

## Black soldiers built the ALCAN Highway

By Fae Deaton  
Correspondent

If any of you have ever thought about driving to Alaska, you might find it of interest to know the History of the building of the ALCAN (Alaska-Canada) highway.

Prior to World War II, it was military policy that Blacks would not be sent to areas where it was very cold northern climes, or, for that matter, active duty. After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, the Day of Infamy as F.D. Roosevelt termed it; it was determined necessary to have an inland route to Alaska. The Aleutian Island chain was at risk for invasion by the Japanese, and in fact, they did invade the Aleutians on Attu Island.

The segregated troops were shipped to the north under the command of white commanders. The U.S. Army commander in Alaska, Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner, who was the son of a Confederate general whose negative attitude toward Blacks was well-known, protested the ordering of the Black troops to work on the Alcan Highway.

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The ALCAN is a 1,522 mile long road from Dawson Creek, British Columbia, to Fairbanks, Alaska (AK). This was a land full of rough terrain, mostly unmapped, and was considered an impossible feat.

The Army Black Corp of Engineers were members of the 93<sup>rd</sup>, 95<sup>th</sup> and 97<sup>th</sup> and 388<sup>th</sup> units. These troops completed the job doing 20 hour days in severe winter weather. One low temperature was MINUS (-) 79 degrees, with the average being about 40-below-zero F.

They pushed through in just 8 months and twelve days. The troops received much praise for their work. It is interesting to note that publicity releases seldom mentioned Black battalions, even though 3,695 of the 10,670 troops were black.

The living, let alone work conditions were terrible, as you could imagine. Living often in tents, with insufficient clothing and monotonous food, the men persevered in record time and received praises for their work.

Most of the black troops were from the South, and many of the troops were decorated and then sent to Europe and the South Pacific for active duty.

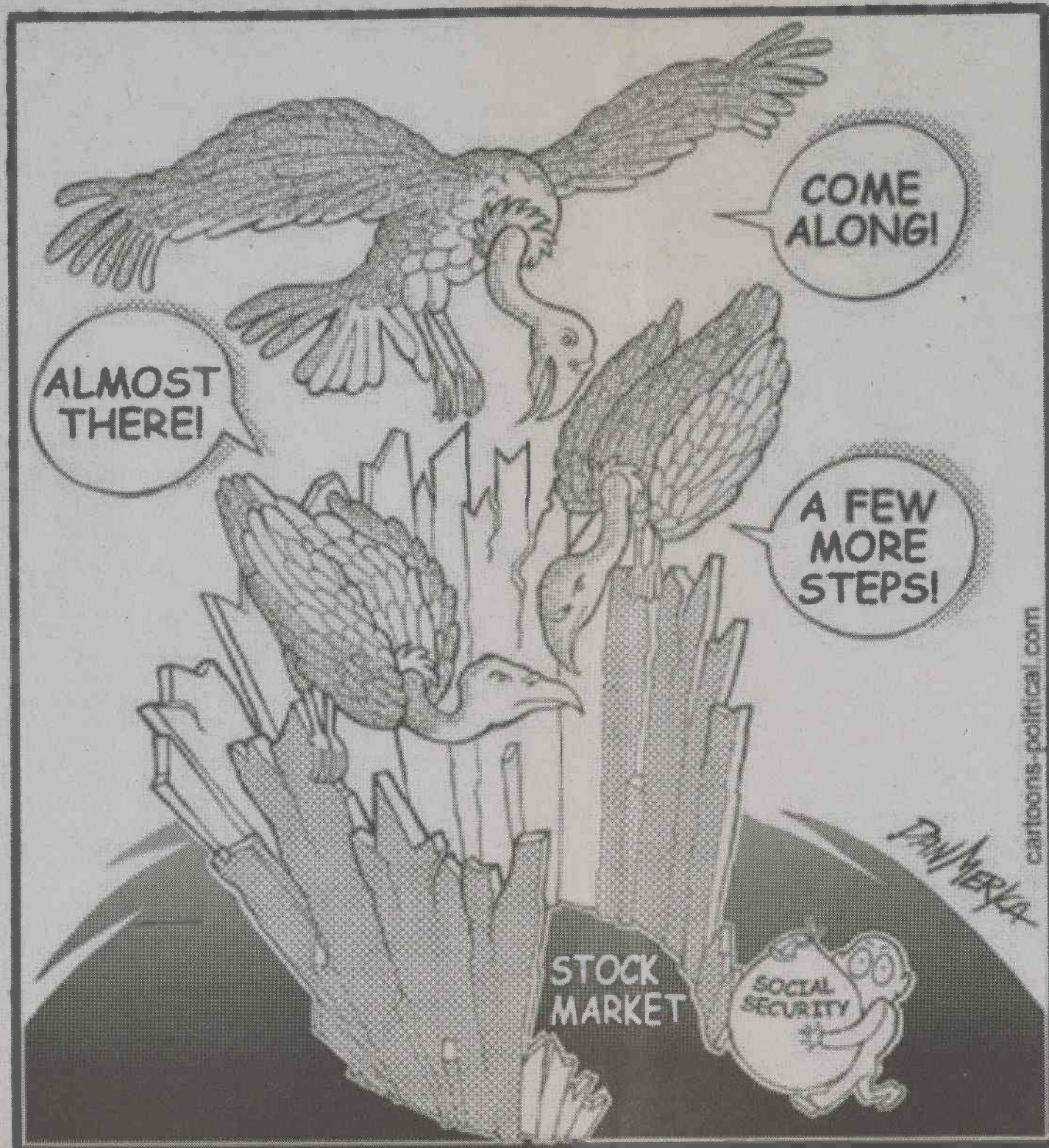
As a result of their outstanding efforts on the construction of the Alcan Highway, the U.S. military integrated all units during the Korean conflict, and were the first government agency to do so. The Alcan Highway is still the only land route to Alaska.

