

Williams & Fainaru-Wada Ordered To Jail

Written by The Staff
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A federal Judge ordered Lance Williams and Mark Fainaru-Wada to jail yesterday for refusing to divulge the name of the source or sources that leaked sealed grand jury testimony to them regarding Barry Bonds and other athletes as part of the BALCO investigation.

U.S. District Judge Jeffrey White sentenced Williams and Fainaru-Wada to a maximum of 18 months in prison after rejecting defense lawyer requests for fines. "The only appropriate sanction is to incarcerate these two individuals to the full extent permitted," Judge White said.

Both individuals will not have to report directly to jail as the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals must decide whether the reporters have a right to refuse to testify.

Both journalists could avoid serving the maximum if one or the other were to decide to release the source of the leak. Neither Williams or Fainaru-Wada seem willing to do so. "I do not wish to spend even a minute in jail," Fainaru-Wada said. "However, I cannot - and will not - betray the promises I have made over the past three years (to confidential sources)."

"I'm supposed to keep my promises when people help me and take me at my word," Williams said in court yesterday. "I do despair for our country if we go very far down this road, because no one will talk to reporters."

As also [reported by the AP](#) , *In August, White ruled his hands were tied by a 1972 Supreme Court precedent that said no one -- journalists included -- was above the law and may refuse to testify before a federal grand jury.*

A bipartisan bill currently before the Senate Judiciary Committee would give reporters protection from revealing their confidential sources in cases that involve federal authorities. Thirty-one states and the District of Columbia have media shield laws already in place.

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The Chronicle reported that Bonds told the grand jury that he believed he was using flaxseed oil and arthritic balm, not steroids, supplied by trainer Greg Anderson, one of five defendants convicted in the BALCO scandal.

([The AP](#))