

# Schlam: Eager to Succeed

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Peter R. Schlam's ambition was to be a trial attorney—getting at the facts, finding witnesses and winning his case brilliantly in the courtroom.

Now the 30-year-old assistant United States attorney for the Eastern District finds himself at the center of a controversy regarding his mysterious reported illness during his recent prosecution of Representative Angelo D. Roncallo.

Mr. Schlam was still reportedly in Florida yesterday, and his parents and his associates declined to discuss any details of the alleged incident on May 8 and 9.

Peter Raymond Schlam, was born on April 21, 1944, to Dr. Isaac Schlam, a native of Austria, and his wife, Stella, a native of Germany. The couple had come to the United States in 1940 "in the time of Hitler," Mrs. Schlam recalled. Dr. Schlam, an internist, works from his home at 427 South Avenue in Lindenhurst, L. I. and is attending physician at New York University Hospital.

His son attended the Lindenhurst schools and Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts. He was graduated from the University of Pennsylvania after seven semesters, and in 1969 from Cornell Law School, winning many awards for moot-court work.

## Worked for G.O.P.

During college, Mr. Schlam worked briefly at Suffolk County Republican headquarters, helped by his neighbor, Arthur M. Cromarty, then chairman of the Suffolk Republican party. He also worked for Assemblyman Perry B. Duryea and for former Assemblyman Prescott B. Huntington.

"Of all the part-time assistants I had in Albany, he was one of the best," said Mr. Huntington, now a retired lawyer. "All I have is a pleas-

ant, favorable impression of him."

With his excellent college record and his political connections, Mr. Schlam obtained an appointment to the United States attorney's office, with the help of the next Suffolk chairman, Edwin M. Schwenk.

"He likes action and he got it fast," said his mother in an interview. "He's been one of their star performers ever since."

She said he had received three commendations from directors of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. His most important case was the conviction of Garrett B. Trapnell, according to Thomas P. Puccio, an assistant U. S. attorney, who shares an apartment with Mr. Schlam in Brooklyn Heights.

"Trapnell had been successful for years in persuading people he was insane," Mr. Puccio recalled. "The facts seemed overwhelming — insane, therefore not guilty. But Peter stuck to it with good incisive investigation. Finally he found a writer for True magazine who had a taped interview in which Trapnell said he could fake insanity. That did it. Peter's victory is going to be an important case in the area of insanity."

The judge at the Roncallo trial was Edward R. Neaheer, who had hired Mr. Schlam while still United States Attorney in 1969. Spectators noticed Judge Neaheer's apparent irritation over the week case.

Mr. Schlam is described by an acquaintance as "somewhat nervous, sharp featured, reasonably boyish with a lock of hair sometimes over his forehead, piercing eyes and lots of gestures."

"He tends to be a somewhat mod dresser, the acquaintance added, "subdued but with wide lapels."

Mr. Schlam's mother differs about the latter point: "Mod?" she asked. "Oh, never mod. Brooks Brothers, all the way."