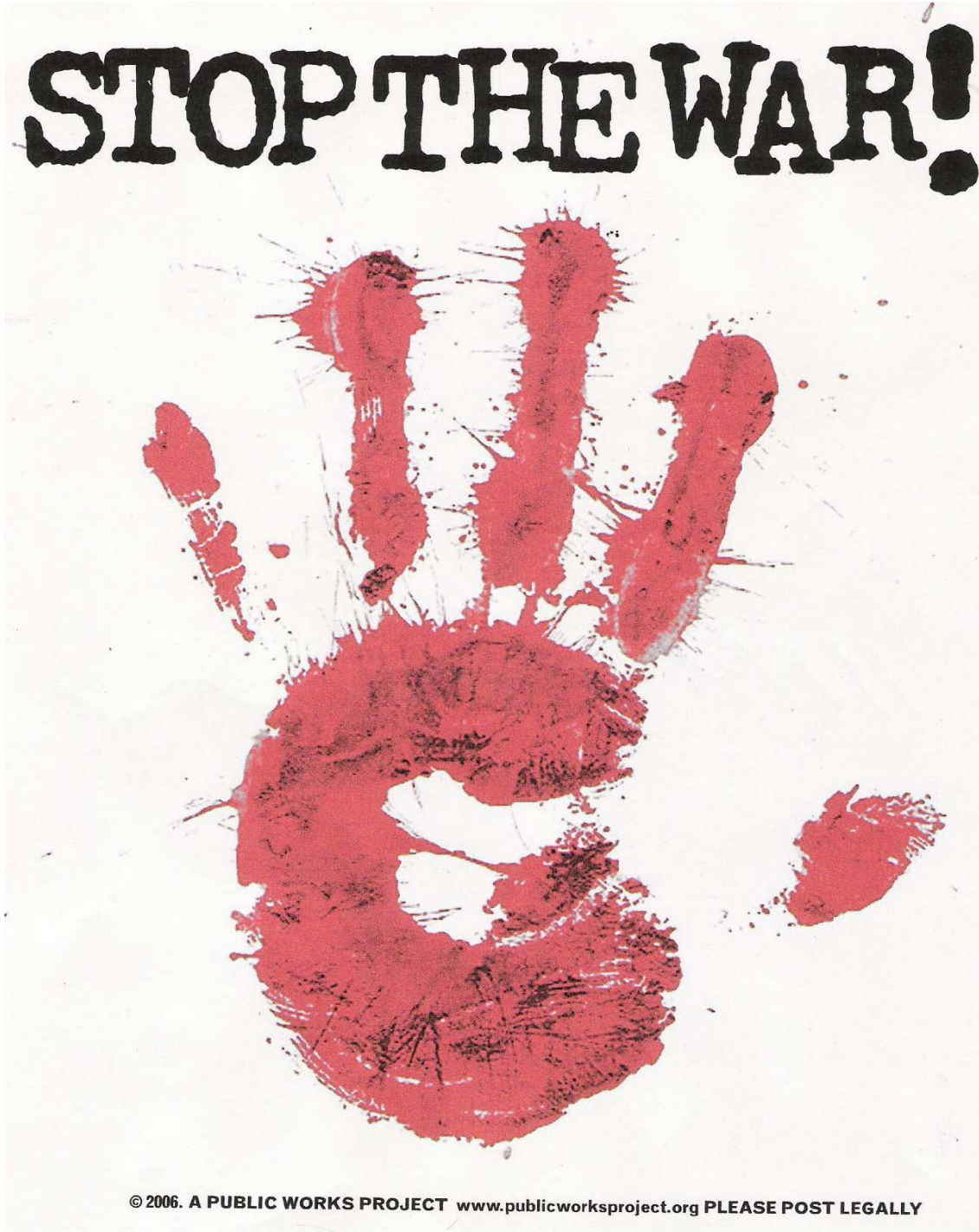


GI Special: thomasbarton@earthlink.net

4.17.06

Print it out: color best. Pass it on.

GI SPECIAL 4D17:



[Thanks to Diane R, Veterans For Peace]

“The Generals’ Revolt”

“This Storm Will Continue Until Finally It Consumes Not Only Donald Rumsfeld”

April 16, 2006 By Richard Holbrooke, The Washington Post [Excerpts]

The calls by a growing number of recently retired generals for the resignation of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld have created the most serious public confrontation between the military and an administration since President Harry S. Truman fired Gen. Douglas MacArthur in 1951.

