

# WOKE WARFIGHTERS

How Political Ideology is Weakening  
America's Military



THE OFFICES OF  
U.S. SENATOR MARCO RUBIO  
&  
U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CHIP ROY

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## HOW WOKE MILITARY LEADERS ARE WEAKENING AMERICA'S WARFIGHTERS

The United States military is the greatest fighting force in the world. It is also one of the most humble and sacrificial the world has ever known. America's volunteer warriors regularly risk their lives not in the name of conquest, but so others may be free. They are driven by a love of country and a sense of service and honor that is increasingly rare today.

The United States and the world are better off because of these brave men and women. Unfortunately, President Joe Biden and his administration are weakening America's warfighters through a sustained assault fueled by woke virtue signaling.

Our military's singular purpose is to "provide for the common defense" of our nation. It cannot be turned into a left-wing social experiment. It cannot be used as a cudgel against America itself. And it cannot be paralyzed by fear of offending the sensibilities of Ivy League faculty lounges or progressive pundits.

The world is a dangerous place, and the Biden Administration's insanity is eroding our greatest source of security in it.

*Mr. The Chief*



# CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Everyone has heard the saying, “There are no atheists in a foxhole.” A corollary may be that there is no racial discrimination on the battlefield. The U.S. military is one of the few institutions in America where the skills of the men on either side of you could mean the difference between life and death. It embodies Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s notion of judging men on the content of their character, not the color of their skin.

There is no time for – and there should be absolutely no tolerance of – racism within the ranks.

And yet, President Joe Biden’s Department of Defense (DoD) is obsessed with race.



## Stand-Down Order

On February 5, 2021, Secretary Lloyd Austin signed a memorandum directing all service members and DoD civilian employees to conduct a “one-day ‘stand-down’ to discuss extremism in the ranks with their personnel.” It was one of Austin’s first major actions after Senate confirmation, during which he promised to “rid our ranks of racists and extremists.”

Foreign adversaries like China and Russia loved the stand-down. Their view was simple: the stand-down sowed further divisions in the United States and allowed them to tell their people that America’s government is a failure.

Nothing could be further from the truth, though.

The Biden Administration’s “Countering Extremist Activity Working Group” (CEAWG) found that “cases of prohibited extremist activity among service members were rare.” In fact, in a force of more than 2.1 million active and reserve forces, there were only 100 cases.

Chaired by Democrat Jack Reed, the Senate Committee on Armed Services’ (SASC) bipartisan report on the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) points out that this is “a case rate of .005 percent, one service member out of every 21,000.”

The SASC report goes on to note that more than 5,359,000 personnel hours were spent on the extremism stand-down ordered by Secretary Austin. The SASC report did not mince words on this un-American working group created by Secretary Austin: “Spending additional time and resources on extremism in the military is an inappropriate use of taxpayer funds, and should be discontinued by the [DoD] Immediately.”



# Bishop Garrison

This man who was in charge of the CEAWG was a rabid partisan who routinely denigrates conservatives and has stated that “systemic racism is one of our greatest national security challenges.”



Garrison has also promoted the deeply unhistorical “1619 Project,” which argues that the beginning of slavery in Britain’s American colonies, not the Declaration of Independence, is the real founding of America, and that everything wrong with society today can be traced back to slavery.

By hiring a Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Defense who sincerely believes such things, the Biden Administration shows itself to be thoroughly out of touch with the needs of our nation.

## Department of Defense Education Agency

The U.S. military’s global presence requires ensuring that service members’ children have proximate access to K-12

education that is in English and meets certain standards.

To that end, the Department of Defense Education Agency (DODEA) exists to operate K-12 schools around the world and in the United States. Parents are dependent on these schools – if your child is in one of these, it is likely because there are no other affordable options.

That’s why having a radical extremist like Kelisa Wing as Chief Diversity Equity and Inclusivity (DEI) Officer at DODEA is completely insane. In 2020, Wing tweeted: “I’m exhausted with these white folk in these [professional development] sessions. [T]his lady actually had the CAUdacity to say that black people can be racist too.... I had to stop the session and give Karen the BUSINESS.” (Caudacity is a derogatory word to describe the audacity of white people.)

- Wing also wrote a book to teach white children that they have white privilege and that “white privilege hurts a lot of people.” The book comes with an exercise to help kids understand “what parts of my identity have provided me with privilege.” This racist bigotry from a DEI specialist is par for the course, but given the unique position of service members with kids in DODEA schools are in, this is completely and utterly unacceptable.



