

Ex-French leader Chirac investigated

by UPI

PARIS -- French magistrates have launched an official embezzlement investigation of the former French president and Paris mayor, Jacques Chirac. The probe involves allegations some 20 fake jobs were created that profited Chirac's Conservative party, an allegation that the 74-year-old has repeatedly denied in the past, Euronews.net reported. He was mayor between 1977 and 1995 before moving to federal politics. As president, he had immunity from prosecution up to this past May, but allegations about his mayoral term frequently appeared in the French media throughout his term and afterward. The Financial Times said four of Chirac's former senior aides were also named in the investigation. In Wednesday's Le Monde newspaper, Chirac again denied any wrongdoing. "Never were City of Paris funds used to further ambitions other than serving Parisians," he wrote. Chirac is the first former president of modern-day France to be investigated by magistrates, the report said.

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