

OPINION

Message to Barrack: Make Love Not War

History has a habit of repeating itself

BY WILLIAM REED

Blacks who believe Barack Obama can do no wrong would grimace at Texas Congressman Ron Paul calling him "a war monger." Paul would infuriate the Obama faithful further in saying: "The military industrial complex is firmly entrenched in Washington and Barack Obama is one of their guys."



Like those who occupied the Oval Office before him, President Obama is overly influenced by the military industrial complex. Their business is war, and military industry people are in line with Obama's going to Libya. Every time a Tomahawk cruise missile blows up a building in Libya (and everyone inside it), Raytheon makes \$1.5 million.

History has a habit of repeating itself. Unfortunately, not enough people pay attention to obvious parallels right before

their eyes. What is unfolding now in Libya is a tragic replay of what has gone before. Wars are costly and extremely expensive, but don't count on Obama or America's military apparatus leaving Iraq or Afghanistan anytime soon.

The military industry that controls Washington, and Obama as well, wants wars. Wars mean profits and the more wars the merrier the profiteers. The term "military-industrial complex" refers to policy and monetary relationships between governments, national armed forces, and the industrial sector that supports them. Blacks are rarely top players in these relationships which include political contributions, political approval for defense spending, lobbying to support bureaucracies, and beneficial legislation and oversight of the industry.

The world spends over \$1.5 trillion yearly on military expenditures and the U.S. accounts for 47 percent of those expenditures. To be fair, wars have helped America's advancements. Advances in technology and scientific research were

achieved through war expenditures such as jet engines, rocket propulsion, plastics and other synthetics, and television and radar. Medical breakthroughs, including sulfa drugs, penicillin, and quinine, were consequences of war.

The "no-fly zone" over Libya could end up costing the Western coalition more than \$1 billion if the operation drags on more than a couple of months. The

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initial cost of eliminating Muammar Gaddafi's air defenses will likely be between \$400 million and \$800 million. The expense of patrolling the no-fly zone once it is likely to be \$30 million to \$100 million a week.

President Obama's decision to participate in striking Libya has already cost U.S. taxpayers well over \$200 million, but although Obama is in bed with a coalition of former colonialists in the invasion of this African coun-

try, Obama still has a 95 percent approval rating among African Americans.

There is no anger or agitation among African Americans against President Obama and a Congress that should be ending the wars we were already in, or against our military leaders starting new ones, such as Libya. With Obama leading the pack, black Americans are part and parcel of imperialists' acts against

Arabs and other people of color the U.S. is "warring against".

One would think that two horrendously expensive military disasters would be enough for this president and his advisers. After all, we're already spending \$1 million per soldier, per year in Afghanistan, and will spend close to half-a-trillion dollars. Whether under Bush or Obama, the U.S. accounts for 47 percent of world military expenditures. The former colonialists we've gone

to war with represent 13 percent of world military spending.

For all his campaign criticism of the Bush Administration's foreign policy, Obama is seamlessly continuing the goals of neo-conservatives to permanently reshape the American definition of "national security", and bullying of Third World countries.

Through it all, African Americans are right behind Obama's war machine. They take comfort in the fact these current actions are based on lofty goals shared by U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and other "coalition" members.

However, this strategy constitutes a disservice to American taxpayers. What are the Obama fanatics going to say when the people who make up the peace and justice conscious movement in this country stand up and say: "We don't endorse military intervention by Britain, France, Italy, NATO or any other colonial forces in the name of 'humanitarian assistance' in Libya?"

William Reed is a national political commentator and media entrepreneur.

Slowly but Surely, the Economy Improves

Campaign pledge delivered



BY JUDGE GREG MATHIS

President Obama has taken a lot of flack from Republicans for his "failure" to create jobs and get millions of unemployed Americans back to work. To hear his critics tell it, the President has done little to nothing in the way of job creation.

However, recent statistics from the Department of Labor paint a different picture, one that

shows the President has kept his word and that, slowly but surely, Americans are finding jobs.

More than 200,000 jobs were created in February and March 2011 – the most jobs created over a two month period since 2006. Big cities, which need jobs the most, are fairing very well.

According to the Department of Labor, more than 75-percent of America's 372 cities reported lower unemployment rates in February 2011. Among those cities that saw a drop in unemployment claims are Los Ange-

les, New York and Miami.

This is good news for African Americans, who primarily live in large cities and struggle to find work more than other ethnic groups during economic recessions, and for the nation as a whole. Continued job growth – no matter how slowly it happens – is a sign that our economy is, indeed, rebounding.

President Obama recently launched his bid for re-election. With Republicans, and even some Democrats, constantly taking shot at his presidency, Obama is in for what will arguably be one of the hardest fought cam-

paigns of his political career.

One of his key messages on the campaign trail should be that his approach to job creation is working. Republicans, with all their spin and fear mongering, will try to convince the voting public that there are no jobs and that America is worse off than it was in 2008.

President Obama has the data to prove that he delivered on one of his biggest campaign promises. He has to make sure that his messaging rises above the conservative noise and that he, despite push back from political opponents, he is working in the

best interest of the average American.

At the same time, elected officials at both the national and state levels must continue to ramp up job creation efforts.

Re-election or no, getting Americans back to work is one of this country's top priorities. Those in power should make sure they are doing everything possible to ensure that the unemployment rate continues to fall.

Greg Mathis is a former Michigan District Court judge and current syndicated television show judge.

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