

Comparing Bush to Hitler goes too far



No beating around the Bush: I think that George W. is the worst president in the history of the United States. His lack of regard for the Constitution, his enrichment of the powerful and wealthy at the expense of the rest of the citizenry, and his maniacal pursuit of war in Iraq makes him just a cut above the others when it comes to the long-term detrimental effects his actions will have on the country.

In fact, I suspect Bush may secretly wish to outdo atrocities committed against democracy by 20th century Pres-

idents Woodrow Wilson (the Sedition Act of 1918 made it illegal to use “disloyal, profane, scurrilous or abusive language” about the government, and/or armed forces during war), Herbert Hoover (whose

corruption came to light during the Teapot Dome Scandal, regarding noncompetitive bidding for an oil field on public land) and Franklin Roosevelt (who demonstrated flagrant disregard for constitutional and human rights when he authorized Japanese-American internment during WWII). Bush certainly has the edge on these presidents once his defiance of Congress, alienation of the international community and commitment to government in secrecy is added to his record.

Yet during a recent trip to Italy, when I saw a poster that equated him with Adolf Hitler, I was offended. Referring to Bush as Hitler is very popular with protesters in the U.S. and abroad. In doing so, protesters denigrate the true evil that Hitler wrought on this planet. Bush may be a terrible person, and his policies have undeniably led to the deaths of many thousands of people, but he never systemically ordered mass murder. Bush’s intention is not genocidal, and to claim otherwise is an insult to people who have experienced a direct attempt to permanently eradicate their cultures.

That said, there are figures from the Second World War to which Bush may be compared. Italians should know better than most that Bush has a striking resemblance to their very own fascist leader Benito Mussolini. Mussolini exploited a fearful population while promising security and order. He exercised censorship and mastered the use of propaganda, something Bush is trying very hard to emulate. While Mussolini discriminated against minorities (in this case Italian Jews), he never sent any to death or labor camps. The parallels are thus uncanny — although Mussolini was at least successful in getting the trains to run on time, whereas Bush is busy destroying national infrastructure, including entire cities.