

## The fascist policies of 'Texas Chainsaw' Gov. George W. Bush

by Michele Steinberg

George "Dubya" Bush likes to tell people to "come on down" to Texas to see how he has run the "second-largest state in the U.S.A." He repeats over and over that his main qualification for the Presidency is his "leadership" in Texas, because "if Texas were a country, it would be the eleventh-largest economy in the world." But, there's something rotten in Texas, and after looking at Bush's record since becoming Governor in 1995, we see that that something is George W. Bush.

In the land of the hypothetical "world's eleventh-largest economy," you will find that Texas ranks 49th out of 50 in the United States for the number of children with health insurance; it ranks 47th in the maximum welfare payment—\$201 a month for a family of three; it ranks 47th in state government spending on public health; and it ranks dead last in state government spending per capita for its population (but *seventh* nationally in spending on prisons, which is included in the overall per-capita spending figure). You will learn that Texas ranks second in the United States in the number of households suffering from hunger—5% of the households overall in this large, apparently wealthy state.

Why haven't you heard about this? After numerous debates, against five rivals for the Republican Presidential nomination, it is remarkable that none of Bush's opponents have taken off the gloves and hit him with the real facts on poverty, misery, disease, and ignorance on the Bush plantation. One reason is obvious: All of the candidates—with the exception, briefly, of Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.)—agreed with Bush that it's tolerable to have the Confederate flag flown over the South Carolina capitol, and *refused* to take a moral stand against the flying of the banner of slavery, secession, and current-day white supremacist groups.

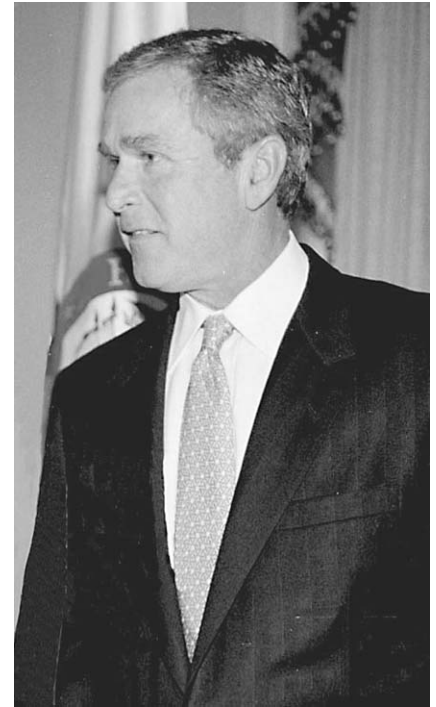
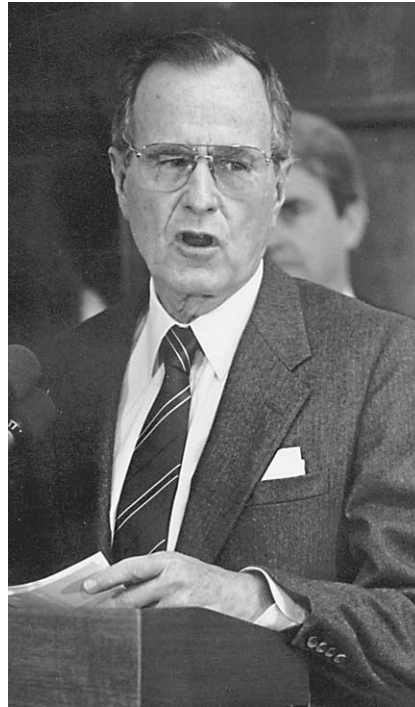
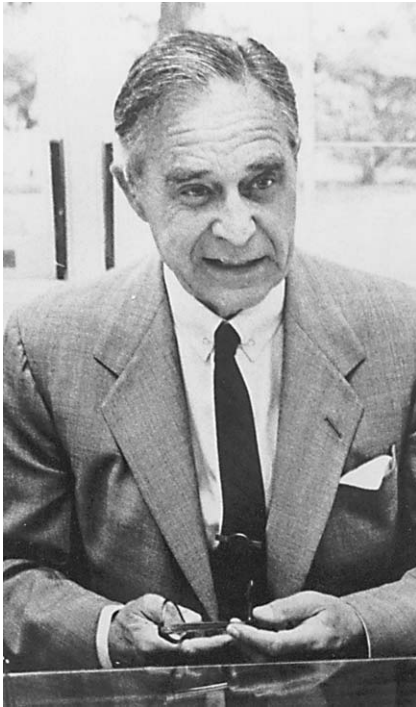
The "Confederate flag issue" is not a symbolic one. As

