocaine possession.

Mrs. Harrelson was convicted in December of obstructing justice and earlier was found guilty and sentenced to three years in jail for using a false name to purchase a rifle allegedly used in Wood's slaying.

Jahn told jurors Mrs. Harrelson and her husband talked Mrs. Harrelson's daughter, Teresa Starr, into traveling to Las Vegas, Nev., to pick up \$250,000 in payoff money for the judge's slaying. During grand jury testimony, Mrs. Harrelson denied any knowledge of her daughter's trip to Las Vegas and said she never had seen Starr with more than \$1,000 in cash.

Jahn told jurors, however, that Mrs. Harrelson not only helped plan the Las Vegas trip

but actually took the money from her daughter.

"Jo Ann Harrelson counted out first \$4,000 and handed it to Teresa Starr and then, at the insistence of Charles Harrelson, counted out another \$1,000 and gave it to her (Starr)," Jahn said.

Mrs. Harrelson is accused of lying to the grand jury twice when she denied purchasing the rifle in Dallas and when she said she never used the alias Fay L. King.

Prosecutors said she also lied about her knowledge of her daughter's trip to Nevada and the handling of the money.

Prosecutors had claimed Chagra contracted for Wood's death because the judge, known as "Maximum John" for the harsh sentences he handed drug dealers, was to sentence him for a drug conviction.

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# Aliens killed to set 'example'

United Press International  
RICHMOND — One of four Salvadorans shot to death July 16 along the banks of the Brazos River near Richmond was killed to frighten other illegal aliens and their families into paying increased smuggling fees, prosecutors said.

Prosecutors made their comments Tuesday at the opening of the capital murder trial of Juan Ramon Ortiz, charged with killing Ramon Tercios — one of the four Salvadorans.

Prosecutors identified Ortiz as a member of the notorious "Las Tejas" illegal alien smuggling ring from Mexico. They said members of the smuggling

gang became angry when relatives of several Salvadorans smuggled into this country in trucks refused to pay smuggling fees which were higher than those originally demanded.

Prosecutors said one "coyote," or member of the smuggling gang, was killed during a shootout with relatives of an alien from El Salvador, and gang members retaliated by killing the four Salvadorans. The smugglers wanted to set an example for other clients who refused to meet the increased smuggling fees, prosecutors said.

Ortiz was one of 13 people indicted in the killings.

# TDC penalized in job sex suit

United Press International  
HOUSTON — The Texas Department of Corrections was fined over \$14,000 for contempt of court for failing to reinstate a woman who claims she was demoted from her job because of her sex.

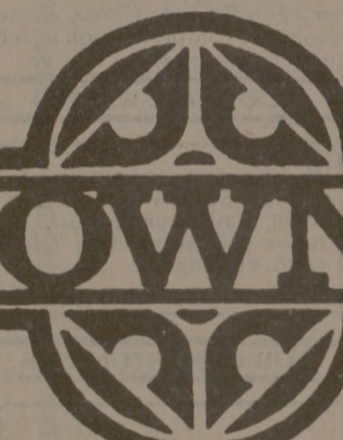
U.S. District Judge Carl Bue on Tuesday ordered the prison system to pay Rosemary Sebastian \$14,483.20 for failing to meet his March 1982 order to restore her title and duties as health services administrator pending a trial on her sex discrimination suit.

Bue calculated the exact penalty on the basis of the claimed damages, including attorney fees, to Sebastian.


Sebastian's lawyer, Evelyn Jo Wilson, said the award is a fine that is paid to the plaintiff. She said Bue ordered Sebastian reinstated in March 1982 because she was likely to win her case and failure to reinstate her would result in added damages charged to TDC.

"For TDC's failure to comply, we were entitled to a compensatory fine remedying the effects of the defendants' failure to comply," Wilson said.

She said TDC denies Sebastian was demoted because of her sex but claims her reassignment from the position in the health services division was part of a reorganization.



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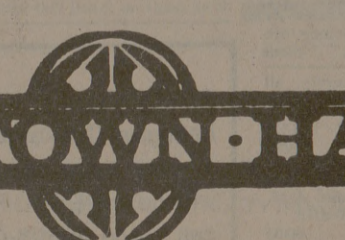
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