

Letters on the Enron collapse

13 February 2002

Many readers have sent comments on the recent WSWs articles on the Enron collapse: "White House stonewalls Congressional probe into Enron links" by Jerry Isaacs, 4 February 2002; "The Enron collapse and the crisis of the profit system" by Nick Beams, 29 January 2002; "The strange and convenient death of J. Clifford Baxter—Enron executive found shot to death" by Patrick Martin, 28 January 2002.

Good informative article of January 29. There are a couple of other events that are still evolving. As profits fall the natural corporate reaction is more downsizing to drive costs down, or firing full-time workers and hiring part-time replacements. Outsourcing labor to nonunion, low-wage regions (South in the US) or third world countries to drive down costs to increase profits will continue. Workers' wages are also flat or falling in real dollars.

The results of these actions are becoming apparent. As better paying jobs are lost (and wealth is further concentrated at the top), the ability of a broad spectrum of society to buy the products or services is lost. This squeezes profits further and a new round of reaction is taken against labor. There will be a period when credit will be used to try to maintain "lifestyle." This false credit prosperity will eventually collapse. Whole countries have seen their buying power collapse, with the predictable consequences of more "belt-tightening," IMF style.

The computer I am typing on is a good example. It is made in Mexico, by low-wage workers. The workers who make the computer could not afford to buy the computer. These low-wage workers must spend a large portion of their wages on food and shelter. A man as reactionary as Henry Ford understood his workers needed a high wage to buy the product he was selling.

The stock market was crazy in the '90s with explosive growth. Normally, as the economy overheats inflation begins to take hold. Actions are taken to lessen inflation, i.e., tight monetary policies to induce a recession. This did not happen in the '90s. The inflation that would normally affect goods and services during a boom was transferred to the equity markets. Inflation did occur but not in the traditional way. There was also Wall Street greed in play.

LC

30 January 2002

I absolutely agree that Cliff would not have killed himself. He was an honorable man who loved his family and in the few years I knew him he always was above board and fought for what was right. I just cannot believe that Cliff would do that to his family. When I first heard the news my first instinct was that they got rid of him because he knew too much and could tell the real story. In Houston if you have enough \$\$\$\$ and enough "Texas" clout you can get anything done. I'm from there, although misplaced at this moment due to the Enron situation, and know that "Force" would do anything for the "Enron Top."

K

30 January 2002

The Enron takeover of PGE is Portland General Electric not Portland Gas & Electric. PGE linemen were required to transfer IRA to Enron; now valueless. Think of repairing those downed electric lines in ice, cold and snow in the middle of the night. Fraud is not what they deserved.

KR

30 January 2002

Well, here's another suspicion confirmed. Have you wondered why the press has not permitted us to hear one peep out of J. Cliff Baxter's widow? It's because she's not singing the right tune. "The family doesn't buy it," said a friend about the rush to suicide verdict. It's actually pretty surprising that the [*Washington*] *Post*, which is acting more and more like the official White House news organ, should let even this little hint of skepticism out.

By the way, something else is conspicuously absent from the press reports. We have not been told even one word about Baxter's activities in the 48 hours before his body was found. Who saw him last? Where was he supposed to be when he was dead in his car instead? What was his schedule of activities? Had his wife reported him missing? If not, why not?

This is absolutely the worst reporting job on an important event that I have seen yet in this country, and that covers a lot of ground. When it comes to shamelessness, Bill Clinton has nothing on the members of our journalism profession.

DM

3 February 2002

Thanks for your article. I'm use to reading mainstream news. Baxter's death immediately raised my suspicion of murder. The fact that it hasn't been investigated nor has there been any interest in it within the mainstream media, has been sickening to me. I would be willing to accept that he committed suicide if a real investigation was done, confirmed forensic details released, and the authorities showed some suspicion. The only forensic question that I have heard was a reporter asking the police outside of the coroner's office on what side of the head he was shot. He didn't know?! Not one reporter pursued this line of questioning. Your article is the only article that I have come across after numerous Internet searches using Google and Yahoo and combinations that even seriously addresses this as a concern. The public isn't even aware of Baxter's importance. By the way, he also had recently bought a new massive gas sucking boat, but that he was looking forward to driving.

Your article was number one in my Google search using "J. Clifford Baxter." People must be reading it. Usually I only get the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Time*, MSNBC, etc. There is absolutely no diversity of opinion or any attempt at finding out the truth. Please, we know that he was murdered, otherwise the facts would have been made available. We can't let this go without investigation. Keep writing and get others to. The oligarchy has almost taken over the web, but sometimes independent writing can find its way through the

search engines. They have tried to suppress the Enron scandal, Bush's role, Cheney's role, the inner rot within our body politic that Enron has exposed. But there is now momentum and it needs to be pursued.

