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THE MISSING ENRON WITNESS

When Enron executives and former executives appeared before Congressional committees some took the First Amendment. Former CEO Jeffrey Skilling did not, but his memory was poor and two other witnesses contradicted him. He was asked if Clifford Baxter, the former Enron vice chairman who had been found dead in his car, had killed himself because of the Enron scandal. Skilling said yes, that Baxter was "heartbroken" because his reputation was ruined. He said Baxter had told him that it was like being accused of being a child molester.

Baxter, like Sherron Watkins, a key whistleblower at Enron, had expressed his concerns about Enron's financial health early in 2001. On Feb. 14, Watkins told a subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee that last March Baxter had told Skilling, "We are headed for a train wreck, and it is your job to get out in front and try to stop it." Skilling had a different story. He testified that he had asked Baxter if he had any reason to think anything bad was going on, and that Baxter said, "No."

Baxter's reputation was that of a straight arrow, and his friends believe that he would have testified truthfully. Sherron Watkins said he had "complained mightily" to Chairman Lay about the partnerships that Enron created to conceal its debts, inflate its profits and siphon off millions of dollars for some officials and investors. Baxter specifically criticized the LJM2 partnership, about which Lay claimed to know little. The Wall Street Journal reported the discovery of a document pertaining to LJM2 signed by Lay that indicated that he knew more than he cared to admit.

Baxter was found at 2:23 a.m. on Jan. 25 slumped in the driver's seat of his Mercedes, parked in a median turn-off near his home in Sugar Land, Texas. A handgun was found in the car. The police have not revealed if it was his gun or if his fingerprints were on it. They also have a note, which has been described as a suicide note, but they won't release it, reveal its contents, say if it is in his handwriting, if it bears his fingerprints, where it was found and who found it. The autopsy report says that the entrance wound in his right temple was 4.5 x 7.2 centimeters. It was caused by pellets no more than 2 millimeters in diameter fired from a handgun. This is called "rat shot." It is used to kill rodents and snakes. The pellets can't be traced to a particular gun. The police have not revealed if Baxter owned a gun and any rat-shot shells. There was no exit wound.

The Sugar Land police quickly issued a press release headlined "Suicide." The chief of police, realizing that was inappropriate before any investigation was made, quickly ordered that changed to "Death Investigation." They were not going to have an autopsy until family members pressured a justice of the peace to order one. It was performed in Houston 14 hours later. The report showed evidence of a painkiller in the blood and two different sleeping tablets in the blood, stomach and liver. It makes no statement about suicide or homicide, but the medical examiner told reporters the findings were consistent with suicide, and the media have been calling it that ever since.

The New York Times reported that the police had concluded it was suicide, saying he "had been shot once in the head with a thirty-eight caliber handgun" and that he "had left a note." It said he had been subpoenaed by a Senate committee, that a House committee wanted to talk to him and that the FBI was looking into his death. It also reported that a friend had called Baxter the day before his death to congratulate him for having been a whistleblower at Enron. The friend revealed that someone had suggested that Baxter hire a bodyguard. He commented, "I'm a businessman. Why do I need a bodyguard?"

Watkins Feared For Her Safety

When Sherron Watkins testified on Feb. 14, Rep. Greg Ganske (R - IA) asked about a note she had written warning Ken Lay of the practices that led to Enron's bankruptcy. He asked if she had put a copy of it in a safe place. She said she had put a copy in a lock box that was not in her office nor in her home.

Ganske then asked her if she was worried about her personal safety. She replied, "At times. I mean just because the company was a little radio-silent back to me, so I didn't know how they were taking my memos or the investigation." Ganske asked, "Why would you be worried about your personal safety?" She said, "Because it was the seventh largest company in America."

Asked by Rep. Peter Deutch (D - FL) if she had done anything based on fear of her personal safety, Watkins responded, "I did actually talk with some Enron Security personnel.... In effect, Mr. Fastow potentially lost his job because I brought up these concerns. And I actually talked to Enron security personnel

about whether I should do anything different, more concerned that Mr. Fastow might be vindictive.” [Fastow had been the chief financial officer.]

This dialogue ensued.

Deutch: Did they give you advice to take any specific actions?

Watkins: Just general security advice.

Deutch: Did Mr. Fastow exhibit any violent behavior or erratic behavior that would lead you to—

Watkins: No, no. It’s just I did not feel very much support. I did feel a little bit as if I were a lone fish swimming upstream, and so it starts to wear on you that it’s you against them, and I was a little bit concerned.

