

OMB APPROVAL  
EXPIRES: October 31, 1994  
ESTIMATED AVERAGE BURDEN  
HOURS PER RESPONSE 14.90

UNITED STATES

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Washington, DC 20549

SCHEDULE 13G

Under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

(Amendment No. )\*

Castech Aluminum Group, Inc.

-----  
(Name of Issuer)

Common Stock

-----  
(Title of Class of Securities)

14838010

-----  
(CUSIP NUMBER)

Check the following box if a fee is being paid with this statement.  (A fee is not required only if the filing person: (1) has a previous statement on file reporting beneficial ownership of more than five percent of the class of securities described in Item 1; and (2) has filed no amendment subsequent thereto reporting beneficial ownership of five percent or less of such class.) (See Rule 13d-7).

\*The remainder of this cover page shall be filled out for a reporting person's initial filing on this form with respect to the subject class of securities, and for any subsequent amendment containing information which would alter the disclosures provided in a prior cover page.

The information required in the remainder of this cover page shall not be deemed to be "filed" for the purpose of Section 18 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 ("Act") or otherwise subject to the liabilities of that section of the Act but shall be subject to all other provisions of the Act (however, see the Notes).

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CUSIP NO. 14838010

13G

1. NAME OF REPORTING PERSON

S.S. or I.R.S. IDENTIFICATION NO. OF ABOVE PERSON

Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc.

2. CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX IF A MEMBER OF A GROUP\* Joint Filing

(a)

(b)

3. SEC USE ONLY

4. CITIZENSHIP OR PLACE OF ORGANIZATION

Delaware

NUMBER OF SHARES BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON WITH

5. SOLE VOTING POWER

NONE

6. SHARED VOTING POWER

1,808,400

7. SOLE DISPOSITIVE POWER

NONE

8. SHARED DISPOSITIVE POWER

1,808,400

9. AGGREGATE AMOUNT BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON

1,808,400

10. CHECK BOX IF THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT IN ROW (9) EXCLUDES CERTAIN SHARES\*

11. PERCENT OF CLASS REPRESENTED BY AMOUNT IN ROW 9

14.0%

12. TYPE OF REPORTING PERSON\*

HC, CO

\*SEE INSTRUCTION BEFORE FILLING OUT!

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CUSIP NO. 14838010 13G

1. NAME OF REPORTING PERSON  
S.S. or I.R.S. IDENTIFICATION NO. OF ABOVE PERSON

Merrill Lynch Group, Inc.

2. CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX IF A MEMBER OF A GROUP\* Joint Filing

(a) [ ]

(b) [ ]

3. SEC USE ONLY

4. CITIZENSHIP OR PLACE OF ORGANIZATION

Delaware

NUMBER OF SHARES BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON WITH

5. SOLE VOTING POWER

NONE

6. SHARED VOTING POWER

1,807,100

7. SOLE DISPOSITIVE POWER

NONE

8. SHARED DISPOSITIVE POWER

1,807,100

9. AGGREGATE AMOUNT BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON

1,807,100

10. CHECK BOX IF THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT IN ROW (9) EXCLUDES CERTAIN SHARES\*

11. PERCENT OF CLASS REPRESENTED BY AMOUNT IN ROW 9

14.0%

12. TYPE OF REPORTING PERSON\*

HC, CO

\*SEE INSTRUCTION BEFORE FILLING OUT!

CUSIP NO. 14838010 13G

1. NAME OF REPORTING PERSON  
S.S. or I.R.S. IDENTIFICATION NO. OF ABOVE PERSON

Princeton Services, Inc.

2. CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX IF A MEMBER OF A GROUP\* Joint Filing

(a) [ ]  
(b) [ ]

3. SEC USE ONLY

4. CITIZENSHIP OR PLACE OF ORGANIZATION

Delaware

NUMBER OF SHARES BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON WITH

5. SOLE VOTING POWER

NONE

6. SHARED VOTING POWER

1,807,100

7. SOLE DISPOSITIVE POWER

NONE

8. SHARED DISPOSITIVE POWER

1,807,100

9. AGGREGATE AMOUNT BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON

1,807,100

10. CHECK BOX IF THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT IN ROW (9) EXCLUDES CERTAIN SHARES\*

11. PERCENT OF CLASS REPRESENTED BY AMOUNT IN ROW 9

14.0%

12. TYPE OF REPORTING PERSON\*

HC, CO

\*SEE INSTRUCTION BEFORE FILLING OUT!

