

Lundine, Clinger Favor Expulsion

OCT 3 1980

House Integrity Said At Stake

By JIM KELLER

The integrity of the House of Representatives was at stake yesterday, according to Representative Stanley N. Lundine, D-Jamestown, and Rep. William Clinger, R-Warren, as that branch of Congress voted overwhelmingly to expel one of its own members.

The House voted 376-30 Thursday to remove Rep. Michael J. Myers, D-Philadelphia, despite pleas to wait until after the November elections. Myers was convicted Aug. 30 of taking a \$50,000 bribe from undercover FBI agents in the so-called Abscam operation.

Both Lundine and Clinger voted for expulsion, agreeing that the decision was a very difficult one to reach.

"I simply feel that the integrity of the House of Representatives demands certain patterns of conduct that Myers had violated by his own admission. We can't tolerate this sort of thing," Lundine told The Post-Journal this morning.

"This vote was not a personal one," Clinger said in a prepared release. "Rather it was one to restore the integrity of the House of Representatives that was threatened by corruption."

Clinger said his fellow Pennsylvania congressman had violated the trust of the people who had elected him.

Neither man felt a motion by Rep. Louis Stokes of Ohio to table the expulsion vote until after the elections or until Myers had been given time to appeal the court decision, would have changed outcome of the House vote.

"Appeals don't affect the the facts of the case," Lundine said. "The House felt that even with the appeal or even if the FBI acted improperly, what Myers did was wrong and his actions were grave enough to expel him."

Explained the Jamestown congressman, "It would have been a tough vote before or after the elections and I feel I would've voted the same whether it was in November (after the election) or in October."

A Clinger aide said many representatives felt the move to table was a delaying tactic, adding that the facts were overwhelmingly against Myers.

"There was a preponderance of evidence— it was there — it was very clear that a wrong doing was

committed," the aide said.

Although both representatives are running for re-election in November, they said they felt it was not a party line vote but based on individual feelings.

Clinger's aide said this was not a partisan issue adding that it transcends party politics.

Lundine agreed saying there were absolutely no indications from party leaders on which way to vote on this motion.

"This was an historic event. It's the first time a congressman has been expelled for bribery. There was none of the usual lobbying, everyone searched his own conscience," Lundine said.

Neither Clinger's aide nor Lundine could say how the vote would go if the other five representatives indicted in the Abscam investigation are convicted. But Lundine said in such a case, the House Ethics Committee, which recommended Myers' dismissal, would be called on to review each case individually.

Said Lundine, "What we did sets a precedent. Unfortunately the House will have to take action on others if they are convicted."