In that epic drama, Truman was unquestionably correct -- MacArthur, the commanding general in Korea and a towering World War II hero, publicly challenged Truman's authority and had to be removed. Most Americans rightly revere the principle that was at stake: civilian control over the military. But this situation is quite different.

First, it is clear that the retired generals -- six so far, with more likely to come -- surely are speaking for many of their former colleagues, friends and subordinates who are still inside.

In the tight world of senior active and retired generals, there is constant private dialogue. Recent retirees stay in close touch with old friends, who were often their subordinates; they help each other, they know what is going on and a conventional wisdom is formed.

Retired Marine Lt. Gen. Greg Newbold, who was director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the planning period for the war in Iraq, made this clear in an extraordinary, at times emotional, article in Time magazine this past week when he said he was writing "with the encouragement of some still in positions of military leadership." He went on to "challenge those still in uniform . . . to give voice to those who can't -- or don't have the opportunity to -- speak."

Second, it is also clear that the target is not just Rumsfeld. Newbold hints at this; others are more explicit in private.

But the only two people in the government higher than the secretary of defense are the president and vice president.

This has put President Bush and his administration in a hellish position at a time when security in Iraq and Afghanistan seems to be deteriorating.

If Bush yields to the generals' revolt, he will appear to have caved in to pressure from what Rumsfeld disingenuously describes as "two or three retired generals out of thousands."

But if he keeps Rumsfeld, he risks more resignations -- perhaps soon -- from generals who heed Newbold's stunning call that as officers they took an oath to the Constitution and should now speak out on behalf of the troops in harm's way and to save the institution that he feels is in danger of falling back into the disarray of the post-Vietnam era.

Facing this dilemma, Bush's first reaction was exactly what anyone who knows him would have expected: He issued strong affirmations of "full support" for Rumsfeld, even going out of his way to refer to the secretary of defense as "Don" several times in his statements. (This was in marked contrast to his tepid comments on the future of his other embattled Cabinet officer, Treasury Secretary John Snow. Washington got the point.)

That first White House reaction will not be the end of the story.

If more angry generals emerge -- and they will -- if some of them are on active duty, as seems probable; if the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan does not turn around (and there is little reason to think it will, alas), then this storm will continue until finally it consumes not only Donald Rumsfeld.

Do you have a friend or relative in the service? Forward this E-MAIL along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the war, at home and inside the armed services. Send requests to address up top.

IRAQ WAR REPORTS

U.S. Military Reports Death Of Three Marines In Anbar

April 16, 2006 (AP)

Three U.S. Marines were killed in action in Anbar province west of Baghdad, the U.S. military said Sunday.

The Marines, who were with Regimental Combat Team Five, died Saturday. Their identities were not released.

At least 2,375 members of the U.S. military have died since the war began in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

MARINE KILLED IN AL ANBAR PROVINCE

4.16.06 HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND NEWS RELEASE
Number: 06-04-01CR

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – A Marine assigned to 2/28 Brigade Combat Team died due to enemy action while operating in al Anbar Province April 15.

Texas Airman Killed Trying To Defuse Bomb

3/31/2006 (AP)

An airman from Houston died in an explosion in Iraq earlier this week, the Defense Department said Friday.

Tech. Sgt. Walter M. Moss Jr., 37, died on Wednesday while trying to defuse a homemade bomb near Baghdad, said Capt. Kelly Cahalan, a spokeswoman for the Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho.

Moss was assigned to the 366th Civil Engineer Squadron on the base.

At least seven Texas service members have died this year in Iraq, and at least 198 have died since the war began in March 2003, according to the Defense Department.

The Price Of Government Lies

April 14, 2006 By Elaine Helm, Kitsap SUN

The condition of a 19-year-old soldier from Port Orchard who was critically wounded in Iraq this week remained unchanged Friday, according to a close friend.

Pvt. Devon Gibbons was scheduled to arrive early Saturday at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, for treatment in a specialized burn unit.

His mother, father and five brothers flew to San Antonio Friday to meet him.

Gibbons was the only survivor of a roadside bomb explosion Tuesday. The attack blew apart the Bradley Fighting Vehicle he was driving in Taji, Iraq.

Three other soldiers in the vehicle were killed. All four soldiers were members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division based at Fort Hood, Texas.

Gibbons, a former South Kitsap High School student, suffered third-degree burns over more than 90 percent of his body, a broken back and had both his legs amputated.

