

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell holds up a vial that he said could contain anthrax as he presents evidence of Iraq's alleged weapons programs to the United Nations Security Council on Wednesday.

Powell presents evidence on Iraq

UNITED NATIONS (AP) - Secretary of State Colin Powell relying on a stream of U.S. intelligence, urged the U.N. Security Council on Wednesday to move against Saddam Hussein because Iraq has failed to disarm, harbors terrorists and hides behind a "web of lies."

His extraordinary presentation in the packed council chamber included satellite photographs, intercepted conversations between senior Iraqi officers and statements from informants that could make or break support for going to war with Iraq.

Russia, France, China and other council members skeptical of the need for a military confrontation said they would review the evidence and demand answers from Baghdad. Most said weapons inspections should continue, Iraq must immediately cooperate and diplomatic efforts should be sought to avert war.

France and Germany went further, calling for strengthening the inspections regime that was already toughened up in November under a Security Council resolution crafted by Washington and adopted by an unanimous council.

Three months after Iraq pledged that it would disarm, Powell presented his evidence to a high-level audience of foreign ministers and ambassadors in an appearance that was televised live to an anxious world.

"The gravity of this moment is matched by the gravity of the threat that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction pose to the world," Powell said. "This body places itself in danger of irrelevance if it allows Iraq to continue to defy its will."

While Powell spoke, Iraqi TV carried a day-old interview with Saddam.

Iraqi officials dismissed Powell's case as a collection of "stunts" and "special effects" that relied on "unknown sources" and was aimed at undermining the work of the inspectors.

"What we heard today was for the general public and mainly the uninformed, in order to influence their opinion," (See Powell, Page 14)

Racial profiling data released

By Al Triche
Sentinel-Voice

With denials by the sheriff-just-departed still echoing, a new sheriff adds his own. Both insist, despite widespread allegations to the contrary, that the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department does not practice racial profiling.

Law enforcement agencies across the state and especially here in Southern Nevada are spinning data from a statewide study of traffic stops focusing attention on Metro and others. Meanwhile, many ask — and as many more believe they already know — the answer to the question that inspired the study: Do they, or don't they?

Examining the Nevada Highway Patrol and police departments in Clark and Washoe Counties, the report correlates traffic stops with race, and it indicates all of them stop African-American motorists in disproportionate numbers.

Blacks in Nevada are pulled over for traffic stops, are handcuffed, and are arrested by police at a rate much higher than are whites, according to the report, which found blacks at the wheel in more than 11 percent of all stops. However, African-Americans comprise less than seven percent of the driving population in this state.

While the report's findings "show racial disparities in traffic stops," they "should not be taken as proof that Nevada law enforcement officers are engaging in racial profiling," its author, University of Nevada, Las Vegas criminal justice professor Richard McCorkle, says, because the study doesn't "permit firm conclusions" on whether it exists.

"I don't believe profiling occurs," David Kallas, Executive Director of the Las Vegas Police Protective Association, said, and, as far as he's concerned, the data can't be evaluated "because there

are circumstances the study doesn't incorporate."

Statewide, aspects of more than 386,000 stops were examined. Police noted age and gender of the drivers. Men were driving in some 71 percent of the instances, and those 18 to 29 years old were most likely to be stopped. The cops estimated age. Reasons (e.g., traffic violations) leading to the stops were documented, as were dispositions of the encounters and data indicating whether police conducted searches.

But, the variable that started all this, of course, was race.

In 2001 the Legislature made racial profiling by police in Nevada illegal, mandating that its Attorney General ascertain whether and to what extent it was occurring.

State Assemblyman Wendell Williams and Sen. Joe Neal, both of Las Vegas, shepherded the legislation, and Neal has prefiled a bill that would make racial pro-

filing a misdemeanor. The measure has been sent to the Government Affairs Committee. Said Kallas of Neal's initiative, "I think that's pretty ridiculous."

The survey was conducted last year after forms for collecting the data were distributed to the various law enforcement agencies. Police were instructed to obtain information regarding traffic stops throughout 2002. 68 percent of all stops, according to the study, were initiated because of moving violations.

