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Dan and Ward: A Pathetic Pair

THEY SAID IT

The American Administration of blasphemy justified its war against Iraq and Afghanistan by it being the protector of democracy in the world, and its first sponsor; and Allawi's Government was formed in Iraq for that purpose, the purpose of creating a cover and deluding the minds of Iraqis and of the world, in order to create the illusion that the United States is serious about establishing an independent and democratic Iraqi country. By that, it achieves its Crusader goals in the region, of making way for the Great State of Israel, and conceals its ambitions and intentions towards the richness and fortunes of Iraq....

Do not make peace with those who call for democracy, for they do not make peace with you unless you give up your religion, and obey them in their hypocritical democratic path, especially if they were the stronger party in the battle. If one day, you think that you can win their approval without becoming one of them, you are mistaken....

For these and other reasons, we have declared this fierce war against this hypocritical path, and have shown those who are standing behind this wrong ideology and losing path.

--Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, "So That You Verify the Path of the Criminals – Democracy," January 23, 2005.

HEAD 'EM UP AND MOVE 'EM OUT.

In 1992, Francis Fukuyama published a book entitled *The End of History and The Last Man*, which caused quite a stir in intellectual circles. Simply stated, the theory he posited goes as follows.

There are two powerful forces at work in the world today that are driving the direction of human history. The first of these is technological change, which he says "drives men to fulfill an ever-expanding horizon of desires through a rational economic process." He devotes several chapters to describing this process, but the following paragraph provides the gist of the argument.

It is not the mark of provincialism but of cosmopolitanism to recognize that there has emerged in the last few centuries something like a true global culture, centering around technologically driven economic growth and the capitalist social relations necessary to produce and sustain it. Societies which have sought to resist this unification, from

Tokugawajapan and the Sublime Porte, to the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, Burma, and Iran, have managed to fight rearguard actions that have lasted only for a generation or two. Those that were not defeated by superior military technology were seduced by the glittering material world that modern natural science has created. While not every country is capable of becoming a consumer society in the near future, there is hardly a society in the world that does not embrace the goal itself.

The second driving force behind human history today, according to Fukuyama, is the "innate desire among humans to seek not just material comfort but respect or recognition." He describes this as "nothing less than the very 'motor of history,'" and offers a detailed explanation, of which the following paragraphs are descriptive.

The desire for recognition, then, is the missing link between liberal economics and liberal politics. We have seen how advanced industrialization produces societies that are urban, mobile, increasingly well-educated, and free from traditional forms of authority like that of tribe, priest, or guild. We saw that there was a high degree of empirical correlation between such societies and liberal democracy, without being able to fully explain the reason for that correlation. The weakness in our interpretive framework lay in the fact that we were seeking an economic explanation for the choice of liberal democracy, that is, an explanation that in one way or another arose out of the desiring part of the soul. But we should instead have looked at the thymotic part, at the soul's desire for recognition. For the social changes that accompany advanced industrialization, in particular education, appear to liberate a certain demand for recognition that did

not exist among poorer and less educated people. As people become wealthier, more cosmopolitan, and better educated, they demand not simply more wealth but recognition of their status. It is this completely non-economic, non-material drive that can explain why people in Spain, Portugal, South Korea, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China have all expressed a demand not just for market economics but for free governments by and for the people as well.

According to Fukuyama, these two forces, working in tandem, are driving "even culturally disparate societies toward establishing capitalist liberal democracies." Because of this, the pertinent question, he says, is not whether all of the important nations of the world will eventually adopt some variation of capitalist liberal democracy, but whether, when this happens, mankind will be "completely satisfied" with the resultant "liberty and equality, both political and economic."

Fukuyama uses the analogy of a wagon train to illustrate how this democratization process is working. Imagine, he says, that the nations of the world are wagons headed down a long trail, all toward the same place. "Some will be pulling into town sharply and crisply, while others will be bivouacked back in the desert, or else stuck in ruts in the final pass over the mountains. Several wagons, attacked by Indians, will have been set aflame and abandoned along the way. There will be a few wagoners who, stunned by the battle, will have lost their sense of direction and are temporarily headed in the wrong direction, while one or two wagons will get tired of the journey and decide to set up permanent camps at particular points back along the road, etc., etc." Eventually, enough wagons pull into town such that "any reasonable person looking at the situation would be forced to agree that there had been only one journey and one destination."