Deutch: Are you convinced that Mr. Baxter’s death was a

suicide....?

Watkins: I’m sure the authorities have reported that correctly.

Deutch asked her twice if there was any doubt in her mind that it was a suicide. First she replied, “Probably not, no.” The second time, she said, “Yes. I, I, I believe it probably was.” Deutch said, “If you say ‘probably,’ there’s doubt.” Watkins then said, “It’s just a sensitive topic that I’d rather not comment on.”

The New York Times excerpts from the hearing transcript included Ganske’s questions and Watkins’ replies but not the exchange with Deutch that suggested Watkins was not fully convinced that Baxter committed suicide. USA Today reported her fears for her own safety, but not her doubts about Baxter.

THE ENRON CON

By Cliff Kincaid

Misdirection is a technique used in magic and sports of getting you to look one way when the real action is taking place elsewhere. That appears to have been the strategy employed by Enron Corporation. It was able to get conservative journalists such as Bill Kristol and Larry Kudlow to lend it their names, for a fee, by preaching deregulation of energy and financial markets. But it was really pursuing an agenda of global regulation through a treaty that would limit emissions of CO2 and other so-called greenhouse gases. At the same time it was making payments to Kristol and Kudlow, Enron was arranging energy deals through the U.N. with China, which is exempt from the treaty curbs on CO2. Enron chairman Ken Lay was a member of Clinton’s Council on Sustainable Development. He had a working relationship with former Senator Tim Wirth, Bill Clinton’s point man in the global warming battle.

Kristol, editor of The Weekly Standard, took \$100,000 from Enron without disclosing the payments at the time. Irwin Stelzer, a contributing editor at the Standard, also took an estimated \$100,000. Kudlow accepted almost \$50,000 for financial advice and speeches, and Peggy Noonan of the Wall Street Journal said she got \$25,000 to \$50,000 for helping Enron chairman Ken Lay with a speech and Enron’s annual report. Paul Krugman, a liberal columnist for the New York Times, took \$50,000 of Enron money, but Washington Post media reporter Howard Kurtz pointed out that so far “most of the Enron journalists are free-marketeers on the right.”

What Did They Know?

We know of no evidence that the prominent conservatives who were paid by Enron were aware of the company’s shady financial shenanigans. But they should have known about Enron’s views on the need for emission controls. Its Web site declared, “Enron recognizes that climate change is a global challenge and supports binding, multilateral agreement on systems to solve it.” The statement made clear Enron’s support of the global warming treaty, also known as the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. “Lack of scientific certainty does not justify

inaction,” the company said, referring to evidence that casts doubt on the theory of man-made global warming.

Bush Nay, Clinton Yea

Enron gave big contributions to Republicans and the Bush campaign, but it didn’t get what it wanted most—Bush’s support for the mandatory restrictions on CO2 emissions contained in the global warming treaty. Bush rejected it because of questions about the science behind the theory and the cost. In an April 23, 2001 article in Business Week, Paul Raeburn said “big corporate names” were disagreeing with Bush on global warming. One of them was Enron. It joined the International Climate Change Partnership and the Pew Center’s Business Environmental Leadership Council, organizations that favor ratification of the Kyoto Protocol.

The Washington Post reporter Dan Morgan reported in a January 13 article that Enron chairman Ken Lay had met with Clinton and Gore to advocate a “market-based” approach to the problem of global warming.” An Enron memo said this would be “good for Enron stock.” Morgan said, “The Clinton administration’s interest in an international agreement to combat global warming also dovetailed with Enron’s business plans. Enron officials envisioned the company at the center of a new trading system, in which industries worldwide could buy and sell credits to emit carbon dioxide as part of a strategy to reduce greenhouse gases. Such a system would curtail the use of inefficient coal-fired power plants that emitted large amounts of carbon dioxide, while encouraging new investments in gas-fired plants and pipelines—precisely Enron’s line of business.”

Morgan added that Enron officials were elated with the Kyoto Protocol and said it would “do more to promote Enron’s business than almost any other regulatory initiative outside of restructuring the energy and natural gas industries...”

Writing in the Hoover Institution journal, Bruce Yandle noted that Enron endorsed Clinton’s \$6.3 billion plan to fight global warming by subsidizing the production and purchase of renew-

able energy and related technologies. Yandle added, "Kyoto-justified taxpayer subsidies will make life easier for firms like Enron." Clinton gave them the subsidies in exchange for campaign contributions. Bush gave them nothing.

