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WERE AGENCIES ASLEEP ON HARNISCHFEGER?

Bond investors are grumbling that Standard & Poor's, and to a lesser extent Moody's Investors Service, were caught flat-footed by the collapse of Harnishfeger Industries, a heavy machinery manufacturer, which filed for bankruptcy last week. As recently as March, both agencies rated the company's senior notes investment grade. S&P had Harnischfeger rated BB+ at the first of the month when the company announced in a conference call that it did not have the means to pay its obligations; S&P subsequently downgraded the company to B-. The next change was on June 7, when the company announced it was filing for bankruptcy, and S&P downgraded the rating to D.

Scott Roberts, director of fixed income institutional products at Scudder Kemper Investments, says he bailed out of his position in the bonds around four months ago after

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MERRILL EMERGING MARKET RESEARCH BIGWIGS, CHANG AND PALERMO, BOLT TO CHASE.

Joyce Chang, head of emerging market fixed income research and strategy, and Vincent Palermo, senior quantitative strategist quit Merrill Lynch last Wednesday to fill similar positions at Chase Securities. A Merrill spokesman confirmed their departures. Chang and Palermo were between positions and could not be reached.

In her new position at Chase, Chang will replace Lawrence Brainard, who is retiring from his post as head of international fixed income research, according to a Chase official. Chang served as a managing director in emerging markets fixed-income research at Merrill Lynch, and has worked at the firm since 1996. She was ranked second in *Institutional Investor's* 1998 Latin American research team in the debt/sovereign category.

• Christina Sultan has formed Sultan & Co., a Los Angelesbased firm that will provide investigative and due diligence services to the financial community, including research on prospective bond issuers and outstanding bond collateral. Sultan, was formerly a director at Kroll Associates, as well as a specialist in fraud and forensic accounting and investigations at one of the top five accounting firms.

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