His friend, Lindsey Costello, said his parents received an update from doctors Friday morning before he left a military hospital in Germany, bound for Texas.

They told her he was awake and talking, she said. He had remained unconscious until Thursday night, when he awoke and started asking about his friends and the other soldiers in his vehicle.

Gibbons was sedated for the transatlantic flight, Costello said.

REALLY BAD PLACE TO BE: BRING THEM ALL HOME NOW



April 15, 2006: Marines from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment patrol the streets of Haditha, in Anbar Province April 1, 2006. (AP Photo/Sgt. Roe F. Single, U.S. Marine Corps)

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Telling the truth - about the occupation or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance - whether it's in the streets of Baghdad, New York, or inside the armed forces. Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize

resistance within the armed forces. If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers.

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/> And join with Iraq War vets in the call to end the occupation and bring our troops home now! (www.ivaw.net)

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Goatfuck? Who Said Afghanistan's A Goatfuck?



Goats keep pace with humvees from the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment in Kunar Province, eastern Afghanistan, March 11, 2006. (U.S. Marine Corps/Sgt. Joe Lindsay/Handout/Reuters)

TROOP NEWS

Iraq Vet Says It's The Lies And Carnage That Demoralizes The Troops, Not The Movement To Stop The war

4.16.06 Truthout.org

Geoffrey Millard, a veteran of the Iraq war, responds to those who say Cindy Sheehan and the protesters demoralize the troops. He argues that it's the lies and the carnage of war that make it difficult for the troops to do their job, not a grieving mother asking, "What Noble Cause were they fighting for?"

As Iraq Dead Pile Up, Bush Regime Traitors Cut Arlington Cemetery Budget!

4.17.06 Army Times

Arlington National Cemetery superintendent John Metzler said 2007 could be a difficult year. Testifying March 30 before the disability assistance and memorial affairs panel of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Metzler said the Bush administration's decision to cut the cemetery's operating budget by \$6 million "will create a challenge for us."

Former Joint Chiefs Chair Myers Calls For His Own Death

[Thanks to PB, who sent in the story, and the headline.]

4.16.06 By DOUGLASS K. DANIEL, Associated Press Writer

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld did not intimidate members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during planning of the Iraq war as some retired generals have charged, a former chairman said Sunday.

With Rumsfeld described by his critics as a micromanager who did not listen to military leaders, the Pentagon circulated a one-page memo late last week detailing the defense secretary's frequent contacts with numerous military and civilian advisers.

Richard B. Myers, the Air Force general who was chairman of the Joint Chiefs from 2001 until last fall, dismissed criticism that military leaders failed to stand up to Rumsfeld and President Bush when they disagreed with those civilian officials.

"We gave him our best military advice and I think that's what we're obligated to do," Myers said on "This Week" on ABC. "If we don't do that, we should be shot."

Australian “Overwhelming Majority” Wants All Troops Out By June: Government Says Troops Stay Until 2007: [So Much For That Silly Stupid Empty Meaningless Bullshit About Living In A “Democracy”]

March 20, 2006 By Cynthia Banham, Foreign Affairs Reporter, The Sydney Morning Herald

THE overwhelming majority of Australians - 65 per cent - want troops to be withdrawn from Iraq either immediately or, at the latest, when their mission providing security for the Japanese humanitarian mission ends in May, according to a poll.

The survey of 500 people, conducted by UMR Research for the political consultancy Hawker Britton, found that 28 per cent wanted the 460-strong Australian deployment protecting Japanese engineers in the southern al-Muthanna province out of Iraq immediately. Another 37 per cent wanted the troops withdrawn once the Japanese mission ends.

Twenty-four per cent of respondents said they wanted Australian troops to remain in Iraq until the country was "considered to be peaceful and stable, even if it takes a long time", while 8 per cent said they should stay until US troops pulled out.

Last week the Minister for Defence, Brendan Nelson, said the troops would take on a new role after the Japanese left in May, joining the "over watch" program in support of Iraqi security forces, police and local government.

Dr Nelson said this would mean Australian troops would remain in Iraq "well into 2007".

Hold Retired Pay Until Age 60?

**“After 20 Years In The Army, I Think I And
Many Others Will Have Had Our Fill Of Long
Hours And High Stress”**

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
4.17.06

The only proposal that I see big problems with is the “retirement payout begins at 60” idea.

