

DEFENSE WINS POINT IN WILLIAMS CASE

**Brooklyn Judge Changes 'Rape' Charge to
'Attempt' Admitting Flimsy Nature of
All Charges Against Negro**

By Angelo Herndon

Attorneys for John Williams, Brooklyn Negro worker framed on a rape charge, won an important technical victory yesterday when the court agreed to reduce the charge from rape in the first degree to an "attempt to commit rape."

Judge Peter J. Brancato of the Kings County Special Sessions Court, made this ruling after attorneys Samuel Newberger and S. Shapiro had asked for a *claminal* of the entire indictment because no new additional evidence was offered by the state in the new trial which was ordered by the District Attorney. The judge refused to strike out the indictment and his decision reducing the charge to an attempt to commit rape is an admission that the charges against the Negro youth are flimsy.

The Appellate Court, in its decision several months ago, reversed the 7½ to 15 year sentence of Williams on the ground that there was no evidence to warrant the conviction and that such conviction as based upon the evidence could not stand up under law. One of the justices of the Appellate Court in a separate opinion held that the entire indictment against Williams should be thrown out.

Irene Richards, the white girl who "forgot" to prosecute Williams for more than three weeks after the alleged crime, told the same contradictory story yesterday as she did in previous trials. Though 28 years old, she offered but mild, if any, resistance to the advances of Williams, who, she said, held her in the foyer of her room, "kissed" her and

then led her into a room where she was "attacked."

She testified further that she could not remember whether she screamed, kicked or attempted to resist, though she struggled with Williams for "a half hour."

After the alleged attack she said she did not tell anyone about what had happened. Williams, she said, used to come to the house where she worked as a maid, "sit around for ten or 15 minutes and talk a little sometimes."

The state rested its case after an extended re-hash of the same insufficient and contradictory evidence on which the Appellate Court reversed Williams' conviction.

The case will go to the jury today after defense and state arguments.

Negro and white friends of Williams who testified on his behalf at preceding trials, were in the court room and it is expected that some of them will be called again as character witnesses.

The International Labor Defense and the John Williams Defense Committee announced that the fight to free Williams would continue until he has been completely exonerated of the frame-up charges against him.