

Bottom Feeding at the Top

by [G. Murphy Donovan](#) (June 2023)



I am not afraid of an army of lions led by sheep.
–Alexander

When I went into the USAF, we still had a draft, so it was either volunteer or wait for a summons. Quite frankly, I chose the Air Force because I thought the food would be better. And it was. Officer training, then in San Antonio, had an award-winning cadet mess.

Back in the day, officer dining was usually called a ‘mess’ for good reasons.

At the time, apparently the Air Force had some insight on

things that mattered; things like a good feed, morale, and common sense military policy. I am unable to say anything about cadet feed today, but after 30 some odd years of service and a plethora of losing wars, the best that can be said about leadership, flag performance, recruitment, retention, and morale in the military is "Whiskey Tango Foxtrot."

Indeed, what are "they" thinking at the Joint Chiefs of Staff today as we speak? Let's start with the USAF, my home team. The other day, the Air Force chief insisted on defending an AF Academy briefing which literally insulted parents and marriage. Cynics might write off General Charles Brown's political correctness to personal background or social promotion. But that's a little too easy—and a cheap shot.

Yet, when given the chance to reject "care givers" in lieu of words like mothers and fathers, the USAF Chief of Staff couldn't muster the courage to punch out. Apparently, traditional families or two parent heterosexual households, as the ideal, will not be a policy in Charlie Brown's cultural cloister any time soon.

Going from sad to worse, Secretary of the Air Force, Frank Kendal, tried to pluck Brown out of the woke crash site; claiming that insulting parents at the Air Force Academy was just a "cadet" clerical error, not policy. Passing the buck is now standard, especially when Pentagon brass gets caught with feet in their mouths or knickers around their ankles.

Kiss up, kick down is now woke SOP.

No surprise then that Charlie Brown is to be the next CJCS. Don't expect any change of heading at the Pentagon any time soon.

Lest we think political correctness is just a USAF joke, the Chief of Naval Operations, no piker in PC sweeps, [stepped](#) on his crank at an earlier congressional hearing. In March, Admiral Michael Gilday, the literal runt of the JCS litter,

endorsed Ibram X (as in Malcolm) Kindi's *How To Be An Antiracist* as recommend [reading](#) to the fleet—a little like George Patton recommending *Mein Kampf* to the 3rd Army—as “just a diverse point of view.”

Gilday also claims the US Navy is racist just like the rest of America.

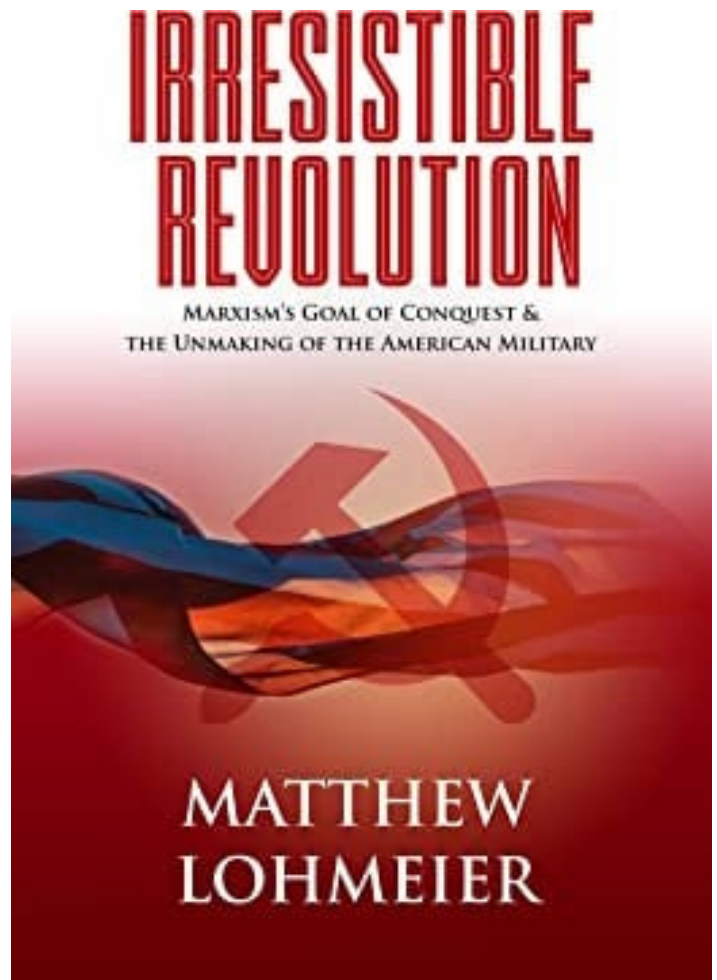


Kindi and Gilday's worldviews are binary: you are racist or antiracist, black or white. There are no shades of gray. Rainbows, however, are another matter altogether. Fleet [drag queen](#) shows and [love boats](#) are now OK with the American admiralty. Sailors no longer need to take liberty to find a quick hit or see a freak show.

How is ridiculing or demeaning women supposed to solve the recruiting and retention crisis, admiral?