Over the past 13 years, scores of articles have been written in response to this book, some critical, some complimentary, and some using it as a platform from which to offer related, expanded, or contrary views on the subject. I am not about to join this crowd at this late date. I mention the book this week because I think it provides an interesting perspective from which to view the world today and to speculate a little on what might lie ahead. With that in mind, I would offer the following points.

The first is that there is considerable anecdotal and empirical evidence to indicate that something like what Fukuyama says is happening is happening, even if it isn't happening just exactly as Fukuyama envisions it.

Second, and more importantly, it really doesn't matter if it is happening or not. The fact is that many people all over the world believe it is happening.

Third, a great many of the people who believe it is happening flat out do not want to be on a wagon train headed toward a world full of capitalist liberal democracies, and some of these people will do anything to stop this train from proceeding, up to and including killing everyone who is taking part in the journey and burning all the wagons to the ground.

The most fanatical and committed of the wagon train's opponents are, of course, radical Muslims. They view the worldwide expansion of democracy and capitalism as an immediate threat to them and to the members of their families, to Islamic societies all over the world, to the precious, long-term goal of converting all of humanity to the Islamic faith, and to the dream of establishing a new Caliphate that will rule over a worldwide Islamic community.

But there are also other political leaders all over the world, from little autocratic countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, to such giant nations as Russia and China, who are not at all happy about

the prospect of a world filled with capitalist liberal democracies, for they would certainly lose their positions of power in such a world. In addition, there are some large and important existing capitalist liberal democracies, such as France and Germany, that are unenthusiastic about other nations reaching this destination because, among other things, they have lucrative special relationships with many autocratic governments that would be threatened if these governments were to liberalize.

Fourth, almost none of the opponents of the wagon train blame its existence on Fukuyama's two "powerful forces of history." Agreeing to this abstraction would force them to accept the fact that the wagon train will go where it is destined to go regardless of their efforts to stop it. Instead, they focus their ire on the United States, which happens to be the largest and most successful capitalist liberal democracy in the world and the most vocal proponent of moving the wagon train along toward its destination, as described by Fukuyama.

And finally, the collective anger associated with the notion that America is somehow directly responsible for the fact that democratic and capitalistic impulses are spreading across the globe is a very powerful force, arguably as powerful as the two forces cited by Fukuyama as responsible for the whole thing in the first place. In fact, one could argue that this anger has become the focal point of world politics in the early days of the 21st century in much the same way that the Cold War was in the last half of 20th.

Now there are several interesting things about this situation that are worth considering. The most important of these is that the wars and diplomatic confrontations that are occurring as a result of this anger cannot be resolved by victory over the alleged perpetrator of the outrage, i.e., the United States. This is unique in history. Wars for glory, plunder, territory, security, empire, religion, and those involving the global assertion of a particular political ideology could all be stopped by defeating the aggressor nation. This one cannot be.

Even if the President of the United States were publicly to announce his belief that totalitarianism and autocracy are ideal forms of government, and declare that tyranny is God's gift to mankind, the two forces mentioned by Fukuyama would continue to work their magic on the people of the world.

Even if Bush were to abandon any and all efforts by the United States to promote democracy and capitalism abroad, the two forces mentioned by Fukuyama would continue to work their magic on the people of the world.

Even if Osama bin Laden and his followers were to succeed in driving the United States out of the Middle East entirely, the two forces mentioned by Fukuyama would continue to work their magic on the people of the world.

One does not have to be a Hegelian historicist to believe that there are indeed such things as strong historical trends and that the yearning for liberty and the material benefits of capitalism about which Fukuyama writes is an example of one of these trends that is likely to be around for a while.

So what does this portend? Well for starters, it would seem to indicate that the antagonism toward the United States in some areas of the world is likely to remain high for a long time, whether the United States actively promotes capitalist liberal democracy around the world or let's Fukuyama's two historic forces do the job.

I would expect that dictators in little nations in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East will try to swim against the tide, holding onto power as best they can. Some will eventually lose their battle to prevent some form of capitalist liberal democracy from overtaking their nation and others will manage to hang on to power by taking small steps in that direction.

The autocrats in Russia and China will concentrate their efforts in the fight against the spread of capitalist liberal democracy by frantically trying to

develop something new to the world of political science, something I call, for lack of a better term, the "fourth way."

The "third way," as we all know, is the name given to various attempts to combine the economic benefits of private enterprise capitalism with the wealth redistribution systems and bureaucratic control mechanisms of socialism. As with any such unnatural breeding, the offspring in these experiments have been amazingly diverse, ranging from the vicious fascist regimes of Italy and Germany in the first half of the 20th century to the mild mannered, social and economic cripples that mark the landscape of modern day Old Europe.

