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First African American To Serve As Joint Chief Head Role Model On Fashion, But No Politics Yet

By Susanne M. Schafer
WASHINGTON (AP) — Gen. Colin Powell is in very good spirits as he prepares to retire as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Appearing before the National Press Club on Tuesday, Powell related how Yasser Arafat, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, was asked by a reporter why he'd come to the White House in a "specially tailored uniform" during the signing of the Mideast peace accord.

And he remarked, "Why not? Chairman Powell wears a uniform," Powell said, standing in his dark olive green uniform, medals and ribbons glinting in the television lights just two days before his retirement September 30.

"So even in my declining days I find myself a fashion role model," he quipped to laughter and applause.



GENERAL COLIN POWELL

Ron Brown At Three Meetings With Accused Businessman, Sources Say

By Marey Gordon
WASHINGTON (AP) — Commerce Secretary Ron Brown's meeting in February with a Vietnamese businessman was purely social and involved no business discussions, Brown's attorney said Monday.

Reid Weingarten, a former federal prosecutor whom Brown recently hired, also denied a published report that Brown provided a government limousine to bring businessman Nguyen Van Hao to the Commerce Department for the February meeting.

Weingarten also confirmed news reports Sunday that Brown met with Hao three times, in November and December of 1992 as well as in February of this year, but the attorney said Brown never agreed to Hao's proposals.

A federal grand jury in Miami has been investigating allegations that Brown accepted \$700,000 from the Vietnamese government in exchange for helping lift the U.S. trade embargo against that country. Brown has denied the allegation, made by Binh T. Ly, a former business partner of Hao. Both Hao and Ly live in Florida.

The February visit to Brown's office was made by Hao, longtime Brown friend Marc Ashton and Ashton's sister-in-law, Lillian Madsen, the lawyer said.

Weingarten contradicted a report Sunday by The Miami Herald that Brown provided Hao, Ashton and Madsen with an official limousine.

The three "traveled in their own car; it was purely social," Weingarten said in a telephone interview. "There was no discussion whatsoever" of business matters, he said.

Weingarten said Ashton contacted Brown in October about Hao's proposal to create a new company that would help western businesses invest in Vietnam. After Clinton's election in November, Brown met with Hao and Ashton in Florida and Hao asked Brown to be attorney for the new company, the lawyer said. "Ron listened politely and at the time there was absolutely no commitment that Ron would be involved at all," Weingarten said.

Hao later traveled to Vietnam to discuss his idea.

About three days after Brown was nominated as Commerce secretary by Clinton on Dec. 12, Brown met Hao again and "flatly and respectfully declined" Hao's offer, Weingarten said.

Brown was chairman of the Democratic National Committee last year and played a key role in President Clinton's election campaign.

The lawyer said Brown would not be available for comment Monday.

In a statement released Sunday night, Brown did not address the question of the meetings but reiterated his denial of last month that he ever accepted any money to assist Vietnam.

President Clinton publicly announced his support of Brown Wednesday.

AT&T Newsletter Shows Ape on Phone in Africa

Outraged NAACP Calls for Boycott of Long-Distance Carrier

By David L. Dillard
In what may appear to be fun and games to American Telephone & Telegraph's *Focus* magazine editors, African Americans are outraged at the drawing of an ape in Africa using the telephone instead of a human.

Meanwhile, the NAACP has waged an economic boycott against AT&T for what local officials call "blatant racism."

The protest was spearheaded by the state NAACP after receiving numerous telephone calls from disgruntled AT&T employees. The state chapter started the boycott Monday, September 20, by discontinuing its long distance carrier service with AT&T and is urging blacks to do the same.

"NAACP local, state, regional and national offices have received numerous calls from across the country from outraged citizens, who likewise decided to withdraw their economic support of AT&T, and have also changed to another long distance carrier," said Ms. Mary Peeler, the state chapter's executive director.

firm that designs AT&T's publication.

"The art director apparently didn't see it or was not troubled by it," Stinson said. "We're taking steps now in this very emotional process (to correct the problem)."

Stinson said the publication has fired the illustrator, but that no action has been taken against AT&T's editorial board. He said there are four minorities on the publication's staff.

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This illustration appeared in an AT&T magazine, showing an ape using a telephone in Africa. Users on other continents are depicted as humans.

U.S. Seeks To Become Partner With South Africa

By George Gedda
WASHINGTON (AP) — With the approval of a multiracial governing council in South Africa, the Clinton administration and Congress are moving quickly to end U.S. curbs on ties with that country and to become a partner in its development.

The Senate acted Friday to normalize economic relations with South Africa, and the House is expected to take similar action in a few days.

