

NAACP eyes violations probe

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) - The state chapter of the NAACP recently called for a federal investigation of possible civil rights violations after members of the Connecticut State Police received racist e-mails.

State police have opened an internal investigation into the e-mails, which were sent to the director of the state forensic lab and employees he oversees, including troopers and civilians. It was not clear where the e-mails originated.

A photograph and video were e-mailed to private accounts in February. The photo is of a Black man lying on a street surrounded by pieces of watermelon and a bucket of chicken, while the video shows a young White girl repeating racial slurs with the encouragement of off-camera adults.

The materials, which surfaced recently, were sent earlier this year, about a week

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— Scot X. Esdaile,
President of the Conn. chapter of the NAACP

after Sgt. Andrew Crumbie was replaced as head of the lab by Lt. David Rice. Crumbie, who is Black, has alleged that racial discrimination was behind the decision to replace him with Rice, who is White.

"When Andrew Crumbie first stated that racism was at the root of his demotion, people turned a deaf ear," Scot X. Esdaile, president of the state chapter of the NAACP, said in a statement. "I think the release of these e-mails has made it clear—it's time to start listening and demanding answers."

State police officials were

not available for comment. A message was left with the agency's spokesperson, Lt. J. Paul Vance. A message was left with the U.S. Attorney's office was not returned.

Vance said last week that although the e-mails were sent using private e-mail, the internal investigation would determine whether any department policies or regulations were violated.

The e-mails were made public last Tuesday after one of the recipients, Trooper Neverill Coleman, who is Black and works at the lab, told his supervisor, Vance said.

It was not clear why Coleman waited five months to come forward. He did not return a message left at his office.

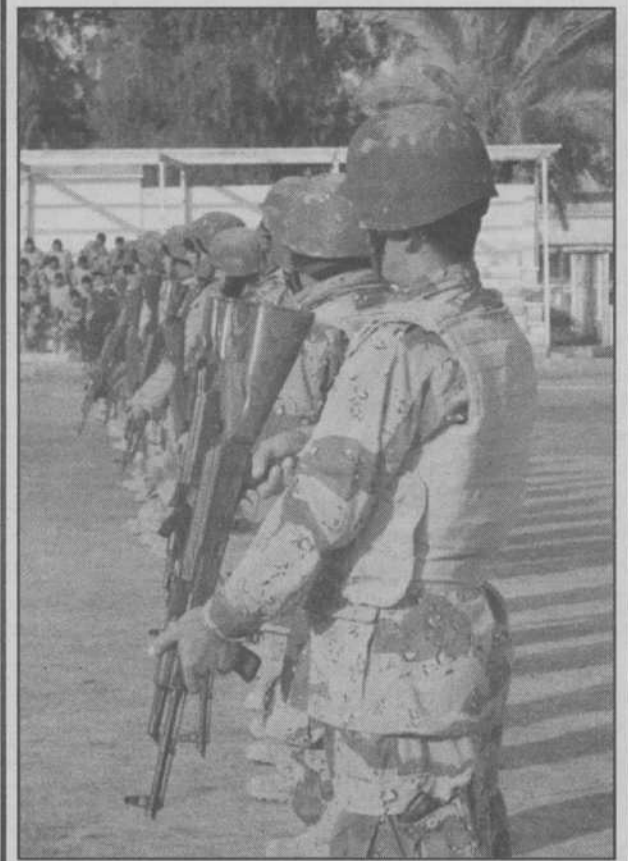
Vance said investigators are looking into whether Rice was aware of the e-mails. State police declined to release the names of the other troopers and staff that are under investigation, including the person who sent the e-mails.

Messages were left with Rice seeking comment.

Crumbie, who did not receive the e-mails, said they are indicative of the atmosphere within state police.

"I think what it shows is that there is a certain level of tolerance when it comes to behavior that may be racially insensitive," he said.

Crumbie has been transferred to the state fire marshal's office, but said he is on leave pending the outcome of his discrimination cases.



Fewer Blacks are signing up for U.S. military service.

Recruits

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recruits are on the decline, Latino recruits are on the rise, according to the data report.

Journal-isms.com, an online summary of news events, explained that many are pointing the finger at the media for the rise in Latino recruits.

Broadcasters and print outlets in conjunction with the military are playing a role in the increase in Latino recruits, explained Roberto Lovato, who often writes for the alternative, ethnic-oriented *New American Media*.

If one reads Latino-oriented magazines, Lovato said, "They're basically cheerleaders for the Pentagon." He said the Defense Department is spending millions in advertising to reach their readers.

But where are the voices in the Latino community protesting the war?