## Service Academies

The Biden Administration wants to indoctrinate a new generation of military leadership at the U.S. Service Academies with Critical Race Theory (CRT).

- An admiral told midshipmen at the Naval Academy that they need to read *How to Be an Antiracist* – a book that teaches that “the only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination,” that capitalism is racist, and that people by virtue of their race are inherently oppressive or privileged while others are inherently victimized or oppressed.

The book takes large inspiration from Marxist concepts of the dialectic, the idea that the world is fundamentally divided between “oppressed” and “oppressor,” and history is the story of the clashes between the two. According to this ideology, the oppressor class has inherent advantages that benefit it at the expense of the oppressed. The only way to mitigate that injustice is to actively take

advantages away from the “oppressor.” This, the book argues, is why not being racist is insufficient – you must be an “Antiracist” to pursue justice.

- A professor at the Air Force Academy boasted about her desire to make students learn how to “identify the structural racism and inequality that has been endemic in American society.” It is important, this professor argued, for students to understand that “racism was ingrained in the system from the beginning” to understand why racism persists today.

But the American system is not built on racism. In the words of Dr. King: “When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

King did not gloss over the real injustices faced by his fellow African-Americans: “It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check which has come back marked ‘insufficient funds.’” But King never argued that the founding and the ideals our nation is based on are fundamentally or systemically evil. He called Americans to live up to our founding promise, not to reject it.

- Cadets at West Point are being taught that “in order to understand racial inequality and slavery, it is first necessary to address whiteness.” A slide for a class at West Point obtained by Freedom of Information requests argues that “white people and people of color live racially different structured lives.” The slide goes on to list three characteristics of Whiteness, describing it as “a location of structural advantage [and] race privilege,” “a standpoint or place from which white people look at themselves and the rest of society,” and “a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed.”

The slide concludes by saying, “Take-for-grantedness of whiteness: privilege lives within this.” It is deeply problematic to lie to the future of our military and attempt to instill in them the belief that white people must feel bad for the color of their skin,

that they are by virtue of their birth oppressors. It is also wrong to tell people of color that they are held down by structural forces outside of their control, and that they are by virtue of their birth doomed to failure.

These are not just one-off instances of fringe academics who should be reprimanded for pushing un-American propaganda. They reflect broader trends in the armed forces.

## National Security Strategy



The Biden Administration’s 2022 National Security Strategy is supposed to outline America’s strategic interests, the threats we face, and how to counter them. In discussing how to “strengthen the effectiveness of the force,” the first topic listed by the Biden Administration is “promoting diversity and inclusion.” That ranks above preventing suicide, reducing sexual assault, and other forms of violence against and amongst our service members. To the Biden Administration, advancing their woke ideology is more important than keeping our soldiers safe.



## General Mark Milley



The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff defended teaching CRT at U.S. Service Academies and testified to Congress about his desire to understand “white rage.” He argued that American taxpayer money should be spent to ensure cadets and midshipmen learn what “caused thousands of people to assault [the Capitol] Building and try to overturn the Constitution of the United States.” The Biden Administration is choosing to focus on and fund the study of racial extremism even when – as the CEAWG showed – it is a virtual non-issue in the military.

## Special Forces



These radical ideas on race are already impacting how our military’s most elite members operate. The United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM)

is comprised of some of the most patriotic, hardworking, and lethal warriors in the history of the world. SOCOM is responsible for the elite, special operations missions executed all around the world for counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, hostage rescue and recovery, unconventional warfare, security force assistance, and other clandestine objectives. SOCOM must focus on keeping our nation safe and securing our interests abroad. Yet even this hallowed institution has not been spared the undue influence of DEI.

In the first lines of SOCOM’s 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, Chief Master Sergeant Smith and General Clarke write that “diversity and inclusion are operational imperatives.” The plan goes on to say that “leaders must integrate diversity and inclusion efforts into unit goals, mission objectives, talent management initiatives, and operational priorities for a successful implementation.” The plan also notes that SOCOM will implement a “Joint Special Operations University Diversity and Inclusion Curriculum” to emphasize what makes “diversity in [Special Operations Forces] an operational imperative.”