Many of us in the Army plan our post-retirement career based on that retirement income. For example, I will be 43 when I’m eligible to retire at 20 years. At that point, I will be ready to do something less stressful than being a mid- to senior-level manager.

Jobs like park ranger, sheriff and Home Depot employee don’t pay what I would need to maintain my family’s standard of living on my Army paycheck. Having that retirement check keeps us where we need to be.

But if I have to wait, that is 22 more years of needing a higher-level, higher-paying, more stressful job.

After 20 years in the Army, I think I and many others will have had our fill of long hours and high stress.

Capt. Chris Kelly
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

“It Is A Wonder Anyone Stays In The Military With The Number Of Empty Promises”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
4.17.06

No one in the military will ever be treated as nicely as a civilian because it is not possible, so quit comparing military service to a civilian job.

After a 20- to 30-year career, we have put in between 45 and 60 years’ worth of work. You want me to wait until I am 60 to receive my retirement?

A National Guardsman or reservist gets the same option for one weekend a month and two weeks a year, not counting activations and deployments. I could just do this as a hobby, get a civilian job and do much better.

I see no reason for spitting in the face of career soldiers by not giving them bonuses for every year they stay beyond 10. Even if it is only an extra \$100 per month as a thank you, it’s something.

It is a wonder anyone stays in the military with the number of empty promises.

I lost 50 percent of my crew chiefs upon returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom because some had not been able to see their children as they started reaching awareness ages. Others had not spent even six months at home before being sent out for a third deployment.

We have a lot of things that need addressing in the military, but changing our retirement is not one of them.

Staff Sgt. (P) Alan M. Carroll
Fort Eustis, Va.

“20 Years Of Eating Crap, Deploying, Being Away From The Family And Being Assigned At The ‘Needs Of The Army’ Whim”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
4.17.06

I could endlessly describe how actual pay to retirees and active-duty service members is being continually eaten away. The percentage of pay being taken for benefits continues to grow.

We want our soldiers and their families to put up with poor to nonexistent medical care, recurring yearlong deployments, getting shot at, lagging career pay, new uniform costs every time the wind changes, new priorities and command climates every time the battalion-brigade-division changes command, and ever-changing rules and regulations for pay, promotion, education and so on.

What keeps soldiers capable of putting up with it all is the glimmer of hope of a small pittance of pay after 20 years of service — 20 years of eating crap, deploying, being away from the family and being assigned at the “needs of the Army” whim.

Yes, there is patriotism. But that only carries one so far.

It does not carry a family through four deployments.

Delaying retirement pay is an idiotic idea.

If you want to kill an all-volunteer Army and start the draft again, this is the way to do it.

Lt. Col. Stephen Barger (ret.)
Fort Meade, Md.

“Our Jobs Are No Closer To A Civilian Job Than We Are To Catching Osama Bin Laden”

Letters To The Editor
Army Times
4.17.06

I can't say all of the proposals are bad, but one stands out like a sore thumb — having newer recruits wait until age 60 before receiving retirement pay.

This is to make the military compensation system more like those civilian employers offer.

This will be great for soldiers. They can have weekends and holidays off. They can take their leave — i.e., vacation — and not be charged for the two days of vacation weekends they would have had otherwise.

They will have to work only eight hours a day; anything after that will be overtime. When they are sick, they can just call in, instead of having to get up and go to sick call.

They will not have to go to South Korea or another foreign country and leave their family at home. Best of all — no combat duty.

Our jobs are no closer to a civilian job than we are to catching Osama bin Laden.

Master Sgt. Brian K. Ward
Princeton, Ky.

“The Potential Recruit — I Mean ‘Employee’ — Must Demand All Benefits And Future Entitlements In Writing Right From Jump Street”

Letters To The Editor

Army Times
4.17.06

I would rather see a sweeping change in the wording of contractual agreements signed by the recruit when processing through the military entrance processing stations.

As we are “civilianizing” the military, the potential recruit — I mean “employee” — must demand all benefits and future entitlements in writing right from jump street.

This is only fair since the benefits promised by recruiters are nothing more than lip service and can be changed on a whim — all, of course, at the new employee’s expense.

Furthermore, the new employee should be allowed to take the contract home and let his family’s attorney look it over. We want to ensure nothing is overlooked.

