

"The evidence mounts every day of lawbreaking in this administration," Gingrich said on "Fox News Sunday."

"If she can look at the day-after-day revelations about this administration and not conclude it's time for an independent counsel, how can any serious citizen have any sense of faith in her judgment?"

Late last week, the indications were that Reno would likely not seek a counsel in the case, which is already being investigated by career Justice Department prosecutors, but aides emphasized no final decision had been made.

If she decides not to ask a three-judge panel to name an independent counsel, Gingrich said, Reno needs to explain her decision. "She needs to answer in public, she needs to answer, I think, under oath," he said.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Orrin G. Hatch (R-Utah) said Reno "becomes a major issue" if she does not call for an independent counsel.

"The conflict of interest, both apparent and real, it seems to me, would necessitate her choosing an independent counsel," he said on ABC's "This Week." "If she doesn't, then I think there's going to be a swirl of criticism that's going to be, I think, very much justified."

Justice Department spokesman Bert Brandenburg dismissed such talk. "Unfortunately, this has become a battle between law and politics," he said in a telephone interview. "The Justice Department will adhere to the law."

Reno routinely asks the career prosecutors looking into the matter whether any development requires the appointment of an independent counsel, according to Brandenburg. So far, they have not said that an independent counsel is indicated, he said.

The law says the attorney general must ask for an independent counsel if there is specific, credible information of criminal wrongdoing by top administration officials—including the president, vice president and Cabinet officers—the head of a president's election or reelection campaign or anyone else for whom it would be a conflict of interest for the Justice Department to investigate.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry J. Hyde (R-Ill.) said an independent counsel was needed to maintain public confidence in the investigation. "In-house investigations, as honorable as they might well be, don't sell the public on the fact that they are independent," he said on ABC.

While Hyde said he retains his confidence in Reno as attorney general, Gingrich was sharply critical of her for not telling White House officials the FBI suspected China was planning to make illegal campaign contributions. Reno has said she telephoned national security adviser Anthony Lake, failed to reach him and never called back.

"If you're the top law enforcement officer of this country . . . wouldn't you say to the White House, 'Gee, the president and the secretary of state ought to know we think the Chinese communists may be trying to buy the American election?'" he said.

House Majority Leader Richard K. Armey (R-Tex.) suggested Reno is victim of the political pressures within the administration.

"This is a person that would like to be professional and responsible in their job, and that makes her out of place in this administration," Armey said on CBS's "Face the Nation." "She is in a hopeless situation. . . . If I were Janet Reno, I would just say, 'I can't function with people that stand with these standards of conduct and behavior and I'm leaving.'"

On another topic, Gingrich said the United States should "consider very seriously" military action against "certain very high-value

targets in Iran" if there is strong evidence linking a senior Iranian government official to a group of Shiite Muslims suspected of bombing a U.S. military compound in Saudi Arabia last year.

"We have to take whatever steps are necessary to convince Iran that state-sponsored terrorism is not acceptable," he said. "The indirect killing of Americans is still an act of war."

The Washington Post reported yesterday that intelligence information indicates that Brig. Ahmad Sherifi, a senior Iranian intelligence officer and a top official in Iran's Revolutionary Guards, met roughly two years before the bombing with a Saudi Shiite arrested March 18 in Canada. According to Canadian court records, the man, Hani Abd Rahim Sayegh, had fled Saudi Arabia shortly after the June 25 bombing that killed 19 U.S. servicemen and wounded more than 500 others.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

JACKIE ROBINSON AND PENSIONS FOR FORMER NEGRO LEAGUE/MAJOR LEAGUE PLAYERS

Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Mr. President, particularly as we are talking about tax day, I think it is important, also, to talk about something that, as Americans, we can celebrate together on this day.

Today marks the anniversary of an important day in American history. Today is the 50th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's dismantling of the color barrier in major league baseball. It might even be said that his actions, in so doing, were the beginning of the dismantling of American apartheid and the system of Jim Crow segregation that kept us apart in this country. I know for a fact that I would not be here in the U.S. Senate today had it not been for the achievement of Jackie Robinson. I daresay that the victory of Tiger Woods in the Masters, which every American celebrated, I think, would not have happened had it not been for Jackie Robinson's achievement.

It was 50 years ago that Jackie Robinson became a member of the Brooklyn Dodgers, making history by opening doors that had previously been closed to African American athletes. The year 1997 also marks the year that major league baseball owners agreed to give pensions to several baseball players who played in the then-segregated Negro Leagues. Many of those players followed in the path that was blazed by Jackie Robinson, but they were ineligible for major league pensions. The fact that the owners fixed that this year again is reason for us to celebrate.

