

Troop surge in Iraq just more folly

By Ron Walters
Special to Sentinel-Voice

The administration's latest decision to add at least 21,000 troops to the fighting in Iraq is the wrong step because it extends the original folly of waging a military conflict in Iraq in a fruitless search to find "victory" in the quagmire that the invasion has created. It is strongly rejected by many citizens who voted to stop the war and by U.S. military commanders, because it has been tried twice and is largely viewed as the force that has increased U. S. casualties in Iraq.

The most crucial aspect of the surge is that it puts more American troops in jeopardy of their lives in an ultimately unwinnable war. America lost what turned into a guerilla war in Korea in 1954; it lost a guerilla war in Vietnam in 1974 and it has lost this guerilla war, too.

What kept these operations alive — and grew the casualty rate and the expenditure of precious funds — is the fiction of American military supremacy in the pursuit of equally fictitious theories. Remember the "domino theory" that if American lost in Southeast Asia, all of Asia would fall to Communism?

The only question is when will the various theoretical fallacies (if we don't fight them there, we will have to fight them in the streets of America) be recognized as bankrupt and the war be drawn officially to a close by American officials recognizing that they cannot win it.

In real terms, the out-going commander of the Iraq War, General Abizaid has already expressed his doubts that additional troops could change the reality on the ground faced by American troops and his view was backed up by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as by the Iraq Commission Report.

George Bush uses the troops fighting in Iraq in the most political of ways: on one hand, he praises the generals and their troops at every opportunity for doing a thankless job; then, he discards the advice of the generals when it is convenient and when they have advised him that a troop surge will not bring "victory" in his terms.

Okay, let's say that Baghdad is "stabi-



RON WALTERS

lized" and that the new strategy of "clear and hold" is adopted by the military. Then what? How long will American troops be able to hold their positions and will they become sitting ducks as they hold these positions for more attacks and more casualties as a result? So, it appears that Bush is ready to sacrifice the troops — and I use that word purposefully — in

the service of a questionable gamble that the infusion of more troops might help to "stabilize" at least Baghdad. This is a recipe for the continuance for failure.

The bottom line here is that U. S. troops — the troops of any country — are the instruments of a policy, but Bush has used them to front his policy by inferring that if you don't support the policy, you don't support the troops. This is flawed logic that would not fly in any banana republic. So why does it fly in the most affluent, the most intellectually perspicacious, the most militarily — oriented nation in the world?

The answer is that Americans do not want

to face up to the fact that this war can't be won and as such, they permit Bush to hide behind the vague goals of "victory" extending a destructive enterprise that should have been closed down long ago. The "new" plan to surge 21,000 more troops is accompanied by a proposal to put \$5 billion more into a rat hole called the Iraq War, an amount that compares to that in the annual U.S. budget for the Community Block Grant program that funds many worthwhile project in American cities; the Bush administration has cut back in the appropriations each year.

So, Democrats have to revise their vow not to cut off funding for the military campaign in Iraq, because they are not the ones to put the troops in jeopardy — the president did that. And don't have the temerity to cut off funding, at minimum they should re-evaluate their conduct of this war and begin to withdraw the troops. This is the strategy that closed down other wars and may well have to be used in this case, too.

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Ban M-word—Minority has no significance

By James Clingman
Special to Sentinel-Voice

Ban the M-word. No, that's not a typographical error. I mean to say M, not N. The M-word has the same effect as the other infamous word we are trying to eradicate and stop people from calling Blacks. So, as we work to wipe out the N-word, let's also refrain from referring to Black people, or allowing others to refer to us, as "minorities."

Now before you go off, and start finding excuses for subjugating and subordinating your people, and before you start your search for other references to Black people, let's think about the M-word for a moment and see if it warrants banishment from our social and business lexicon.

Whoever defines you also has the power to control you. One of the best lessons we have on that was in the movie "Roots" when Kunta Kinte refused to be called Toby. The White man insisted, and went to extreme measures to break Kunta, because he knew that by determining who Kunta was, it would be easier to control him.

So it is with the M-word. It has been used as a label to connote "less than" and has kept Black folks scrambling for and settling for less than our fair share of the very resources our forefathers and mothers worked and died for.