In a column entitled, "Enron's Secret Energy Plan," Robert Novak noted that Lay's efforts on behalf of the treaty "reached into the Bush Cabinet to Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill. There is no evidence of direct communication on this issue between Lay and O'Neill. The middleman between them was former Sen. Timothy Wirth, an environmentalist who is now president of Ted Turner's billion-dollar United Nations Foundation. Lay tried hard to harness O'Neill's indiscreet enthusiasm for the global warming cause to a commercial bonanza for Enron."

Dealing With China

While it tried to gain an advantage for natural gas against oil and coal here in the U.S., Enron was involved in a United Nations conference to develop China's coal resources. China is exempt from the restrictions on carbon dioxide emissions in the Kyoto pact. This conference led to the U.S. taxpayer-funded United Nations Development Program (UNDP) providing \$10 million in the area of "climate change" to assist Enron in a scheme to develop Communist China's coal resources. China, the biggest coal producer in the world, got the money for coal-bed methane projects conducted in association with Enron and Amoco back in 1997. The UNDP receives about \$87 million a year from the U.S.

The U.N. Foundation and Enron jointly funded a project through a U.N. agency called the "United Nations Economic Commission for Europe." This so-called "Energy Efficiency Investment Project" was designed to facilitate economic development in the former Soviet Union, including Russia. While spouting deregulation rhetoric, Enron made deals with environmentalists. In return, the radical environmentalists claimed Enron, which staged many "Earth Day" activities, as a true friend. At a dinner in Kyoto during treaty negotiations, Lay was given an award by the Climate Institute. Enron also received an award from the EPA.

The company's game can be seen in its involvement with James Dehlsen, a member of the board of the radical World Watch Institute who founded Zond Corporation in 1980 and served as Chairman of the Board until its acquisition by Enron Corporation in January 1997. As Chairman Emeritus of Zond, he served on the Board of Enron Wind Corporation until March 2000. Dehlsen served as an advisor to the Department of Energy's Wind Program, testified at the first U.S. Senate hearings on global warming, and was a delegate to the climate change conference in Kyoto, Japan.

Sustainable Development

Lay and the environmentalists served together as members of Clinton's "Presidential Council on Sustainable Development." Other members included John Adams of the Natural Resources Defense Council, Carol Browner of EPA, Fred Krupp of the Environmental Defense Fund, and Michele Perrault of the Sierra Club. The creation of this group through executive order 12852 was another effort to implement the global environmental

agenda. Analyst James M. Sheehan said the concept of sustainable development entails "controlled economic development" and political control of consumption levels—i.e., living standards. In Florida, where "sustainable communities" have been created with federal assistance, activists have defined "sustainable development" as "This is a stick-up. Give me your property."

Clinton's executive order 12852, dated June 29, 1993, mandated that the council should "develop and recommend to the President a national sustainable development action strategy..." The council's report, *Sustainable America: A New Consensus for Prosperity, Opportunity, and A Healthy Environment for the Future*, was released in March 1996. Earlier, the council sponsored a "National Forum on Partnerships Supporting Education About the Environment," producing "Education for Sustainability," a report calling for integrating the "principles of sustainability into our nation's educational system."

Henry Lamb, Executive Vice President of the Environmental Conservation Organization, has said that this process of implementing sustainable development is designed to bypass U.S. constitutional processes by utilizing non-elected individuals, federal bureaucrats, left-wing non-governmental organizations and U.N. agencies. He notes that the concept of sustainable development has never been officially endorsed or embraced by Congress.

It is clear that Enron wasn't really opposed to government regulation; it just wanted to benefit from it. Its troubled \$2.9 billion power plant in India was financed in part through the U.S. government's Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). In fact, 19 of 20 projects proposed by Enron between 1993 and 2000 were partially financed by OPIC and the Ex-Im Bank. The Clinton administration provided some \$1.2 billion in loans for these projects, worth a combined \$4 billion, while Democratic causes received nearly \$2 million from Enron.

Honoring Gorbachev

In 1997, Enron gave an award to Mikhail Gorbachev, who has become a leading proponent of global government in the name of saving the planet from environmental destruction. He stages an annual "State of the World Forum," drawing luminaries from around the world. Gorbachev received the "Enron Prize for Distinguished Public Service" from the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy of Rice University. The Enron Prize was awarded "to men and women who, through their personal and political courage, have made historic contributions to public service in both the domestic and foreign policy fields."

