

# Letters from our readers

5 May 2005

*The following is a selection of recent letters to the World Socialist Web Site.*

*On "Bush demands deep cuts in Social Security"*

Thanks for the detailed response to the Bush press conference on Social Security. It is important for younger people to know something of the history of the Social Security system, especially how insultingly dishonest it is for Bush and his ilk to invoke Roosevelt's role as they do.

I was struck by another part of the press conference. In one of the few press contributions which might nowadays be referred to as courageous, a reporter asked him about the practice of "rendition" of prisoners to the jails of allies notorious for inhumane interrogation. When he asked Bush what his response would be to Americans taken prisoner on the battlefield and rendered to other countries to be tortured, the president jokingly replied, "Well, that's sort of a hypothetical question" and went on with his usual mantra about how we are at war, etc. Am I missing something, or is that a declaration that he couldn't care less about the fate of captured American service personnel? Is that just a dullard's response to a question he is incapable of answering, or worse? I used to listen to presidential press conferences in hopes of gleaning the real answers by reading between the lines, but I can't watch or listen to Bush. I don't think there are any lines to read between.

Fraternally,

JB

Windsor, Ontario

30 April 2005

*On "The Republican Party and the Christian right: sowing the seeds of an American fascist movement"*

This is an excellent article, flatly laying out what actions and threats the GOP is trying to use. It has allowed its power to go to its head, and I remember thinking during the Terri Schiavo ordeal that those who were appealing and appealing and then threatening judges who refused to knuckle under were acting like spoiled two-year-old children. I fully expected Tom DeLay to at any time resort to flinging his body on the ground and having a full-blown temper tantrum. Your article describes the happenings around this issue with much better descriptions than anything I would have written.

I find it totally ironic that the present cads leading the country are resorting to tactics they often accuse socialists of trying to use. They operate with so much psychological projection that they would make a great case for a person to use to study for a doctoral thesis!

LM

York, Pennsylvania

29 April 2005

I think this was a profoundly true and excellently written article about the current state of America and American politics. I am a graduate student of Public Service and a new socialist. I fully intend to continue working for issues of social justice for the rest of my life and

career, but it seems that more and more issues of injustice keep popping up that I don't know where to focus my attention. This claim by the Christian Right about a bias against "people of faith" is ridiculous, given it seems that so often, the message of faith portrayed lately is only to criticize those of other faiths and trample upon their rights! And the truly sad fact of the matter is that many people of true and good Christian faith fall under the spell of these politicians, ignorant of both political schemes and the fact that there are other issues that their savior Jesus Christ is said to have focused on—such as nonviolence, antiwar ideology and feeding the hungry of our nation. Unfortunately too much attention and money is being directed to an unjust war and issues like the "right to life."

[Tony] Perkins' [president of the Family Research Council] statement—"Just because we believe in the Bible as a guidepost for life does not disqualify us from participating in the government"—made me want to call him up myself and remind him that indeed it does not, but this is America, the so-called land of the free, and there are many other books, thoughts and stories by which other people govern their own lives. They should be free to do so.

Your assessment of the problem in your article was so true: those religious conservatives believe it their right to take away the rights of others. Thank you very much for your article. I passed it along to several other readers. I hope that as I continue my education and my work that I can find a way to organize myself and others to making this a more just society.

AKM

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

28 April 2005

*On "Christian fundamentalist bigotry reigns at US Air Force Academy"*

During the early '80s a new type of horror movie appeared in US cinema. It mixed sex and huge amounts of violence and gore. It was unlike any horror movie I had seen in the past. There was just one gory scene after another. If one liked horror, it took it to a new level. Another thing is, they were almost always followed by sequels, like Halloween I and Halloween II. Bush I and II remind me of those movies. Just when you think it can't get worse, it does, and it is just a continuing series of outrageous and horrifying events.

Now, we find out that the officer corps in one branch of the military, the US Air Force, is experiencing, what appears to be, a not so subtle forced conversion to Christian fundamentalism. Is a similar process happening in the other branches of the military?

Mussolini defined the first stage of fascism as corporatism. Looking at the huge, pervading, influence of big business on US government, I think it is fair to now categorize the US as a fascist state. However, Mussolini was often at odds with the clergy.

