

Dominic Boyer

October 3, 2006

Dear Chancellor DiStefano:

I write to you in strong and unequivocal support of the letters of my Cornell colleagues, Profs. Brett de Bary and Eric Cheyfitz, which urge you to reverse your recommendation to fire Professor Ward Churchill. To the arguments their letters have already laid out, I would add my deep and frank disappointment in your administration's resort to McCarthyite tactics in order to purge your professoriate of alternative voices. Whatever short-term patriotic satisfaction you imagine that these actions will generate will soon be displaced, just as the original McCarthyism was, with a sense of deep embarrassment for the corruption of the spirit and principles of free expression. Is this really the legacy that you wish your name to be associated with as an administrator? The negative effects on the morale and reputation of your institution will be profound — indeed I think you are condemning Colorado to third tier status for many years to come. I hope you have the foresight to realize that history will not treat your handling of the Churchill case kindly.

Sincerely,

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