One of Gorbachev's main vehicles today is environmentalism. An "Earth Charter" was unveiled at his State of the World Forum in 1995. It can be viewed as sort of a constitution for an emerging world government. Gorbachev has said, "Nature is my God." Gorbachev, who presided over perhaps the most environmentally irresponsible nation in history, now supports development of a universally binding international code of environmental ethics, saying, "There must be a kind

of ten commandments for the environment.”

He occasionally lets it slip that he has not really changed his basic communist philosophy. During a Washington, D.C. appearance, for example, he did not disavow his communist background. “Though he now considers himself a democrat and not a communist,” reported *USA Today*, “he refuses to dismiss Russia’s communist past.” The paper quoted Gorbachev as saying, “There were certain guarantees of protection for the masses of people” under communism. “The socialist tradition...goes back to Jesus Christ, not (Karl) Marx,” he added. This reference to Christ as a socialist reflects an embrace of so-called Liberation Theology, an effort to peddle Marxism using Christian concepts and phrases.

Where Were the Media?

At the recent World Economic Forum in New York, there was a panel discussion on why so many people, including the press, failed to foresee Enron’s collapse. Gail Fosler, Senior Vice-President and Chief Economist of The Conference Board, compared Enron to the dot-com phenomenon, in which nobody questioned a company’s credentials or financial statements. She said “intellectual intimidation” was at work against anyone who posed even reasonable questions about the company’s practices. Kathleen Hays, an anchor for CNN, said it was difficult for reporters without accounting backgrounds, and with limited resources, to uncover stories such as Enron. “We tend to follow stories that are already stories,” Hays said. She added that “we get hate mail when we report negative stories.”

A New York Times article by Richard Stevenson and Jeff Gerth said that a breakdown in checks and balances encompassed Enron’s auditors, lawyers and directors and “extended to groups monitoring Enron from the outside, like regulators, financial analysts, credit-rating agencies, the media and Congress.” The Times added, “While the press took note of Enron’s high political profile and ties to the Bush campaign in 2000, the company’s financial profile in the media was largely flattering until last year. In March, an article in Fortune by Bethany McLean delved into the unanswered questions about the sources of the company’s profits. Her article was published after Enron’s spokesman and Mr. [Andrew] Fastow, [the chief financial officer], flew to New York to meet with two top Fortune editors in an unsuccessful effort to cast the company in a more favorable light.” They said it was not until after the unexpected resignation of a top Enron official in August did the tone of the coverage become critical.

Washington Post media reporter Howard Kurtz also had praise for the reporting of Bethany McLean of Fortune. Her article asked the basic question: “How exactly does Enron make its money?” She said, “Details are hard to come by because Enron keeps many of the specifics confidential for what it terms ‘competitive reasons.’” McLean quoted financial analysts as saying even they didn’t understand the company. “If you figure it out, let me know,” said credit analyst Todd Shipman. He was reported to be laughing when making that statement. Another said, “Do you have a year?” when asked for an explanation of Enron’s finances. McLean added, “As for the details about how it makes money, Enron says that’s proprietary information, sort of like Coca-Cola’s secret

formula.” She quoted an Enron official as saying the company had 1,217 trading “books” for different commodities. He said, “We don’t want anyone to know what’s on those books. We don’t want to tell anyone where we’re making money.”

But Fortune didn’t try to find out. It ran a glowing profile of an “Enron activist” from a book by Gary Hamel, titled, *Leading the Revolution*. The activist, Louise Kitchen, headed one of Enron’s European operations. She was hailed as someone who pushed Enron “to become a leading online trader of hundreds of products...” A December 18, 2000 Fortune article also sang the praises of Enron. It said, “With revenues in the vicinity of \$60 billion, Enron is an awe-inspiring juggernaut. It has offices all over the globe, from London to Rio, Tokyo to Dubai. Its CEO, Kenneth Lay, is considered a visionary who values the intellectual capital of his 18,000-person-strong staff above anything else.”

“Integrity, Respect And Excellence?”

The fawning over Enron was contagious. Frank Vogl, president of Vogl Communications, gave a lecture in March, 2001, on how Enron was a leader in corporate ethics. He was a senior adviser to something called The Ethics Resource Center. When the history of Enron is written, this lecture will have to go down as an example of the tendency of people in the media and academia to accept anything Enron said about itself. “Integrity is a word that major corporations are recognizing as the best means of describing the fundamental strength and focus of the values-driven corporation,” Vogl said.