Sgt. 1st Class Anthony J. McGaha
Camp Humphreys, South Korea

Another Blinding Flash Of The Obvious

April 16, 2006 Sarah Baxter , Washington, The Sunday Times

There are 140,000 US troops in Iraq. Lieutenant-General John Vines, who stepped down as commander of ground forces in Iraq at the beginning of this year, said it was essential to reduce the numbers.

“There is an incredible amount of stress and I’m worried about it,” said Vines.

He added that soldiers were on their third or fourth tours of duty in Iraq: “The war has been going on nearly as long as the second world war and we’re asking a lot of the forces.”

IRAQ RESISTANCE ROUNDUP

Assorted Resistance Action

16 April 2006 RTÉ & AP & Reuters

A policeman was killed and two injured, when guerrilla fighters opened fire on two police stations in Sadr City.

Another policeman was killed in a similar shoot-out in Al-Sulekh neighborhood in Hilla.

Police also found the body of an Iraqi soldier in Hillah, 60 miles south of the capital in Babil province.

Police said three bodies in army clothes were found near Ramadi, 110 km (68 miles) west of Baghdad.



Bodies of three police recruits found about four kilometers (2.5 miles) west of Ramadi April 16, 2006. Police said notes left on the bodies said: 'This is the punishment for new police recruits.' (AP Photo)

**IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE RESISTANCE
END THE OCCUPATION**

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS

One day while I was in a bunker in Vietnam, a sniper round went over my head. The person who fired that weapon was not a terrorist, a rebel, an extremist, or a so-called insurgent. The Vietnamese individual who tried to kill me was a citizen of Vietnam, who did not want me in his country. This truth escapes millions.

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
December 13, 2004**

More Canonical Murphy's Laws of Combat

Strategypage.com

90. The bursting radius of a hand grenade is always one foot greater than your jumping range.

91. All-weather close air support doesn't work in bad weather.

92. The combat worth of a unit is inversely proportional to the smartness of its outfit and appearance.

93. The crucial round is a dud.

94. Every command which can be misunderstood, will be.

95. There is no such place as a convenient foxhole.

96. Don't ever be the first, don't ever be the last and don't ever volunteer to do anything.

97. If your positions are firmly set and you are prepared to take the enemy assault on, he will bypass you.

98. If your ambush is properly set, the enemy won't walk into it.

99. If your flank march is going well, the enemy expects you to outflank him.

100. The quartermaster has only two sizes, too large and too small.

101. Odd objects attract fire: never lurk behind one.

102. The more stupid the leader is, the more important missions he is ordered to carry out.

103. The self-importance of a superior is inversely proportional to his position in the hierarchy (as is his deviousness and mischievousness).

104. There is always a way, and it usually doesn't work.

105. Success occurs when no one is looking, failure occurs when the General is watching.

106. The enemy never monitors your radio frequency until you broadcast on an unsecured channel.

107. Whenever you drop your equipment in a fire-fight, your ammo and grenades always fall the farthest away, and your canteen always lands at your feet.

108. As soon as you are served hot chow in the field, it rains.
109. Never tell the Platoon Sergeant you have nothing to do.
110. The seriousness of a wound (in a fire-fight) is inversely proportional to the distance to any form of cover.
111. When you have sufficient ammo the enemy takes 2 weeks to attack. When you are low on ammo the enemy attacks that night.
112. Your bivouac for the night is the spot where you got tired of marching that day.
113. If only one solution can be found for a field problem, then it is usually a stupid solution.
114. Radios function perfectly until you need fire support.
115. What gets you promoted from one rank gets you killed in the next rank.
116. If orders can be misunderstood they will be.
117. Odd objects attract fire. You are odd.
118. Your mortar barrage will put exactly one round on the intended target. That round will be a dud.
119. Mine fields are not neutral.
120. The weight of your equipment is proportional to the time you have been carrying it.
121. Things that must be together to work can never be shipped together.
122. If you need an officer in a hurry take a nap.
123. The effective killing radius of a grenade is greater than the average soldier can throw it.
124. Professionals are predictable; it's the amateurs that are dangerous.
125. A clean (and dry) set of BDU's is a magnet for mud and rain.
126. No matter which way you have to march, its always uphill.
127. The worse the weather, the more you are required to be out in it.

Is There A “White-Skin Privilege”?

“If ‘White Privilege’ Exists, Then There Are Millions Of Ordinary White Workers Who Have Yet To Figure Out Exactly How To Cash In”

April 14, 2006 Socialist Worker

KEEANGA-YAMAHTTA TAYLOR examines one popular explanation for the persistence of racism: that all whites benefit from the oppression of all Blacks, and therefore enjoy a “white-skin privilege.”

