



# One race the Human Race



by Robert L. Woodard  
The Wynnefield Barber

**T**he servicemen and women of our Armed Forces deserve the utmost respect for putting their lives on the line to protect our country.

I recall an interview I had with the Tuskegee Airmen on my Barbershop Talk Radio Show on WURD 900AM. Those wonderful servicemen shared many of their successes and dilemmas during the time of war with the enemy. They were very proud of their accomplishments in defending this country and they believed that after WWII, opportunities for themselves and others would improve. However, by listening to what happened after they rendered and sacrificed their lives for freedom, justice and equality for all, the question still remained, 'Can I, will I, should I and am I going to be accepted and respected, equal to the white soldiers after the war?'

Two of the fighter pilots, Eugene Richardson and Roscoe Draper, said they were so proud of their decorated uniforms that it made them feel like they were on cloud nine. They helped win the war and proved to the world that blacks could fly an airplane, not only equal to whites, but they became "Number One" in never losing a bomber plane on any of their missions.

I will never forget their account of being treated "less than" by their fellow Americans after the integral role they played in winning WWII. Yet, in their hearts, they knew they had lost the battle at home against bigotry, prejudice, hatred, separation, segregation, discrimination and the "illusion of racism" when they returned to the land of their birth.

All servicemen and women deserve much more respect and appreciation for risking their lives. As citizens of the United States of America, we must look in the mirror and ask, 'What's going on?' (Marvin Gaye). We owe these veterans the opportunity to see all citizens of this nation "...just get along" (Rodney King). So, I say to all Americans, remember the words of the late Michael Jackson, 'Take a look in the mirror.' Each and every one of us must "make that change" to become a better citizen with love and respect for one another. Then and only then will we as a nation become great.

It is a sad thing to see our government leaders, both Republicans and Democrats, continue to act out political warfare even after an election. These actions will not benefit the welfare of "the People." We must demand true leadership from our government. A house divided can only fall apart.

Americans have a lot of work to do to make things better. I believe we must first change how we view race in America. The illusion that there is more than one race has crippled our society. If we change from viewing race as a plural to a singular, the word "racism" could not exist because there would have to be another race to be against. Science has proven that there is truly only one race - the human race. We should work hard to rid ourselves of bigotry, prejudice, hatred, separation, segregation and discrimination. Just think about it. Even city, state and government applications ask individuals to name their race. If we view race as a singular, it will become a healing force in an ailing society.

Charlottesville, Virginia, is a perfect example of the reaction to there being more than one race. In order for white supremacy to exist, you have to believe that a white race is better than any other race. This and this alone creates disrespect for science as well as our human race. On that day in Charlottesville, three people lost their lives because of the illusion that there is more than one race. Two state patrol troopers were killed in a helicopter crash while assessing the situation from above - Pilot, Lt. H. Jay Cullen and Trooper Berke M.M. Bates. Heather Heyer, a white counter-protester, was hit by a vehicle during the protest.

Each time we have an event like this, we create more and more divisive tactics that put our servicemen and women in harm's way. Charlottesville is a perfect example of having the right to protest but that doesn't give anyone the right to kill fellow human beings. If we as Americans remember nothing else, we should always salute the sacrifice of our veterans, our fallen and our current servicemen and women.

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