CUSIP NO. 14838010 13G

1. NAME OF REPORTING PERSON  
S.S. or I.R.S. IDENTIFICATION NO. OF ABOVE PERSON

Merrill Lynch Asset Management, L.P.

2. CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX IF A MEMBER OF A GROUP\* Joint Filing

(a) [ ]  
(b) [ ]

3. SEC USE ONLY

4. CITIZENSHIP OR PLACE OF ORGANIZATION

Delaware

NUMBER OF SHARES BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON WITH

5. SOLE VOTING POWER

NONE

6. SHARED VOTING POWER

1,310,100

7. SOLE DISPOSITIVE POWER

NONE

8. SHARED DISPOSITIVE POWER

1,310,100

9. AGGREGATE AMOUNT BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON

1,310,100

10. CHECK BOX IF THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT IN ROW (9) EXCLUDES CERTAIN SHARES\*

11. PERCENT OF CLASS REPRESENTED BY AMOUNT IN ROW 9

10.1%

12. TYPE OF REPORTING PERSON\*

IA, PN

\*SEE INSTRUCTION BEFORE FILLING OUT!

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CUSIP NO. 14838010 13G

1. NAME OF REPORTING PERSON

S.S. or I.R.S. IDENTIFICATION NO. OF ABOVE PERSON

Merrill Lynch Global Allocation Fund, Inc.

2. CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX IF A MEMBER OF A GROUP\* Joint Filing

(a) [ ]

(b) [ ]

3. SEC USE ONLY

4. CITIZENSHIP OR PLACE OF ORGANIZATION

Maryland

NUMBER OF SHARES BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON WITH

5. SOLE VOTING POWER

NONE

6. SHARED VOTING POWER

1,232,000

7. SOLE DISPOSITIVE POWER

NONE

8. SHARED DISPOSITIVE POWER

1,232,000

9. AGGREGATE AMOUNT BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY EACH REPORTING PERSON

1,232,000

10. CHECK BOX IF THE AGGREGATE AMOUNT IN ROW (9) EXCLUDES CERTAIN SHARES\*

11. PERCENT OF CLASS REPRESENTED BY AMOUNT IN ROW 9

9.5%

12. TYPE OF REPORTING PERSON\*

IV, CO

\*SEE INSTRUCTION BEFORE FILLING OUT!

SCHEDULE 13G

ITEM 1 (a) Name of Issuer:

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Castech Aluminum Group, Inc.

ITEM 1 (b) Address of Issuer's Principal Executive Offices:

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2630 El Presidio Street  
Long Beach, CA 90810

ITEM 2 (a) Name of Persons Filing:

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Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc.  
Merrill Lynch Group, Inc..  
Princeton Services, Inc.  
Merrill Lynch Asset Management, L.P.  
Merrill Lynch Global Allocation Fund, Inc.

ITEM 2 (b) Address of Principal Business Office or, if none, Residence:

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Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc.  
World Financial Center, North Tower  
250 Vesey Street  
New York, New York 10281

Merrill Lynch Group, Inc.  
World Financial Center, North Tower  
250 Vesey Street  
New York, New York 10281

Princeton Services, Inc.  
800 Scudders Mill Road  
Plainsboro, New Jersey 08536

Merrill Lynch Asset Management, L.P.  
800 Scudders Mill Road  
Plainsboro, New Jersey 08536

Merrill Lynch Global Allocation Fund, Inc.  
800 Scudders Mill Road  
Plainsboro, New Jersey 08536

ITEM 2 (c) Citizenship:

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See Item 4 of Cover Pages

ITEM 2 (d) Title of Class of Securities:

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Common Stock

ITEM 2 (e) CUSIP NUMBER:

14838010

ITEM 3

Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc. ("ML&Co."), Merrill Lynch Group, Inc. ("ML Group") and Princeton Services, Inc. ("PSI") are parent holding companies, in accordance with (S) 240.13d-1(b) (ii) (G). Merrill Lynch Asset Management, L.P. (d/b/a Merrill Lynch Asset Management ("MLAM")) is an investment adviser registered under (S) 203 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. Merrill Lynch Global Allocation Fund, Inc. (the "Fund") is an investment company registered under Section 8 of the Investment Company Act of 1940.

