

21 July 2006 - FOX COMMENTATOR THREATENS 9/11 ACTIVIST

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O'Reilly suggests he should be "floating in the river"

Duluth, MN (PRWEB) July 21, 2006 --- Bill O'Reilly, the host of "The O'Reilly Factor" on the Fox News Channel, has suggested that Kevin Barrett, an outspoken 9/11 truth activist, belongs "in the Charles River floating down". James H. Fetzer, founder and co-chair of Scholars for 9/11 Truth, a non-partisan society of more than 300 members dedicated to exposing falsehoods and revealing truths about 9/11, said that the absence of response from the FCC, Fox News, and the national media speaks volumes about the state of the nation. "When public threats can be made to a citizen's life for expressing his opinions on a controversial topic and neither the government nor the media respond," he observed, "that is a sure sign we are living in a fascist state."

O'Reilly couched his remarks in the context of assailing other academicians who have asserted that the government had a role in bringing about the events of 9/11, a claim to which he takes strong exception. He attacked the leadership of the University of Wisconsin, which has reviewed the case and will allow Barrett to teach a course this fall. During his program on 11 July, O'Reilly remarked, "This guy would have been gone at Boston University, my alma mater, in a heartbeat. The Chancellor there, John Silber, would of--would have--this guy'd be in the Charles River floating down, you know, toward the harbor." He implied that allowing Barrett to teach at BU "wouldn't happen" but "at the University of Wisconsin there are no standards. . . . I'm stunned."

"What's stunning is that this man, who knows nothing about the events of 9/11 apart from what the government has told him, nevertheless assumes unto himself the role of judge, jury, and (it even appears) executioner!" Fetzer added. "This is a travesty, an astonishing violation of academic freedom, freedom of speech, the right of the people to be free from assault." Verbal threats, he observed, are assaults, especially when, as in this case, they endorse physical violence against a citizen. Barrett, who was alerted to the threat by David von Kleist of The Power Hour, has replied by writing to Rupert Murdoch, who owns Fox News, suggesting that if he were killed as a result of these remarks, "Fox News would find itself facing the mother of all lawsuits, and my family might very well end up in control of the Murdoch fortune."

For reasons that are not entirely obvious, Barrett's public affirmation of governmental complicity in 9/11 had drawn intense attacks from the right wing. A Wisconsin state legislator, Steve Nass (R-Whitewater), for example, has called for him to be fired and has even introduced legislation that would overrule the determination of the Provost of the University of Wisconsin-Madison that Barrett be permitted to teach a course on Islam this fall in which 9/11 will be discussed. "Kevin and I presented a joint session on 9/11 during the Midwest Social Forum held in Chicago on July 9, 2006," Fetzer said. "The University of Wisconsin sent a representative. Even though it was announced and the public was welcome, no one from Nass's office bothered to attend. It would have been the perfect opportunity to ask him questions about his positions and the reasons why he holds them."

An author who has published "The Amateur Parent", a book on child-raising practices, has had a similar experience. Because of an article in The Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel that appeared on June 29, 2006, he began to research the subject to ascertain exactly what Barrett believed had happened on 9/11. By visiting the web site of Scholars for 9/11 Truth, www.911Scholars.org, he discovered that Barrett and many other faculty and experts have concluded that the impact of the planes and the temperatures of the fires were inadequate to cause the collapse of the Twin Towers, which came down at rates of speed and in patterns of destruction that were compatible with controlled demolitions, a finding recently reinforced by the discovery of residue of explosives on steel remnants.

According to his "Exposing the 9/11 Conspiracy Wingnuts", Bill Douglas, the author, called the office of Rep. Nass and asked to speak with someone who could address the issues. "I asked if he was familiar with the Scholars for 9/11 Truth website, and he replied that they had learned of it this week." Douglas explained some of the reasons the society held its position and asked if Nass would comment. "The gentleman responded that no, they had not looked at this information, and this would not be something they would look at, further indicating that anyone who made such charges was blinded by their hatred of President Bush." Fetzer said, "This is buffoonery. The melting point of steel is not Democrat or Republican and the hottest temperatures that jet-fuel-based fires can attain does not depend upon the identity of the President of the United States."

Douglas, whose article is archived on www.911Scholars.org, discovered that a substantial group of distinguished experts, whose credentials he summarizes, share Barrett's views. He also found that the members of the society had what appear to be rather good reasons for questioning the official government account. Their critics, on the other hand, display astounding irrationality. Noting that Rep. Nass wants to fire Barrett without looking at the evidence, Douglas observed, "To fire someone for presenting facts, facts that you dispute, yet have no idea what those facts are, and are unwilling to look at them to find out what they are . . . is also insane. As someone who writes on parenting issues, as a concerned parent as well, America should also consider retiring our insane government officials who fire people for facts

they aren't aware of and are unwilling to look at. . . ."

Fetzer agreed. "Most Americans don't even realize that the official government account of 19 Islamic fundamentalists hijacking four commercial airliners under the control of a man in a cave in Afghanistan is itself a conspiracy theory", he said. "We are critics of the government's theory, which appears to be indefensible in every significant detail. Their names were not on the passenger manifests. None of them was subject to any autopsy. They could not have flown the planes. Those cell phone calls would have been impossible at those altitudes and speeds. The American people are being played for saps", he added, wistfully. "All we want is for the nation to know the truth about its own government, which had the motive, means, and opportunity to pull off 9/11."

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