sure you are ready for this, but you could quote Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers.''

Mr. Gingrich asked, 'Which one is that?''

Mr. Armey warbled: ''I did not mean to deceive you. I never intended to push or shove. I just wish that you was someone that I love.''

Today, Lauren Maddox, a spokeswoman for Mr. Gingrich, defended the Speaker's role. She said: ''Newt has always had the right to run for Speaker and campaign. Any statement he made was in no way undermining the work of the committee.''

She added: ''There was a specific agreement between Newt's lawyers and the special counsel that Newt could brief the leadership. And it was always understood that in turn, the leadership could respond in any way they thought was appropriate.''

In the December conversation, Mr. Bethune said in a couple of hours, once the subcommittee announced its actions, ''it would also be a time when we are authorized to have the conversation that we are having now, a little prematurely. But I don't think it would be troubling to anyone that we are a little ahead of the gun.''

Mr. Cole would not comment today, but the conversation itself suggested that the situation at the time seemed more complicated than Ms. Maddox contended.

Mr. Bethune, who served with Mr. Gingrich in the House for six years and now practices law in Washington, made several efforts to outline the slippery path that all must follow. One ally asked him what the leaders should say about any agreement between Mr. Gingrich and the subcommittee.

The lawyer replied: ''No. I didn't say there was an agreement. I said there was a delicate process under way and that this is what Newt is going to do, in response to the delicate process. There is no agreement, no deal. We are not authorized to say that.

''Now if I can be very delicate here. There is one other constraint,'' Mr. Bethune continued. ''He can run for Speaker, but he must maintain his confidentiality as far as public statements. And then, finally, Newt will not orchestrate, nor will he be—he will not orchestrate any attempt to spin this in such a way that it belies what he is admitting today in the statement of alleged violations.''

But having barred one door, Mr. Bethune opened a window. ''Having served as a member,'' he said, ''you know when documents become public, I as a member, am entitled to say whatever the hell I want to say about those public documents. 1 guess that applies to any of you all who may be listening.''

The men also talked about how they could use Mr. Gingrich's main adversary, Representative David E. Bonior of Michigan, the House Democratic whip, as a springboard to make arguments that Mr. Gingrich's agreement with the subcommittee would otherwise preclude.

''We know that Bonior is going to be having a press conference shortly thereafter, alleging a bunch of things that go too far,'' said Ed Gillespie, communications director of the Republican National Committee. ''Once he has kicked that off, that would give us an opportunity to then go back and refute what he has said, and we have not jumped the gun on opening and we have simply responded.''

Mr. Gingrich praised the suggestion. ''Ed's very clever.'' he said. ''Bonior, he will undoubtedly say things that are not true, will exaggerate what the committee has done.''

Representative Bill Paxon of upstate New York, a coordinator of moves by the Republican leadership in the House, said it was essential to have a quick response after the subcommittee released its material.

The Speaker suggested that a leadership response be put out by 2 or 3 p.m., within a couple of hours of his statement and the subcommittee's statement. ''I'm not an expert,'' he said, but ''at that point we're in by the evening news, catch the morning papers.''

Then the group went over the statement, with various suggestions offered about how to say that the Speaker had never intentionally misled the ethics committee.

The Speaker sought to end the cross talk by saying, ''Why don't we pick up Ed's language: 'Although there is no charge that Newt intentionally misled the committee, Newt was responsible for the mistakes that were made?' ''

Ultimately, the statement as issued changed a little. It said, ''it should be noted, and is clear, he did not seek nor intend to mislead the committee.''

[From the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Jan. 11, 1997]

GINGRICH ETHICS CASE: PANEL TRUSTED HIS MOTIVES, GINGRICH TOLD GOP ALLIES TAPE REVEALS CONFIDENCE TO SEEK SPEAKER'S POST

(By Jeanne Cummings)

WASHINGTON.—On the morning that Newt Gingrich admitted that he provided inaccurate information to the ethics committee, the speaker told his top advisers that he was convinced the two Republican members of the House ethics subcommittee believed it was not intentional.

As a consequence, Gingrich moved aggressively forward in his campaign to be re-elected as speaker with less fear that he would later be cut down by the ethics panel.

The speaker's analysis was laid out in a conference call with his lawyer and top Republican lieutenants who were drafting a statement that would downplay the offense that could cost Gingrich his job: providing ''inaccurate, incomplete and unreliable'' material to the committee.

The conversation was picked up on a Florida couple's scanner and a copy of the tape was obtained by The Atlanta Journal-Constitution and the New York Times.

The conference call focused on how the Republican leadership should react to the investigative subcommittee's findings of alleged ethics violations and the speaker's decision to concede them later that day.

When the speaker's statement admitting the violations was released on a Saturday afternoon, reporters were handed the GOP leadership statement just moments after subcommittee members left a press conference area.

