

# Fired Enron auditor may testify

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional investigators in the Enron probe pressed Monday for public testimony by a fired auditor who says the Arthur Andersen accounting firm shares the blame for Enron's collapse.

Dismissed over the destruction of thousands of Enron-related documents, David Duncan told investigators that Andersen had ample information when it evaluated the controversial partnership arrangements at Enron that were a big factor in its bankruptcy. Enron kept hundreds of millions of dollars in debt off the balance sheet for several years.

Duncan "did not sit there and say 'Enron hid all this information from us and therefore we couldn't count right,'" said Rep. Jim Greenwood, R-Pa., who heads a House panel investigating the collapse. "It was more of ... 'we made mistakes.'"

Rather than giving a "mea culpa," Duncan gave "a mea culpa; he did not point the finger at Enron," Greenwood said Monday, characterizing the comments the fired auditor made last week to congressional investigators.

Duncan's lawyers sought to delay his public testimony, scheduled for Thursday before the House Oversight and Investigations

Subcommittee, arguing that Duncan needs more time to prepare.

But Greenwood, who chairs the subcommittee, rejected the request, saying Duncan "doesn't really need to recall every detail of what he did for Enron. We're focused on the destruction of documents. We'll subpoena him if we have to."

Andersen chief executive Joseph "Berardino is saying that the company found fault with Duncan's destruction of documents. He (Duncan) needs to defend himself," said Greenwood.

If Duncan testifies, the hearing will pit him against Andersen's legal department and company management in Chicago.

Appearing Sunday on NBC's "Meet the Press," Berardino criticized Duncan and defended attorney Nancy Temple, who advised the Houston office by electronic mail on Oct. 12 about the firm's document destruction policy. That was just four days before Enron announced more than \$600 million in third-quarter losses and took the first step in disclosing details of the partnerships.

Berardino said Duncan displayed "at the least ... extremely poor judgment" for his part in discarding the documents in October and November.

Berardino said Temple reminded the Houston office of the policy to do away with some documents "because accountants are pack rats ... We save lots of stuff that's not relevant."

But Duncan told investigators "it was unusual" for a company lawyer to emphasize the document-destruction policy.

Meanwhile, a lawyer for Kenneth L. Lay, Enron's chairman and chief executive, said Lay disposed of millions of dollars in Enron stock before the company's collapse last year because he needed to raise cash to repay loans, not because of concerns about the health of his company.

Attorney Earl J. Silbert said Lay had put up shares of his Enron stock as collateral for other investments. On at least 15 occasions between February and October last year, Lay returned shares to the company to repay \$4 million he had received through a credit line.

However, Silbert also said that Lay held onto some stock, detailing one transaction in which Lay exercised options to purchase 68,000 shares of Enron stock on Aug. 21.

"He continues to hold that stock today," Silbert said.

# Bush may be hiding knowledge of Enron

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush's advisers, fearing the Enron Corp. bankruptcy controversy could divert attention from his second-year agenda, are debating what to do about a political problem they helped create.

From the first belated disclosure that the energy giant sought help from Bush's team, the White House has helped fuel the story by refusing to release some details and offering others in dribs and drabs.

"Whatever the underlying facts are, they are creating the impression that there's something to hide," said Joe Lockhart, a veteran of scandal-control strategy as press secretary to President Clinton.

Nearly two-thirds of Americans — 63 percent — believe the Bush administration is not telling everything it knows about its relationship with Enron, according to a recent CBS News poll.

With the Enron story gathering steam, Republicans are divided over how to respond, and Democrats are split on whether it will be a potent political issue.

White House officials hope Bush's State of the Union address Jan. 29 will shift focus from Enron to his domestic policy agenda, the war on terrorism and efforts to prevent future attacks.

But some Republicans outside the administration say that will not be enough. They are pushing for more disclosures and an internal investigation.

"The answer is for George Bush to come out and very specifically take the measure on by saying, 'My treasury secretary

talked to Enron and nothing was done. My commerce secretary talked to Enron and nothing was done,'" said Eddie Mahe, a GOP consultant in Washington.

He also urged Bush to announce an internal investigation into all White House contacts with Enron. Although the president has refused to launch a formal internal inquiry, Mahe said, "I would hope that George W. Bush would understand and believe that it's the right thing to do. And if somebody did something wrong, he should throw them out."

Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer has said the White House will not try to determine which administration officials had contacts with Enron executives. However, he said, aides were informally keeping track and disclosing those contacts in which Enron chiefs sought help from the government.

Fleischer called requests for full accounting "a fishing expedition."

The Clinton White House also was slow to turn over information and quick to denounce its critics.

"I think we've learned from recent history that there doesn't have to be underlying unethical behavior — that the process itself can be as damaging as any alleged wrongdoing," Lockhart said.

But several other Democrats, particularly those outside Washington, said Bush's performance in the war against terrorism is more important to voters than Enron. Some Democrats are leery about clashing with a wartime president.