Democratic pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche explained at a press conference in Concord, New Hampshire on Jan. 11, the stance of George "Jefferson Davis" Bush on the Confederate flag is an indicator of a fundamental question—the commitment to uphold the General Welfare clause of the U.S. Constitution. LaRouche explained that both Bush and Al Gore, whose cabal inside the Democratic Party tramples on civil rights and the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and has so far kept LaRouche off the ballot South Carolina for the March 9 primary, have a common racist outlook that threatens the very future of the United States.

LaRouche said, "So . . . what we have today, which is relevant to the general nature of the campaign on both sides, is that the national campaign is now dominated by an issue between those who believe in the General Welfare, as in the FDR tradition, or the corresponding tradition, civil rights tradition, in the Republican Party, and those on the other side, which includes George W. Bush and Gore, who line up with the Wall Street crowd, who are trying to ram Gore's nomination through the Democratic convention . . . an alliance of the Gore people, in effect, with the Bush people, on this issue, to the effect that you have George W. 'Jefferson Davis' Bush on one side, and you have an Al 'August Belmont' Gore on the other side, as against those of us who represent, in both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, the Lincoln tradition."

### A family of fascists

Like his father, former President George H.W. Bush, "Dubya" will brook no criticism. Authors of books, articles, and Internet websites who criticize him have come under intense pressure and threats. Recall the incident in October



Three generations of the Bush family's service to British oligarchical interests: (Left to right) Prescott Bush, who played a role in putting Hitler into power; former President Sir George H.W. Bush; and Texas Gov. George W. Bush.

1999, when the book *Fortunate Son*, which included a report that “Dubya” had once done community service in Texas to expunge the record of an arrest for cocaine possession, was pulled from bookstores and the copies destroyed after the publisher, St. Martin’s Press, came under massive pressure. The book had become a top-ten seller in the days before it was pulled, and has since been published by another company. However, despite the legendary Bush wrath, in the days running up to the onset of the GOP primaries, the truth must come out.

George “Dubya” Bush comes from the family that backed the top Nazis behind Adolf Hitler: Grandpa Prescott S. Bush’s stake in the Union Banking Corp. was seized in 1942 under the Trading with the Enemy Act, because of the corporation’s role in financing and profiting from Hitler’s war effort.

His father, is “Sir George,” knighted for his service to Queen Elizabeth II and the British monarchy. Sir George’s acceptance of knighthood, and the noble title, blatantly violates Section 9, Article I of the U.S. Constitution of 1787 which says: “No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.”

“Dubya’s” mentor, Marvin Olasky — his guru on the issue of “compassionate conservatism” — puts forward the idea that

“today’s poor in the United States are the victims and perpetrators of illegitimacy and abandonment, of family nonformation and malformation, alienation and loneliness, but *they are not suffering from thirst, hunger, or nakedness, except by choice, by insanity or parental abuse.*” In other words, their poverty is their own fault.

Talk about “family malformation”! The Bush dynasty in Texas can be compared to the infamous screen depiction of the “Leatherface” family in the 1974 horror flick, “The Texas Chainsaw Massacre.” That dysfunctional, cannibalistic family, led by Leatherface the elder, goaded the younger to chop up innocent victims so the family could eat them.

Gov. George W. Bush is a killer, too. He could be aptly called the “Texas Chainsaw Governor.” He revels in the fact that he has killed more people under Texas capital punishment laws — 114 in five years — than any other governor in the nation. He plans to execute 20 prisoners during election year 2000 (see article below).

