

STATE NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED

"He didn't start this until after the governor appeared at a fund-raiser for his opponent," said Cox, who called Roach's challenger a strong contender for the seat.

The governor's legal counsel, Cox added, will respond to Roach's request.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
10/15/96

GOVERNOR BACKS LEGISLATIVE GUIDELINES FOR STATE AIRPLANE USAGE

■(GIT) Governor Frank Keating is willing to back guidelines enacted by the legislature aimed at outlining how the executive office can use state-owned aircraft, a spokesman for the governor said Wednesday.

"Governor Keating does not have a problem with that," Press Secretary John Cox said when asked by *Capitol Network News* whether the governor would be willing to back legislation outlining the use of state government aircraft. "The governor would welcome any legislator, Republican or Democrat, to file legislation that outlines or provides guidelines for the use of the plane. He certainly does not have a problem with that."

Asked whether Keating would sign such a bill if passed by the legislature, Cox stopped short, saying it would depend on the limitations imposed by the legislation.

"But that's his position on any piece of legislation. He's not going to sign it without reading it," Cox explained. "Even if it were a right-to-work bill, he wouldn't tell you today that he would sign it without having seen it."

Cox's comments follow nearly a week of criticism of the governor's use of a state airplane to attend some partisan political fund-raisers. Renewing an argument made by Dan Mahoney, Keating's communications director, Cox called the criticism political in nature, noting that the governor's chief critic, Rep. Russ Roach, D-Tulsa, became concerned about the issue only after the Keating attended a fund-raiser for Roach's opponent.

"Men are conservatives when they are least vigorous, or when they are most luxurious. They are conservatives after dinner."

Ralph Waldo Emerson
"New England Reformers"
1844

The same, Cox said, holds true for Rep. Ron Kirby, D-Lawton, who joined in the criticism on Wednesday.

"Using that \$3 million airplane to campaign for GOP candidates, while accompanied by Oklahoma Highway Patrol troopers, is an abuse of power and a waste of tax dollars," said Kirby.

Cox and Mahoney's view of the criticism was joined earlier in the week a lawmaker from the other side of the aisle, Sen. Dick Wilkerson, D-Atwood.

"When the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tem attack the governor for his airplane costs, it's a flim flam," Wilkerson told the Kiwanis Club of Greater Ada on Monday. "They know it, the governor knows it and you know it. That's not a make-or-break issue. Those kinds of things don't have any substance to them, but that constant give and take and the gnawing back and forth is part of how our system works."

"I've never had a reason to think Governor Keating was anything but an honest man, albeit a misguided honest man," added Wilkerson, who went on to criticize the governor for "always talking about what's wrong with Oklahoma."

Cox also stressed that state law mandates that the governor be provided transportation and security by the Department of Public Safety. That department, Cox said in response to questions, is responsible for determining how the governor gets to and from any public event and would be the one affected by any new measures adopted by the legislature.

—SHAWN ASHLEY
10/16/96

GINGRICH TOUTS "JUDGMENT," NOT CHARACTER ISSUES

■(GIT) Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole should focus his and the public's attention on what Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich said were issues of judgment, not character, in the final three weeks before the general election.

Speaking to reporters some 12 hours before Dole and President Bill Clinton were scheduled to meet in San Diego for their second presidential debate, Gingrich accused Clinton of "trying to buy the election" and of errors of judgment in public policy issues.

Asked what he hoped Dole would do during the debate, Gingrich said, "I hope Bob Dole calmly tells the truth to the American people."

That truth, Gingrich said, shows that Clinton does not have the judgment to be president.

The House Speaker also pointed to the former Arkansas governor's pledge to cut taxes, which he said later resulted in tax increases.

Gingrich's leveled his strongest criticism at recent revelations concerning contributions by an Indonesian banking family and their associates to Clinton's reelection campaign.

Indonesian billionaire Mochtar Riady, his family members and the US subsidiaries and executives of the family's company, the Lippo Group, have contributed more than \$475,000 to the Democratic Party since 1991, according to published reports. The revelations have led Republicans, including Gingrich, to call for a federal investigation into Clinton's ties to the wealthy family.

During his appearance Wednesday, Gingrich pointed to loans from the Import/Export Bank and Department of Commerce appointments as examples of what he called a "network of favoritism" that existed between Clinton's White House and the wealthy family.

Gingrich said a close examination of the relationship reveals "pay off after pay off" and accused the president and the Democratic Party of attempting "to buy the election."

In town for a \$250 per plate GOP fund-raiser, Gingrich dedicated the bulk of his comments to promoting the efforts of the Republican Party.

Holding up a copy of two mock checks — one made out to the Internal Revenue Service and the other made out for an American family — Gingrich endorsed Dole's 15 percent tax cut proposal, saying it would put \$1,261 more dollars in the pocket of a family of four with a \$30,000 income.

And then there was the matter of the ice bucket.

Gingrich used the bucket, in which ice was once delivered to House members' offices twice daily, to illustrate Republican efforts to cut what he called needless spending. In the case of the bucket, Gingrich said Republicans were able to cut \$500,000 for the congressional budget by eliminating the daily deliveries.

That, he said, was the beginning of a bigger story in which budget savings were

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