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Senate condemns Olympic leader

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Senate committee tore into Olympic leaders Wednesday over the Salt Lake bribery scandal and took quick action to place the IOC under the same law that deals with corrupt governments.

With two members calling for International Olympic Committee president Juan Antonio Samaranch to resign and a general skepticism that the IOC was ready to clean up its act, the Senate Commerce Committee repeatedly criticized a "culture of corruption" that left the rings tarnished and the games defamed.

"A pattern of payoffs, palace intrigue and padded budgets has clouded over the integrity of the Olympics," Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., said.

Despite some senators' urging that immediate financial action be taken, commerce panel chairman Sen. John McCain said he wanted to go slow on legislation that would make the Olympics a less-attractive product for sponsors and direct billion-dollar TV rights fees to the U.S. Olympic Committee instead of the IOC.

Such legislation could wind up hurting athletes training for next year's games in Sydney and the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake, the powerful Arizona Republican said.

But McCain, who held two IOC members to an excruciating 45 minutes of questioning on

Olympic finances and reform intentions, said he would immediately introduce a bill to place the international panel under the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, which forbids bribery of foreign officials.

"A pattern of payoffs, palace intrigue and padded budgets has clouded over the integrity of the Olympics."

— Sen. Ron Wyden
D-Oregon

"We'll do it today," he said.

The White House, meanwhile, said it hoped to have an answer soon on a USOC request to make the IOC a public body under international anti-corruption statutes.

After the three-hour session, McCain said he would consider a second hearing as IOC efforts

to bounce back from the worst case in its 105 years became clearer, week end of the year.

"I had hoped we would come out of the hearing with a better feeling and more of the IOC's intentions on reform."

McCain was upset by the letter from Anita DeFrantz and James H. Dwyer, two U.S. IOC members, for the majority of an Olympic reform report by the Majority Leader George Mitchell, D-Me.

DeFrantz, an IOC vice president, said she testified by Samaranch, and Easton endorsed just one of the report's recommendations, on term limits for IOC members who now are essentially elected.

"That's very interesting," McCain said he was "very concerned about enthusiasm for the Mitchell recommendations," and that the IOC's "burden of proof" if it fails to reform is to pin down the IOC members on their money the Olympifore Congress time. "But maybe the skepticism was

Agreement reached in WNBA labor dispute

HOUSTON (AP) — The players of the WNBA have agreed in principle to a new collective bargaining agreement according to Monica Lamb, the Houston Comets' player representative.

Lamb said in an interview with Houston television station KRIV that "in large part the deal is done." "The players have chosen to accept the proposal and to go forward with it," she said.

Bruce Levy, a New York-based agent representing about 30 current or former players, told *The Arizona Republic* there was not "any real obstacle" that needed to be cleared.

Levy said the deal included minimum salaries of \$30,000 for veterans and \$25,000 for rookies plus year-round player health benefits. Players now can negotiate deals based on merit, rather than being predetermined by a salary slot.

Additionally, players would receive a percentage of the league's basketball-related income, and the league will establish and contribute to a retirement plan.

Lamb said that one of the details yet to be ironed out is the length of the deal. She told KRIV that the WNBA wants the contract to last four years, but the players say they only want a three-year deal.

Hornet center Coleman arrested in nightclub

DETROIT (AP) — Charlotte Hornets center Derrick Coleman was arrested late Tuesday in his hometown and charged with interfering with a police officer's duty.

Several others were also arrested at Chuck's Millionaire Club in Detroit, Officer Collette Hill, a department spokesperson said.

It was not immediately clear what Coleman was accused of doing at the club. Police said the player was released on a \$100 bond on the misdemeanor charge.

The Hornets played at Detroit on Monday and the Pistons were to play at Charlotte on Wednesday. Coleman was expected to

miss the game because he sprained ankle and had surgery to stay in Detroit.

Spokesperson Jonathan Supranowitz said Coleman had not talked yet to the club and had no details of the case.

The person arrested at the club said he was cleaning crew and no money was available to talk to Coleman.

In 1995, Coleman was arrested in Detroit and charged with fusing to move his car. He was swearing at a police officer. The case ended in a mistrial.



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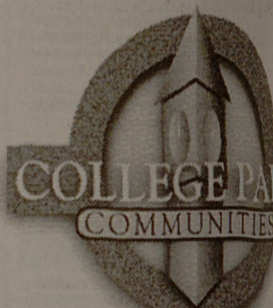
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