

Gingrich Will Pay for Book Tour

Speaker Also Asked to Follow Dole's Lead and Reveal Group's Finances

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House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) responded to a cautionary letter from the Ethics Committee yesterday by announcing he will pay his own way on a 25-city tour this summer to promote a book on American democracy.

Gingrich said he will "personally pay for my travel, food and lodging expenses" after the committee told him he should either do that or comply with House rules that would have required him to return to Washington or his suburban Atlanta district after every four days on the road.

HarperCollins, the speaker's publishing house owned by media magnate Rupert Murdoch, originally planned to pick up the costs associated with the tour, most of which will be incurred during the August recess. HarperCollins had also offered Gingrich a \$4.5 million advance for two books, but after a public outcry, Gingrich decided to accept only \$1 up front. The book deal is the focus of one of five ethics complaints against the speaker.

On another front, Rep. David E. Bonior (D-Mich.) tried to step up the pressure on Gingrich to reveal contributors to GOPAC, a national political action committee that Gingrich controlled for nine years until this summer. Bonior, House minority whip, sought to use Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole's disclosure of donors to a conservative think tank yesterday to force Gingrich to

reveal GOPAC contributors. Advisers to Dole (R-Kan.) issued a detailed list of the 131 corporations and individuals that had given nearly \$5 million to his Better America Foundation since its creation in 1993. The disclosure, which Dole hailed in a prepared statement as "the right thing," followed the publication in *The Washington Post* yesterday of most of the donors and their contributions. Better America plans to return its remaining balance of \$2.5 million.

A tax-exempt foundation created by Dole to promote the ideals of the Republican Party and help lay the groundwork for his presidential campaign this year, Better America had become the largely partisan target of complaints that it was helping Dole circumvent restrictions on campaign giving.

Bonior said Gingrich should follow Dole's example and reveal who gave an estimated \$10 million to \$20 million to GOPAC in the years Gingrich controlled the party-building organization.

"If Senator Dole's activities present a mountain of ethical questions, then Newt Gingrich's activities are Kilimanjaro," Bonior told reporters. "Come clean with the American people. Disclose the donors. Disclose the expenses."

Gingrich press secretary Tony Blankley said the speaker felt no pressure to disclose GOPAC's finances. "They've complied with all the rules, as Mr. Bonior knows," he said.

Better America was not legally

bound to reveal donors or the size of their contributions and prospective givers were told in the foundation's promotional literature that "names of the donors will not be disclosed."

The foundation's evident success at securing large donations from leaders in such industries as telecommunications, energy and pharmaceuticals startled even veteran observers of the art of political fundraising.

"My first reaction was 'Jesus Christ! Look at this list!'" said Ellen Miller, executive director of the Center for Responsive Politics, which has long criticized foundations such as Better America. "It read like the *Fortune* 500 . . . getting their hooks into a leading presidential candidate."

Patricia Lewis, president of the Alexandria-based National Society of Fundraising Executives, said donors who were counting on anonymity might be alarmed by Better America's disclosure. But she added she thought there would be little long-term harm to Dole's fund-raising.

"If I was especially intent on remaining anonymous, I would feel anger," said Lewis, whose group represents 16,000 charitable fundraisers. "Whether that's going to chill giving on a national level, I'm not sure. I think people would separate this kind of giving from philanthropic giving."

Better America also disclosed some of its expenditures, which included a \$125,000 grant to National Right To Life and large gifts to four other groups.