ITEM 4 Ownership

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(a) Amount Beneficially Owned:

See Item 9 of Cover Pages. Pursuant to (S) 240.13d-4, ML&Co., ML Group, PSI, MLAM and the Fund (the "Reporting Persons") disclaim beneficial ownership of the securities of Castech Aluminum Group, Inc. (the "Company") referred to herein, and the filing of this Schedule 13G shall not be construed as an admission that the Reporting Persons are, for the purposes of Section 13(d) or 13(g) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the beneficial owner of any securities of the Company covered by this statement.

(b) Percent of Class:

See Item 11 of Cover Pages

(c) Number of shares as to which such person has:

(i) sole power to vote or to direct the vote:

See Item 5 of Cover Pages

(ii) shared power to vote or to direct the vote:

See Item 6 of the Cover Pages

(iii) sole power to dispose of or to direct the disposition of:

See Item 7 of Cover Pages

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(iv) shared power to dispose of or direct the disposition of:

See Item 8 of Cover Pages

ITEM 5 Ownership of Five Percent or Less of a Class.  
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Not Applicable

ITEM 6 Ownership of More than Five Percent on Behalf of Another Person.  
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MLAM is an investment adviser registered under Section 203 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 and acts as an investment adviser to investment companies registered under Section 8 of the Investment Company Act of 1940. With respect to securities held by those investment companies, several persons have the right to receive, or the power to direct the receipt of dividends from or the proceeds from the sale of, such securities. Merrill Lynch Global Allocation Fund, Inc., a reporting person on this Schedule 13G for which MLAM serves as investment adviser, has an interest that relates to more than 5% of the class of securities reported herein. No other person has an interest that relates to more than 5% of the class of securities reported herein.

ITEM 7 Identification and Classification of the Subsidiary Which  
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Acquired the Security Being Reported on by the Parent Holding Company.  
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See Exhibit A

ITEM 8 Identification and Classification of Members of the Group.  
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Not Applicable

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ITEM 9 Notice of Dissolution of Group.  
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Not Applicable

ITEM 10 Certification

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By signing below each of the undersigned certifies that, to the best of their knowledge and belief, the securities referred to above were acquired in the ordinary course of business and were not acquired for the purpose of and do not have the effect of changing or influencing the control of the issuer of such securities and were not acquired in connection with or as a participant in any transaction having such purpose or effect.

Signature.  
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After reasonable inquiry and to the best of my knowledge and belief, each of the undersigned certifies that the information set forth in this statement is true, complete and correct.

Date: August 7, 1996

Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc.

/s/ Richard B. Alsop

-----  
Name: Richard B. Alsop  
Title: Attorney-In-Fact\*

Merrill Lynch Group, Inc.

/s/ Richard B. Alsop

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Name: Richard B. Alsop  
Title: Attorney-In-Fact\*\*

Princeton Services, Inc.

/s/ Richard B. Alsop

-----  
Name: Richard B. Alsop  
Title: Attorney-In-Fact\*\*\*

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\* Signed pursuant to a power of attorney, dated November 17, 1995, included as Exhibit B to this Schedule 13G.

\*\* Signed pursuant to a power of attorney, dated November 17, 1995, included as Exhibit C to this Schedule 13G.

\*\*\* Signed pursuant to a power of attorney, dated November 30, 1995, included as Exhibit D to this Schedule 13G.

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Merrill Lynch Asset Management, L.P.  
By: Princeton Services, Inc. (General Partner)

/s/ Richard B. Alsop

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Name: Richard B. Alsop  
Title Attorney-In-Fact\*\*\*\*

Merrill Lynch Global Allocation Fund, Inc.

/s/ Richard B. Alsop

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Name: Richard B. Alsop  
Title Attorney-In-Fact\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* Signed pursuant to a power of attorney, dated November 30, 1995, included as Exhibit E to this Schedule 13G.

