

THE HILL



Report: Aides claim Ron Paul approved 'offensive material' in old newsletters

By Alicia M. Cohn - 01/27/12 01:30 PM ET

New allegations surfaced on Friday that could renew the controversy over old newsletters containing inflammatory passages sent out in Rep. Ron Paul's (R-Texas) name in the 1980s and 1990s.

A **report** by *The Washington Post* quotes former Paul aides who claim they witnessed Paul proof the material before it was published.

The former employees quoted include personal assistant Eric Dondero Rittberg and secretary Renae Hathway. Hathway described Paul as “hands-on” when it came to the newsletters.

“It was his newsletter, and it was under his name, so he always got to see the final product,” said Hathway. “He would proof it.”

Paul's campaign spokesman denied the claims, saying Paul did not see the “offensive material” and was busy practicing medicine full-time when it appeared. Paul “abhors it, rejects it and has taken responsibility for it as he should have better policed the work being done under his masthead,” spokesman Jesse Benton told the paper.

The subscription-based newsletters published by Ron Paul & Associates became an issue for Paul's presidential campaign in December, when passages containing questionable language came to light. Critics called the newsletters racist and homophobic, and his GOP competition piled on, calling for Paul to explain or apologize.

Paul has repeatedly said he only became aware of the material some 10 years after its publication. But he did accept “some responsibility” for allowing the newsletters to be published under his name.

“I had some responsibility,” Paul **said** on an Iowa radio show in late December. “These were sentences that were put in, I think it was a total of eight or 10 sentences and it was bad stuff — it wasn't a reflection of my views at all.”

The *Post* also reports an anonymous source claimed Paul intentionally approved a “more provocative” strategy for the newsletters, as well as a conversation between Paul and Ed Crane where they discussed the need to reach out to people with “extreme” views. Paul's spokesman disputed the account.

Ron Paul & Associates operated from 1984 to 2001.