

# Former attorney general guilty



KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Former state Attorney General William Webster, whose name is on a major Supreme Court anti-abortion ruling, pleaded guilty Wednesday to conspiracy and misapplication of state funds.

The federal charges, which had been formally filed earlier in the day, carry a combined maximum sentence of 15 years in prison and a \$500,000 fine. Under a plea bargain, prosecutors recommended Webster be sentenced to 18 months in prison and that he surrender his law license.

U.S. District Judge D. Brook Bartlett allowed Webster to go free on personal recognizance. No sentencing date was set.

The conspiracy charge accused Webster and others of soliciting campaign contributions by promising rewards from the Second Injury Fund, a workers' compensation fund administered by the attorney general's office.

That count also accused Webster of being responsible for the destruction of computer files in January before he left office, allowing employees of his office to use state property for his fund-raising activities and allowing an employee of his office to baby-sit for him.

The second charge said Webster intentionally took state property worth \$5,000 or more for his own use and that of others.

Webster previously had repeatedly denied any wrongdoing. In a statement he read as he entered his plea, he told Bartlett that he disagreed with some elements of the charges, but acknowledged overall guilt.

Bartlett took over the case after U.S. District

Judge Russell G. Clark removed himself from it Wednesday without explanation.

Webster, a 39-year-old Republican, had been under investigation by a federal grand jury for two years. He lost the gubernatorial race to Democrat Mel Carnahan last fall after the grand jury probe became an issue.

In eight years as attorney general, Webster won praise from conservatives nationwide for his defense of Missouri's abortion restrictions.

The U.S. Supreme Court upheld Missouri's 1986 law in a case bearing Webster's name. The 1989 ruling allowed states to impose more restrictions on abortion, but stopped short of overturning the Roe vs. Wade decision that legalized abortions.

Webster also was associated with a right-to-die ruling by the court. He fought to prevent the family of Nancy Cruzan from removing the brain-damaged woman's feeding tube. But a judge, relying on the high court ruling, cleared the way for the tube to be removed, and she died in 1990.

Hillard Selck, a Republican national committee member and a long-time Webster defender, said Webster "would have been one of Missouri's better governors. ... It's a shame to see a future like that destroyed. But if somebody does something wrong, they have to suffer the consequences."

State Rep. Bob Griffin, a Democrat who served in the Missouri House with Webster in the early 1980s, said: "It's a real tragedy. He had such potential."

Two Webster associates, William Roussin and Steven Redford, pleaded guilty in December and February to federal charges implicating Webster in a bribery scheme and the defrauding of the workers' compensation fund.

# Miss America barred from using 'condom'

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — Miss America Leanza Cornett, using her reign as a national platform to teach about AIDS, ran into censorship problems in her native Florida.

Some school officials told her not to use the word "condom" while talking to students; others forbade the name of the disease itself.

"When the notice said I couldn't talk about AIDS or sex, I was floored," she said.

Cornett, 21, was told not to mention AIDS when visiting three elementary schools Tuesday in rural Bradford County, southwest of her Jacksonville home.

"I can adhere to any school board's needs," she told a Rotary-Kiwanis meeting following her school visits. "But I will not be an accomplice to the spread of this disease. People are dying from this disease. I feel guilty that I didn't speak about it. I don't want to lay blame, but the school board should feel guilty."

During her visits to the schools, she presented awards in Chevrolet's "Driving for Education" program and gave 10-minute motivational speeches to students, said Todd Strawn, a businessman who sponsored part of the speaking tour.

"My platform issue is AIDS awareness," she told the Rotary-Kiwanis meeting. "The corporate sponsors and the Miss America organization have supported me throughout my year as I spoke about these issues."

The school district's curriculum introduces the subject of AIDS in the fifth grade and sex education in the sixth grade.

Cornett said it was the first time she had been told not to mention AIDS. In a talk last month to Wolfson High School students in Jacksonville, Cornett was asked not to mention condoms.

Cornett left out the word, but tried to get her message across nonetheless.

Doctors, she said, take precautions when dealing with patients by wearing gloves.

"It is important to put on a glove. Make sure it is a latex glove," she said, speaking slowly and precisely.

"I hope you understand what I said," she said, winking at students.

**'I will not be an accomplice to the spread of this disease. People are dying from this disease.'**

— Leanza Cornett, Miss America

# Western states will see lunar eclipse

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Earth will totally eclipse the moon Friday for viewers in the Far West, Hawaii, Australia and Asia, but the shadowed moon may seem to vanish because of volcanic mist from Mount Pinatubo.

The total lunar eclipse will be seen simultaneously from all locations where it is visible, start-

ing at 5:12 a.m. PDT on the West Coast, 2:12 a.m. HST in Hawaii and 10:12 p.m. local time in Sydney, Australia.

A partial lunar eclipse starts earlier and covers a wider area, including the western half of the United States, but may be difficult to see where the sun is rising and the moon is low on the horizon.

The total eclipse will last 97 minutes. But only Hawaii and points to the west will see its totality. From the West, the moon will set while still totally eclipsed.

In North America, the start of the total eclipse should be visible from California, Arizona, Nevada, Oregon and western Washington state.

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