\*\*\*\*\* Signed pursuant to a power of attorney, dated July 2, 1996, included as Exhibit F to this Schedule 13G.

EXHIBIT A TO SCHEDULE 13G  
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ITEM 7 DISCLOSURE RESPECTING SUBSIDIARIES  
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Three of the persons filing this report, Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc., a Delaware corporation with its principal place of business at World Financial Center, North Tower, 250 Vesey Street, New York, New York ("ML&Co."), Merrill Lynch Group, Inc., a Delaware corporation with its principal place of business at World Financial Center, North Tower, 250 Vesey Street, New York, New York ("ML Group"), and Princeton Services, Inc. a Delaware corporation with its principal place of business at 800 Scudders Mill Road, Plainsboro, New Jersey, ("PSI") are parent holding companies pursuant to (S)240 13d-1(b) (1) (ii) (G). The relevant subsidiaries of ML&Co. are Merrill Lynch Pierce, Fenner and Smith ("MLPF&S"), ML Group and PSI, which is the general partner of Merrill Lynch Asset Management, L.P. (d/b/a) Merrill Lynch Asset Management ("MLAM") and Fund Asset Management, L.P. (d/b/a) Fund Asset Management ("FAM"). The relevant subsidiary of ML Group is PSI.

ML&Co. may be deemed to be the beneficial owner of the common stock of Castech Aluminum Group, Inc. (the "Company") held by or deemed to be beneficially owned by ML Group and MLPF&S.

MLPF&S, a Delaware corporation with its principal place of business at 250 Vesey Street, New York, New York, is a wholly-owned direct subsidiary of ML&Co. and a broker-dealer registered pursuant to Section 15 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. MLPF&S may be deemed to be the beneficial owner of certain of the reported securities of the Company held in customer accounts over which MLPF&S has discretionary power.

ML Group, a wholly-owned direct subsidiary of ML&Co., may be deemed to be the beneficial owner of 14.0% of the common stock of the Company by virtue of its control of its wholly-owned subsidiary, PSI.

PSI, a wholly-owned direct subsidiary of ML Group, may be deemed to be the beneficial owner of 14.0% of the common stock of the Company by virtue of its being the general partner of MLAM and FAM.

MLAM, a Delaware limited partnership with its principal place of business at 800 Scudders Mill Road, Plainsboro, New Jersey, is an investment adviser registered under Section 203 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. MLAM may be deemed to be the beneficial owner of 10.1% of the common stock of the Company by virtue of its acting as investment adviser to certain private accounts and several investment companies registered under Section 8 of the Investment Company Act of 1940.

One registered investment company advised by MLAM, Merrill Lynch Global Allocation Fund, Inc. (the "Fund"), may be deemed to be the beneficial owner of 9.5% of the common stock of the Company.

FAM, a Delaware limited partnership with its principal place of business at 800 Scudders Mill Road, Plainsboro, New Jersey, is an investment adviser registered under Section 203 of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. FAM may be deemed to be the beneficial owner of less than 5% of the common stock of the Company by virtue of its acting as investment adviser to several investment companies registered under Section 8 of the Investment Company Act of 1940.

Pursuant to (S)240.13d-4, ML&Co., MLPF&S, ML Group, PSI, MLAM, FAM and the Fund disclaim beneficial ownership of the securities of the Company reported herein, and the filing of this Schedule 13G shall not be construed as an admission that any such entity is, for the purposes of Section 13(d) or 13(g) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the beneficial owner of any securities of the Company.

EXHIBIT B  
-----  
POWER OF ATTORNEY

The undersigned, Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc. (the "Corporation"), a corporation duly organized under the laws of the State of Delaware, with its principal place of business at World Financial Center, North Tower, New York,



