Letters on "The New York Times and the case of John Walker"

29 December 2001

Below we post a selection of letters on "The New York Times *and the case of John Walker*"

Regarding John Walker and the article by David Walsh: I speak for this youth. I understand his search for his soul and his rejection of the materialistic society of the West. I am appalled and disgusted by the words of Bush, the senior, who apparently has not known a day in his life in which he doubted himself and his affluent society. I have been around a long time—as long as the elder Bush—and I have seen a much different side of life than he apparently has.

SB

22 December 2001

Thank you Mr. Walsh for this thoughtful and appropriate article. Your perceptions are accurate and you communicate them credibly. Too bad this piece isn't published in *The New York Times*, where its readers could have opportunity to compare the lie with the truth.

Keep on.

G

25 December 2001

Thank you for your wonderfully written article about John Walker.

Best regards,

VM

22 December 2001

Gentlemen,

I am not used to responding as I am not a writer, but it is deplorable what President Bush Sr. said about John Walker. It was inhumane, ditto for the present president. I now feel this war in Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf War was senseless. The Bushes do not own the United States and the rest of the world. How dare they dictate whom they go after next? Did they ever hear of peace and talk? I remember that is what the Taliban wanted. Were Bush and his warmonger friends telling us the truth then?

To get back to John Walker, the innocent warrior, he should be let go. We made him suffer long enough and his family too. John Walker is not our prisoner. He joined the Taliban. He should be let go because I still do not believe that we were right going after Osama bin Laden with a vengeance when we never had proof. Also I remember President Bush Jr. repeating after the attack, "Why do they hate us"? Did he ever find out? Did he talk with anyone? I am afraid what Bush and his cabinet and the people who think like him want. This president could have caused peace instead of war. My family, friends and I are humble, we believe in peace. Why not show us all the dead Bush's bombs produced in Iraq and Afghanistan? That we poor people do not understand. John Walker is a brave fellow. He did not fight against America.

Thanks

MB

23 December 2001

I think it is a sad possibility that the imprisoned American, John Walker, may be executed without public discussion and debate. I feel that your article of December 22, which asks, "Is there no one to be found who will speak up for this youth?", asks the critical question. If Mr. Walker is held at Guantanamo, and is tried in a military court, with the possibility of death, the issues that you raise in the article, entitled "The *New York Times* and the case of John Walker," will certainly come to pass.

SJ

27 December 2001

Some of us have taken a position opposite of 99 percent of Americans. There are few of us, but yet we seem to be being heard. Bush the senior is a crass example for anyone to follow. He speaks I think more strongly because "the president" said something like

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“the poor fellow, what could have made him take this path?” and received bad marks so the father as usual jumps in to to say my son is a man with a good heart and he wants Walker to walk the plank.

HW

22 December 2001

“A society reveals a great deal about itself by the way it treats its youth, even those who make mistakes. John Walker found himself, more or less accidentally, in a tragic position. The official response is out-and-out brutality. George Bush, the former president, told ABC TV, ‘Make him leave his hair the way it is and his face as dirty as it is and let him go wandering around this country and see what kind of sympathy he would get. I mean, he’s just despicable.’” — “The *New York Times* and the case of John Walker”

Not only has Poppy Bush had a fairly comfortable life but he was one of the players in the Reagan administration who had to have known about the fielding of the Mujahedin or “freedom fighters.” With his contacts in the CIA (as a prior director) and his closeness within the government to Casey, he had to have known about the kind of regime he was partly instrumental in creating. And, of course, with his close relationship to the Wahhabi Saudis, he had to have known how deeply motivated the Islamic warriors would be. This is compounded by the fact that he was president during the waning conflict between the Mujahedin and the Soviets.

I suppose when Poppy speaks of being “despicable,” he’s speaking from experience.

E

22 December 2001

I wonder why no one has brought up the fact that if Johnny Walker is to be tried for treason for aiding the Taliban, why shouldn’t our government be similarly tried, since (only last spring) they sent $40 million to the Taliban.

AS

23 December 2001

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