

Readers' letters

A 'culture of life' — for one person

I find it outrageous that our federal lawmakers were jumping through hoops to create new laws for Terri Schiavo, a patient who has been on life support for the past 15 years. If they are so worried about a "culture of life," what are they doing for the more than 40 million Americans who lack health insurance?

In the United States, there's a large gap in life expectancy between rich and poor, black and white, but Congress isn't flying in on the weekend to address that issue. Instead, the proposed budget actually slashes social programs, and Bush's Social Security reform would gut our final safety net.

Patti Jazanoski
Santa Cruz

Question of priorities

I can't help wondering how many starving children could have been saved with the estimated \$5 million spent to keep Terri Schiavo alive.

Art Anderson
Saratoga

Let her parents decide

This is not a case of "right to die" vs. "saving a life," as some would have it. Rather, it is a question of who among those closest to such an unfortunate individual are most appropriate to decide what path to follow given the lack of unambiguous evidence revealing the afflicted one's true wishes.

In such instances, the courts should presume the desire to live as intrinsically present, and that in Terri Schiavo's situation, the decision to revoke this presumption and take her life should rest in the hands of those who gave her life — her parents.

Paul Grant
San Jose

So much for so few

To paraphrase Winston Churchill: Never was so much done by so many to benefit so few of our countrymen that it offends the very sense of our personal dignity.

Mary Pea
San Jose

Diverting our attention

Everything is going wrong for the Republicans. Their policies have failed to achieve a balanced budget, lower the international trade imbalance, prevent the fall of the dollar, improve international relations, prevent the escalation of gasoline and fuel prices or halt the spread of terrorism.

Faced with an endless succession of disasters and embarrassments, what are the poor Republicans to do? Answer: When a public-relations opportunity presents itself, grab hold and run with it.

Richard Sutherland
Los Altos

Liberal hypocrisy

Liberals who hate electrocution have no problem with Terri Schiavo being killed by dehydration. Liberals who fight to keep convicted murderers alive look the other way as an innocent woman is forced to die. Liberals who love to inject the courts into every situation object to having any court review this case.

Liberals who will use the most bizarre research to support their pet claims ignore more than a dozen neurologists who challenge whether Schiavo is really in a persistent vegetative state. Liberals who abhor violence against women are unwilling to determine how she acquired her condition, and are callous to Michael Schiavo's prevention of any rehabilitation, much less to his "love and care" for her — while living with another woman and having two kids by her.

Liberals so hate conservatives that they cannot be seen agreeing with them.

Hypocrisy, thy name is liberalism.

Larry Bickford
San Jose

Who's the expert?

We're told that House Speaker Dennis Hastert and others rejected the description of the brain-damaged woman as persisting in a vegetative state. According to self-appointed medical expert Hastert, Terri Schiavo "laughs, she cries and she smiles with those around her. She is aware of her surroundings and is responsive to them." So are we to assume that all the doctors who have been treating this poor woman for so many years have it all wrong?

May Terri Schiavo rest in peace — she has waited long enough.

Eryl Aynsley
Belmont

Barbarism?

House Majority Leader Tom DeLay said removing the feeding tube would be an act of barbarism. Such a pious utterance makes me wonder whether DeLay might not be more brain dead than Terri Schiavo.

Julio Ortiz
Sunnyvale

Bush flip-flopped

Where was President Bush's "presumption in favor of life" when he presided over 152 executions as governor of Texas, several of which had strong claims of actual innocence? Talk about flip-flopping.

Judith Randle
Berkeley

True compassion needed

So Congress pulled out all the stops in an attempt to keep the feeding tube connected to Terri Schiavo. And the president said, "Those who live at the mercy of others deserve our special care and concern."

All this compassion would ring a little more true if our president and Congress showed equal concern and energy for providing food and health care to poor children in this country.

Janice Hough
Palo Alto