THE NEW York Times recently reported that in 2004, 72 percent of African American men in their 20s who had dropped out of high school were unemployed, compared to only 34 percent of white men and 19 percent of Latinos. Half of Black men in their 20s with high school diplomas were unemployed in 2004.

Decades after the civil rights movement, second-class citizenship, poverty and injustice are stark realities for millions of African Americans in this country. After Hurricane Katrina, no one with any remote contact with reality could deny that both race and class are the axes upon which American society rotates.

The new movement for immigrant rights has helped to expose the racism that shapes the lives of millions of brown people in this country, as well. From Arabs to Mexicans, racial minorities are blamed for everything from “potential” terrorist attacks to unemployment.

The question arises, though: Does the oppression of one group of workers lead to the enrichment or benefit of another?

On the surface, this may seem like common sense. A cursory look at any set of statistics shows that, on average, white people have more accumulated wealth, make more money, have more access to college, go to better schools and even have a longer lifespan.

What all of these things point to is that we live in a deeply racist society, in which some people clearly do benefit. The question is, which people.

The problem with framing this inequality in terms of “white-skin privilege” is twofold.

If we only look at aggregate statistics telling us that “whites” are better off than “Blacks,” it doesn’t provide the whole picture. It doesn’t tell us which whites are better off than which Blacks.

If we only go by the numbers and not what lies beneath the numbers, then what do we say about the fact that Latino unemployment is lower than Black unemployment?

Are Latinos benefiting from Black oppression?

What do we say about the fact that immigrants have a higher poverty rate than Black Americans?

Are Blacks benefiting from the oppression of immigrants?

Second, the idea of “white privilege” never addresses the central question of why racism arose in the first place, and in whose interest.

Racism developed in the West during the Atlantic slave trade as a way to “explain” the enslavement of Africans. Slaveholders in this country--who were also the political elite, including many of the so-called “founding fathers”--rationalized that Africans were savages, had no culture and could benefit from slavery.

When slavery ended, racism did not end with it, but became a tool by which the wealthy could divide poor Blacks from poor whites.

Racism, in the “golden age” of imperialism at the end of the 19th century and into the 20th century, also was a justification for invading other parts of the world in order to “civilize” the “savages,” or to take up the “white man’s burden.”

THE NOTION of white-skin privilege obscures the fact that we live in a class society, in which a tiny minority of rich people rule and control all of the wealth and resources in society. Because they are few, they rely on scapegoats and division to maintain their rule.

This isn’t a conspiracy--instead, it happens in front of our faces every day.

The politicians today blame immigrants for unemployment and low wages--not the fact that the minimum wage isn’t a living wage, or that corporations are allowed to abandon entire cities because it’s cheaper to move production to a nonunion state or a poorer country.

“White privilege” makes it seem that all whites are responsible for oppressing all Blacks.

This outlook ignores the class divide.

The ruling class in this country is made up almost entirely of white men, but not exclusively. It is difficult to conceive of how Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice or former Secretary of State Colin Powell are victimized by their lack of white privilege.

While those two are easy to pick out, in general, the Black political elite and Black executives--from Sen. Barack Obama to Kenneth Chenault, the CEO of American Express--are not suffering because of a lack of white privilege either. In fact, they have a lot more say over the lives of ordinary white workers than those white workers will ever have over them.

Conversely, if “white privilege” exists, then there are millions of ordinary white workers who have yet to figure out exactly how to cash in.

The fact is that the majority of people without health care, the majority of the unemployed, the majority of the homeless and the majority of those who live in poverty are white. These numbers don’t reflect benefits or privilege. They reflect exploitation and oppression.

The disparity that does exist between white and non-white workers is the result of racism and discrimination, not white privilege, by employers, landlords, mortgage lenders, city governments and the federal government.

Racism harms all workers, including white workers, by driving down wages and living standards for the entire working class.

It is the ruling class that has always been the true beneficiary of racism. From the riches gained from slave labor, to divided workforces unable to unite for better wages and conditions, our rulers have clearly reaped all of the benefits and privileges.

The clearest way to illustrate this is to compare the incomes of Black and white workers in the North and South of the U.S.

As one author wrote: “Despite the continued gross discrimination against Black skilled craftsmen in the North, the ‘privileged’ southern whites earned 4 percent less than they did. Southern white male operatives averaged...18 percent less than northern Black male operatives. And southern white service workers earned...14 percent less than northern Black male service workers.”

