

Excerpts from “Convictions”
By John Kroger

The Enron Trials

(Page 369) The Bush team knew that if it failed to move aggressively on Enron, there would be a huge political price to pay. Indeed, the Bush administration had no political interest, as some folks on the left have alleged, in going easy on Ken Lay and company. On the contrary, it was motivated to get some scalps quickly.

(Page 371) After Enron went bankrupt, the Justice Department decided to respond aggressively. One way to do that was to transfer successful mafia prosecutors to this new battle against corporate crime.

(Page 359) Ben Campbell was chief of VCE, Violent Criminal Enterprises, the EDNY’s gang unit. *NOTE: Ben Campbell was an Enron Task Force prosecutor.*

(Page 371 – *About Leslie Caldwell, the first head of the Enron Task Force*) But her two most senior prosecutors were mafia veterans: Sam Buell from Boston and Andrew Weissman, my old chief at the EDNY.

(Page 365)we were running out of top mobsters to prosecute.

(Page 371) Leslie’s decision to staff the Enron case with mafia prosecutors was made deliberately. In the Justice Department, organized crime work has always been considered the best possible training ground, for this experience produces prosecutors who are tough, aggressive, and creative.

(Page 415) We were not just prosecutors but former gang and mafia prosecutors, convinced that DOJ had gone too easy on white-collar defendants in the past.

(Page 384) Leslie, Sam, Andrew and I were used to trying mob, gang, and narcotics cases, in which the only evidence comes from the mouths of cooperating conspirators, so it felt natural for us to follow that model.

(Page 386) ...the FBI assigned eight experienced agents to the case...

(Page 393) By August of 2002 the Enron Task Force had existed for eight months, and the pressure on us for results was growing. We were working very hard, in my case, more than one hundred hours per week. We were also making progress. To the public and the media, however, it looked as if we were stalled. Every day on television CNN’s Lou Dobbs closed his *Moneyline* show by displaying his sardonic “Enron Corporate Fraud Scoreboard.” The scoreboard showed the number of days since the company’s bankruptcy and the total number of Enron arrests, a number that seemed permanently fixed at zero. I cannot speak for anyone else, but Dobbs’s smug and biting criticism got on my nerves – unprofessional, but true.

(Page 401) Throughout this period the Broadband investigative team and I always kept our eyes on our major strategic goal, gathering as much evidence as possible against Ken Rice and Kevin Hannon, so they would flip against Jeff Skilling.

(Page 439) Convicting Ken Lay and Jeff Skilling was critical...letting Skilling and Lay escape – was just too costly.

(Page 440) ... - the ultimate convictions of Ken Lay and Jeff Skilling – appeared to justify our questionable tactics.

(Page 445) ...the end justified the means.