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Mary Heffernan, one of Sen. Bob Packwood's accusers, said yesterday, "There has to be tremendous political pressure to sweep this under the rug, so . . . the evidence has to be just tremendous."

## Senators close ranks for 'indispensable' Packwood

By KATHARINE Q. SEELYE  
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WASHINGTON — A few months after he was accused of grabbing and groping several women, Sen. Bob Packwood got himself a new vanity license plate — "MASADA."

The reference is to the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and the fierce stand taken by the Zealots. Rather than give in to the Romans, they took to a mountaintop, called the Masada, and committed suicide.

Packwood was emotionally isolated on his own mountaintop at the time, a pariah among his colleagues, the butt of jokes and, he disclosed later, considering suicide himself. But if he is in a state of siege, he is not showing it, and neither are his fellow senators.

"Somehow in life, when you reach a certain age, you bear what you have to bear," Packwood said yesterday after the Senate ethics committee issued the equivalent of an indictment against him.

The committee listed 18 explicit sexual incidents as well as incidents of tampering with evidence and improper use of his official position for "personal financial gain."

Sen. Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., who heads the ethics committee, and Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., the vice chairman, declined to discuss the case yesterday. They scheduled a press conference for today.

Packwood, 62, R-Ore., shrugged off any suggestion that he should resign his powerful post as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. Moments later he was back on the floor, discussing the intricacies of Medicare.

In the corridors, his fellow senators were circling the wagons. Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, R-N.Y., called Packwood an "acknowledged ex-

pert" on finance matters who was "indispensable" to the complex and painstaking budget process.

Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, D-N.Y., one of Packwood's closest friends, told a reporter, "Here's what you can say: I love him."

A lone senator, Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., was openly critical of Packwood. She had called for his resignation from the Senate shortly after the sexual allegations surfaced in 1992, and she called again yesterday for him to quit.

The thought of public hearings on the sexual allegations has mortified the Senate, and the Democrats, whose president has had to endure sexual accusations of his own, are not clamoring for the spectacle.

"There is the matter of vulnerability," said Thomas Mann, an expert on Congress at the Brookings Institution. "No one wants to cast the first stone."

One senator said he and his colleagues dreaded the thought of public hearings, and any closing of ranks yesterday was less to protect Packwood, who is regarded as a loner, than to protect the Senate itself from the kind of humiliations it suffered during the hearings on Judge Clarence Thomas' nomination to the Supreme Court or John Tower's nomination as secretary of defense. Tower's nomination was derailed by accusations of drinking and womanizing.

Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., the only woman on the ethics committee, said she wanted public hearings. But the decision is up to the committee, and there is no indication when they might take place.

Packwood has said in the past that he would welcome full and fair public hearings, but he declined yesterday to say whether he still wanted to make his case publicly.

## ALLEGED MISCONDUCT BY PACKWOOD

### Sexual

A number of women have alleged the following incidents:

- ✓ 1990, his Washington office, Sen. Bob Packwood grabbed a staff member by the shoulders, kissed her on the lips.
- ✓ 1985, Bend, Ore., fondled a campaign worker as they danced. Later that year, grabbed her face, kissed her.
- ✓ 1981 or 1982, his Senate office, squeezed the arms of a lobbyist, kissed her.
- ✓ 1981, walked a former assistant into a Capitol basement room, kissed her.
- ✓ 1980, Eugene, Ore., pulled a campaign worker toward him, kissed her. Also invited her to his room.
- ✓ 1980 or early 1981, Portland, Ore., kissed a hotel desk clerk.
- ✓ 1980, Washington, grabbed a staff member, pushed her onto a couch, kissed her. Staff member tried several times to get up but was pushed back on couch.
- ✓ 1979, walked into another senator's office, started talking with a staff member, suddenly leaned down, kissed her.
- ✓ 1977, pushed an elevator operator to the wall, kissed her. Also went to her home, kissed her, asked her to make love.
- ✓ 1977, Oregon motel room, grabbed a prospective employee, kissed her.
- ✓ 1975, his Senate office, grabbed a staff assistant, held her hair with one hand, fondled her with the other, kissed her.
- ✓ 1970, Portland restaurant, ran his hand up the leg of a hostess, touched her crotch area.
- ✓ 1969, Washington, made suggestive remarks to a job applicant.
- ✓ 1969, his home, grabbed a Senate employee who was babysitting, rubbed her shoulders and back, kissed her. Put his arm around her, touched her leg as he drove her home.
- ✓ 1969, grabbed a staff worker, kissed her, reached under her skirt, grabbed her undergarments.

### Donations

The ethics panel found Packwood may have abused his office and brought discredit upon the Senate. Based on allegations he solicited support from:

- ✓ A foreign agent representing a client with interests in the Finance Committee and the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.
- ✓ Businessmen and lobbyists with interests before either the Commerce or Finance committees, or both.

### Diaries

The committee found Packwood may have altered his diaries when he knew or should have known they would be sought.