It was never ordained that just because one lives in the North, wages are supposed to be higher, or if one lives in the South, wages automatically have to be lower. Southern workers--Black and white--make lower wages and generally have a lower standard of living because of the legacy of the most vicious racism, and the ability of the bosses to use racism, threats and intimidation to limit unionization.

NONE OF this is to say that there aren’t white workers who buy into racist ideas. But the fact is that all workers--regardless of race--buy into some idea of racism.

For example, many workers, Black, white and Latino, have bought into the idea--to some degree--that Arabs and Muslims are more likely to be terrorists, and therefore should be treated differently. Black and white workers accept some of the anti-immigrant hysteria against Latinos because of the anxiety about the economy and jobs.

But we have to distinguish between what individual workers may think, and real material benefits.

Workers buy into racism for two primary reasons--and not because we are all born with some predisposition to racism.

The first is that we live in a society in which racism is the norm.

We are inundated with racist stereotypes about Blacks, immigrants, Arabs and Muslims every single day. From the media perpetuating suspicion about Blacks; to Hollywood's portrayal of non-whites as drug dealers or terrorists, and not much in between; to Democrats and Republicans using "wedge issues" like affirmative action to conjure resentment between non-white workers and white workers; the ruling class actively uses racism to divide the working class.

The great Black abolitionist, Frederick Douglass put it succinctly, "The hostility between the whites and the Blacks of the South is easily explained...[B]oth are plundered by the same plunderers...and [hostility] was incited on both sides by the poor whites and the Blacks by putting enmity between them. They divided both to conquer each."

The other reason racism exists in the working class is that workers compete with each other for jobs, housing, education and everything else in this society.

As Karl Marx explained, "Competition separates individuals from one another, not only the bourgeois but still more the workers, in spite of the fact it brings them together. Hence, it is a long time before these individuals can unite...Hence every power standing over these isolated individuals...can only be overcome after long struggles."

But struggle does change the ideas of the working class. The civil rights movement fundamentally changed the racist caricatures that white workers had of Black workers. By the beginning of the 1970s, most white workers were in favor of affirmative action--only a few years after Blacks had gotten the right to vote.

The mass movement of Latino immigrants today is playing a crucial role in shifting racist ideas about immigrant workers.

The advances made in changing consciousness will not be permanent until we have a society based on justice and equality, not racism and scapegoating.

The Strange Career Of The Omnipresent Zarqawi

April 15, 2006 Truth about Iraqis [Excerpt]

In March, the US military said Zarqawi was not leading the "Iraq unrest" (is that what they call it in Washington these days?).

On April 2nd, the son of Osama bin Laden's mentor (talk about six degrees of separation here) said Zarqawi was no longer leading the "resistance" and was "sacked for mistakes".

On April 6th, the US military announces the capture of Abu Ayman, another mongrel aide to Zarqawi (how many does that make?).

On April 10th, the Washington Post, citing US military sources, reported that a propaganda campaign may have raised al-Zarqawi's profile and overstated his importance.

Any Iraqi could have told you that. When some 100 attacks were reported in Iraq every day, US media and the military blamed them all on Zarqawi. Omnipresent, the mongrel was?

A few days after this report emerged, US military personnel, perhaps embarrassed by the Zarqawi scheme, said he had conceded defeat in Iraq and had fled the country.

Quaint. So, how much of his significance was overplayed? US media quoted US officials as saying Zarqawi personally beheaded poor Nicholas Berg.

Another question, if the significance of Zarqawi was overplayed, does that mean the capture of his 100,000 lieutenants was also a figment of some propagandist's imagination?

The debacle in Iraq is become worse by the day.

OCCUPATION REPORT

Duly-elected Iraq Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari Gets Taken for a Ride



OCCUPATION PALESTINE

Ambulance Attacked By Israeli Occupation Troops

4/10/2006 Palestine Red Crescent Society

Saturday 8/4/2006.

At Jet checkpoint (East of Qalqilia), Israeli soldiers attacked a PRCS ambulance and prevented the crew from crossing the checkpoint.

Israeli soldiers beat one of the emergency medical personnel and prevented the ambulance from crossing the check point, delaying the medical team for more than half an hour.

The ambulance was finally allowed to pass following coordination from the International Red Cross. The Israeli soldiers had closed Jet checkpoint early morning that same day, preventing the movement of Palestinian vehicles and ambulances.