The "fourth way" experiments that are going on in Russia and China today are an attempt to combine the job stability of tyrants with the economic success of capitalism. This is such an unnatural combination that it is unlikely to result in actual new hybrid, but most probably will eventually produce something that bears so close a resemblance to just one of the parents that it will be difficult to distinguish between the two.

In the case of Islam, I think it is not just possible but likely that some individual Muslim countries will, like Turkey, find that they can create a variation of capitalist liberal democracy that will provide a comfortable and prosperous home for members of the Islamic faith.

As for the Islamic militants, it looks to me as though they will wage a battle to the death against the wagon train, and thus against America. My concern is that Osama bin Laden and his ilk are all too aware that they are not just up against the United States, but are also up against the forces of history about which Fukuyama has written.

If they are in fact aware of this, then they know that victory in such a battle against such a foe is going to take something greater than simply breaking the will of the American public to fight in Iraq. Victory for them must involve the total destruction of America

not just as the driving force behind the spread of capitalist liberal democracy, but also as an example of the advantages that this form of government provides. And this means they must use weapons of mass destruction aimed at the heart of the American economy.

For what it is worth, I have a high degree of confidence that Osama and his kind will not succeed in this endeavor. Unfortunately, I also have a high degree of confidence that they will continue to try.

DAN AND WARD: A PATHETIC PAIR.

Last Thursday night, as Dan Rather said his final goodbyes and signed off the air for the last time as anchor of the “CBS Nightly News,” many conservatives watched with mixed emotions, satisfied that someone less preposterous will now sit in the anchor’s chair, but, at the same time, a little sad, knowing that Dan will be missed, if for no other reason than the service he has done for the cause of conservatism. You see, conservatives owe Dan a considerable debt of gratitude. He did what they could not do themselves. He proved to heretofore disinterested average Americans that the mainstream media is overtly, aggressively, and irredeemably biased against conservatives and conservatism.

For decades, conservatives have waged a lonely and largely fruitless battle to convince the majority of their fellow Americans that the mainstream media’s showcase celebrities are hopelessly liberal, despite their protestations to the contrary, and shade the news to suit their biases. Reed Irvine and the group he founded, Accuracy in Media, tried. Brent Bozell and his organization, Media Research Center, tried. Even First Lady Barbara Bush tried. But no one ever fully succeeded in convincing the public that the “news” did indeed have a bias and that the occasional screw-ups in which that bias was obvious were not mere aberrations.

Certainly there were minor successes along the way. The popularity of Rush Limbaugh and Fox News and the rise of “alternative media,” including Matt Drudge and various right-leaning blogs, constitute evidence of such small victories.

But the liberal bias of network news had never been proven to the satisfaction of the entire nation until Dan went on the air in the heat of an election campaign with obviously forged documents about President Bush’s National Guard service, and then, in one final fit of liberal lunacy, announced that he was not persuaded of their false nature, despite overwhelming proof to the contrary. Now, thanks to Dan, only the most ridiculously partisan, tin-foil-hat wearing Democrat can pretend that the bias doesn’t exist.

The sheer ridiculousness of Rather’s claim that his documents were “fake but accurate”; his utter lack of concern for the truth or for the basic standards of his profession; and his and his colleagues’ (read: Tom Brokaw and Peter Jennings) venomous contempt for those who dared to impugn the all-knowing “anchorman,” all made the story too big to ignore and too obvious to forget. In short, Dan and his poorly forged National Guard memos handed conservatives a smoking gun.

To belabor that metaphor for a bit, it appears that a similar gun may well have been handed to conservatives over the last several weeks by Ward Churchill, the ramblingly incoherent, breathtakingly ignorant, America-hating, pseudo-intellectual boob who, despite manifest lack of qualifications, was, until a few weeks ago, the chairman of the Ethnic Studies department at the University of Colorado and who is still a tenured professor at the school, earning in the neighborhood of 100,000-taxpayer-supplied-dollars a year.

Like Rather, Churchill is so over the top, so absolutely buffoonish, so blatantly and unapologetically biased, and so willing to compromise the truth to serve the larger purpose of advancing his own creepy political agenda, that he cannot be ignored.

And like Rather, Churchill's personal preposterousness and posturing may well serve the larger purpose of bringing necessary and long-overdue scrutiny to a monopolistic institution that formerly propagated its liberal prejudices with impunity. It is distinctly possible, in other words, that Ward Churchill may well have done for academia what Dan Rather did for the media, namely show once and for all and beyond a reasonable doubt that modern academia is openly hostile to conservatism and hopelessly steeped in rank and intolerant liberalism. If so, this would, indeed, be a significant accomplishment on Churchill's part.

