ATHEISTS FOR JESUS
Jean Franco
"The fact is that Christ isn't on record as having lobbed many bombs."
(Siegfried Sassoon by way of Pat Barker).

I am a member of a persecuted minority - one of the five percent of the American population who do not believe in God. The problem is there's no godless candidate except perhaps for Nader. Last election I voted for him and lost a few friends who claimed I was responsible for the election of George W. Bush. And though I still believe Nader is the only candidate talking my kind of sense, I'm trying my best to like Kerry. So judge my dismay when, on the New York Times op ed page, I read a column by David Brooks claiming that "Religious involvement is a much more powerful predictor of how someone will vote than income, education, gender or any other social or demographic category save race." (NYT June 22 1904) Brook's logic is impeccable. He argues that the Democrats can't just rely on the secular left so they must build a bridge to religious moderates whoever they are. Well here's my modest contribution to the debate. Why doesn't Kerry start a crusade to rescue Jesus meek and mild, the Jesus who turned the other cheek, threw the merchants out of the temple and greatly enjoyed the company of Mary Magdalene - rescue him, that is, from the religious right who are busy casting Jesus as a war lord who is readying himself for the battle of Armageddon. Go to any Christian book store and this is the Jesus featured in the videos of Apocalypse and in the best-selling Time La Haye and Jerry Jenkins books that depict the Anti-Christ as presiding over the United Nations. The Apocalypse is the future that 70 million Evangelicals believe in and George W. Bush is their ally. So what I want to know is whether Kerry or the religious moderates have any intention of rescuing Jesus meek and mild from the crusaders. Because of they don't do it, we atheists are going to have to do it for them.