This closure prevented cancer and thalesemia patients from being transported to hospitals in Nablus for treatment.

This checkpoint separates Qalqilia from Nablus, two heavily populated cities in the Northern West Bank.

[To check out what life is like under a murderous military occupation by a foreign power, go to: www.rafahtoday.org The foreign army is Israeli; the occupied nation is Palestine.]

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

RUMSFELD ORDERS RETIRED GENERALS BACK TO ACTIVE DUTY

April 14, 2006 The Borowitz Report

One day after six prominent retired generals called for his resignation, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld ordered all six of them back to average duty.

"The time has come for these so-called retired generals to start spending less time with their families," Secretary Rumsfeld said at a Pentagon press briefing.

The Defense Secretary said that the six generals would be returned to active duty "at once" and pressed into service in Iraq.

"We will be parachuting all six of them into Baghdad Monday at dawn," Secretary Rumsfeld said. "And we will have body armor ready for them by June 2007."

The Defense Secretary said that with the U.S.'s military manpower stretched to the limit in Iraq and Afghanistan, returning retired generals to active duty was the simplest way to make up for the shortfall.

"If we un-rotate enough of these folks, why, we won't need a draft," he chuckled.

Retired major general John Batiste, who commanded the Army's 1st Infantry Division in Iraq in 2003 and 2004, said that he would gladly return to Iraq as ordered, but said that the decision to restore the six Rumsfeld critics to active duty "seemed a little bit fishy to me, timing-wise."

For his part, Secretary Rumsfeld said the move to un-rotate the generals had nothing to do with their criticism of him: "They said we didn't have enough boots on the ground, and now we have twelve more boots on the ground."



CLASS WAR REPORTS

Immigrants Striking May 1 Against Law That Would Make Them Criminals: “You're Going To See Something Like You've Never Seen In The United States”

"You have to think of other creative ways to make it clear to Congress and the Bush administration that we expect them to behave responsibly," Gutierrez said. Organizers chose May 1, he said, because of "its special symbolism" as an international workers' day.

[Thanks to PB, who sent this in. He writes: Here's a new thing: hundreds of thousands of WORKERS are going to be marching on MAY FIRST for working-class rights. It's about time!!!]

April 14, 2006 By Darryl Fears and N.C. Aizenman, Washington Post Staff Writers
[Excerpts]

The coalition of grass-roots organizations that staged huge rallies on behalf of illegal immigrants in recent weeks is torn over an ambitious next step, a massive job and economic boycott that some are calling "A Day Without Immigrants."

Across the country, some groups have expressed enthusiasm for a May 1 action that they hope would paralyze restaurants, hotels, meat-packing plants and construction sites.

But others have questioned the strategic value of such a move so soon after the wave of demonstrations, particularly as it would require many illegal immigrants to risk their jobs by skipping yet another workday.

"You can only march for so long to make your point," said Juan Jose Gutierrez, national coordinator for Latino Movement USA, an early proponent of the boycott. He said organizers need to keep the pressure on Congress to reject a House immigration bill that would make it a felony to be in the country illegally or to assist an illegal immigrant.

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Organizers chose May 1, he said, because of "its special symbolism" as an international workers' day.

In Los Angeles, organizers were planning the boycott even before the March 25 rally there that produced half a million people. They want to erect a stage downtown on May 1 and invite movie stars, said Mike Garcia, president of the Service Employees International Union Local 1877.

In Chicago, "everyone in the Spanish media now is talking about a May Day," said Artemio Arreola, a member of the Mexican Federation, a driving force behind a march last month that included about 300,000 people.

And in Dallas, where between 350,000 and 500,000 turned out for a demonstration on Sunday, Jesse Diaz, president of the local League of United Latin American Citizens, predicted that the boycott idea "is going to take off like wildfire. There's so much emotion in the air. You're going to see something like you've never seen in the United States."

In the coming days, representatives of hundreds of groups across the nation will be meeting to decide whether to support the boycott. Whatever happens at those gatherings, supporters of the action said, the idea has already taken hold.

"Word has started getting out through the Listservs on the Internet, through mass media," Gutierrez said. "The buzz has gone national. This idea has taken a life of its own, and although there will be detractors for a whole variety of reasons, May 1 will happen."

What do you think? Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Send to thomasfbarton@earthlink.net. Name, I.D., address withheld unless publication requested. Replies confidential.

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