

# Democrat Offers Gingrich Apology for Harsh Words

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President Clinton has urged a halt to hateful speech, but yesterday it was a House Democrat who had to apologize for comparing House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) to a political "terrorist."

A spokeswoman for Rep. Martin Frost (D-Tex.) issued the apology shortly after Gingrich fired off a letter to the White House asking Clinton to instruct Frost to tone down his rhetoric. Frost, chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC), made the offending statement in a fund-raising letter for the committee.

Gingrich "calls himself a 'revolutionary,' but he promotes the policies of a terrorist by backing legislation that will eliminate anti-drug programs for America's youth," Frost's letter said.

Tricia Primrose, spokeswoman for the Democratic campaign committee, released a two-sentence statement: "While the DCCC strongly disagrees with Newt Gingrich's policies that harm children and young people, the choice of language

in the letter was unfortunate and inappropriate. The letter was first mailed at the end of March, three weeks before the terrible tragedy in Oklahoma City."

In his letter to Clinton, Gingrich said: "It is one thing to disagree with one of the Republicans' policies and offer a constructive alternative piece of legislation. It is quite another to accuse me of promoting the policies of a terrorist. It is not only completely false, but highly irresponsible and inappropriate."

Gingrich described Frost's comments as "a perfect example of the kind of hateful rhetoric and talk the president is talking about."

White House press secretary Michael McCurry said that the comment "sure sounds like the kind of rhetoric that the president would like to see toned down."

Frost's two-page letter accused the speaker of "relying on vicious and personal attacks" to intimidate opponents and "forge a mandate for meanness."

The letter also called Gingrich "one of the most dangerous figures to emerge in American politics during our lifetime."