The action by the Senate came shortly after African National Congress President Nelson Mandela appealed to the world community to end all economic sanctions against South Africa, except oil and arms until the 1994 elected government is in place.

Mandela issued the appeal in a speech at the United Nations, then flew to Washington where he told delegates to an international economic development Congress they should "seize this historic moment" and invest in South Africa.

He predicted the new order in South Africa would adopt policies on taxation and repatriation of profits that investors will find attractive.

President Clinton said Mandela's call for the removal of sanctions and the creation of the mixed-race council were "watershed events" in South Africa's movement toward a non-racial democracy. He urged swift action on removing sanctions.

The Senate voted to rescind a ban on U.S. support for South African loan requests at the International Monetary Fund and also to allow the U.S. government to finance American exports to South Africa.

Clinton also called on U.S. states, counties and cities to move quickly to lift their sanctions. The Senate legislation contained similar language.

Clinton said he has asked Commerce Secretary Ron Brown to lead a mission to South Africa to explore trade and investment opportunities.

State Department spokesman Mike McCurry said government resources will be used to assist South Africa's economic recovery in a variety of ways.

The Senate bill also encouraged U.S. investment in South Africa once multiracial elections are held on April 27, 1994. It also seeks expanded U.S. trade to South Africa and lifts restrictions on U.S. assistance.

"Removal of sanctions is a first step," said Sen. Paul Simon, D-Ill. "We will have to assist South Africa. There will have to be commercial investment." In 1986, the Congress overrode President Reagan's veto and approved a series of sanctions against South Africa, most of which were repealed two years ago by President Bush in recognition of the steps President F.W. de Klerk had taken toward dismantling apartheid.

Black Caucus Leads Defense of PAC Funds

Copyright Congressional Quarterly 1993
By Beth Donovan
WASHINGTON — If political action committees are just moneyed special interests, why is the Congressional Black Caucus — a group that represents some of the most disadvantaged Americans — suddenly leading the charge to defend PACs? Because they have a reason: because they can — that's the opinion of many African American House members and academics who have watched this year's campaign finance debate evolve.

President Clinton has urged Congress to curb "the power and influence of political action committees"; the Senate in June passed a bill that would get rid of

them altogether. But PACs, which are formed by businesses, labor unions and other interest groups to pool contributions from their members, are a key source of funds for House races. PACs may donate up to \$5,000 per election to a candidate, with primary and general elections counting separately.

It has long been clear that House Democrats would not go along with a ban on PACs. But the potential impact on minority districts, scarcely mentioned a year ago, is providing a new rationale for PAC backers.

As they gear up for a high-profile October debate, white Democratic leaders in the House are all too happy to let the newly fortified

black caucus put its populist spin on the fight for PACs.

Black members say they must defend PACs because minority candidates face demographic and societal obstacles to fundraising. PACs, they say, empower their voters and provide minority candidates with one of the few available sources of money.

Districts represented by blacks are disproportionately poor, and not many constituents can afford to contribute very much to political campaigns. Outside their districts, African Americans often lack the elite school and boardroom contacts that form lucrative fundraising networks for many white candidates.

"We just don't have the

resources," says Rep. Eva Clayton, a first-term Democrat who represents the district with North Carolina's lowest per capita income. "If your district is poor, you're not wealthy and you're excluded from affluent circles, it's hard to raise money." Politically, black members can afford to defend PACs because their constituents care far more about bread-and-butter economic issues than political reform. Moreover, members say, it is just common sense to their voters that the only way to counter wealthy interests is to gather many small contributions in PAC pots.

"The enormous fear of PAC money is rooted in white, Protestant, puritanical traditions,"

says Frank A. Sorauf, a political scientist at the University of Minnesota. "The minority community is just not as easily played upon with PAC bashing." Congress has been debating campaign finance for more than a decade, but this is the first time that the black caucus has played a prominent role. A task force headed by first-term Rep. Corrine Brown, D-Fla., was set up just before the August recess to address concerns about the potential for restricting PACs.

Freshmen, who make up nearly half of the 38 House Democrats in the black caucus, pushed the issue of minority candidate reliance on PAC money to the fore.

They got the attention of Speaker

Thomas S. Foley, D-Wash., at a meeting of the entire Class of 1992 in February. According to several participants, many blacks, along with women and Hispanics, told the Speaker that strict new limits on PACs would disproportionately hurt them and, perhaps most significantly, that they were not afraid to publicly fight for PACs.

Then in March, when freshman Democrats met to put the final touches on a much advertised "reform" plan, a late push to include a PAC ban was quashed after Rep. Melvin Watt, D-N.C., stood up and said he could not support a plan that would hurt campaigns of black candidates.

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