White drivers, 65.2 percent of Nevada's population, it says, made up 63.8 percent of stops. But, 11.2 percent of encounters were stops of African-American drivers, although, based on the 2000 census, blacks comprise only 6.2 percent of the population. Police claim to have been mostly unaware of the race of motorists (which they determined by observation) before (See Traffic, Page 5)

Black astronaut felt honored by mission

By Marcus E. Walton
Special to Sentinel-Voice

One of the astronauts who lost their lives when the space shuttle Columbia disintegrated as it descended to land near the completion of its 16-day mission, was one of just nine African-Americans to ever go into space.

Lt. Col. Michael P. Anderson, 43, died along with six other astronauts Saturday morning, as the shuttle explosion strewn pieces of hot metal and toxic rubbish across hundreds of miles of Texas and Louisiana. He once described his job as being "to tackle the unknown, and take part in man's greatest adventure."

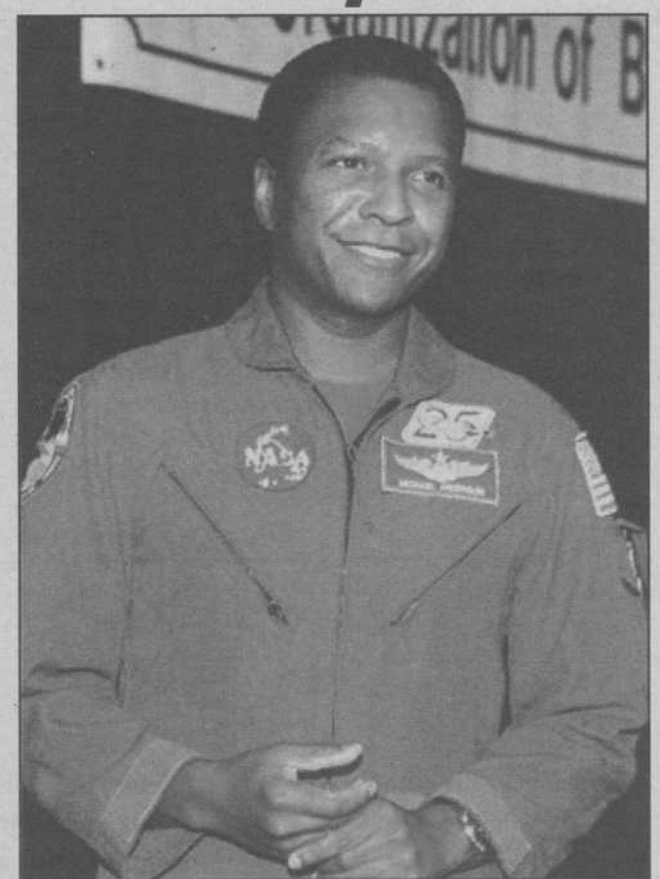
On this latest exploration into space, Anderson, the crew's lone African-American member, was the mission's payload commander, responsible for managing the scientific experiments conducted aboard the Columbia. In his last national interview, with National Public Radio's Tavis Smiley,

Anderson said that the space program had a "really bright" future for African-Americans, with three Black astronauts scheduled to fly on shuttle missions in the coming year. The interview took place on Wednesday, Jan. 29, Col. Anderson and Columbia pilot Willie McCool answered questions from space.

Anderson said that astronauts Robert Curbeam, Joan Higginbotham and Stephanie Wilson were all in line to take shuttle flights on various missions.

"It looks like the future's really bright," Anderson said. But in the past he has admitted that being Black has been a challenge as he moved through the steps necessary to become an astronaut.

"Throughout life, every individual faces challenges. The key to facing those challenges is having confidence and faith in yourself," Anderson said in a NASA sponsored Web cast in March 2000. "Instead of giving up, I (See Anderson, Page 3)



Sentinel-Voice photo by John Broussard

Lt. Col. Michael P. Anderson, who died Saturday when the space shuttle Columbia exploded, visited Las Vegas during the Tuskegee Airman's 1999 convention held here.