Not to be outdone by their legacy peers, the Space Command is up to its armpits in cultural politics too with the Matthew Lohmeier fiasco. Seems Colonel Lohmeier was fired for public speaking and writing a book, *Irresistible Revolution*. Not just any book, but a direct hit on Marxist memes such as Critical Race Theory and Diversity, Inclusion and Equity mandates in the military. Lohmeier, an AF Academy graduate and instructor pilot, has been relieved of his command for challenging the Pentagon's mandates on social engineering.

Independent thinking in the USAF is now a career hazard.



For an example of the caliber of officer a woke Pentagon throws under the bus today in the name of DEI, see David Bet-David's recent [interview](#) with Colonel Lohmeier.

Let's face it; DEI and Critical Race Theory are just symptoms of much larger corporate and strategic problems at the Department of Defense. The recent moonlight skedaddle in [Kabul](#) is a mirror image of the 1973 Saigon rout, if not more ignominious. The *sierra* show in Ukraine, supporting another corrupt regime in another proxy war, is also likely to evolve into another generational strategic FUBAR.

WTF, indeed.

The defeat in Afghanistan affirmed again the Pyrrhic victory standard on the E-Ring at the Pentagon; building now on the dubious precedents like Vietnam, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yugoslavia, and Syria.

Defeat without remorse now appears to *de rigueur* with Pentagon politicians and the Joint Chiefs. Pardon any redundancy.

Institutional corruption starts at the top. Beltway soldiering now appears to be performance art. CJCS chief, General Mark Milley claims that the Kabul fiasco was a successful “withdrawal” and the drone strike that [killed](#) a garden full of children was “righteous” retaliation. With similar vacuity, General Lloyd Austin, Secretary of Defense, continues to [claim](#) that the US military is not woke—or political—in spite of the evidence that screams woke—and catastrophically broke.

Ironically, these same oblivious military mandarins are wondering why military recruiter/retention programs have to bottom feed and still not meet quotas. The Wall Street Journal [attributes](#) the woke and recruitment crisis to “cultural rot.”

Bingo.

Cultural politics among the flag ranks is not just a threat to recruitment and retention. The real issues are competence and accountability. No one at the Pentagon gets fired. Generals today are not expected to perform, succeed, or win—but they are expected to pander and spend.



And, the price tag for generational inertia goes up every year.

The only troops that actually fight well today are Special Forces. Regulars are too obese, unfit, woke, and broke. If we cannot win the small war, who believes the Pentagon could fight a two front global war with the Russians and Chinese? The Chairman of the JCS and the Secretary of Defense are

probative. Both posture like Gilbert and Sullivan players at a Third World fat farm.

Jowls are us.

Appearances matter, especially if senior officers are to be exemplars for fit warriors, male and female.

Alas, the brass pursues yet another feckless proxy war in Europe today where the stakes are now nuclear. Cynics can't help but think that the name of the game is the game, not national security, as Eisenhower [prophesied](#) after WW II.

Money now talks just as
bullshit walks.



America is the largest [exporter of arms](#) in the world today. If the truth be told, industrial grade arms sales are now one of the few things the Pentagon does well anymore.

Clearly, regime change in Russia is now the objective in Europe, but if that doesn't work, NATO gets to flush their slightly used weapons into Ukraine and justify new and better gear at home. Thus, even another military loss is an E Ring win.

Say what you will about real or imagined threats from Russia, China, and the Muslim *Ummah*. None of those hold a candle to the Beltway establishment partisans embedded in every national security nook and cranny. DMV Democrat voters in and around the capitol outnumber all other parties 9 to 1.

The former peace party is now the Pentagon war party. We are now beyond irony.



Vinegar Joe Stillwell

Administrations may come and go, but a national security monoculture abides in Washington, DC. At the Pentagon, woke flag officers are festooned with fruit salad, fond as they are of decorating each other with ribbons, gee gaws, and medals that, for the most part, signify tenure, not achievement. Contrast, if you will, an Eisenhower or a Stillwell official photo with vainglorious crowd at today's Joint Chiefs.

Our generation of flags provides excuses fronted by a literal and figurative, self-congratulatory, rainbow of ribbons, flags, and merit badges. The generals and admirals who won in the 20th Century, in contrast, didn't rely on virtue signals. They gave us integrity, honor, victories – and humility.

One last shot across the bow of the USS Rainbow.

There is nothing new about gay men and lesbian women in any

army or navy. Churchill once said that the only real traditions of the Royal Navy were “rum, sodomy, and the lash.” Indeed. The difference in America today is that our flag officers seem to believe personal sexual and social tactical diversity is more important than national strategic competence or success.

Military service chiefs now identify best with virtue signals; not tactical, operational, and strategic measures of merit. The rise of command cultural politics in the US Armed forces is a tragic error coupled to yet another pending, predictable strategic defeat.

Colonel Matt Lohmeier, like Billy [Mitchell](#) before him, may turn out to be the military prophet of his generation.

[Table of Contents](#)

G. Murphy Donovan writes about the politics and policies of Intelligence and national security.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](#)