After he refused to grant her clemency last year, Bush viciously parodied one of his victims, Karla Faye Tucker, in an interview with *Talk* magazine. Clemency in her case had been requested by hundreds of leaders around the world, including Pope John Paul II. Republican Presidential candidate Gary Bauer, one of Bush’s rivals, deplored Bush’s mockery of the woman he put to death.

But, Bush is killing even more people, especially children, with his economic and social policies are killing than he does

with Texas's death row. Olasky, the "guru" of "compassionate conservatism," who travelled an odd ideological path from the Communist Party U.S.A. to the rigid orthodoxy of Austin's Redeemer Presbyterian Church, where he is an elder today, shaped Bush's belief that the poor have chosen to be that way.

### Dubya's record of greed

The following report shows that Bush's Texas is a hell-hole, an embarrassment to any real leader; and the conditions in Texas should be a warning to the American people to mobilize to stop the Texas Chainsaw Governor while there's still time.

In Bush's Texas, the philosophy is clear: money first, last, and always. For Bush, like his fellow Conservative Revolution fascists (and fellow Texans) Sen. Phil Gramm and Rep. Tom DeLay, the "balanced budget" tool can kill as efficiently as the gas chamber. In numerous cases since 1995, Bush acted to *block* efforts to improve conditions for the impoverished, Hispanic minorities, and the sick and disabled:

- In 1999, Bush tried—unsuccessfully—to prevent 200,000 poor Texas children from qualifying to receive desperately needed medical coverage provided under the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIPs), a supplemental program enacted to compensate for the murderous policies embodied in the Federal 1996 Welfare Reform bill.

- In 1995, Bush vetoed a Patients Protection Act in Texas that would have required health maintenance organizations (HMOs) to let their patients see doctors outside their own networks. The veto was of great benefit to Columbia/HCA, the largest for-profit hospital corporate chain in the U.S.A., which is owned by Bush's financial godfather, Richard Rainwater. Without Bush's veto, the bill, which enjoyed widespread popularity, would have cut into Columbia/HCA's profits.

- In 1995, Bush blocked the passage of legislation to provide a "border Marshall Plan" to improve conditions in the poverty-ridden, disease-plagued *colonias*, the 1,400 undeveloped tracts of land that were then home to 340,000 Texans (97.3% of them Hispanics) in the 40 counties along the border with Mexico.

Confronted with reality, Bush's reaction is to lash out, deny, and lie if necessary. In December 1999, when a U.S. Department of Agriculture report found that 5% of Texas households have suffered from hunger in the past two years, Bush fired back, "Where? You'd think the governor would have heard if there are pockets of hunger in Texas!"

The study, titled "Measuring Food Security in the United States," showed that Texas was second in the nation, behind only Oregon, in the number of people suffering from hunger. State Rep. Elliott Naishtat, a Democrat who chairs the House Committee on Human Services, said on Dec. 23, 1999 that he was "appalled" at the governor's comments, adding, "Could

TABLE 1

### How Bush's Texas ranks among the 50 states

Policy	Ranking
Percentage of children without health insurance	1
Number of children without health insurance	2
Share of children kicked off national Medicaid rolls between 1996-99 (14% of total)	1
Number of people suffering from hunger	2
Number of children in poverty	2
Highest population percentage living in poverty	5
Per-capita spending by state government (services, education, infrastructure, etc.)	50
Percentage of population who have completed high school	49
Number of adults, age 25 and over, who have obtained a high school diploma	46
Size of welfare payment for eligible families (only 45% of the official poverty rate)	47
Per-capita funding for public health	48
Home ownership	44

*Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Department of Education, other Federal and state agencies, and private organizations, including the Center for Public Policy Priorities, show that Gov. George W. Bush's Texas holds a near-record in poverty, lack of health insurance, and lack of public education.*

it be the governor also doesn't know that Texas ranks at or near the bottom in every recognized national poverty-related category?"

### Poverty, hunger, and early death

One out of every six citizens of Texas lives in poverty, according to figures compiled by the Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPP) in its report "Working But Poor." The CPPP points out that "these rates are significantly above the national average."

