

Letters on "Political reaction and intellectual charlatanry: US academics issue statement in support of war"

27 February 2002

The following letters were received in response to David North's February 18 article, Political reaction and intellectual charlatanry: US academics issue statement in support of war.

Dear Editor,

David North's article on the academically issued pro-war statement was amazing. Not only was it exceedingly well written, but it made wonderfully salient points regarding the entire farce of the "democratically waged war" in which our country is choosing to be involved. I offer my thanks to him, and to your organization.

FW

18 February 2002

"Political reaction and intellectual charlatanry...", these are your words, and thank you so much for them! In France and Europe we are near thinking that Americans are "all the same". No, even under the media's pressure (and what pressure!) the WSWs (still) stays alive and thinking. I remember Francis Fukuyama, during a TV show, in France with Bernard Pivot (who specializes in literature, poetry). He was so stupid with his "end of history ... thanks to democracy" theory. Bernard Pivot and his guests were absolutely astonished and could not say a word. Ten years later, as history is going on, and strong and hard, Mr. Francis Fukuyama is still here chatting, his mouth still pouring out babble of narrow-minded arguments.

But if history ended with democracy, what's going on now?

I just wonder...

Thanks so much.

Yours faithfully,

PZ

France

18 February 2002

Thank you for your solid analysis of the statement by US academics in support of Bush's terror war.

I would like to point out that not all of the supporters are "right-wing," as the first sentence of the article calls them. An academic like Michael Walzer certainly falls in the category "liberal," and the same is true in the political spectrum for someone like ex-Senator Moynihan. Of course, this does not make the document any better but rather shows the extent of intellectual corruption in parts of academia as well as in politics—despite the sometimes outlandish moral posturing of the latter.

Sincerely,

MG

Princeton, New Jersey

21 February 2002

Dear WSWs,

I don't know if you've already decided which articles/essays to include in your next quarterly *Review*, but I hope it contains David North's, "Political Reaction and Intellectual charlatanry: US academics issue statement in support of war." I find it very well written. I also appreciate your recent reference to Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz as "psychopaths." What better word describes men who engineer mass murder?

GS

New Hampshire

18 February 2002

What I have to say about your recent article can be summed up in two words: Thank You.

Sincerely,

VM

18 February 2002

Mr. North,

I have read with interest your excellent analysis of the open letter by American “intellectuals.” Although I have not read the actual documents, you have given a substantial overview with numerous quotes from the text—I have a good idea of the arguments made. I have noticed that some of the most complete analyses of political/social issues can be found on WSWS.

It is interesting to note that the “intellectuals” analysis of why the US was attacked September 11 appears to mirror the arguments of the decidedly anti-intellectual Falwell and Robertson given soon after the events. Comments for which they were heavily criticized in some publications. It really does appear that all right-wing propaganda regarding the “war” is consistent regardless of whether they come from academic or evangelical fundamentalist Christian sources. They must keep in good contact to stay “on point.”

Sincerely,

GA

New York

18 February 2002

I briefly read the above piece and want to congratulate you on a superb analysis. Perhaps a follow-up would be to discuss the backgrounds of the authors and also to review some academic analyses less servile to the official line of the Bush administration. The most alarming aspect of the current situation is the lack of recognition by the media and by intellectuals (at least publicly) of the false and manipulative use of the term “war” and the claim “we are at war,” etc., by the administration. The “War on Poverty” and the “War on Drugs” were only wars in a metaphorical sense. This is true of the “War on Terrorism” as well.

The US has a problem—a very complex problem—that has little to do with war. It seems transparently manipulative to in any way equate the situation of December 1941 when the US faced two highly organized and successful military machines that had recently conquered a host of supposedly powerful nations and the problems posed by a few religious fanatics. The latter had been unable to successfully bring off a terrorist act in the US until September 11 (except for the abortive earlier attempt on the Trade Centers) despite their strong desire to bring off such attacks. The September 11 attacks could have been

carried out by almost anyone willing to die (the Columbine High School killers could have done it). I fail to see how coordinating ticket purchases and carrying box cutters is evidence of some “Dr. No”-like mastermind. The attacks succeeded solely because of the official policy of cooperating with hijackers. In any event, none of this has anything to do with war and certainly not with World War II. But almost no one in politics or the media wants to say this, whatever they think in private.

Keep up the good work. Your lucid writings are a light in the darkness that transcends your commitment to socialism, although it does honor to the socialist tradition.

RT

18 February 2002



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