The conservative battle against overt liberal bias in academia is considerably older but has thus far been less fruitfully waged than the battle against liberal bias in the media. The "media" as we know it is a fairly recent construct, and its overt liberal bias dates, most probably, to Walter Cronkite's on-air editorializing against the Vietnam War. In contrast, the battle against liberal bias in academia predates Vietnam by several decades.

Indeed, the intellectual renaissance of American conservatism, which dates to roughly the early 1950's, owes its origin to liberal bias in the academy, since that bias is what inspired William F. Buckley to write his classic *God and Man at Yale*, a convincing first-hand account of leftist prejudice at his *alma mater*. Overt and rank liberal bias was, even then, so entrenched at Yale, that Buckley felt justified in calling it an institution that takes "moral and financial support from Christian individualists and then addresses itself to the task of persuading the sons of these supporters to be atheistic socialists."

And the situation has hardly improved in the half-century since. Study upon study has shown that academia today is overwhelmingly biased against conservatives and conservative ideas. I do not have the space to detail all (or even many) of these, but the general idea of what these studies demonstrate can be found in a column written last fall by *The Boston Globe's* Jeff Jacoby, which was but one of

probably a dozen or more similar high-profile pieces that were published in the days just before and immediately after the election.

Today, campus leftism is not merely prevalent. It is radical, aggressive, and deeply intolerant, as another newly-minted graduate of another prominent university -- Ben Shapiro of UCLA -- shows in "Brainwashed," a recent best-seller. "Under higher education's facade of objectivity," Shapiro writes, "lies a grave and overpowering bias" -- a charge he backs up with example after freakish example of academics going to ideological extremes.

No surprise, then, that when researchers checked the voter registration of humanities and social-science instructors at 19 universities, they discovered a whopping political imbalance. The results, published in *The American Enterprise* in 2002, made it clear that for all the talk of diversity in higher education, ideological diversity in the modern college faculty is mostly nonexistent.

So, for example, at Cornell, of the 172 faculty members whose party affiliation was recorded, 166 were liberal (Democrats or Greens) and 6 were conservative (Republicans or Libertarians). At Stanford, the liberal-conservative ratio was 151-17. At San Diego State, it was 80-11. At SUNY Binghamton, 35-1. At UCLA, 141-9. At the University of Colorado-Boulder, 116-5. At the University of Texas-Austin, 94-15 . . .

At about the same time, a poll of Ivy League professors commissioned by the Center for the Study of Popular Culture found that more than 80 percent of those who voted in 2000 had cast their ballots for Democrat Al Gore, while just

9 percent backed Republican George W. Bush. Asked to name the greatest president of the last 40 years, 26 percent chose Bill Clinton; 4 percent said Ronald Reagan. While 64 percent said they were “liberal” or “somewhat liberal,” only 6 percent described themselves as “somewhat conservative” -- and none at all as “conservative.” . . .

The latest campaign-finance records reveal that the most partisan organizations in America, as measured by employee donations to a presidential candidate, are the University of California and Harvard. Together, the two institutions accounted for \$942,000 in contributions to the Kerry campaign -- 19 times the amount donated to the Bush campaign.

Last month, *The New York Times* reported that a new national survey of more than 1,000 academics shows Democratic professors outnumbering Republicans by at least 7 to 1 in the humanities and social sciences. At Berkeley and Stanford, according to a separate study that included professors of engineering and the hard sciences, the ratio of Democrats to Republicans is even more lopsided: 9 to 1.

None of this is mere coincidence, of course. Early last century, Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci argued that the ultimate triumph of socialism would result only from the creation of social hegemony, which, in turn, could be created only through “the long march through the institutions,” or, in other words, through control of the culture and cultural institutions. Not surprisingly, chief among the institutions is “the schools,” or, more specifically, the universities.

The American left recognized many decades ago that Gramsci was on to something and that the best way to alter the nation’s culture was to capture the instruments of higher education. And they have

been largely successful. A handful of truly great books, including Roger Kimball’s *Tenured Radicals* and Alan Bloom’s classic *The Closing of the American Mind*, have sounded alarms about the radical orthodoxy that has been positioned to dominate American universities.