If you go to: <http://www.visi.com/~alcan/fdc-page.html> you can see a series of "First Day of Issue" stamped envelopes with pictures of the men and the areas of the Alcan Highway.

Hats off to gallant unknown and unsung heroes.

Ref.: <http://www.visi.com/~alcan/History.html>

# Opinion



Stock Market Vultures

## Know your government

By Toby Tate  
Editor-in-Chief

I have said it before and I'll say it again: Everyone should understand how their government works and why they should be involved. Don't sit passively by, thinking that your elected officials have your best interests at heart, that they have the inside scoop on what's happening in the world and that the best you can hope for is to elect someone who isn't on the take. It's time to wise up.

Here's the deal: government is like a business with no budget. Whatever they need to spend, they'll get. Guess where they get it? That's right: from the taxpayers. If they overspend or fall into a deficit, then voila! They'll just raise taxes, no biggie.

The private sector is a bottomless pit of money to the U.S. Government. Business is like a money machine, cranking out an endless supply for all of us who feel we are entitled, whether we earned it or not. This is America, and we like our handouts. Free drugs, health care, social security, Medicaid, welfare — It's all good; or is it? Is reliance on others for our daily bread the reason our forefathers started the revolution in 1776, our great, great grandfathers fought and died in the civil war, or our grandfathers in WWII? So we could have our handouts? Somehow, it doesn't seem quite right. Let's rethink this and look at history.

The history of the U.S. is replete with stories of self-reliance from the first settlers at Jamestown on. The reason Jamestown was eventually successful was because one of the more brilliant leaders hit upon the idea of allowing people to purchase and own their own land, thereby giving them the incentive to work that land. Previously, there had been no motivation for

anyone to do anything, because since the populace owned the land collectively, everyone expected everyone else to take care of it (How Capitalism Saved America: The Untold History of Our Country, from the Pilgrims to the Present — by Thomas DiLorenzo). Most people probably don't know this because we take for granted the things we've been told without checking the facts.

