

STATE OF COLORADO

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

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Denver, Colorado 80203-1792
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Bill Owens
Governor

February 17, 2005



Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you for writing to me about the comments and writings of Ward Churchill.

I believe that all decent people, whether Republican or Democrat, liberal or conservative, should denounce the views of Mr. Churchill. Not only are his writings outrageous and insupportable, they are at odds with the facts of history. Evil cowards murdered the thousands of innocent people who were murdered on September 11. Indeed, if anyone could possibly be compared with the evildoers of Nazi Germany, it is the terrorists of the 21st century who have an equally repugnant disregard for innocent human life.

While we should never infringe on Ward Churchill's right to express himself, we are not compelled to accept his pro-terrorist views at state taxpayer subsidy nor under the banner of the University of Colorado. Ward Churchill besmirches the University and the excellent teaching, writing and research of its faculty.

Ideas have consequences, and words have meaning. If there is one lesson that we hope that all Coloradans take from this sad case, it is that civility and appropriate conduct are important. Mr. Churchill's views are not simply anti-American. They are at odds with simple decency, and antagonistic to the beliefs and conduct of civilized people around the world. His views are far outside the mainstream of civil discourse and academic work.

His resignation as chairman of the Ethnic Studies Department was a good first step. I hope he will follow this step by resigning his position on the faculty of the University of Colorado. If he does not voluntarily resign—and his public comments suggest he will not—then I encourage the C.U. Regents to formally evaluate Ward Churchill's employment status. I appreciate the fact that the Regents have taken the necessary first step in this regard.

Sincerely,

Bill Owens