And even liberals themselves have acknowledged that their “long march” through academia has been more successful than they or Gramsci could ever have imagined. The march was described as follows by Richard Rorty, a professor of comparative literature at Stanford, who is also an icon of the modern intellectual left and the one-time philosopher-in-residence at the Clinton White House.

The power base of the Left in America is now in the universities, since the trade unions have largely been killed off. The universities have done a lot of good work by setting up, for example, African-American studies programs, Women’s Studies programs, and Gay and Lesbian Studies programs. **They have created power bases for these movements.** (emphasis added)

Unsurprisingly, since September 11 and the start of the War on Terror, the situation on America’s campuses has grown even more inhospitable to anything that varies even slightly from accepted liberal/leftist orthodoxy. Traditional anti-capitalism, newly reinvigorated anti-Americanism, and percolating Arabist anti-Semitism have combined to create a volatile atmosphere at many colleges.

According the Anti-Defamation League, between 2001 and 2002, incidents of anti-Semitism at American colleges increased by roughly 24%. The academic attack on the dastardly “neocons” whose ideas purportedly form the foundation of the Bush foreign policy is steeped in anti-Semitic language and allusions. Columnist Mark Steyn wrote recently that the academic left has thoroughly demonized Deputy Defense Secretary Paul

Wolfowitz, unashamedly using his ethnicity against him. They have, Steyn wrote, portrayed the Deputy Secretary as nothing less than “the most sinister of all the neocons, the big bad Wolfowitz, the man whose name started with a scary animal and ended Jewishly.”

The alleged “anti-war” movement – which is largely a creation of old hard-left Marxist-sympathizer organizations like the Workers’ World Party – has thrived on many campuses and has painted Zionists (read: Jews) as the problem in the Middle East and the Bush administration as the Zionists’ lackeys.

Middle East Studies departments at some schools, most notably Columbia, have grown so aggressive in their denunciation of Americans and “Zionists” that the Middle East Forum, run by Mark’s old friend Daniel Pipes, felt compelled to create an organization, CampusWatch, both to publicize anti-American, Anti-Semitic propaganda and to counter it. All things considered, the “liberal” anti-war types have made America’s campuses dangerous places for both supporters of President Bush and for Jews.

Yet this tax-payer-supported, radical-left, anti-American propoganda machine that goes under the name of America’s higher education system remains untouchable. Hysterical appeals to “free speech,” and “academic freedom,” have largely blunted any attempt even to censure, much less reform, the academy. And overwrought shrieks of “McCarthyism” have thwarted efforts to reassess the tenure system, which both entrenches the radicals in academia and protects from any legitimate effort to remind them of their obligations to seek truth and educate the next generation.

And then along came Ward Churchill.

The tale of Ward Churchill is, if nothing else, compelling. As I noted above, Churchill’s behavior has been so over-the-top buffoonish that he has drawn serious, sustained, national-level attention to himself, and this attention has done neither him

nor the higher-education system that created, hired, promoted, and tenured him any good.

All of the standard failings of what passes for “liberal arts” education in this country are present in this tale, i.e. unqualified educators, appointments made because of race and ideology, anti-Americanism, anti-capitalism, anti-Semitism, academic fraud, plagiarism, advocacy of violence against the United States, advocacy of violence against critics, and, perhaps most important, ridiculously poor scholarship. As Denver radio talk show host and *Rocky Mountain News* columnist Mike Rosen recently put it, Churchill has become “the poster child for so much of what’s wrong with higher education today . . .”

For those of you who haven’t followed this closely, Churchill, who first made headlines by calling those killed in the World Trade Center attacks “Little Eichmanns,” has been an endless source of news and entertainment over the last several months. For starters, it turns out this guy was wooed, hired, and promoted by the University of Colorado, despite the fact that he is both officially unqualified for such a tenure-track position, holding as he does only a Masters Degree, and unofficially unqualified, since he is, apparently, a less-than-scholarly scholar. As one of Churchill’s fellow CU faculty members, Law Professor and columnist (and self-professed liberal) Paul Campos, recently put it: Churchill’s “writings and speeches feature an incoherent farrago of boundless paranoia, wildly implausible theories, obscene celebrations of murder, and atrocious prose.”

To make matters worse, the one qualification that Churchill did have; the one characteristic that he possessed that distinguished him from other scholars in his field, namely that he is an American Indian and is therefore somehow “ethnically credentialed” to speak on issues of particular interest to American Indians, appears to be a total fabrication. In the estimation of most interested observers, Churchill simply created out of whole

cloth a fictional American Indian identity. As Susan Harjo, president of the Morningstar Institute, a national American Indian-rights organization, put it: “Ward Churchill tells these huge lies. He’s notorious, and he’s not an Indian. In 15 years of being interviewed and investigated, he hasn’t come up with a single Indian ancestor.”

