

Re: Oil Profits Whom?

April 16, 2005

Dear Editor,

In a recent letter (4/16) Roger Page, besides regurgitating the completely discredited fallacy that 9/11 had anything to do with Iraq, asserts that recent gas pump price increases somehow refutes the unsurprising observation that control of Middle Eastern natural resources, like the British before us, was an overwhelmingly strong motive for the Bush administration to cherry-pick the "intelligence" data and invade that country. After all the congressional and CIA special investigations how could he not know this?

Maybe he also didn't read that Exxon announced early this year that it had made a pure profit of \$8.4 billion during the last quarter of 2004, the latest in a string of record breaking profits since 2001. Frankly I welcome higher gas prices- the free market seems to be the only way to pry people out of their gas guzzlers. But I'm not so pleased that the costs of the war in both lives and dollars should be borne by naive young men and individual taxpayers, while the blood profits from the war are retained by corporate cronies of the current administration. In fact middle class taxpayers have been getting the wrong end of this stick for some time, as the percentage of federal tax receipts from corporate income taxes has been in decline since the 1950s, from over 30% to under 10%. And the General Accounting Office data shows that 61% of U.S. corporations paid no taxes at all during the boom years from 1996 to 2000. Since the Bush administration has dramatically decreased taxes for the wealthiest individuals, who exactly do you think makes up the difference? I'll give you three guesses.

I agree that going to war for oil may not make any economic sense for the country as a whole, but it makes perfect sense if you're a Exxon/Halliburton corporate fat cat. What did Page expect? That CEOs would take these record profits and discount the price at the pump out of the goodness of their hearts?

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