He added, “Enron proclaims that a core corporate value is integrity, which means: ‘We work with customers and prospects openly, honestly and sincerely. When we say we will do something, we will do it; when we say we cannot or will not do something, then we won’t do it.’” “The challenge for business,” Vogl said, “is to imbue its brand labels and its multiple relationships with a meaningful sense of integrity.” He quoted Ken Lay as saying in the company’s Annual Report: “Our intellectual capital is our most important asset, and we cherish it. All employees are shareholders. Our values of communication, integrity, respect and excellence are equally applicable to our dealings with each other as with our customers and suppliers.”

The Enron ethics handbook is on its way to becoming a collector’s item. Copies have been auctioned on e-Bay for prices ranging from \$5 to \$255.

What You Can Do

Send the enclosed cards or your own cards or letters to Len Downie Jr., Executive Editor of the Washington Post, Howell Raines, Executive Editor of the New York Times and Ambassador Yuri Ushakov of the Russian Federation.

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR'S CUFF

By Reed Irvine

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I FIRST GOT INTERESTED IN THE DEATH OF ENRON'S FORMER VICE CHAIRMAN, CLIFF Baxter, because of its similarities to the Vince Foster case. I wrote a column about some of them that attracted considerable interest. The most important similarity is the secrecy that shrouded the Foster investigation by the U.S. Park Police and the Baxter investigation being carried out by the police department of Sugar Land, Texas, where Baxter lived. I have had several conversations with Patricia Whitty, the public information officer for the police department, the latest of which was today. She said they had received a response to the request for a trace on the revolver found in Baxter's car, but she didn't say it showed that it was his gun. The only other piece of evidence that they have acknowledged finding is a note that has been called a suicide note, but they refuse to release it. If it is a suicide note and if they have proof that Baxter wrote it, why are they keeping it secret?

IT MAKES SENSE ONLY IF THE GUN AND THE NOTE DO NOT SUPPORT THE SUICIDE theory. If, as in the Foster case, the gun cannot be identified as Baxter's and the note is not in his handwriting and does not mention his family or suicide, it would be to the advantage of those who want to cover up a homicide to keep that information from the public as long as possible. In the Foster case two years and two additional pro-forma investigations were enough to get the major media to lose interest in the case and accept the suicide finding. The U.S. Park Police officers decided it was suicide when they found a gun in Foster's hand, a gun he did not own and that did not fire the shot that killed him. But after two years of calling the death a suicide, reporters were unwilling to even look at the abundant evidence that proved it was a homicide.

SUSAN SCHMIDT OF THE WASHINGTON POST IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THOSE REPORTERS who closed their eyes and ears to the evidence in the Foster case and are already doing so in the Baxter case. In her story on Sherron Watkins' testimony on February 14, she said, "Watkins told the subcommittee that Enron Vice President (sic) J. Clifford Baxter told her on Jan. 15, ten days before he committed suicide that he repeatedly met with Skilling to express his concerns about the partnerships."

This is the transcript of a phone conversation I had with her about this.

I: I noticed in your story on Sherron Watkins today you referred to Cliff Baxter as having killed himself.

S: Yeah.

I: You must know something I don't know. Can you tell me what the evidence is that he killed himself?

S: Well, I think that's what the medical examiner ruled.

I: The medical examiners? Are they qualified to make those judgments?

S: I believe so.

I: On the basis of simply doing an autopsy?

S: Well, you know, if you think he was murdered, go ahead and write it.

I: I just wondered if you had something more substantial than that. The police are the ones who are investigating. The first thing they did was say it was suicide. Then somebody reminded them that you are supposed to rule out homicide before you can say it's suicide. So they changed it to "Death Investigation" in their press release. But they haven't put out any evidence to rule out homicide. They found a gun in the car---
[Schmidt interrupts.]

S: You know what? If you want to go down that path and ride that horse, go ahead, but I've got better stuff to do right now. So you know, go ahead. Go for it, and turn this thing into a two-year deal like you did with Vince Foster, O.K.?"

I: Oh, with Vince Foster, I sent Bob Woodward an article proving that Foster was murdered. He promised to respond to it, and he hasn't been able to. Maybe he can get your help. Would you be willing to help him?

S: No, I wouldn't! And I'm not willing to entertain this call any further. Goodbye.

How is that for dedication to finding and reporting the truth?

