

# TEXAS

## Law firm, Tiguas settle over advisers playing both sides

Tribe paid pair to help reopen casino after they worked to shut it down

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — A Texas Indian tribe that paid millions of dollars to two Washington consultants for help reopening its casino — while unaware that the same consultants had worked to close the casino — has reached a settlement with the law firm that employed one of the men.

Representatives of the Tigua tribe of El Paso said Friday that they negotiated a confidential financial settlement with Greenberg Traurig in January. As part of the arrangement, they said, the firm will have the authority to pur-

sue claims on the tribe's behalf against its former employee Jack Abramoff and public relations consultant Michael Scanlon.

Mr. Abramoff, formerly a prominent Republican lobbyist, and Mr. Scanlon secretly worked with conservative religious activist Ralph Reed to help persuade the state of Texas to shut down the Tigua casino in 2002.

Then they persuaded the tribe to pay them \$4.2 million to lobby Congress to reopen it, according to documents in the case.

Federal authorities are investigating possible fraud and public corruption in connection with Mr. Abramoff's and Mr. Scanlon's dealings with the Tiguas and other tribes.

The two collected at least \$82 million in lobbying and public re-

lations fees from half a dozen tribes, according to tribal records and Federal Election Commission documents.

Attorneys for Mr. Scanlon and Mr. Abramoff said they were surprised by the settlement.

"If its terms are as described by the Tigua representative," said Mr. Scanlon's lawyer, Stephen Braga, "it's a most unusual posture for Greenberg Traurig to put itself in."

"Without seeing the settlement, Mr. Abramoff can have no comment," said a spokesman for Mr. Abramoff's lawyer, Abbe D. Lowell.

"But it would be an odd legal arrangement for the firm to be able to sue one of its former employees on behalf of a tribe it did not represent and does not stand in the shoes of."