

Letters on "The new Know-Nothings: US House votes to outlaw therapeutic cloning"

8 August 2001

Below we post a selection of letters on "The new Know-Nothings: US House votes to outlaw therapeutic cloning" by Patrick Martin.

The following article was good and informative to read: "The new Know-Nothings: US House votes to outlaw therapeutic cloning," by Patrick Martin, 7 August 2001.

It sounds as though there are many people in the American government who are longing for the good ol' days that normal people usually refer to as the Middle Ages!

SM

7 August 2001

Dear WSWs,

This in fact may be a chance for research on the subject, for it does clearly show that there is no way for American researchers to work in a country where you can find so-called "universities" that teach Bible Genesis instead of Darwinian science.

Top researchers, like University of California-San Francisco's Roger Pedersen, who were already preparing to jump to Europe this autumn, shall not hesitate any longer, and will emigrate.

The puzzling point is that US courts are likely to prosecute them, since they respect less and less the limitation of their borders, and may even sue European companies for doing justified research within Europe.

But the confrontation of the federal government with its former allies, in the mid-term, may be a chance for the working class: The all-American capitalistic world of the '90s has proved to be very unfair, creating huge amounts of money for the rich, and lower income for the poor.

Some kind of counterpower is welcome today.

As for long-term, I am sure that as soon as genetic medicine is available in Europe it should become available in the US, because bigotry has its roots in the

repressed fear of death, so that bigots shall jump on the "magic pills" as soon as they become available...

With compliments for your good work,

PB

Montpellier, France

7 August 2001

In the matter of human cloning, WSWs is dead wrong. Again, WSWs has its socialistic dogma blinders on.

There is no way to overestimate the dangers of genetic engineering. It will create a monstrous inhuman future. All you have to do is to apply what we know about corporate rapacity and impose and project it over the natural world to produce an unthinkable and irrevocably nightmarish future existence.

Your generalizations, that opposition to human cloning implies an attack on science and human knowledge, is unworthy of the level of intellectual subtlety and perspicacity usually found on the WSWs. It is a mean attempt to bully those you don't agree with into submission.

If "Socialism has nothing in common with appeals to anti-scientific prejudices" then thank God I'm not a socialist! Science has played into the hands of reaction and extreme-right profiteering since the days of the Industrial Revolution. Where have you been?

Government control over biotechnology cannot sanctify its purposes. Period.

RW

7 August 2001

Dear Patrick Martin and WSWs editor,

Thank you for your insightful coverage of the House actions today in effectively banning certain stem cell research through the back door. While I personally object to the cloning of human beings simply because we can (as part of my faith), I don't believe that it is right to deny people the opportunity for life and health.

I am reminded of the opposition to RU-486.

Whatever one's feelings on abortion, I would hope that we can all agree if a medicine reduces the risk of a medical procedure it should be allowed. "Right to Life" and the sanctity of life should apply to women undergoing abortions as much as to their fetuses if concern about fellow human life is the motivating factor.

Apparently this is not the case.

This same movement is now opposing potentially life-saving research on fetal stem cells. What is clear to me in observing these inconsistencies is that "right to life" takes a back seat to "lust for power" here—power over other people's bodies, power over science and the mind, and power over life and death. This, I think, is the key element that reactionary Greens and the reactionary right can agree upon.

DH

Santa Ana, California

7 August 2001

PS: Thank you again on your coverage of this, and previous articles (German Green Party, review of *Artificial Intelligence*) identifying the tendency for the far right and Greens to ally and find common targets for their hatred and desire for dominance.

Although I have an obvious philosophical difference with a strict Marxist perspective (indulging in the opiate of the masses), I greatly respect this paper for its insight and consider it a privilege to reach others through its medium. I knew little about Trotsky and the Fourth International before discovering you. I admire the clarity of your convictions and your compassion for humanity. I wish you and this paper well, and will continue to read.



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