In Texas, the gateway to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the *maquiladoras* across the border in Mexico, it is the children who pay the highest price. As **Table 1** shows, the state ranks among the highest in child poverty. Although not the highest in infant mortality, the disparity between the infant mortality for black infants and white infants is very high.

Of all children and youth up to age 18 in the state, 26.9% (1,502,000) are poor. As of 1994-97, fully 24.5%, or 1,497,000, of all children and youth in Texas under age 19, lacked any medical insurance.

During Bush's watch, the rate of poverty among children under six years of age underwent a radical jump, from 24.4% in 1979-83, to 30.3% as of 1992-96, according to the Na-



*Poverty in George W. Bush's Texas: A backyard in San Elizario. Along the border with Mexico, the incidence of hepatitis A, tuberculosis, and salmonella is many times higher than the national average.*

tional Center for Children in Poverty. That is, in 1996, there were over 572,000 children under six living in poverty in Texas.

Since 1996, when the Conservative Revolution's "welfare reform" bill was signed into law by President Clinton under the influence of George W.'s political twin, Al Gore, the situation for the children of Texas has grown even worse.

In January 1999, the Urban Institute released a survey showing that Texas families report significantly greater problems obtaining daily necessities—ranging from adequate housing to affordable food—than the rest of the nation; and 17% of low-income parents lack confidence in their ability to get medical care for their children. According to 1998 data from the Children's Defense Fund, every 23 minutes a baby is born in Texas with low birthweight, and every four hours, an infant dies during its first year of life.

Bush and Gore, in fact, have been in intense competition over who is more capable of putting the screws to America's poor. While it was Gore, working with former White House Rasputin Dick Morris, who pushed through the end of Federally insured welfare protection for America's dependent children and mothers, Bush took the lead in implementing the plan.

According to *EIR's* May 1999 review of the aftermath of the welfare reform law, Texas eliminated 302,786 people from the welfare rolls between August 1996 and September 1998. That number was second only to California, which has a much larger population. So brutal is Bush's treatment of poor families on welfare, that the U.S. Department of

Health and Human Services intervened against the Chainsaw Governor in 1997 to prevent implementation of a plan that would have put screening for welfare eligibility under the control of private corporations. In a practice reminiscent of those of HMOs, the privatized welfare screeners would have received a bonus for keeping the welfare rolls low.

### **Steal from the poor**

By 1999, Democratic members of the Texas State Legislature, which by law meets *only every two years* for only three months, mobilized to stop Bush's murderous policies, by providing insurance to some 500,000 poor children in Texas, under the CHIPs, a Federal program set up to compensate for the damage done by the 1996 welfare "reform."

But, rich-kid Bush tried to block a move by the Legislature to set the income eligibility for insurance under CHIPs at \$33,400, which is twice the official poverty-level income for a family of four (*EIR's* economic reports have proven that, in terms of survival of a family, the poverty line is set far too low).

Bush insisted the ceiling be set at 150% of the poverty level, because he wanted to make sure that the number of new recipients would be kept low. At the 150% of poverty level, a \$25,100 income for a family of four, 200,000 fewer people would be eligible for CHIPs coverage. Bush's actuaries had determined that many poor families would come forward, and qualify for *state* medical coverage, not Federal Medicaid insurance, and would then start eating into the Texas budget surplus. The Legislature held out, and an angry Bush report-

## It's all in the family

Judging from the Jan. 18-19 developments in Florida, where George “Dubya” Bush’s brother, Jeb Bush, is governor, both racism and foul-mouthed outbursts are a family trait.

The Confederate flag fight in South Carolina was still raging — where 50,000 protesters gathered in Columbia on Martin Luther King Day, Jan. 17, to have the flag banned from flying over the state capitol — when, a day later, in Florida’s capital, Tallahassee, Gov. Jeb Bush “let it fly” against African-American protesters — without knowing a TV camera was rolling.

Infuriated over a sit-in by two leading African-American state legislators at the office of Lt. Gov. Frank Brogan, Bush ordered his staff, “Get their asses outta here. . . . We’re going to make their lives hell for this.” The remarks were recorded by a video crew, and the film was aired the next morning, making the national news.