BM, M.D.

4 February 2002

Dear Mr. Isaacs,

Many thanks for keeping your readers informed about what's happening to America's democracy. It is articles like yours that give people reason to hope that times will come when democracy worthy of the name will prevail, a democracy of which a truly free press is an essential part (not one owned by a few unelected moguls accountable to no one). But this will not happen automatically, people have to be very vigilant: Every attempt at subverting the Constitution must be immediately red-flagged. And this is precisely what your article does.

The "war on terrorism" has not brought to justice a single criminal behind the horrific September 11 atrocity ... As long as Mr. Bush continues bombing the poorest country on earth, the mass media will probably continue to focus on this "war" instead of matters that really matter, such as the Enron case of unbridled fraud and corruption. It's increasingly beginning to look like this bombing is primarily a distraction from this and similar matters which this administration would rather not be discussed by investigative journalists.

Your grateful reader,

RT

4 February 2002

Thanks for the news story. I was searching the Internet for someone, anyone, who would raise the obvious questions about this so-called suicide. I find it impossible to believe that this man would kill himself at such a convenient time for the criminals at Enron and the White House. Have you found anything else out?

EP

4 February 2002

Your article on Baxter's death is excellent. My thoughts exactly. Even more suspicious, if not at least as suspicious, is why the media doesn't even utter a word, of simply questioning this man's suicide. I, and others like me, appreciate you putting real information out to the public. Please keep it up! Thank you.

Sincerely,

D H-B

4 February 2002

Great article by Isaacs on the stalling tactics by President Lush and Veep Cheater concerning the End-wrong debacle. The discussion concerning the ridiculousness of the White House's arguments in stonewalling and the vast interconnections of all the players are intellectually sound and convincing to anyone who cares to listen to reason. But I have something to add that I did not come across in reading the article. Mainly, I believe the stonewalling is a tactic that will (hopefully, in the White House's eyes) draw out the scandal over the next two and a half years past the next presidential (s)election (or, more cynically, until the next terrorist attack or invasion of Iraq and/or nonaligned "axis" state).

Lush and Cheater have no care in the world that their arguments are as solid as Swiss cheese. So what?! As long as the "discovery" that Big Energy Business basically wrote the WH's National Energy Policy is delayed indefinitely in courtroom quicksand, fine with them. They know they are going to lose against the GAO in court. Or will they? The really ominous thing that comes out of all of this is if the issue goes to the Supreme Court (as it probably will). If that fine construction of High Order can be coaxed into siding with the same

powers that put Lush in the WH, then we have a real problem in the USA—a "loophole big enough to drive a (small galaxy) through," to paraphrase the Comptroller of the GAO. And the complete end of any oversight of the executive branch, period. Now THAT would be the greatest velvet coup by the Ruling Elite of all time.

GH

San Diego, California

4 February 2002

Clifford Baxter may or may not have killed himself but this link — <http://www.drugfreebusinesshouston.org/board.htm> — shows that the Harris County Medical Examiners Office has ties to Bush and Cheney and should therefore not be trusted to do an independent investigation of the Baxter death.

Harris County Lab Director Ashraf Mozayani is Medical Examiner Joye Carter's right hand and she sits on the board of Drug Free Business Houston, which is a front of Drug Free America Foundation, formerly Straight, Inc., which was accused of and successfully sued for committing all sorts of illegal and unethical acts, including overcharging the government for its "treatment" of clients.

This group is run by Melvin and Betty Sembler of Florida. They are long-time supporters of the Bush family, having given and raised millions for the campaigns of Bush I, Bush II, and Jeb. Melvin Sembler was appointed ambassador to Australia under Bush I and to Italy under Bush II. Ms. Mozayani is on the board of DFBH with William Bedman of Halliburton. Enron is listed as a supporting member as well.

In addition, Carter is affiliated with a right-wing group called Justice For All, which supports the death penalty and has strong ties to Tom Delay. She was the guest speaker before this group in 1997...

Again, Baxter may have killed himself, although many friends have been quoted as saying that they and members of the Baxter family don't believe he did kill himself. But what is certain is that the Harris County Medical Examiners Office is not independent enough to be trusted with the final decision in this important case.

If the entire Houston office of the Justice Department had to be removed from the case for their ties to Enron and Bush, why does the mainstream media not question the reason why the political hacks in the medical office were allowed to stay on the case?

DB

7 February 2002



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