The only goal of our Special Forces should be effectiveness. Every other consideration must be subordinate to and in service of that end. Diversity can indeed contribute to that goal; our nation is at its best when everyone is able to bring his or her talents to bear on an objective without discrimination. But forcing our military to engage in DEI trainings encourages supporting and advancing people on criteria other than competence and ability to carry out a mission.



## SEX REASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES

Our military has – or at least, historically has had – rigorous and robust medical requirements and restrictions on who can and cannot serve. It is just common sense that those who may be on the front line need to be incredibly fit and cannot afford to be hampered by an extended absence of prescription medicine. The military's list of disqualifying conditions is extensive, including:

- **Peanuts or gluten allergies,**
- **Learning disorders like ADD or ADHD that require medication**
- **A history of depression or anxiety that required medication, treatment, or hospitalization**
- **Skin diseases like eczema and psoriasis.**

People cannot even enlist with Invisalign or braces until they are removed. And yet, today's woke military is now proudly promoting and celebrating sex reassignment procedures, which can have months-long recovery periods, with complete recovery taking "up to one year" for some procedures.



## Obama-Biden Administration

In 2016, President Obama's DoD issued a policy to allow unrestricted service by transgender people. In 2019, then-Secretary Mattis changed this policy to exclude those who suffered from gender dysphoria or who had recently experienced it. As the Heritage Foundation's Thomas Spoehr points out, this was a move designed not to arbitrarily discriminate against such people, but "to ensure that America's men and women in uniform were not put at risk in a rush to engage in social engineering with our armed forces."

People with gender dysphoria often suffer from associated mental health conditions and are between eight and nine times more likely to experience severe anxiety. Service members with gender dysphoria are also 10 times more likely to have mental health encounters than the average service member. Most shockingly, they are eight times more likely to commit suicide.

Spoehr argues that because these people are more prone to mental breakdowns, "those serving next to them will be reluctant to rely on them," which could result in the creation of a class of non-deployable service members. This would harm readiness both by reducing the number of service members available to deploy, but also by "breeding resentment among units who have members everyone knows will not be called upon to deploy with the rest of the unit."





## Biden-Harris Administration

Less than a week into his presidency, President Biden reversed Secretary Mattis's policy, preventing any service member from being forced out due to his or her gender dysphoria. On "International Transgender Day of Visibility," the DoD prohibited "discrimination on the basis of gender identity or an individual's identification as transgender" and established "a means to access into the military in one's self-identifying gender."

This instruction allows members of each service to "transition" while on active duty, including "gender reassignment surgery." Once a person completes the gender transition, his or her marker in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) will be changed to the gender of his or her choosing. This will allow the person to use bathroom and shower facilities of his or her chosen gender.

Services are now requiring their members to receive training on the transgender service policy, including advice on how to use pronouns properly and when to recommend their subordinates consider gender reassignment surgery. These policies are purported to make our armed forces more inclusive and compassionate, but they are harmful to the people they claim to help and are sapping our combat readiness.





## PROMOTING LGBTQ + INDIVIDUALITY

The U.S. military attracts people from all walks of life, who join for various reasons – to serve their country, to follow in a parent’s footsteps, to see the world, to escape their hometown, or to pay for college. Despite their differences, for each of these people the military serves as a forge in which diverse members are made one to serve the needs of their unit and their country.

The military’s focus should be on serving the nation and using the the individuals’ skills, talents, and uniqueness as tools to achieve the higher goal of maintaining the most lethal fighting force in the history of the world. As the famous 3rd Infantry Division Song written during World War II puts it, “on all the posters that I read / it says ‘the Army builds men,’ / so they’re tearing me down / to build me over again!”

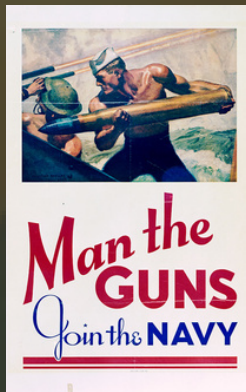
That's why the DoD's insistence on promoting individual identity and self-actualization in recruitment and retention efforts, particularly for the LGBTQ+ community, is dangerous. The appeal to self is corrosive to unit cohesion, yet it is only growing.

- The U.S. Army put out a recruitment video focused on “a little girl raised with two moms” who joined the military to “find [her] inner strength – and maybe shatter some stereotypes along the way.”