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- **Working Group on Women's Rights as Human Rights:** Visit with Lynn Hagan and Muslim students to discuss issues related to Muslims and Arab women; Tuesday, January 22; 11:00 AM-12:30 PM; Academic 308. Co-Sponsors: Women's Studies Program, Anthropology Department, and College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office.
- **Women's Center Welcome Back Open House:** Tuesday, January 22; 3:00-5:00 PM; Academic 308.
- **Women's Center Community Services Series:** Brazos Valley Workforce Centers; Wednesday, January 30; 4:00-5:30 PM; Academic 308.
- **Women's Center Film Series:** Screening of *Ida B. Wells: A Passion for Justice*, followed by discussion; Wednesday, February 6; 4:00 PM; Academic 308. Refreshments will be served.
- **Women's Center Spring Lecture Series:** Sally Robinson, English Dept., TAMU, "Stuffed and Punch Drunk: *Fight Club*, Feminism, and the 'Crisis' in Masculinity"; Tuesday, February 11; 4:00 PM; Academic 308.
- **Women's Center Film Series: *The Women***, Dir. George Cukor; Tuesday, February 12; 7:00 PM; Evans Library Annex, Room 417B.
- **Women's Center Community Services Series:** Phoebe's Home; Thursday, February 14 (V-Day); 4:00 PM; Place TBA.
- **The Vagina Monologues:** Thursday-Saturday, February 28-March 2; 7:00 PM; Place TBA.
- **Women's History/Spirit Month Presentation:** Marlene Fried, Hampshire College, "A Matter of Access: Building a Reproductive Rights Movement in the U.S. and Internationally"; Monday, March 4; 6:30 PM; Francis 202. Co-Sponsors: Women's Studies Program, Sociology Department, and Philosophy Department.
- **Women's Center Film Series: *Now, Voyager***, Dir. Irving Rapper; Tuesday, March 5; 7:00 PM; Evans Library Annex, Room 417B.
- **Women's Center Spring Lecture Series:** Sara Alpern, History Dept., TAMU, "The History of Women's History at A&M"; Wednesday, March 6; 12:00-1:30 PM; Academic 308.
- **Women's History/Spirit Month Bag Luncheon:** Lynn Hagan and Sidney Franks; Monday, March 18; 12:00 PM; Rudder 402.
- **Women's History/Spirit Month Presentation:** Lynn Hagan and Sidney Franks, "Marhaba: Greetings from a Western Woman in an Arab World"; Monday, March 18; 6:30 PM; Rudder 302. Co-Sponsors: Women's Studies Program, Anthropology Department, and College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office.
- **Gender Issues Education Services Coffee Talk:** Thursday, March 21; 4:00 PM; Academic 308. Co-Sponsored by the Women's Center.
- **Women's Center Film Series: *Thelma and Louise***, Dir. Ridley Scott; Tuesday, April 9; 7:00 PM; Evans Library Annex, Room 417B.

## Tuition

Continued from page 1

Board of Regents in August. UT's fee was proposed at the UT System Board of Regents meeting in January, when students were not in class.

"Students here just don't typically protest," said Cindy Lawson, director of University Relations at A&M. "The administration has had pretty open discourse with any fee. Students had opportunity to ask questions and give feedback on numerous occasions."

Student Body President Schuyler Houser said no survey of student opinion has been conducted, but not because students are unconcerned about the issue.

"Truly, there are several other big issues right now that require student involvement and demand a lot of time," Houser said, referring to last week's survey on Bonfire 2002.

Bowen's forums about the enhancement fee have been sparsely attended, but so many students attended a recent Bonfire 2002 forum that it had to be moved from an MSC meeting room to Rudder Theatre.

UT President Larry Faulkner held a forum last Thursday attended by a reported 200 students hoping to learn more about the issue.

Dunman said YCT at A&M has also been busy fighting the proposed plan to offer automatic admittance to the top 20 percent of economically disadvantaged students in 253 Texas high schools.

Houser said one reason for the difference in student input is that, if approved, UT's fee will affect current students, while the most popular of A&M's plans for collecting the fee will affect future students.

"It is always more attention-grabbing when you know something will significantly affect you," she said. Houser said the enhancement fee was proposed with the least amount of impact on current students because many have already set their four- or five-year financial plans.

Long said the students he has spoken with oppose the fee, which averages to between \$3,000 and \$4,000 more for the average four-year degree program.

"If A&M is trying to recruit lower income students, this fee will counteract that," he said.

## Bush

Continued from page 1

to send their children to private schools, Bush said Florida is making enormous strides in public education, especially among poor minority students.

"We're closing the learning gap," Bush said. "I took enormous grief for some of these initiatives, but if you stay the course and show some results, the fears begin to subside."

Bush also discussed the controversy surrounding Elian Gonzalez, the six-year-old Cuban refugee who was returned to Cuba in 2000 over the strenuous objections of his Miami relatives and the Cuban-American community in south Florida. The incident brought to the surface deep feelings of suspicion and distrust among the various ethnic groups of south Florida. These tensions were exacerbated by the Clinton administration's handling of the issue, Bush said.

"The case should have been left to a local judge so custody could be decided based on what was best for the child," Bush said. "But Clinton elevated this into a federal issue, and it hurt a lot of people in our community."


Florida is second only to Texas in the number of death row prisoners executed each year, but Bush said carrying out the sentence of death is the hardest part of his job.

"I believe in the death penalty, but I'm not God, and signing a death warrant is really hard," Bush said.

Bush is running for a second term as Florida's governor in the November general elections.


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