

National News

Black Secret Service agents file complaint

A group of veteran black U.S. Secret Service agents filed a class-action complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) on Feb. 24, accusing the Service of a pattern and practice of racial discrimination. The complaint charges that the pattern of discrimination involves performance evaluations, transfers, assignments, training, promotion, and a "racially hostile work environment."

The two lead plaintiffs in the complaint are Reginald Moore, a lead agent in President Clinton's security detail, and John Turner, a member of Vice President Gore's security detail.

One of the lawyers representing the group, attorney John Relman, called "for the direct intervention of the President or the Vice President to assure that these practices are investigated and are stopped."

Another of the plaintiffs' lawyers, David Shaffer, has also represented agents at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) in similar actions. "What makes it so compelling at the Secret Service is that they are willing to take a bullet for the President, but they can't get promoted because of their race," Shaffer said.

Judge won't reinstate black U.S. Marshal

U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson on Feb. 25 refused to order the U.S. Marshals Service to reinstate a black Deputy U.S. Marshal who was dismissed from his position, after having complained of a pattern of racial discrimination within the Marshals Service, the weekly *New Federalist* reported on March 6. Judge Jackson said that he will allow Deputy Marshal Matthew Fogg \$300,000 in compensatory damages, and back pay up through September 1995, but he denied the rest of the equitable relief sought by Fogg, and said the matter will have to be decided by the U.S. Court of Appeals.

Fogg, a highly decorated 20-year Deputy Marshal, was awarded a \$4 million judgment and other relief in April 1998, by a Federal jury which found that the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) had carried out a 13-year vendetta against him, in retaliation for his efforts to expose and eliminate racial discrimination and corruption within the Marshals Service.

In its opposition papers filed in the Washington, D.C. Federal court, the Justice Department argued that Fogg, should not be reinstated, because he maintains a website on the Internet "where he makes brazen allegations of racism and corruption against various USMS officials," and because "plaintiff gave an extensive interview to a newspaper, *The New Federalist*, a Lyndon LaRouche publication, wherein plaintiff made statements against the USMS and the Department of Justice."

The Justice Department also complained that Fogg "has been using his free time to become a public speaker against racism."

The government included as an exhibit, a copy of the Fogg interview, which was published in *New Federalist* on Dec. 7, 1998.

Both Fogg and the government will appeal Jackson's ruling.

Labor leaders quit U.S. trade commission

On Feb. 25, AFL-CIO President John Sweeney and two other labor leaders—President Jay Mazur of UNITE! and President Lenore Miller of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Unions—resigned from President Clinton's Advisory Committee on Trade Policy, in a dispute over trade policy with China.

Improvement of U.S. relations with China is one of the keystones of President Clinton's foreign policy, and one of the most crucial for world peace and economic development.

Sweeney's letter said, "We are not willing to put up with a role that consists entirely of writing minority dissents to reports that do not give adequate weight to workers' legitimate and urgent concerns." Sweeney ac-

cused the "business leaders" on the panel of pushing through a "pro-China agenda" over the objections of labor. The Advisory Committee is expected to soon issue an endorsement of the trade agreement that President Clinton negotiated with China.

The White House has been lobbying heavily in Congress to gain approval for normal trade relations status (formerly most favored nation) with China, and for China's membership in the World Trade Organization. Vice President Al Gore is reported to have put out the word that if the approval of the China trade agreement and WTO fails, he would negotiate "a much tougher" package with China. Gore's actions have been considered a direct assault against White House policy.

McCaffrey: U.S. is center of drug trafficking

The headquarters of international drug trafficking is in the United States, not in Mexico, said Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Gen. Barry McCaffrey (ret.), the Mexico City daily *La Jornada* reported on Feb. 26. McCaffrey was responding to charges by U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Jeffrey Davidow, that the "world headquarters of drug trafficking" is located in Mexico.

Asked to respond to Davidow's statement, McCaffrey said "no," those headquarters "are here, in the United States. . . . We have five million addicts; our country is spending more than \$30 billion on drugs. I always hate hearing about who has the worst drug problem. The United States has 52,000 deaths each year. . . . We spend millions on cocaine" (quotes retranslated from Spanish).

On Feb. 25, the Mexican Foreign Ministry called in the U.S. Embassy's Chargé d'Affaires James Derham (Davidow was out of the country) to express anger over Davidow's statement, "which neither contributes to, nor reflects Mexican and U.S. efforts to cooperate in the battle against drugs." Acting Foreign Minister Carmen Moreno told Derham to communicate to Davidow that the Mexican government finds his remarks "strange," as they contradict statements by McCaffrey and Secretary of State Madeleine

SADDAM HUSSEIN will be toppled by a military coup, said Frank Ricciardoni, formerly the number-two man in the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, the Turkish daily *Milliyet* reported on March 2. Ricciardoni was recently appointed by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright as Special Representative for Transition in Iraq, to work with the Iraqi opposition. He told *Milliyet*: "Most probably, there will be a military coup. . . . All I can say is that it will be very sudden and without warning."