- For Pride Month, the Air Force tweeted an image of an airman surrounded by a rainbow flag. There was no American flag in the image.
- The Marines also tweeted a Pride Month image with rainbow-tipped bullets on a marine helmet, featuring the words “proud to serve.”
- The Air Force updated its writing guide to allow airmen and guardians to include pronouns in their signature block.
- An Air Force Academy slide presentation titled, “Diversity & Inclusion: What it is, why we care, & what we can do” advises cadets to use gender-neutral language and avoid terms such as “mom” and “dad.”

## Compare such absurdities with recruitment efforts in World War II:



Focusing on what is different among us, rather than that which unites us, only serves to foster division and discontent among service members. We need look no further for evidence of this than the recent egregious example of an attempt use taxpayer money and DoD property to host a drag queen story hour for children at the library on Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany to promote "inclusivity" during pride month.

That event was thankfully canceled after Senator Rubio sent a letter censuring the Air Force for considering placing children in a sexualized environment, but it greatly concerned service members and their spouses. Moreover, it sent a message that discouraged potential newcomers from joining up. The Biden Administration's divisive rhetoric and propaganda continue to bring down the military's already-low recruitment numbers. It is irresponsible and extraordinarily dangerous to allow them to continue.



# ACCOUNTABILITY

The Biden Administration has a disturbing track record of punishing those who object to woke ideology and giving license to those who agree with it.

Under the Biden Administration, there is a strict standard for those who hold heterodox opinions but no consequences for those who toe the party line.

This flagrant discrimination is fundamentally unjust and cannot continue. Moreover, it breeds resentment and allows loyalty to an ideology, rather than competence, to determine success in our military.

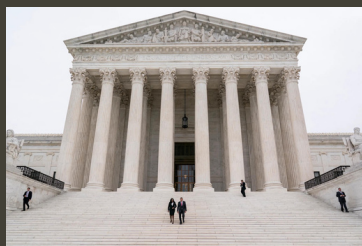


## Protecting the Woke

While senior left-wing leaders were lamenting the overturning of *Roe v Wade*, a junior medic in uniform took to TikTok – the Chinese spyware app – to lambast the Supreme Court, asking, “How am I supposed to swear to support and defend the Constitution and a country that treats its women like second-class citizens?” She went on to say, “I will not rest, and I will not be silent, because this is an attack on women in this country.”

Service members may have strong feelings about the country they are serving and significant events happening there. Service members have a right to free speech. But service members also know the limits to what they can and cannot say and do while in uniform or on government property. To date, that medic has not received any disciplinary action for her remarks.

## Punishing the Righteous



Meanwhile, when a U.S. Army chaplain celebrated the overturning of *Roe v Wade* in an email to his unit, arguing that it “upholds the sanctity of life of the unborn [and] honors the U.S. Constitution” and urging service members to pray “for the safety of our Supreme Court Justices... whose lives are in danger,” he was placed under investigation.

An incredible double standard for liberals and conservatives is also held at the highest levels of our armed forces.

## Protecting Resistance Leaders



General Mark Milley told a reporter writing a book on the Trump presidency that he had directly and intentionally undermined the will of the sitting President of the United States, promised to leak highly classified information to the People's Republic of China that would endanger the lives of American service members, and injected himself inappropriately into the nuclear chain of command.

Our ability to deter Beijing rests on the credibility of our armed forces' ability to use force to counter threats. Milley's admission put that in jeopardy. Yet he inexplicably faced no consequences, despite calls from both of us, as well as other national security leaders, for his resignation or dismissal.



## Protecting Incompetent Leaders

In Afghanistan, after two decades of fighting, the Biden Administration oversaw a disastrous withdrawal that cost 13 U.S. service members their lives. No one faced consequences. Our military left behind equipment worth tens of billions of dollars. That equipment included more than 2,000 armored vehicles and up to 40 aircraft. The Taliban seized it and even held a parade to celebrate its acquisitions. No one faced consequences. Rather, the Biden Administration continued undermining the military with woke ideology and ignored its failure. The only service member who received a reprimand from the

Afghanistan debacle was a lieutenant colonel who criticized the way the withdrawal was executed. What this officer did was concerning. Despite a gag order, while in uniform he used government property to harshly criticize superiors while there were still boots on the ground in Kabul. This is certainly improper behavior.



Nevertheless, the hypocrisy is glaring. It is outrageous that the woke Biden Administration held him to account while leaders whose decisions resulted in the deaths of service members and billions of dollars' worth of equipment falling into enemies' hands went unpunished.