If you ever watch Jay Leno and the Tonight Show, you've probably seen his man on the street "Jaywalking" interviews. Jay approaches random people on the streets in Berkeley, Ca. or wherever and asks them

questions most Americans should know, i.e. who the Vice President is, how many stripes are on the American flag, what the capital of the U.S. is, etc. I am always amazed, not at the wrong answers per se, but at the supposed education levels of the people providing the wrong answers. It's mind-numbing. Some even claim to be teachers. Aaaaaauugh! It's enough to make you change your citizenship.

Jay also does what he calls the "Jaywalk All-Stars," made up of people who gave the most wrong answers to questions on the street. They battle it out on the show game-show style until

someone (hopefully) gives enough right answers to win the game. These people usually consist of college students, white collar workers and people you would normally consider smart. They just don't know the name of the Secretary of State or that country where Hussein was the president. It's astonishing but sad.

How long can we survive as a country by being ignorant? Is it always going to be up to the other guy to know what's going on? Do we really want to trust that to the other guy?

The U.S. was founded on principles of religious freedom and free speech, but the lawyers and judges who have usurped power over the legal system are slowly changing the laws a little bit at a time as we sit like lobsters in a pot of slowly boiling water. We don't even know what's happening. We better find out and we better do it quickly, before it's too late. It's your government and this is a republic: Find out who's doing what and why. Don't assume that a political party who says they're for the people are for the people, or say they are for the little guy are for the little guy: Are they really? What does history show? Are they all talk and no action? Do they always seem to be against everything the other party does, but never offer any fresh ideas of their own? Is the person you elected doing what you elected him of her to do, or do you even know?

It's time to take back your government. Don't take someone's word for it; research it. Know and understand your government. Let them know you're watching — send an e-mail to your congressman and voice your opinion — but first, have an opinion. Forming opinions comes from being knowledgeable and knowledge from being curious and asking questions, so do it: Be curious. The life you change may be your own.

## Keeping focused is often a difficult task

Anonymous Submission

The end of the semester is here, which means one thing: Staying up all night studying for finals or working on a final project that you've known about all semester but didn't feel like doing until the last minute. Over the course of a single semester anything from dating someone new and spending all your time with them, a death in the family, being homesick, or just being burnt out because of school itself can distract us as students from the real reason we are here and that's to get an education. Even if your semester is going well it can come crashing down in the blink of an eye.

My spring semester has been an up and down roller coaster ride that seemed like it was never going to end. The semester started out great; I didn't have a care in the world. I was doing something that I loved, I had a new girlfriend, there were no family problems, and school itself was going perfect. I was on the top of the world and I felt as though nothing could bring me down.

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I was always in a good mood, even if I was stressed all I had to do was step back and take a look at everything I had going for me, which put a lot of things into perspective for me. Why should I be upset? There really is nothing to be upset about. Everything was going perfect.

Even in the middle of the semester I had everything going my way, my grades were good, I had a job offer for the summer, my girlfriend and I were still going strong and one of my professors was trying to get me an internship that could possibly help me receive my dream job.

Now, it's the end of the semester and I have lost every bit of drive that I had at the beginning.

It all began in the middle of April. My mother's birthday was on April 15<sup>th</sup>. She is no longer alive so that depressed me. My father's birthday is the 18<sup>th</sup>, and I haven't talked to him in two years. To make matters worse, my girlfriend told me that night that "We need time apart, I'm confused about us."

So now, as the end nears I have to try and put all this negativity behind me and focus in on all my finals and projects due by the end of the semester. People say there is a silver lining to every dark cloud, but I feel as though every time I find that proverbial silver lining it's always a little too late and more dark clouds surround me.

All in all it wasn't a bad semester and I don't think my grades will suffer because of this last month, but when everything goes wrong at the last part of the semester it makes me feel like the whole thing was nothing but one big waste of time.

I know deep down that the semester was not a waste of time, though, because I am one step closer to receiving my degree next year.