In the business sector, both public and private, we have minority programs, minority affairs and minority set asides. Despite meager attempts by the government to ameliorate the problems of discrimination against Black people with various Constitutional amendments and such, "Black rights" soon became "minority rights" and everyone except White males became a minority.

Now it's even worse. After many cities completed their disparity studies in the late 1990s and found that Black people had been discriminated against, some of them, including my own city, moved from "minority" programs to "Small Business Enterprise Programs." This program accommodates not just so-called minorities; it allows everyone, including White males, to participate. Once again, so much for helping Black people, the ones to whom the debt is owed.

Black rights have been watered down and are now recognized as "minority" rights because we have allowed someone else to define us as a people. We may be "in the minority" in this country, but we are not "a minority." Taking a world view, we're not in



JAMES CLINGMAN

the minority.

To show you how silly this game is, in some cities the so-called minority groups collectively comprise the majority of the population, yet they allow themselves to be called and treated as a "minority." In other cities, where there are majorities of Black people, there are "minority" programs to which Blacks are subjected. Hence, the ridiculous term "majority minority."

Look at towns such as Gary, Detroit, Atlanta, Washington, D.C., or many of the other small towns that are majority Black. Why would Black people take a back seat to anyone by settling for 20 percent or 30 percent of the contracts, thus, allowing the other 70 percent to go to White males?

The sad part is that we have been programmed so well to expect and accept being called minority. What was supposed to positively response to past discrimination and mistreatment has now put us at an even greater disadvantage in this country. That's why we should ban the M-word, as well as terms like "people of color," when we are really referring to Black people. Let's not be afraid or ashamed to say who we are, and let's not settle for less than that from anyone else.

Now, back to the objections we will surely receive about this. Blacks are engaged in an ongoing discussion about what we should call ourselves, that is, Africans, Afrikaans, African-Americans, Afro-Americans, People of African Descent, etc.

The context of my issue with the M-word lies with business and the barriers to economic empowerment for our people because of our willing acceptance of a subordinate classification. I will defer to more learned brothers and sisters to determine what we should call ourselves in the context of nationhood, and I will accept what they recom-

mend.

But for now, knowing how the game is played and how we are played when it comes to public assets paid for with our tax dollars, and private sector contracts supported by our consumer dollars, I am advocating for the term Black. That's why our new action alliance is saying "Bring Back Black!" We must define ourselves and take more control of our own destiny.

In his seminal work, "The Destruction of Black Civilization," Chancellor Williams wrote: "The term 'Black' was given a rebirth by the Black youth revolt. As reborn, it does not refer to the particular color (or as one objector complained, the phenotype) of any particular person, but to the attitude of pride and devotion to the race whose homeland from times immemorial was called, 'The Land of the Blacks.'

Almost overnight our youngsters made "Black" coequal with 'White' in respectability and challenged the anti-Black Negroes to decide on which side they stood. This was no problem for many who are light or even near-white in complexion, for they themselves were among the first to proclaim with pride, 'Call me Black!'"

Williams went on to write: "In ancient times 'African' and 'Ethiopian' meant the same thing: a Black. This, of course, was before the Caucasians began to reorder the earth to suit themselves and found it necessary to stake their birthright over the Land of the Blacks also."

Today, in 2007, Blacks have reverted to allowing Whites to define us with words like "minority" and have thereby reordered this country to benefit themselves, as they did with the Kunta Kinte's. As for me, the disagreements among us notwithstanding, I am going with Chancellor Williams on this one. Down with the M-Word; Bring Back Black!

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Curry

(Continued from Page 10)

us had the intelligence to play middle line-backer? They weren't thinking about logic at all. The goal was to suppress Black aspiration and accomplishment.

That brings me back to my original point. Black kids will be among the millions watching this year's Super Bowl on TV. And while most eyes will be fixed on the action occurring on the field, some youngster will notice the guys walking on the sidelines with a headset on. From that moment on, the kids won't

have to wonder whether they can compete at the highest level of coaching, they will have proof. They would have seen it for themselves.

If Tony Dungy coaches Indianapolis in the Super Bowl, that will be wonderful. If Lovie Smith leads the Bears on the field, that, too, will be a delight. If both of them end up on opposite sidelines, I'll be in football heaven. No one could possibly miss the point.

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