



IN THE NEWS

Top stories from the state, nation and world

Powell's Book Fails To Indicate Political Intent

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In his new book, retired Gen. Colin Powell says he turned down a chance to become director of the CIA when a newly-elected President Bush offered him the job in 1988, according to Newsweek.

In 1992, Powell was asked to consider being candidate Bill Clinton's running mate, and the Clinton White House approached him twice about becoming secretary of state, said the Sept. 11 issue of Newsweek, which obtained a copy of the 613-page autobiography "My American Journey."

The book, scheduled to arrive in book stores next week, doesn't explicitly state Powell's political ambitions.

But if he wants a top job at the White House, he may succeed by resisting the temptation to run as an independent and winning a Republican nomination as a presidential or vice presidential candidate, according to a poll in the same magazine.

In a three-way race against GOP Sen. Bob Dole and President Clinton, Powell finished last, with 21 percent of registered voters who participated in a telephone survey. Clinton won support from 36 percent, and Dole got 33 percent, Newsweek said.

But as the Republican candidate, Powell trounced Clinton by as many as 10 percentage points. As a GOP vice presidential candidate, Powell would boost Dole to victory, beating a Clinton-Gore ticket 51 percent to 44 percent.

Chemical Weapons Used By Iraq During Gulf War

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Iraq may have used some chemical weapons during the Gulf War, a magazine reported Saturday, citing newly released Pentagon documents.

The Pentagon has said in the past that no such weapons were found in the war zone. But documents obtained by U.S. News and World Report say traces of chemicals were found on the battlefield.

In recent weeks, Iraq has turned over documents that prove Iraq had been concealing biological weapons, including anthrax and botulin.

The Iraqis had also produced 78 gallons of a toxin that produces gangrene, a discovery that U.N. sources said they will reveal this week, according to the magazine, due to hit newsstands on Monday.

The United Nations is demanding that Iraq fully disclose all its efforts to produce weapons of mass destruction before it lifts the oil embargo that was imposed along with trade sanctions in 1990 after Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Iraq has complained that the sanctions are wreaking havoc on its economy and people.

Questions about the stability of the Iraqi regime have been raised by the Aug. 8 defection of two of Saddam's sons-in-law, including a former defense minister, Lt. Gen. Hussein Kamel al-Majid.

Controversial Defense Lawyer Kunstler Dies

NEW YORK — William Kunstler, the raspy-voiced lawyer who proudly spoke out for the politically unpopular in a controversial career defending clients including the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., the Chicago Seven, Leonard Peltier, Colin Ferguson and others, died Monday. He was 76.

Kunstler died at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital of a heart attack. He had a pacemaker installed on Aug. 7. He had been hospitalized since Aug. 28.

Kunstler saw himself as a legal paladin, a defender of those most lawyers avoided, an advocate for outcasts and pariahs. Critics often depicted him as a showboat and publicity seeker.

The highlight of his career came when he defended the Chicago Seven against charges of conspiring to incite riots during the 1968 Democratic National Convention.

The jury acquitted the seven defendants of conspiracy and found five guilty of incitement.

Kunstler himself would be sentenced by the judge to four years and 13 days in jail for contempt. But 168 of the 181 counts were dismissed on appeal, and he did not serve any time.

In 1978 he declared, "I only defend those whose goals I share. I'm not a lawyer for hire. I only defend those I love."

Work on civil rights cases in the South in the early 1960s transformed his view of American society and the courts, and he began representing "the poor, the persecuted, the radicals and the militant, the black people, the pacifists and the political pariahs."

"I spent over a year in Mississippi representing the Freedom Riders," he once recalled. "That's when I met Martin Luther King Jr., and became what he called his special trial counsel. I represented Martin for seven years, until he was murdered."

Recently, he persuaded prosecutors to set aside charges against Qubilah Shabazz, the daughter of Malcolm X, who had been accused of hiring a government informant to kill Louis Farrakhan.

A private funeral and a more public memorial service are being planned, said his law partner, Ron Kubey.

