

BEHIND THE ONGOING HOUSE INVESTIGATION



BY PHIL LONG—ASSOCIATED PRESS

Newt Gingrich is said to be privately infuriated about the "enraging" ways of scandal-mongering in Washington.

Highlights of the ongoing investigation by the House ethics committee into Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.):

1. CENTRAL ISSUE, PENDING SINCE SEPTEMBER 1994: Whether the financing of Gingrich's college course with tax-deductible contributions violated federal tax law prohibiting tax-exempt charities from furthering a partisan political agenda.

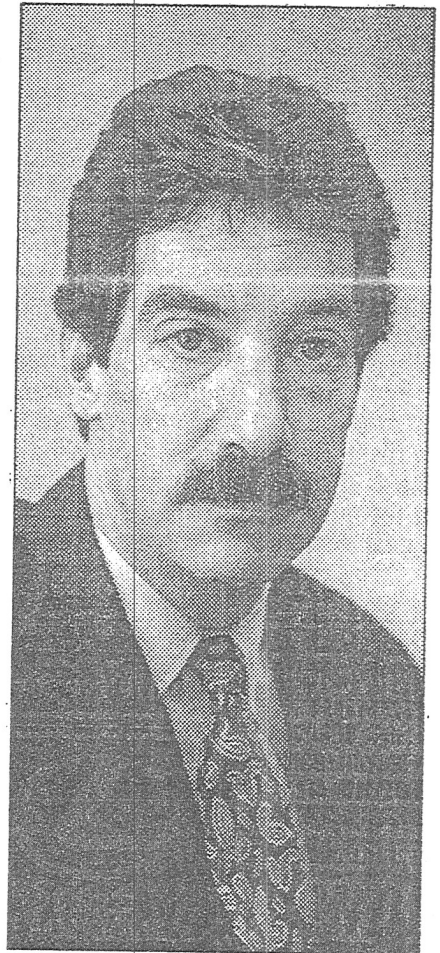
2. THE NEW STAGE OF THE ETHICS INQUIRY, expanded in late September, seeks to learn whether Gingrich "provided accurate, reliable and complete information" in several areas regarding the course.

Those issues include the relationship between the course and GOPAC, a political action committee Gingrich once headed; and the role of the Progress and Freedom Foundation, a conservative think tank supportive of Gingrich.

The committee said it wants to learn whether Gingrich's relationship with the foundation violated its tax-exempt status and whether his use of foundation "personnel and facilities" constituted a "use of unofficial resources for official purposes."

The panel also is studying the Abraham Lincoln Opportunity Foundation to see whether it violated its former tax-exempt status with Gingrich's "knowledge and approval."

3. GINGRICH NOTED IN AN INTERVIEW THAT SPECIAL COUNSEL JAMES M. COLE, who is leading the investigation, also expressed to him an interest in "Earning by Learning," a program supported by Gingrich that is designed to encourage youngsters to read.



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Special counsel James M. Cole: Examining several aspects of Gingrich's political and educational worlds.