The sit-in began on the afternoon of Jan. 18, after two African-American state legislators, Rep. Tony Hill (D-Jacksonville) and Sen. Kendrick Meek (D-Miami), met with Bush, asking him to alter his “One Florida” program,

which eliminates affirmative action in the state college system. Bush refused. They then started their sit-in. Bush was livid.

The tape of Bush’s outburst was aired on the 6 a.m. news on Jan. 19 by ABC affiliate WTXL, in Tallahassee. Soon after that, National Public Radio carried a spot on Bush’s quotes. By mid-morning, 20 state legislators had joined the 200 people protesting. The governor’s offices were closed and locked to anyone not having an appointment. Governor Bush, who was scheduled to deliver his budget for the state, insisted he would go ahead, regardless of the protesters.

Sen. Daryl Jones (D-Miami), head of the Black State Legislators caucus, is speaking out against Bush’s arrogant actions preceding the sit-in.

Jeb Bush now claims that the order to “kick their asses out” applied to the reporters covering the sit-in, not to the elected state officials. He also put out a ridiculous statement apologizing to his mother for using “the A-word.”

Lying double-talk and trying to rewrite the record is also a trait frequently observed in “Dubya” when he gets caught with his inherited “silver foot in his mouth.”

Meanwhile, “Dubya’s” wife Laura was touring South Carolina on Jan. 18-19, telling voters that the Confederate flag is “not a symbol of racism,” and that she knows this, because she comes from Texas.

edly told Democratic Rep. Gen Maxey, who led the CHIPs fight in the State Legislature, “You crammed it down our throats.”

This wasn’t the first time that Bush pulled such a “save the rich” stunt, but, significantly, in the CHIPs fight, Bush lost. His behavior was a repeat of 1995, when he vetoed the Patients Protection Act, which had passed both the Texas Senate and House by overwhelming margins. The act would have given patients “rights” to simple things like choosing their own doctor, that is, against the collusion between HMOs, for-profit hospitals, and other so-called providers who profit most when they *do not* provide health care. Bush explained his veto in a memo that said that the bill would “unfairly impact some health care providers”—though not named, Bush was referring to Rainwater’s Columbia/HCA.

This decision was corrupt. According to *The Buying of the President 2000*, a book released in January by the Center for Public Integrity, Bush was deriving more than 60% of his personal income from businesses in which he and Rainwater were partners when he became Governor, according to Bush’s 1994 financial disclosure statement. Rainwater had also designed the deal that netted more than \$14 million for “Dubya” in the sale of the Texas Rangers baseball team.

Perhaps even more to the point is the fact that Rainwater’s Columbia/HCA chain profits by looting hospitals, and imposing brutal austerity measures that cost lives. On Dec. 30, 1998, the U.S. Department of Justice joined in a lawsuit alleging that Columbia/HCA Healthcare Corp., the largest and most infamous health care provider in the nation, had been having defrauded the Medicare program and several other Federally funded health insurance programs for years.

The government’s action came after a two-year investigation into the chain’s bogus expense claims, and months after the government joined another suit that charged Columbia/HCA and a corporate cousin, Quorum Health Group, of defrauding Medicare for over 14 years for an estimated \$1 billion.

Columbia/HCA, which owned 300 hospitals in 32 states at the time the Justice Department joined the suit, skyrocketed to Wall Street prominence, becoming the world’s largest, “most successful” for-profit hospital chain, by using strategies such as radically cutting the number of hospital medical staff and registered nurses—or buying up the competitor hospitals in a community, closing down some of them, and forcing patients to utilize the remaining hospitals.

Columbia/HCA's policy to maximize profits by ripping away hospital infrastructure is the antithesis of what this country mandated in the Hill-Burton Act of 1946, to ensure that every community had sufficient hospital beds. Now we find, through these lawsuits, that at least some of the money Columbia/HCA used to buy up (and close) health facilities was illegally gotten. While some of the lawsuits have ended, the investigations into Columbia/HCA's fraud continue.