Mr. President, there are few Americans today who do not know of Jackie Robinson, the baseball great whose talent and pursuit of excellence enabled him to break the color barrier 50 years ago. Jackie Robinson began his baseball career in 1945 as a Negro League player after serving his country in World War II. The following year he joined the minor league operation of the Brooklyn Dodgers, and was named

the Minor League Most Valuable Player. In 1947, he was brought up to play in the major leagues, and was named 1947's Rookie of the Year. Two years later, he was named the league's Most Valuable Player. In 1962, Jackie Robinson became the first African-American named to Baseball's Hall of Fame.

Jackie Robinson's legacy, however, is not restricted to that of a sports legend, or even a civil rights pioneer. Today I want to talk about some of his many achievements off the baseball field. While playing professional baseball, Jackie Robinson served as an inspiration to many people of the heights they could achieve. Upon his retirement, he was determined to make a real difference in the quality of the lives of others. As founder of the Jackie Robinson Development Corp. and the Freedom National Bank, he was able to provide access to capital and affordable housing to low income families in the underserved community of Harlem.

Even today, his good works continue through his widow, Rachel Robinson, who started the Jackie Robinson Foundation 1 year after his death. The Foundation provides full 4-year college scholarships for minority and disadvantaged young people. The recipients are chosen based on academic strength, community service, leadership potential and financial need. There have been over 400 Jackie Robinson scholars from across the country with a 92 percent graduation rate.

In order to celebrate these achievements, Senator D'AMATO and I led the effort to mint a commemorative coin in honor of Jackie Robinson. I am delighted that this legislation passed and that the Jackie Robinson Foundation will benefit from profits earned by the coin. Minting will begin later this year.

Jackie Robinson's extraordinary successes were the result of phenomenal talent and determination. While much of the world knows of Jackie Robinson's success, we must not forget the African-American baseball players who played in the Majors and helped integrate the game, yet did not receive the recognition for their contribution to the game, nor, for that matter, receive a pension for their time in the Majors.

Last year, I became aware of the plight of Sam Jethroe, a former major league ball player whose career in baseball began in the Negro League. Sam Jethroe, born in East St. Louis, IL, on January 20, 1922, began playing for the Cleveland Buckeyes, a Negro League team, at the age of 20. He played for the Buckeyes for seven seasons, and was one of the recognized stars of the Negro League.

A switch-hitting outfielder who threw right-handed, Jethroe was christened "Jet" for running so fast; opposing teams actually worked at strategies to slow him down. Sam Jethroe was also a good hitter; he batted .300 during his time with the Buckeyes and he led the Negro League in hitting in 1942, 1944, and 1945.

Although African-Americans had previously been banned from the major

leagues, Mr. Jethroe was given a try-out with the Boston Red Sox in 1945. He wasn't signed onto a major league team, however, until 1949, 2 years after Jackie Robinson's historic appearance in the league. At that time, Mr. Jethroe became the first African-American baseball player on the Boston—now Atlanta—Braves and debuted on their team in 1950. He was their starting center fielder.

In 1950, Sam Jethroe won the base-stealing crown, with 35, scored 100 runs, and batted .273, with 18 homers and 58 RBI's. As a result he was named National League Rookie of the Year in 1950, the third African-American to capture the honor in 4 years, following Jackie Robinson and pitcher Don Newcombe. In 1951, Sam Jethroe was even better. He repeated his stolen base title win and batted .280, with 101 runs scored, 29 doubles, 10 triples, 18 homers, and 65 RBI's.

After spending 1953 in the minors, Mr. Jethroe completed a successful career in baseball by playing two games with the Pittsburgh Pirates.

At the time that Sam Jethroe played baseball, a player needed 4 years of service in the major leagues in order to qualify for a pension. As you may know, players active since 1980 need only 1 year in the majors to qualify. Because Sam Jethroe fell short of the 4-year requirement, he has never received a pension. I believe that Mr. Jethroe would have qualified for a pension; that is, he would have played more than 4 years in major league baseball had it not been for the fact that he was banned from baseball because of the color of his skin.

The misfortune of the ban was compounded by the change of vesting rules for pension eligibility. Sam Jethroe is now 74 years old, and does not enjoy a secure retirement.

Pension security goes to the heart of our challenge to treat the end of life as the golden years rather than the disposable years. Retirement security has been likened to a three legged stool. Social security, private pensions, and personal savings constitute the basis of an income stream for the later years of life. While Sam Jethroe was eligible for social security benefits, he had limited savings, and did not receive a pension for his years in major league baseball.