The marriage of backward, reactionary, fundamentalist Christians with an avaricious, insatiable, financial elite under the banner of the Republican Party in the US is a new, emergent phenomenon that I

don't believe has political precedent at any time in recent world history. The term I use for it is "theofascist"

TR

3 May 2005

This article was both excellent and very ominous. As a Jeffersonian libertarian I am appalled at the rise of the Christian Right and their fascist vision for the United States. The United States was founded by men of the Enlightenment. Men like Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and Benjamin Franklin were all deists and rationalists who established the first republic since ancient times.

The republic was unlike all the countries of old Europe, which were based on oppression, poverty and ignorance. The people were kept in their chains by religion, particularly the ideal of the Divine Right of Kings.

What we see today is an effort by Christian fundamentalists to turn the clock back to the day before the Enlightenment when religion ruled the world, commonly known as the Dark Ages. The fact that one cannot freely worship at a public institution like the US Air Force Academy is sad, and frightening. The fact that the commander would address the cadets to force his beliefs upon them is sickening to the core. Jefferson must be rolling over in his grave. As he once stated so eloquently:

"In every country and in every age, the priest has been hostile to liberty, always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses for the protection of his own."

Keep up the good work.

GG

Manteca, California

30 April 2005

*On "Thirtieth anniversary of US imperialism's defeat in Vietnam"*

This article points out the same thing that General (ret.) Mohammad Yahya Nawroz, army of Afghanistan and Mr. Lester W. Grau Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, concluded in their paper, "The Soviet War in Afghanistan: History and Harbinger of Future War?" They said that "no army, however sophisticated, well trained, materially rich, numerically overwhelming and ruthless, can succeed on the battlefield if it is not psychologically fit and motivated for the fight. The force, however destitute in material advantages and numbers, which can rely on the moral qualities of a strong faith, stubborn determination, individualism and unending patience will always be the winner."

It's likely that the adventure in Iraq will turn out to be no different than our previous adventure in Vietnam and the Soviet Union's blunders in Afghanistan. History will be repeated.

PK

2 May 2005

*On "Nader solidarizes himself with extreme right in Terri Schiavo case"*

One of the many aspects of the Schiavo affair that bothered me was the reference by the right, and Nader as well, it seems, to Michael Schiavo's supposed adultery. If I were in a persistent vegetative state, I would want my husband to move on, and in less than the five anguished years it took Mr. Schiavo. I would want him to be happy, just as I would want my parents to be happy. Doesn't that seem reasonable? It is very troubling that certain elements in this society get bloodthirsty at the concept of common-law marriage, as though to live for ten years with a woman and raise a family with her were "living in sin" because their marriage had not been sanctioned by the Church. Why did Nader even bring it up except to arouse irrational

disapproval? He was trying to convey open-mindedness and instead revealed his close-mindedness. Thanks for following up on "the Nader factor" and capitulation of the Democrats to the religious right.

NG

26 April 2005

Why is anyone surprised by Mr. Nader's actions in the Terry Schiavo case? His entire career from his monstrous tank car in the 1960s until the present has been anti-scientific and sensationalistic. He's opportunistic and manipulative without a rational moral political goal other than personal notoriety and disruption for the sake of disruption.

NH

26 April 2005

*On "An appreciation of biologist Ernst Mayr (1904-2005)"*

Fascinating and lucid. I learned a lot!

BB-H

Israel

4 May 2005

*On "Bus-train collision kills 37 in Sri Lanka"*

As always, the quality and interest of the writing on this site is unparalleled. Even so, I think it is important to express how amazing it is that I can manage to read articles about relatively local occurrences in places I know little about and have them interest me as much as articles about the US which relate directly to me. Thanks for the massive amounts of effort that must go into all this work.

JL

Wilmington, Delaware

2 May 2005

*On "Britain: lecturers' union boycotts two Israeli universities"*

As a Jewish academic type, I voice my support to your principled stand against the academic boycott of universities in Israel, and take great pleasure that you call attention to how this discussion debases dialogue to the "collective punishment" space occupied by Nazis, Zionists, Stalinists and very disoriented contemporary progressives.

AL

Canada

2 May 2005



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](http://wsws.org/contact)**