The subcommittee is chaired by Rep. Porter Goss (R-Fla.). The other members are Rep. Steven Schiff (R-N.M.), Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Rep. Ben Cardin (D-Md.)

In the taped conversation, which has been confirmed by the speaker's office, Gingrich said: ''I think that if the committee thought I had intentionally misled them, I would not be a candidate for speaker. Goss and Schiff would have called me in and said, 'We will actively oppose you.' ''

House Majority Leader Richard Armey agreed with Gingrich's comments and said: ''We have got to believe they have carried Pelosi and Cardin as far as they can. And in that case, what Newt has just said is absolutely correct. They couldn't have carried them to where they are today if they were not confident they could defend Newt within their own circles.''

There is no indication on the tape that Gingrich spoke with Goss and Schiff about their conclusions in the case.

Rich Galen, a spokesman for Gingrich, said the speaker's confidence came from a variety of impressions and experiences throughout the investigation and not any direct conversations with his two Republican colleagues.

''The fact that they didn't (confront Gingrich) was something he drew comfort from,'' said Galen.

Goss and Cardin declined to comment.

Schiff said that while the speaker has extended contact with the subcommittee members during his two appearances before them, ''there was no external contact.''

Pelosi said: ''Any characterization of how we ended up where we did is something the leadership could not know.''

The discussion among Gingrich and his advisers that leads to his remarks about the ethics subcommittee members begins when Gingrich Chief of Staff Dan Meyer asks Gingrich's attorney Ed Bethune if it would be appropriate to include a sentence in the leadership statement saying that the speaker did not intentionally mislead the committee.

''It seems that members need to understand that and it then will be fine,'' Meyer inquired.

Noting that Gingrich had an agreement with the subcommittee not to coordinate an effort to undermine his own admissions, Bethune said, ''Newt cannot be part of crafting any such statement.''

However, Bethune said ''a member of Congress having received those documents can say anything they want to.''

The leadership then agreed to include a sentence in their statement that ultimately read: ''It should be noted, and is clear, he did not seek nor intend to mislead the committee. We look forward to working with him as speaker following his re-election on January 7.''

INTRODUCTION OF THE VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE ACT

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, which I am offering to ensure the continued success of vocational and technical education programs into the future. The bill, the Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act, includes a number of positive reforms that will help strengthen vocational and technical education programs and improve opportunities for students.

Vocational and technical education, authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act and known as the Perkins program, aims to prepare youth and adults for the future by building their academic and technical skills and ensuring they are equipped to proceed with postsecondary education or pursue other avenues. This program represents one of the largest federal investments in our nation's high schools and is a key component of our secondary and postsecondary education systems.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 66 percent of all public secondary schools have one or more vocational and technical education programs with approximately 96 percent of high school students taking at least one vocational and technical course during their secondary studies. Vocational and technical education is an important postsecondary option as well. Over 2,600 postsecondary sub-baccalaureate institutions,

such as community colleges, technical institutes, skill centers, and other public and private colleges, also offer vocational and technical education.

Reforms made to the Perkins Act in 1998 increased the focus on ensuring that participating students at both the secondary and postsecondary levels acquired academic and technical skills, as well as completed their respective programs and transitioned into successful employment or further education. Some progress has been made as states have created an initial performance accountability system and the focus on academic performance among students participating in vocational and technical education courses has been strengthened.

Today, I am offering the Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act to build on the 1998 reforms, and ensure vocational and technical education continues to prepare students for whatever they choose to pursue upon graduation. Should a student choose to proceed with postsecondary education, enter the military, or pursue other opportunities, the goal of the Perkins program must be to prepare students with the right combination of academic and technical skills so that they may succeed in whatever path they choose.

The bill I am offering includes a number of reforms designed to enhance achievement and accountability, streamline programs so that states may better utilize federal dollars, and provide model sequence of courses that will enhance vocational and technical education programs and partnerships.

The bill includes important steps to increase accountability, and emphasize continued improvement in student achievement. The bill establishes separate performance indicators for secondary and postsecondary students, improving on current law by recognizing the need for distinct measures to be applied to differing students. The bill also requires states to make continued and substantial improvement in the academic and vocational and technical achievement of students, and establishes incentive grants for states exceeding their own high standards.

To increase accountability and achievement at the local level, the bill requires local programs to establish local adjusted levels of performance similar to current statewide performance level expectations. The Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act also establishes local improvement plans and permits states to apply sanctions for local recipients that, after receiving technical assistance, fail to show improvement or continually do not meet local adjusted levels of performance.

To better streamline and target federal funding, the bill combines funding for the Tech-Prep and Perkins state grant programs into one program funding stream, and incorporates the activities of Tech-Prep into the basic grant program. This consolidation will increase flexibility for states, streamline funding, and ensure current activities continue to exist while the program as a whole is updated to meet the challenges of the future.

