

'I Was Overconfident and, in Some Ways, Naive'

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Following is the text of yesterday's statement by House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) on allegations that he violated House rules:

The investigative subcommittee of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has issued a statement of alleged violation. With great sadness, I have filed an answer which admits to that violation. I would like to comment on the statement as follows:

When I was elected to the House by my district in Georgia, I was dedicated to big ideas. I was and am in love with this country and convinced of its unlimited promise. At heart I'm a college professor, so I believed—and still do believe—that the theory of America is what makes us special in history. Our government exists to serve and protect a free people, born in equality with rights granted by God. It is the truths that define America that will save us: Our problems can be eased by government, but only the American people can solve them.

This resounding belief was why I ran for office. Every time I make my way to the House chamber down the great marble halls of the Capitol, it fills me with excitement. And it has from the very first day. From the first day I was full of plans for organization and initiatives that I hoped would help light a fire under people. I wanted to

inspire the American people to take control of their destiny.

I was overconfident and, in some ways, naive. With deep sadness, I agree. I did not seek legal counsel when I should have in order to ensure clear compliance with all applicable laws, and that was wrong. Because I did not, I brought down on the people's house a controversy which could weaken the faith people have in their government. In responding to complaints in this matter, I did not manage the effort intensely enough to thoroughly direct or review information being submitted to the committee on my behalf. In my name and over my signature, inaccurate, incomplete and unreliable statements were given to the committee, but I did not intend to mislead the committee.

I accept responsibility for this, and I deeply regret it.

I did not seek personal gain, but my actions did not reflect creditably on the House of Representatives.

Clearly, I wish this had not happened. I appreciate the subcommittee's commitment of time, energy and integrity to correct it.

The ethics process is important, and the integrity of the people's house is central to honest self-government. I remain committed to supporting the ethics process and to ensuring that the public can look to our Capitol with pride.

In the future, I will aggressively seek to ensure that every activity is well within the rules and to the credit of the House.

Since this remains a pending matter, there will be no further comment.