FROM WIRE REPORTS

U.S., Allies Agree To Penalize Serbs

WASHINGTON, D.C. — As a U.S. warship prepared to deploy in the Adriatic, the United States and its allies agreed Tuesday that Bosnian Serbs should be punished militarily for their mortar attack on Sarajevo, U.S. officials said.

At the same time, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, in an apparent attempt to head off military retaliation, indicated a willingness to negotiate a "comprehensive peace agreement" on the basis of an ongoing U.S. peace initiative.

U.S. officials, while saying they were encouraged by Karadzic's new stand, said it will not affect the determination of NATO and the United Nations to punish the Serbs for Monday's attack.

"I can say that the allies are together," a senior administration official said. "The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said it was 'particularly significant' that U.N. commander Gen. Rupert Smith held the Serbs fully responsible for the attack, which claimed 37 lives and left more than 100 wounded.

Under an agreement reached last month, NATO military action in Bosnia is to be coordinated by NATO and U.N. military officials and is not subject to veto by civilian officials at U.N. headquarters.

The scope of the military retaliation agreed to by the allies was not disclosed. Karadzic made known his stand in a letter to former President Carter, who helped negotiate a truce in Bosnia late last year.

Karadzic's letter states, "The territorial proposal contained in the U.S. peace initiative will remain the basis for a settlement and will be open for adjustment to benefit the interest of both parties."

The United States and its negotiating partners have proposed a territorial compromise under which the Bosnian Serbs would be required to surrender about a third of the territory they have conquered in more than three years of warfare. Under the proposal, the Bosnian Muslims and Croats would control 51 percent of the national territory while the Serbs would control 49 percent.

As a U.S. negotiating team continued talks in Paris, the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt's scheduled port call in Greece was canceled, and the vessel was ordered to steam toward the Adriatic Sea.

"The Bosnian Serbs must be held accountable," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said. "A military response is appropriate," he added, calling Monday's attack the "latest example of murderous behavior by the Bosnian Serbs."

Other officials said the imperative to retaliate was not changed by the Karadzic letter.

But Carter told CNN he believes Karadzic's proposal is worth serious attention.

"As the recent tragic attack on Sarajevo has demonstrated once again, peace will not come easily, but there is good reason to take Dr. Karadzic's statement and put it to the test and to seek comparable helpful efforts from all the other parties involved to move rapidly to talks," he said.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, R-Kan., used the occasion of the attack to press for his proposal for the withdrawal of U.N. peacekeepers and for an end to the U.N. embargo on arms deliveries to Bosnia.

"This is not the time for more unkept promises and empty threats from the United Nations and NATO," Dole said.

Women's Conference Calls for Social Change

BEIJING — The largest U.N. conference ever opened Monday with a call for men to join women in a social revolution for equality — and for governments and international institutions to pay for it.

"A revolution has begun," said Gertrude Mongella, secretary-general of the Fourth World Conference on Women. "There can be no spectators, no sideliners, no abstainers, for this is a crucial social agenda which affects all humanity."

Some of the world's top women political leaders said again and again that the conference will come to nothing without strong follow-up — and that men must be part of the solution.

The gathering of more than 4,750 delegates from 181 countries, the first of its kind in a decade, opened with a lavish Chinese welcoming ceremony. It passed its first day smoothly, in contrast with the controversy over Chinese policing that has dogged a parallel gathering of voluntary organizations.

On Monday, there were signs tensions had eased in Huairou, the town 30 miles north of Beijing where 23,000 activists from private groups have met for the past five days.

Police stood by quietly as about 1,000 members of the international anti-war group Women in Black protested silently for an hour, carrying or wearing signs demanding a peaceful resolution of conflicts around the world.

In the only incident in Beijing on Monday, Chinese security men barred Winnie Mandela from the welcoming ceremony, saying she came late. Mandela, the estranged wife of South African President Nelson Mandela who heads the African National Congress Women's League, said her bus lost its way en route to the Great Hall of the People.

Hillary Rodham Clinton arrived shortly after midnight in Beijing. She plans to address the conference later Tuesday then travel to Huairou Wednesday to speak to the women's advocacy groups there.

Activists are planning to capitalize on her highly publicized visit by demonstrating for their causes.

