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THE BATTALION CLASSIFIEDS

NEWS

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DeLay business dealings under scrutiny by lawyers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rep. Tom DeLay of Texas, the Republican leader who led the drive in the House to impeach President Clinton for lying under oath, now finds himself at the center of his own controversy over truthfulness.

The media spotlight that focused on DeLay as he kept up a steady stream of Clinton criticism has turned into a glare recently as reporters have probed discrepancies between statements he made in a legal proceeding and those on financial disclosure forms he is required to file as a member of Congress.

"Frankly, it's my opinion he lied to me under oath," said Gerald DeNisco, the Houston lawyer who questioned DeLay during a 1994 deposition in a lawsuit filed against the representative by a business partner.

The former pest exterminator, who is viewed as the Republican most Democrats love to hate now that Newt Gingrich has exited the national stage, accuses Democrats of orchestrating the barrage of critical media coverage.

"I am the most investigated man in America. They're trying to bring me down," DeLay, the No. 3 GOP House leader, said

earlier this month.

The man who slammed Clinton for verbal gymnastics in dodging questions about Monica Lewinsky — and who repeatedly called on him to provide the facts — is not rushing to answer the volley of questions directed at him.

"I'm the most investigated man in America. They're trying to bring me down."

— Rep. Tom DeLay
House majority whip

Generally loquacious, the majority whip is brushing off inquiries regarding a lawsuit filed against him in 1994 by a business partner who claimed DeLay and a third partner were trying to cut him out of the pest control firm.

"We have answers to all of that," DeLay told a pair of Texas reporters in a brief hallway encounter earlier this month. "It ain't worth talking about."

Aides have been equally tight-lipped since the controversy, first reported by an alternative Houston weekly in 1995 and resurrected last month by The New Republic, flared. "These stories are being forwarded by political enemies of Tom DeLay and we choose not to fight them out in the press," said spokesperson Michael Scanlon.

The roots of DeLay's current troubles reach back to that 1994 deposition, taken 10 months before he ascended into the GOP leadership.

DeLay, a part-owner of Albo Pest Control until 1997, testified that he had not been an officer of the company for two or three years. But on congressional financial disclosure forms filed for several years preceding the deposition — and one filed three months after — he listed himself as chair of Albo's board of directors. He dropped the title on his 1995 report.

DeNisco, the lawyer, said he believes DeLay was attempting to limit financial liability by denying he was a corporate officer. DeLay later retreated somewhat from his claim, saying he could not remember when he had resigned.

Clinton calls for gun tracing program

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Clinton administration wants to bring more cities under a program that traces guns used by juvenile criminals in light of a report that showed at least half the guns were bought illegally from licensed dealers.



CLINTON

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms released an analysis Sunday of its Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative. The program traced 76,260 guns used in crimes by 18- to 24-year-olds in 27 cities over the past three years.

President Clinton is asking Congress in his new budget proposal for money to pay for expanding the initiative to 10 more cities across the country.

Alcohol, Tobacco and

Firearms found 51 percent of the traced guns were purchased from licensed dealers by people acting as "straw" intermediaries for the real owners, and only 35 percent were stolen. The remainder came from private sellers not required to obtain identification or subject their customers to background checks.

In a statement, Clinton said the figures go a long way toward helping authorities find and punish those responsible for putting guns in the hands of the young.

"With more police on the streets and tougher gun laws on the books, crime has dropped to its lowest level in a generation. But we must do more," Clinton said. "Tracing crime guns to their source, and putting gun traffickers out of business for good, will make our streets even safer."

That 25 percent of the guns moved quickly from sale to recovery by police indicates they were bought

legally, then resold, Treasury officials said. Semiautomatic pistols were the most commonly recovered weapon in each city, making up 52 percent of all trace requests.

As a result of the traces, 397 people have been referred to state and federal courts over the past year for prosecution as gun traffickers, the report said.

"We can't stop them from buying the guns, but as soon as they turn those guns over to felons, we can prosecute that," said ATF director John Magaw.

The report identified five types of semiautomatic pistols that move rapidly from dealers to young offenders: the Lorcin 9 mm, the .40-caliber Smith & Wesson, the Bryco 9 mm, the Hi-Point 9 mm and the .40-caliber Glock.

It said 11.3 percent of the offenders involved were under 17 years old, and 32 percent were between 18 and 24.

Albright finds to negotiations on

RAMBOUILLET, France (AP) — Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, making scant headway toward a Kosovo peace settlement, said Sunday that if neither Serbs nor ethnic Albanians accept the six-nation plan, NATO cannot carry through on its threat to attack Serb targets.

With a new deadline set for Tuesday, Serb negotiators "are not engaging at all" over the critical question of NATO peacekeepers would enforce the plan while the Kosovars must still agree to sign on fully with the plan to give autonomy in the Serb province, Albright said.

"Some really earth-shaking decisions made, which is why it is difficult," Albright said after several hours of talking to each side. "And these are really decisions about war and peace and life and death."

Albright, talking to reporters, declined what was holding up Albanian approval, said, U.S. officials thought the Albanians her a green light on Saturday.

But other U.S. officials said the negotiations focused on the Albanians' quest for independence after the plan's interim three-year deadline. The U.S. refusal to endorse independence

AGGIE BASKETBALL

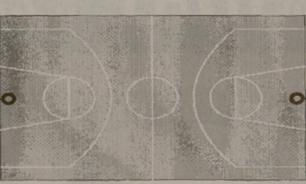
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