New York, 10281, does hereby make, constitute and appoint Richard B. Alsop, Richard D. Kreuder, Andrea Lowenthal, Gregory T. Russo, or any other individual from time to time elected or appointed as Secretary or an Assistant Secretary of the Corporation, acting severally, each of whose address is Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc., World Financial Center, North Tower, New York, New York 10281, as its true and lawful attorneys-in-fact, for it and in its name, place and stead (i) to execute on behalf of the Corporation and cause to be filed and/or delivered, as required under Section 13(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Act") and the regulations thereunder, any number, as appropriate, of original, copies, or electronic filings of the Securities and Exchange Commission Schedule 13D or Schedule 13G Beneficial Ownership Reports (together with any amendments and joint filing agreements under Rule 13d-1(f)(1) of the Act, as may be required thereto) to be filed and/or delivered with respect to any equity security (as defined in Rule 13d-1(d) under the Act) beneficially owned by the undersigned and which must be reported by the undersigned pursuant to Section 13(d) of the Act and the regulations thereunder, (ii) to execute on behalf of the Corporation and cause to be filed and/or delivered, any number, as appropriate, of original copies or electronic filings of any forms (including, without limitation, Securities and Exchange Commission Form 3, 4 and 5) required to be filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Act and the regulations thereunder, and (iii) generally to take such other actions and perform such other things necessary to effectuate the foregoing as fully in all respects as if the undersigned could do if personally present. This Power of Attorney shall remain in effect until revoked, in writing, by the undersigned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned has executed this Power of Attorney this 17th day of November, 1995.

MERRILL LYNCH & CO., INC.

By: /s/ David H. Komansky

Name: David H. Komansky

Title: President and Chief Operating Officer

EXHIBIT C

POWER OF ATTORNEY

The undersigned, Merrill Lynch Group, Inc. (the "Corporation"), a corporation duly organized under the laws of the State of Delaware, with its principal place of business at World Financial Center, North Tower, New York, New York, 10281, does hereby make, constitute and appoint Richard B. Alsop, Richard D. Kreuder, Andrea Lowenthal, Gregory T. Russo, or any other individual from time to time elected or appointed as Secretary or an Assistant Secretary of the Corporation, acting severally, each of whose address is Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc., World Financial Center, North Tower, New York, New York 10281, as its true and lawful attorneys-in-fact, for it and in its name, place and stead (i) to execute on behalf of the Corporation and cause to be filed and/or delivered, as required under Section 13(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Act") and the regulations thereunder, any number, as appropriate, of original, copies, or electronic filings of the Securities and Exchange Commission Schedule 13D or Schedule 13G Beneficial Ownership Reports (together with any amendments and joint filing agreements under Rule 13d-1(f)(1) of the Act, as may be required thereto) to be filed and/or delivered with respect to any equity security (as defined in Rule 13d-1(d) under the Act) beneficially owned by the undersigned and which must be reported by the undersigned pursuant to Section 13(d) of the Act and the regulations thereunder, (ii) to execute on behalf of the Corporation and cause to be filed and/or delivered, any number, as appropriate, of original copies or electronic filings of any forms (including, without limitation, Securities and Exchange Commission Form 3, 4 and 5) required to be filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Act and the regulations thereunder, and (iii) generally to take such other actions and perform such other things necessary to effectuate the foregoing as fully in all respects as if the undersigned could do if personally present. This Power of Attorney shall remain in effect until revoked, in writing, by the undersigned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned has executed this Power of Attorney this 17th day of November, 1995.

MERRILL LYNCH GROUP, INC.

By: /s/ Rosemary T. Berkery

Name: Rosemary T. Berkery

Title: Vice President and Director

EXHIBIT D  
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POWER OF ATTORNEY

The undersigned, Princeton Services Inc., a corporation duly organized under the laws of the State of Delaware, with its principal place of business at 800 Scudders Mill Road, Plainsboro, New Jersey 08536 does hereby make, constitute and appoint Richard B. Alsop, Andrea Lowenthal, Richard D. Kreuder, Gregory T. Russo, or Dauna R. Williams, acting severally, each of whose address is Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc., World Financial Center, North Tower, New York, New York 10281, as its true and lawful attorneys-in-fact, for it and in its name, place and stead to execute and cause to be filed and/or delivered, as required under Section 13(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Act") and the regulations thereunder, any number, as appropriate, of original, copies, or electronic filings of the Securities and Exchange Commission Schedule 13D or Schedule 13G Beneficial Ownership Reports (together with any amendments and joint filing agreements under Rule 13d-1(f) (1) of the Act, as may be required thereto) to be filed and/or delivered with respect to any equity security (as defined in Rule 13d-1(d) under the Act) beneficially owned by the undersigned and which must be reported by the undersigned pursuant to Section 13(d) of the Act and the regulations thereunder, and generally to take such other actions and perform such other things necessary to effectuate the foregoing as fully in all respects as if the undersigned could do if personally present. This Power of Attorney shall remain in effect until revoked, in writing, by the undersigned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned has executed this Power of Attorney this 30th day of November, 1995.

