

## Statement By University Of Colorado Board Of Regents Chair Jerry Rutledge - March 24, 2005

The University of Colorado has been embroiled for several months in a lengthy controversy concerning what I believe are bombastic and repugnant writings and statements by Professor Ward Churchill. Today, CU-Boulder Chancellor Phil Distefano announced the results of a seven-week inquiry into serious allegations of research misconduct — including plagiarism, fabrication and the misuse of others' academic work — permeating Professor Churchill's academic career.

Let me first personally thank Chancellor DiStefano, assisted by Dean Todd Gleeson and Dean David Getches, who conducted this review. Despite intense scrutiny on this very contentious issue, our three-member team conducted their work diligently, completely and most importantly — quietly, refusing to comment prematurely on this most important matter until its conclusion. Our university owes these individuals a deep debt of gratitude.

It is important to also note that the university engaged its time-honored academic review process, which is fair and deliberative. This process was sound, and it gives the findings tremendous weight.

The findings concluded that Professor Churchill's First Amendment rights allow him to make the statements he made concerning the victims in the 9/11 tragedy. I respect Professor Churchill's right to air his views — and I am pleased to have the same opportunity. Let me reiterate my very, very strong belief that Professor Churchill's essay and subsequent remarks are outrageous, egregious and patently offensive. Those incendiary remarks are an embarrassment to a tremendously strong teaching and research university such as CU.

Further, the allegations of research misconduct have sufficient merit to warrant further inquiry, which is our next step. It is most appropriate that the inquiry moves into the next, very serious level of review.

Many people have called for more stringent actions, including immediate termination of Professor Churchill, but that was not an option based on my reading of Chancellor DiStefano's report.

The university's best recourse is to follow the process outlined by Chancellor DiStefano and Regent Laws and policies.

These have been difficult weeks for the University of Colorado, but our review process and the academic integrity of this university will

help us to emerge stronger when the last chapter of this endeavor is written. As the University of Colorado Standing Committee on Research Misconduct begins its work, it would not be fair to Professor Churchill or our university for Regents, administrators, or committee members to comment further during the next stage of the review.