Sam Jethroe's compelling story prompted me to contact Jerry Reinsdorf of the Chicago White Sox to see if anything could be done to help Sam Jethroe and Negro League veterans suffering from similar circumstances.

Mr. Reinsdorf took the initiative and raised the issue of pension protection with other owners for those people who were excluded from major league baseball prior to the breaking down of the barriers by Jackie Robinson.

In 1997, the owners decided to provide pensions to the African-Americans who played solely in the Negro leagues before 1948, as well as those who played both in the Negro leagues and in the

major leagues. I would like to commend Jerry Reinsdorf for his help in this matter. Sam Jethroe and the other Negro League players would not have received this long-awaited relief had it not been for him.

I also want to commend the owners for the tremendous good will and propriety of their decision. They recognized an injustice and fixed it. It is fitting that major league baseball recognize the contributions of these fine athletes in the year that we recognize and celebrate the 50th anniversary of Jackie Robinson's historic breakthrough in major league baseball.

So, Mr. President, in summary, I would like to say that there is good news today, the 15th of April. Not only did Jackie Robinson 50 years ago help open up doors in America, but he helped to change hearts. Fifty years ago, after the owners of major league baseball debated whether or not to let people of color play America's game, they made a decision that America's game would take care of one of its own. It seems to me to be an essential American story, that in 50 years' time we have seen enough change in this country, given rise by the sacrifice, the commitment, and the excellence pursued by Jackie Robinson and those like him who opened up doors. Now, 50 years later, those doors have been opened, and the hearts of many Americans have, indeed, been changed.

I think that is good news for today that we can all celebrate.

(The remarks of Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN pertaining to the introduction of S. 586 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KEMPTHORNE). The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

Mr. ASHCROFT. I thank the Chair very much for this opportunity to speak in morning business.

I commend the Senator from Illinois for her excellent remarks regarding Jackie Robinson, who is an American leader, an inspiration in terms of an individual whose conduct was inspiring not just to people of one race or another but to all America. This is the day upon which we are encouraged to and would appropriately celebrate his vast achievements and his substantial contributions. I thank the Senator from Illinois for her comments in that respect.

(The remarks of Mr. ASHCROFT pertaining to the introduction of S. 579 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 522

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that beginning immediately, at approximately 3:20 today, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 37, S. 522, regarding the unauthorized access of tax re-

turns, and the bill be considered under the following limitations: There be only one amendment in order to the bill, to be offered by Senators COVERDELL, GLENN, ROTH and MOYNIHAN; no other motions or amendments be in order; further, total debate on the amendment and the bill be limited to 35 minutes divided equally between Senator COVERDELL or his designee and Senator GLENN or his designee.

I further ask unanimous consent that following the expiration or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to the vote on the Coverdell amendment, the bill then be read a third time and there be 10 minutes for debate at that point to be equally divided, to be followed at that point by a vote on S. 522, as amended if amendment.

That would mean we would have 45 minutes of debate and have final passage shortly after 4 o'clock, probably 5 minutes after 4.

That is my unanimous-consent request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DURBIN. Reserving the right to object, I would like to ask the majority leader if I could have unanimous consent for 10 minutes to introduce a bill and speak after the vote on the Coverdell legislation?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, we have a number of Senators that may be requesting time to speak after this. I think we can accommodate the Senator, but I would like to get a minute where maybe we can get all those wrapped up and we will get an agreement during the debate. So the Senator will get the 10 minutes shortly after the vote, if he would defer for now, and I will see what we have to do. We will certainly treat the Senator fairly in that context.

Mr. DURBIN. I withdraw my objection.

Mr. DASCHLE. Reserving the right to object, I thank my colleagues, especially Senator COVERDELL, for working with us to try to resolve this matter. The language that we now have incorporated, or will have incorporated, in the resolution is certainly acceptable. I hope we can have a good debate and pass this legislation this afternoon. It is important we do it today, but it is also important this legislation, involving flood victims, be passed today. This will accommodate our need in that regard.

I thank Senator COVERDELL and the majority leader for their cooperation. I have no objection.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I will send an amendment to the desk. I do want to note, while this is going to the desk, we did work to accommodate the Senator and other Senators from the area where there have been floods. We have made a change in the time flood insurance is required to be covered by—we limited the times involved, so we could have time to assess, maybe, the impact and whether or not to put it on a permanent basis. But I want the RECORD