PRINCETON SERVICES INC.

By: /s/ Philip L. Kirstein  
-----  
Name: Philip L. Kirstein  
Title: Director, Senior Vice President  
Secretary and General Counsel

EXHIBIT E  
-----  
POWER OF ATTORNEY

The undersigned, Merrill Lynch Asset Management, L.P. d/b/a Merrill Lynch Asset Management, a Limited Partnership duly organized under the laws of the State of Delaware, with its principal place of business at 800 Scudders Mill Road, Plainsboro, New Jersey 08536 does hereby make, constitute and appoint Richard B. Alsop, Andrea Lowenthal, Richard D. Kreuder, Gregory T. Russo, or Dauna R. Williams, acting severally, each of whose address is Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc., World Financial Center, North Tower, New York, New York 10281, as its true and lawful attorneys-in-fact, for it and in its name, place and stead to execute and cause to be filed and/or delivered, as required under Section 13(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Act") and the regulations thereunder, any number, as appropriate, of original, copies, or electronic filings of the Securities and Exchange Commission Schedule 13D or Schedule 13G Beneficial Ownership Reports (together with any amendments and joint filing agreements under Rule 13d-1(f) (1) of the Act, as may be required thereto) to be filed and/or delivered with respect to any equity security (as defined in Rule 13d-1(d) under the Act) beneficially owned by the undersigned and which must be reported by the undersigned pursuant to Section 13(d) of the Act and the regulations thereunder, and generally to take such other actions and perform such other things necessary to effectuate the foregoing as fully in all respects as if the undersigned could do if personally present. This Power of Attorney shall remain in effect until revoked, in writing, by the undersigned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned has executed this Power of Attorney this 30th day of November, 1995.

Merrill Lynch Asset Management, L.P.  
d/b/a Merrill Lynch Asset Management  
By: Princeton Services, Inc., General Partner

By: /s/ Philip L. Kirstein

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Name: Philip L. Kirstein  
Title: Director, Senior Vice President  
Secretary and General Counsel

EXHIBIT F  
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POWER OF ATTORNEY

The undersigned, Merrill Lynch Global Allocation Fund, Inc., a corporation duly organized under the laws of the state of Maryland, with its principal place of business at 800 Scudders Mill Road, Plainsboro, New Jersey 08536 does hereby make, constitute and appoint Richard B. Alsop, Andrea Lowenthal, Richard D. Kreuder, Gregory T. Russo, or Dauna R. Williams, acting severally, each of whose address is Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc., World Financial Center, North Tower, New York, New York 10281, as its true and lawful attorneys-in-fact, for it and in its name, place and stead to execute and cause to be filed and/or delivered, as required under Section 13(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (the "Act") and the regulations thereunder, any number, as appropriate, of original, copies, or electronic filings of the Securities and Exchange Commission Schedule 13D or Schedule 13G Beneficial Ownership Reports (together with any amendments and joint filing agreements under Rule 13d-1(f) (1) of the Act, as may be required thereto) to be filed and/or delivered with respect to any equity security (as defined in Rule 13d-1(d) under the Act) beneficially owned by the undersigned and which must be reported by the undersigned pursuant to Section 13(d) of the Act and the regulations thereunder, and generally to take such other actions and perform such other things necessary to effectuate the foregoing as fully in all respects as if the undersigned could do if personally present. This Power of Attorney shall remain in effect until revoked, in writing, by the undersigned.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned has executed this Power of Attorney this 2nd day of July 1996.

MERRILL LYNCH GLOBAL ALLOCATION FUND, INC.

By: /s/ James W. Harshaw, III  
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Name: James W. Harshaw, III  
Title: Secretary