UNITED AUTO WORKERS President Stephen P. Yokich said that his union may not endorse any Presidential candidate, *UAW Solidarity* magazine reported in its March issue. "I know who I'd vote for, but I'll keep that to myself, as we haven't endorsed. And maybe we won't endorse," he said.

MINORITIES make up 74% of Federal death row inmates, according to the Death Penalty Information Center. Of the 188 defendants against whom the Attorney General has authorized the government to seek the death penalty, since capital punishment was reinstated in 1988, 45 have been white, 35 Hispanic, 10 Asian/Indian, and 98 African-American.

RICHARD HUBER, the CEO of Aetna-U.S. Healthcare, resigned in February, as the company's stocks plummet and lawsuits mount. William H. Donaldson, the former head of the New York Stock Exchange, will replace him. Aetna insures 47 million Americans.

YOUTHS under 18 are increasingly being sent to state prisons as adults, according to a study by the Department of Justice. The number of such youths more than doubled, from 3,400 to 7,400, between 1985 and 1997. Defendants under 18 are prosecuted in either adult or juvenile courts, depending on state law. The study estimated that about 61% of those under 18 sent to state prisons in 1997 were incarcerated for a violent offense, including 7% for murder.

Albright, both of whom have lauded U.S.-Mexican cooperation in the anti-drug war. Moreno reminded Derham that very large criminal organizations operate in the United States, dedicated to the production, trafficking, and distribution of drugs, as reported in the "Joint Diagnosis on the Drug Problem" document, which both governments recently approved.

Court rules against Giuliani's workfare

The fascist policy of New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani toward homeless New Yorkers was dealt a blow on Feb. 22, when State Supreme Court Justice Stanley L. Sklar ruled that New York may not force homeless adults to accept workfare jobs in exchange for city shelter.

Giuliani denounced the decision, saying, "I expect the Court of Appeals to reverse it pretty quickly." The law requiring the homeless to work or be evicted or even jailed, stems from a 1995 regulation of the State Department of Social Services at the city's request. Judge Sklar ruled that the law which city officials cite in support of the work requirement may be constitutional, but it violates a consent decree that requires the city to give shelter to every needy adult who seeks it.

Weinberger: U.S. may go to war with China

Sir Caspar Weinberger, the former U.S. Defense Secretary, said that the United States might have to go to war with China, according to *Insightmag.com* on Feb. 29.

Weinberger was commenting on a warning in the Chinese *People's Liberation Army Daily*, that the United States would pay a "high price" if it went to war with China over Taiwan. China "is a country with certain strategic attack capabilities, and long-distance strike capabilities. It would not be wise to fight a country like China," the PLA newspaper said.

Weinberger told a meeting on Capitol

Hill on Feb. 28, "It might not be wise for America to go to war with China, but it might be necessary." Weinberger said that what he called the threat by the PLA to attack the U.S. mainland with long-range missiles, needs an "unequivocal, immediate, unambiguous, firm response."

Speaking to the Monday Club, hosted by former newspaper editor M. Stanton Evans, Weinberger criticized Clinton's new Ambassador to China, Joseph Prueher, as too weak; he noted reports of China's missile deployment aimed at Taiwan, and said that the United States should have built the missile-defense shield proposed by President Reagan. But, blaming the Clinton administration, Weinberger said, "I don't think we are ready for military conflict with China."

FBI probes Virginia 'supermax' prison

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is conducting a preliminary investigation at Wallens Ridge Prison in southwest Virginia, in response to allegations of abusive treatment of New Mexico inmates who were housed there, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported on Feb. 28, in an article on the state's infamous "supermax" prisons.

Virginia has two supermax facilities, and guards have fired their weapons—either warning shots or rubber pellets—more than 250 times since the beginning of 1999.

At the Red Onion Prison, there were 167 shooting incidents last year, and, as of last August, at least 63 inmates had been hit. As of early February, 24 shots had been fired this year, with seven inmates hit. According to a Human Rights Watch report on Red Onion Prison, staff members fired at inmates with shotguns, for misconduct that should have been handled by unarmed staff, and inmates should have been shocked with electronic stun devices instead.

Dr. Stuart Grassian, an expert on solitary confinement who is a psychiatrist and professor at Harvard Medical School, was quoted by the newspaper: "In my experience, these places are breeding grounds of sadism." He was speaking at a conference on supermax prisons.