

Girl Says She Lied About Rape, Chester Man Freed From Prison

MEDIA, Pa. (AP) — A former custodian jailed for two months on rape charges has been released and the charges against him were dismissed after a 15-year-old girl testified that she lied about being raped.

"I feel sorry for the individual and think she needs help," Alexander Bradway, 33, said Wednesday after he was set free by Delaware County Court Judge Frank J. Lynch, who called the false accusation "an outrage."

Bradway, a divorced father of nine who lost his custodial job with the Chester School District as a result of his arrest, insisted he was not bitter but was glad the girl had the courage to come forward.

"I feel for him," Lynch said. "It points up the ease with which a charge can be made and the difficulty in defending against it. I thought it was an outrage that the man had to spend two months in jail for something he never did."

He said a bail hearing was conducted the next day and Bradway, who had been unable to raise the \$5,000 bail previously set, was released on his own recognizance pending a hearing.

"I felt it was necessary before serious charges are dropped that the individual who instigated the charges make it a matter of record that the charges were false," Spitz said of Wednesday's hearing.

"I wanted it to be clear that she had not been intimidated or threatened," he said. "I'm satisfied now that she's telling the truth."

In the hearing, the girl said she had spent the night with Bradway and willingly had sexual relations with him. She gave no explanation about why she had lied, Spitz said.

Because of the girl's age, Spitz said no charges would be filed against her.

"Thank goodness that the young lady had an attack of conscience," said Mark Stivers, Brad-

Bradway was originally charged with rape, false imprisonment, kidnapping, simple assault and terroristic threats.

He was arrested Jan. 7 after the girl, then 14, told police Bradway approached her on a Chester street on Dec. 4, forced her into the back seat of his car and took her to his house. There she said, he kept her overnight, raped her three times and threatened her with a knife, according to a police affidavit.

Assistant District Attorney Gerald Spitz said Wednesday that the girl, who since the incident has been under the care of Delaware County Children and Youth Services, recanted her accusations March 18 to an agency counselor.

Bradway's defense attorney.

Stivers said during the preliminary hearing that the girl forged a note in order to be excused from school Dec. 4; school officials called her mother, who warned her daughter she'd be in trouble when she came home.

The girl left school anyway, and Bradway said Wednesday that he saw her on the street and felt sorry for her because she looked like an 18- or 19-year-old "street person."

He said the next day she asked him if she could stay with him, but he told her to seek help at City Hall. She left, and Bradway said he next heard of her when he was arrested.