

NBC Election Night Coverage

Waxman to NBC: Don't Welch on Videotapes August 4, 2001

The Waxman-NBC fight continues.

The New York Post

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) is still pushing NBC News to hand over alleged videotapes from last November's presidential election.

Waxman says the tapes, which NBC insists do not exist, show GE Chairman/CEO Jack Welch trying to push NBC into calling the election for George W. Bush. According to trade magazine Multichannel News, Waxman sent a four-page letter last Thursday to NBC president/COO Andrew Lack - demanding that NBC turn over the tapes or risk facing a congressional subpoena.

Waxman says he heard a rumor that Welch, a high-profile Republican, ordered NBC News to call the race for Bush - and that a tape exists from that night that may have captured Welch's interference.

Lack has already sent Waxman a letter insisting that the "tape" rumor is false, and that Waxman doesn't have enough evidence anyway to snag internal NBC News videotapes.

Last February, Lack testified under oath before the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which was probing election-night miscues by the major networks. He said that if the videotapes exist, he would provide them to Waxman - but called the Welch story "a dopey rumor."

In his latest letter to NBC, Waxman wrote that "NBC has confirmed to my office that in fact an advertising and promotion videotape from election night unquestionably exists," although he didn't mention if the tape includes footage of Welch.

Waxman has given NBC until Sept. 4 to produce the videotapes, saying that any destruction or alteration of the videotapes would constitute a federal crime of obstructing a congressional investigation

"This is especially important when committee witnesses promise - under oath - to supply requested information. So I respectfully decline to close this matter," Waxman said, according to Multichannel News.

He added that he was "offended" by Lack's position and called NBC's decision to declare the matter dead an "arrogant assertion." - Post TV Staff

