

# Gotti's lawyers argue for reversal

NEW YORK (AP) — John Gotti's federal murder and racketeering convictions should be overturned because the Gambino crime family boss got an unfair trial, defense lawyers told a federal judge Monday.

Two jurors also have been quoted as saying the trial was unfair and that they voted to convict Gotti because of government pressure.

Judge I. Leo Glasser said he would rule Tuesday on whether to hold a hearing on the defense lawyers' arguments. But he refused to delay Gotti's sentencing, also scheduled for Tuesday. Gotti wasn't at Monday's hearing.

Gotti and a top lieutenant, Frank Locascio, face life imprisonment for their April 2 convictions on racketeering charges that included murder, murder conspiracy, obstruction of justice, gambling, loan sharking, extortion and tax fraud.

Civil-rights lawyer William M. Kunstler asked in court papers that the verdicts be set aside because of "gross misconduct" by prosecutors.

Kunstler asserted that prosecutors engineered a juror's dismissal just before the start of deliberations "merely because the government did not like her or thought that she would be unfavorable to its case."

The defense also said one juror was unfairly biased against the defendants because she was married to a former FBI agent. That relationship came out not during jury selection but late in the trial.

"I do think that the cumulative effect of all of this was to create an unfair jury which was designed to convict these defendants," Kunstler said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney John Gleeson called

Kunstler's arguments frivolous and "filled with gross, deliberate misstatements of fact."

Recently two of the jurors who convicted Gotti in just 13 hours have come forward to complain about the trial. The anonymous jurors were sequestered in an undisclosed hotel throughout the 10-week trial because of allegations of jury tampering in other Gotti trials.

"I truly believe that both Gotti and Locascio were not proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt," one panelist, identified as Juror No. 12, was quoted by the Daily News as saying.

He said he voted to convict because of problems at home and fear of the government.

"I'm sorry that I didn't hold out, but I was under a lot of pressure," he said.

WNBC-TV reported last week that another juror wrote an apologizing letter to Locascio, saying the jury voted to convict because "we were so frightened by the marshals and the FBI."

However, another juror, in a letter to the judge that was made public Monday, said the trial and deliberations were fair.

"The jury analyzed each count methodically and completely, applying critical detail to the law as prescribed by your charge. There was never any mention of fear, favoritism or unfairness," wrote the juror, whose name wasn't disclosed.

Gotti, 51, and Locascio, 59, have been in jail without bail since their arrests in December 1990.

Gotti was convicted of orchestrating the December 1985 assassination of Gambino boss Paul Castellano to seize control of the nation's most powerful crime syndicate.

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# Bush signs emergency urban aid bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush signed a \$1 billion emergency urban aid and summer jobs package Monday, saying it was "only a beginning" to the radical reforms that America's crime-ridden cities need.

The measure replenishes federal disaster loan funds depleted by the Los Angeles riots and Chicago flood, and provides \$500 million to put up to 414,000 teenagers to work this summer.

Bush declared a budget emergency to pay for most of the new expenditures. That action will add almost \$944 million to the federal deficit. The 1990 Budget Enforcement Act bars deficit spending unless the president declares an emergency.

The relief and jobs package was scaled down to fit White House demands from a \$2 billion version originally passed by the Senate.

"I turned aside efforts by some in the Congress to spend more for the sake of spending more when the urgent need is for fundamental change to provide hope and opportunity for

people in the inner cities," Bush said in a Rose Garden ceremony attended by lawmakers and Labor Secretary Lynn Martin.

The head of one private urban policy group, Lynn A. Curtis of the Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation, called the aid package "too little, too late. The federal government is offering a Band-Aid when major surgery is needed."

Curtis said the cities need a comprehensive policy "that begins with Head Start and Job Corps-like programs for all eligible children and youth."

Bush, too, called the emergency aid "a beginning, only a beginning."

He urged Congress to "put an end to the delays" and act on the rest of his urban proposals, including a crime bill, the so-called Weed and Seed anti-drug program, enterprise zones, welfare reform and school choice.

"It's imperative that we make a fundamental change," said Bush.

Sen. John Seymour, R-Calif., said afterwards that every day's delay makes it harder to get a more comprehensive urban

package through Congress in this election year.

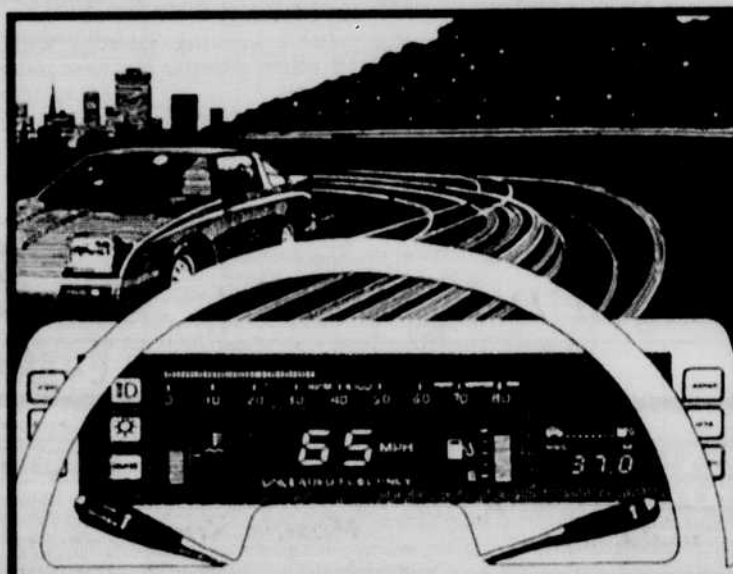
"I was personally disappointed it took so long to get the package he just signed together," said Seymour.

The package includes:  
-\$300 million for Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster assistance.

-\$143.8 million for Small Business Administration disaster loans.

-\$500 million for summer youth jobs.

In addition, it includes \$72 million in nonemergency funds for the SBA, which Bush said will allow the agency to guarantee \$1.45 billion in small business loans.



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