Texas residents say that a similar story of protecting cronies could be told about the Bush family's links to the real estate bigwigs in the border area, who have an interest in keeping the notorious *colonias* as they are.

The Border Low Income Housing Coalition, a Texas-based organization, reports that conditions in Bush's *colonias* are among the poorest in the world.

According to the coalition, "A large majority of *colonias* have dirt roads, without even gravel surfaces, and have no surface drainage systems. Approximately half of Texas *colonia* residents do not have adequate water supplies. 51% of *colonia* residents use septic tanks, 36% use cesspools, 7% use outhouses, and 6% use other means to dispose of wastewater. Many *colonias* are constructed in flood plains, causing raw sewage to overflow into the yards when it rains. . . . Incidence of health problems is high. Flooding is common . . . making the existence of privies an additional health problem. Waterborne diseases are very common in *colonias* for this reason. The rate of TB in the *colonias* is 3.9% and hepatitis is 6.2%, well above the average for the rest of Texas.

"Education levels are quite low and school dropout rates are high. . . . Two-thirds of those over 18 years of age have not finished high school. Median annual income is estimated at \$7,000-11,000 per household. . . . Typical families consist of 5-6 people."

## The future under 'Dubya'

To get a glimpse of a future under a Bush Presidency, just look at his proposed \$1.7 trillion "tax cut" over 10 years. It is simply a plan to steal from the poor and give to the rich. According to a December 1999 analysis by Citizens for Tax Justice and the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, based in Washington, Bush's tax policy is a sop to the very rich. The poorest people in America, those in the lowest 20% of the population, with an income of less than \$13,300 per family, will get an average tax cut of \$43 a year, amounting to only 0.6% of Bush's tax cut. In contrast, the top 10% of the income bracket, those with incomes of \$89,000 or more, would receive an average tax cut of \$8,362, amounting to 61.6% of Bush's tax cuts. But for the top 1%, with an income of \$301,000 or more, the average tax cut would be \$50,166 a year, 36.9% of Bush's plan.

Under George W. Bush and his oligarchic family, it's only the top 1% that count.

# The Bush family's death machine

by Marianna Wertz

As of Jan. 19, 2000, since he became Governor of Texas in 1995, George W. Bush, the "compassionate conservative," has overseen the execution of 114 Texas death-row inmates. According to the Death Penalty Information Center, this is nearly half of all the people (201) executed in Texas since the resumption of capital punishment in 1976. No other governor in America in recent times comes close to this number of executions, and Texas is way out ahead of every other state in the business of killing, accounting for one-third of all executions in the country since 1976 (see **Figure 1**).

In a pre-Christmas binge, four Texas inmates were killed in four days. One of the last executions of 1999 was that of David Long, who had to be flown to the execution chamber from a hospital in Galveston accompanied by medical personnel, where he had been placed on life support following a suicide attempt. Bush killed him anyway.

In January alone in Texas, there are seven executions scheduled, including Larry Robison, a paranoid-schizophrenic who killed his victims only after attempts to institutionalize him were rejected because of lack of medical insurance; and two men, Glen McGinnis, 26, and Anzel Jones, 21, both of whom were 17 when they committed their crimes, and both of whom are African-American. On Feb. 24, Toronto Patterson, 21, who was also 17 when he committed his crime, and is African-American, is scheduled to die.

The execution of those who were minors when they committed their crimes is banned by international treaty, but the United States took "exception" to this rule when it signed the treaty. The three American states where minors have been executed since 1997 — Texas, Virginia, and Oklahoma — join Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen in continuing to execute juvenile offenders.

The compassionate "Dubya" also refused to grant clemency to the first woman to be executed in Texas since the 1860s, Karla Faye Tucker, though she had been demonstrably rehabilitated while in prison. Bush subsequently mocked Tucker in an interview with *Talk* magazine, telling the reporter in a high-pitched, sarcastic tone that she had said, "Oh please, don't kill me." His refusal to grant Tucker clemency spurned requests by hundreds of world leaders,