And the fraud doesn’t stop there. According to a March 5 *Rocky Mountain News* column by Dan Caplis and Craig Silverman, Churchill’s *Curriculum Vitae* is quite impressive indeed. To wit:

Churchill stands credibly accused of ethnic fraud, grade retribution, falsification of the nature of his military service, academic fraud, plagiarism, selling other artists’ creations as his own and falsely accusing *Denver Post* columnist Diane Carman of inventing incendiary quotations.

With regard to the charge of plagiarism, *The Rocky Mountain News* reported over the weekend that Colorado University officials “received documents this week purporting to show that he plagiarized another professor’s work.” The *News* continued:

Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia sent CU an internal 1997 report detailing allegations about an article Churchill wrote.

“The article . . . is, in the opinion of our legal counsel, plagiarism,” Dalhousie spokesman Charles Crosby said in summarizing the report’s findings.

Dalhousie began an investigation after professor Fay G. Cohen complained that Churchill used her research and writing in an essay without her permission and without giving her credit. Although the investigation substantiated her allegations, Cohen didn’t pursue the matter because she felt threatened by Churchill, Crosby

said. Crosby said Cohen told Dalhousie officials in 1997 that Churchill had called her in the middle of the night and said, “I’ll get you for this.”

And to make sure that the sordid tale also had the requisite anti-Semitic element, two weeks ago, Churchill’s replacement as the head of the Ethnic Studies department at Colorado, Emma Perez, wrote her own rambling piece for *Counterpunch*. In it, she complained that the effort to “get” her buddy Ward is a “neocon test case for academic purges,” and that Colorado is now the “national frontline of the neocon battle for dominance in academe,” thereby implicitly tying Churchill’s problems to dastardly folks with last names like Wolfowitz, Pearle, Feith, and Frum.

And just so that no one misunderstood whom she meant by “neocons,” Perez further defined the term, complaining that the “Neocon students at CU-B (College Republicans) are likely connected with CampusWatch and/or AVOT (Americans for Victory Over Terror). . . .” You’ll note that while she doesn’t actually know that CampusWatch has anything to do with the CU “neocons,” that doesn’t stop her from making the charge and thereby alleging affiliation with the Middle East Forum and its “Zionist” predisposition. At the very least, one would have to call this explicit and aggressive Jew-baiting.

Of course, to no one’s surprise, all of this brazen asininity on the part of Churchill and his successor as the head of the invented department of Ethnic Studies has done little to dampen the enthusiasm of CU’s other academics for Churchill’s anti-American rantings. On February 28, 1999 of Churchill’s fellow CU faculty members signed a full-page ad in a local paper “demanding” that the University’s investigation of Churchill be halted immediately. The sentiment was, naturally, seconded and supported by the Colorado Chapter of the ACLU.

Somehow, I doubt this “demand” will be met. When all is said, and done, Ward Churchill will

almost certainly not be a member of the University of Colorado faculty. Though “buyout” negotiations hit a snag over the weekend – which is entirely understandable given the new revelations about Churchill’s propensity for pilfering others’ poorly written prose to complement his own – it is likely that the University’s regents will find a way to make him disappear.

In the meantime, Churchill’s fellow faculty-radicals can and surely will holler and scream and generally carry on like children, insisting that this is all a matter of “intellectual freedom,” and that they are defending the honor of a brave and brilliant scholar against the Neo-McCarthyites who would silence him. All the while, what they’ll really be doing is simply adding fuel to fire. The longer this mess goes on; the longer Ward Churchill continues to make headlines; the more often Churchill and his fellow campus leftists show up in the “Talking Points” memo on Bill O’Reilly’s show; the more attention they draw to an educational system that

is so rife with bias that’s its principal functions of seeking truth and educating the young have been almost completely obscured, the more likely it will become that the public’s patience will, at long last, wear thin.

And here, unfortunately, the analogy with Rather falls apart. Conservatives have managed, over the years, to develop alternative media sources that preclude the necessity of totally fixing the bias problem in the mainstream press. But such a solution is, quite obviously, not possible with regard to academia. Countering the corrosive effect of rampant liberal bias at America’s colleges and universities will not be so easily addressed, no matter how thin the public’s patience wears.

Of course, simply being aware of the problem is a big part of the battle. And thanks to Ward Churchill, awareness should no longer be a problem.

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