But on Monday the spotlight was on issues confronting women and the "platform of action" to be adopted by the conference to guide the women's agenda in the 21st century.

"Cementing the partnership of women and men" is critical, Mongella said.



First lady HILLARY CLINTON plans to speak at the conference today, then travel to rural China to address women's advocacy groups.

N.C. Gunowners Can't Hide Concealed Weapon Permits

RALEIGH — While North Carolinians may soon be able to obtain permits to carry concealed weapons, there is uncertainty over whether they will be able to hide the permits from public scrutiny.

The state House approved a concealed weapons permit bill May 3. On the fifth of the bill's 14 pages was a provision directing that the Division of Motor Vehicles maintain a computer listing of everyone receiving a permit.

"The listing and other information concerning permits issued under this Article maintained by the Division is a public record under the provisions of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes," read the section, citing state open records law.

When the bill was approved and made law on July 10, it totaled seven pages — none of which included the passage regarding the permits as public record.

The DMV's lobbyist, Lindsay McCoy, told the Asheville Citizen-Times that the division didn't have a position on the bill. It did, she said, supply lawmakers information indicating that several thousand people who ordinarily wouldn't visit DMV offices would come in, increasing workloads dramatically.

The National Rifle Association, a fervent supporter of concealed weapons as a means of citizen protection, didn't want any language that would hinder passage of the proposed law.

A lawyer for the North Carolina Press Association believes that the omitted pas-

sage isn't critical and that public records law dictates that concealed weapon permits be available for public inspection.

But the lawyer, Amanda Martin, wouldn't be surprised if some of North Carolina's 100 sheriffs, who will screen applicants for the permits, balk at releasing permit information to a visitor who requests it.

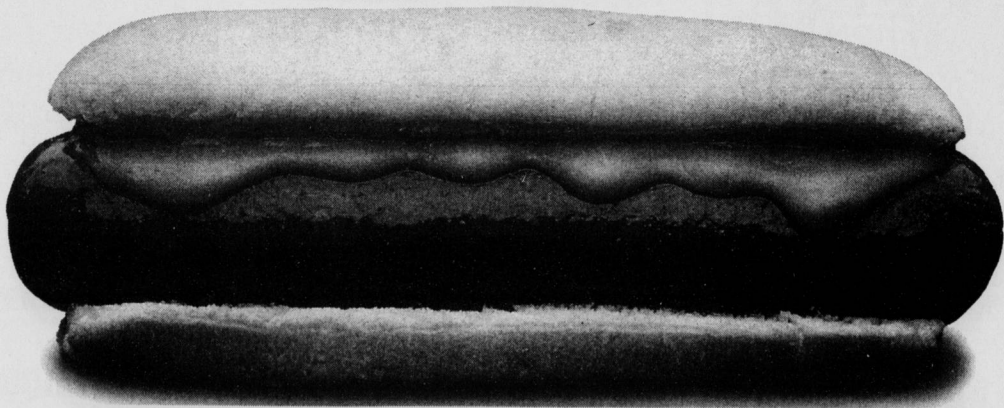
"I think it's a possibility we are going to get resistance to getting those records," Martin said, adding that public records law "is a broad, kind of sweeping statement that encompasses virtually all public records held by all public agencies in the conduct of public business."

Keeping the language about public records would have helped, she said, but leaving it out of the final wording shouldn't hurt the case that the permits are public documents.

Buncombe County Sheriff Bobby Medford, who is awaiting official word on the subject, said he is cautious about releasing permit information to anyone who isn't connected with a law enforcement investigation.

After North Carolina's new right-to-carry permit law takes effect Dec. 1, law-abiding, non-drug using, mentally sound citizens 21 and older will be able to receive permits to carry concealed weapons in public. Those seeking permits cannot have been dishonorably discharged from the military or convicted of DWI in the last three years and must have completed a firearms safety course.

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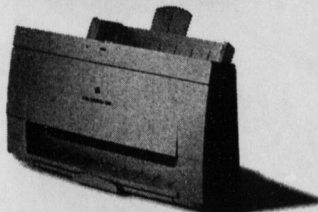
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