The Vocational and Technical Education for the Future Act includes an important new element that will build upon efforts to coordinate secondary and postsecondary vocational and technical education. The bill requires states to develop model sequences of courses for vocational and technical programs to be used as an option at the local level. These model sequences of courses will incorporate both secondary and postsecondary elements, include rigorous and challenging academic and vocational and technical content in a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses, and lead to a degree or credential.

Technology and economic competition are combining in ways that are changing the nature of work and are redefining the American workplace. The need for higher literacy, numeracy, communication, and interpersonal skills in the workplace has grown over the past decade and will continue to be an important factor in the workplace in the future. The skills needed to be successful in postsecondary education are similar to the skills that are required by employers. The need for a strong academic and technical background makes it imperative that the current vocational and technical education system adapt in order to provide the knowledge and skills needed to succeed.

The bill I am offering today seeks to meet the challenges of a changing economy and workplace by building upon the current successes of vocational and technical education. Our challenge is to ensure that all vocational and technical education students have access to programs that are sufficiently rigorous in both their academic and technical content, as well as provide clear connections with the education and training beyond high school that most Americans need for continued workplace success. I believe this bill fulfills those high standards, and I am pleased to be offering it today.

THE ARRIVAL OF WILLIAM ETHERIDGE OTTO

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a joyful heart to announce the birth of my very first grandchild. On January 19, my wife Faye and I welcomed into this world William Etheridge Otto, the new son of our daughter Catherine Etheridge Otto and her husband Tim. William arrived at 9:03 a.m. in Raleigh, North Carolina. He weighs seven pounds and seven ounces and measures 21 inches.

Faye and I are proud as can be of our very first grandchild and his parents. Looking into the face of a newborn baby reaffirms your hope for mankind, your faith in God and your commitment to family. I want my grandson to grow up in a peaceful and prosperous nation, where he can achieve his dreams and is limited only by his willingness to work hard. I want William Etheridge Otto and all children to have good schools, safe neighborhoods and the best medical care. And I hope our national leadership can return to the values of balanced budgets and opportunity for all so that my grandson's generation can reach for the American Dream. Those are North Carolina values. I look forward to teaching William those values throughout his precious life.

A new child in the family is a gift from God. The Etheridge family today is very blessed to welcome our newest addition. I look forward to introducing him to my friends and neighbors.

LEGALIZATION OF ILLICIT DRUGS

HON. MARK E. SOUDER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to call attention to the work of organizations that seek the legalization of illicit drugs in our country, to the detriment of the health and safety of our citizens.

On January 4, 2005, the Washington Post published an article entitled ''Exhale, Stage Left,'' chronicling the career of Keith Stroup, the founder and retiring executive director of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML). This article sheds light on some of the operations and claims of such organizations, and I ask that it be entered into the RECORD.

Particularly disturbing in this story is the entanglement of the drug legalization group with those who stand to profit from others' addiction—drug traffickers. The Washington Post article describes that one of the major early financial backers of NORML was ''the legendary pot smuggler'' Tom Forcade. To collect donations, Stroup even went to Forcade's ''stash house,'' which was ''filled with bales of marijuana.'' Certainly we can understand why a drug smuggler would contribute generously to efforts to legalize drugs like marijuana—with so much product to move, this man had a vested financial interest in making harmful drugs easier for people to obtain. But what kind of group takes money from such a criminal? Do we really want our laws ''reformed'' by efforts funded by criminal enterprises? Yet according to the article, it had seemed ''perfectly normal for NORML to call a dope smuggler when it ran short of cash.''

Drug legalization groups like to claim that marijuana is not really harmful and that it does not serve as a ''gateway'' to the use of other dangerous drugs. In fact, on its website, NORML claims, ''There is no conclusive evidence that the effects of marijuana are causally linked to the subsequent use of other illicit drugs.'' Perhaps NORML needs to look back at the experiences of its own leaders to re-examine such an assertion. The Post article describes how Stroup and his colleagues themselves moved onto other drugs in the 1970s: ''Privately, he and his NORML pals joked about forming an advocacy group for another drug they'd begun to enjoy—cocaine.'' I'm sure that the families who have suffered through the heartaches of cocaine addiction could inform NORML that cocaine abuse is no laughing matter. Stroup has come to realize that as well, admitting that his own use of cocaine may have led to lapses in professional judgment and that he knows now that ''[c]ocaine is deadly.'' Once, though, he had thought cocaine harmless. If he was wrong about cocaine, might he not likewise be wrong in presuming marijuana harmless?

In an attempt to make marijuana sound ''harmless,'' drug legalization groups also try to downplay the addictive qualities of marijuana. NORML states on its website, ''While the scientific community has yet to achieve full consensus on this matter, the majority of epidemiological and animal data demonstrate that the reinforcing properties of marijuana in humans is low in comparison to other drugs of abuse . . .'' Yet the leaders of legalization