RICHARD OPPEL OF THE NEW YORK TIMES AND PATRICE HILL OF THE WASHINGTON TIMES were more willing to discuss the evidence than Susan Schmidt was. A New York Times headline on January 26 read, "Former Enron Official Commits Suicide." The lead in the story said that "he apparently killed himself." Richard Oppel's story on February 14 was an improvement. It said, "J. Clifford Baxter, the former Enron vice chairman, who authorities say committed suicide last month...." Patrice Hill's story in the Washington Times used almost the same wording, but omitted "authorities say." Both showed interest in the failure of the police to release evidence supporting the suicide theory. None of these reporters connected the dots between Sherron Watkins' testimony that she feared for her safety and Baxter's death. She and Baxter were both whistleblowers. Asked why she was afraid, she simply said that Enron was the seventh largest corporation in America.

THE ONLY "AUTHORITY" THAT I KNOW OF WHO HAS SAID BAXTER COMMITTED SUICIDE IS the medical examiner, Joye Carter. She said on the day of his death that the cause was "a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head." The next day Chief of Police Taylor issued a press release saying, "Even with the ruling from the medical examiner's office, Sugar Land detectives will continue to thoroughly investigate the death of John Baxter. We are not in any way saying we disagree with the medical examiner's findings. We are simply saying we want to make sure that we cross all the T's and dot all the I's in order to be sure that nothing is overlooked in this investigation." What is being overlooked is Lord Acton's comment, "With secrecy all things degenerate, including law enforcement." In the Foster case the police threw a blanket of secrecy over the evidence, enabling them to pass off a homicide as a suicide. If the police are doing this in the Baxter case, it would not be the first time that it had been tried in Fort Bend County, where Sugar Land is located.

ON MAY 5, 1995, LT. ALAN MABRY, A HOUSTON POLICE OFFICER, WAS FOUND SHOT TO death in Fort Bend County 15 hours after he left home to buy some milk. He had been shot behind his right ear with his service revolver. The sheriff's department ruled it to be a suicide, but a coroner's jury decided it was a suicide. Someone with access to the body had smeared what the state toxicologist and the jurors believed was a grossly excessive amount of gunshot residue on Mabry's hand. Mabry had been charging that there was wrongdoing in the police officers' pension board and the credit union. A year before his death he was elected to the pension board, but he was relieved of duty pending investigation of remarks he had made about the Houston chief of police and the assistant chief. The Houston Police Patrolmen's Union offered a \$50,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of his killer. Two years ago, the Fort Bend sheriff's department asked the Texas attorney general to authorize it to keep the Mabry case records secret. The Sugar Land police have already made that request with respect to the Baxter investigation records. If they can keep the investigation open for a year or two and withhold the evidence, the idea that Baxter killed himself will have been firmly planted in the minds of most people and it will be hard to get journalists to look at the evidence no matter what it shows.

WE SAW THIS ON FEBRUARY 14, WHEN BERT SCHLOSSBERG, THE AUTHOR OF *RESCUE 007*, held a news conference in Washington. He and Ben Torrey, representing The International Committee to Rescue the KAL 007 Survivors, presented the evidence that the Korean airliner was able to make a soft landing on the sea near Sakhalin after having been hit by one Soviet missile. There is strong evidence that most of the 269 people aboard survived and were rescued by Soviet vessels that converged on the spot where the plane ditched. The Soviets concealed this evidence for so many years that when it became available it was virtually impossible to get reporters to study and report it. This was reflected in the attendance at the news conference. Only one newspaper, the Washington Times, sent a reporter, an intern who failed to write a story. AIM had collected nearly 600 petitions to Presidents Bush and 500 to Putin from AIM members, asking that they find out what happened to those 269 people. We wanted to arrange for Bert Schlossberg and Ben Torrey to present these to the White House and the Russian Embassy. We had a willing recipient at the White House, but a top aide who had to approve it was tied up making preparations for Bush's trip to Asia two days later. We will try again when they return. The Russian Embassy response was so rude that we thought the Cold War had been renewed, but they did send a first secretary to the news conference to take notes. The petitions will be sent to Moscow.

THE PAX TV PROGRAM ON TWA FLIGHT 800 THAT AIRED ON FEB. 8 WAS EXCELLENT. IT took up the first half of the hour-long "Encounters With the Unexplained." The eyewitnesses, after five and a half years, were finally heard by millions of people. The CIA simulation of the crash that was produced to discredit all the eyewitnesses was exposed as a fraud. The government's fuel-tank explosion theory was given short shrift. It ended with a "we-may-never-know" line, but I don't think many viewers came away believing the official line.