Lovato told Journal-isms.com, "Young Black Americans are the most progressive voters in the United States. Blacks are not going to buy it anymore," speaking of the war. "Latinos haven't been paid as much attention to. So you go for the next poor community you can find."

According to Lovato, former assistant secretary of defense in the Reagan administration Larry Korb stated, "A decrease in Latino enlistment numbers would make things very difficult for the armed forces, because they are the fastest-growing [minority] group in the country, and they have a very distinguished record of service in the military."

At Mosque Maryam, Min. Farrakhan gave further cautionary guidance to those who may be considering military service: "You're in the Army because you didn't want to sell drugs, you didn't want to get involved in criminal activity, and the recruiters are all in the poor neighborhoods. America's not offering you any job, but they want you in the Armed Forces. They know they're going to fight many more wars. To mothers, who have reared your sons and your daughters, suffering, scuffling for the little bit of money you can scrape, to give your children a decent life, then you send them away to Iraq and Afghanistan and they come back broken, mentally destroyed."

He added, "They're trained to kill and then are brought home with that same training in their heads. Women are taken away from their babies and sent to war. This is criminal. Then when you come home, the Veterans' Administrations are not treating you as they should."

Nisa Islam Muhammad writes for *The Final Call*.

Fewer minorities use hospice care

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) - Unlike terminally ill patients who die in hospitals, attached to tubes and monitors, Marie Madison wants to die in the comfort of her home.

The 97-year-old woman, diagnosed with acute respiratory failure in January, is the first in her family to receive home hospice care, with nurses from New Beacon Hospice in Birmingham checking on her twice a week and on call 24 hours. She also is a Black person who chose an end-of-life service that minorities have tended not to use as frequently as Whites do.

NUL

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each of these opportunities for upward economic and social mobility are available in few other countries outside the United States," the Opportunity Compact states in its conclusion.

"Therefore, maintaining equal access to these opportunities is a vital part of preserving the very principles that make this country unique and will prove to be an effective way to eliminate gaps in income, wealth and educational attainment within this country that are too often defined along the lines of race or socioeconomic status."

Morial says the NUL is not shirking opportunities to hold the Democratic Congress accountable, also. He says this year's NUL convention will be singularly focused on presidential candidates because "the president sets the agenda for Congress in reality."

The key, he says, is to get the candidates committed now. "This is about presidential leadership. That's who sets the tone," Morial said. "You can only do so much when you have limited majorities in both houses. This is about the long term. This is about trying to frame up the domestic agenda."

Blacks seek hospice care in disproportionately smaller numbers than Whites do, partly because of cost, health insurance and cultural factors, including a sense of being denied medical care on the basis of race, according to health care specialists.

"Some people think that if a doctor wants them to stay home and not come into the hospital, that the medical system isn't truly concerned about them," said Jon Radulovic, vice president of communications for the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.

Many in the hospice industry are reaching out to

Blacks and the growing Hispanic population, but Madison said no one had ever approached her about it until January.

"A social worker told me about it at the hospital and I thought it was nice," Madison said in a recent phone interview from her home.

Along with help from nurses, the hospice care team includes a chaplain who goes to Madison's home to sing her favorite hymns and read scriptures with her.

"So far, so good," she said.

In 2005, 82.2 percent of those receiving hospice care were White, while 7.5 percent identified themselves as Black or African-American, according to the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. About 75 percent of the country is White, while about 12 percent is Black, according to the Census Bureau.

The California HealthCare Foundation issued a report in March indicating that some minorities and immigrants view hospice care as a way for doctors to deny them the medical care they've been fighting to get.

New Beacon director Debbie Cox said one of her goals is to reassure minorities that hospices provide a service they should consider. "Once they see that I'm

here to help you take care of your loved one, then they warm up to you a little bit," Cox said.

Some hospices are trying to reach more Blacks through church programs.

"While I hate to generalize, African-Americans tend to rely a great deal on their spirituality and faith communities when dealing with serious illness," Radulovic said. "Further education to the faith leaders is an important part of outreach to that community."

David Stone, executive director of the Alabama Hospice Organization, said hospices also are trying to get information to Hispanics, including Spanish-language materials and making contact in faith-based community settings and gathering places.

In addition to trying to gain more minority patients, hospices are working to hire more minority employees.

"Hospices are really trying to make sure they, as hospice providers, are actually more multicultural themselves," Stone said.

He said patients generally want to be cared for by people to whom they can relate. "When you're dealing with someone at such a vulnerable time, it's understandable that you'd want someone you feel you have a connection with," Stone said.

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