Why Accuracy in Academia?

by Reed Irvine

As I traveled around the United States lecturing about the news media, I was frequently asked why our journalists are so frequently more critical of the United States than of our enemies. Why, people asked, do they so often show hostility to our free enterprise system and to business? Why are they so naive about communist countries such as Cuba, Nicaragua, Vietnam, and even the Soviet Union itself?

Since I started Accuracy in Media in 1969, I had become painfully aware of the fact that many reporters, editors, and broadcasters in this country held views that were very much at odds with those of mainstream Americans.

This became obvious when surveys disclosed that journalists overwhelmingly supported George McGovern for president in 1972 (by 81% according to the Lichter-Rothman survey), while three-fifths of the voters cast their ballots for his opponent, Richard Nixon.

Why are journalists, who like to think of themselves as "the voice of the people", so out of line with the thinking of the majority of Americans?

I concluded that the explanation was probably related to the fact that most journalists today are the products of our liberal arts colleges, where our youth are being indoctrinated with views and values radically different from those of mainstream America.

I launched Accuracy in Academia to get at the root of the problem, applying on the campus the kind of careful, responsible criticism that AIM had directed against the media.

This touched a sensitive nerve. The denunciations have resounded from Berkeley to Moscow. AIA must be on target.

How AIA Can Work For You

- AIA publicizes campus indoctrination of students, both inside and outside the classroom.
- AIA publicizes political discrimination on campus.
- AIA publicizes violations of free speech.
- AIA raises money for the legal expenses of victims of free speech violations and political discrimination.
- AIA informs the public about political activities—on the left and the right—on campuses.
- AIA can provide speakers to address campus organizations and classes.
- AIA informs students how classroom political activists push their own political views in class.
- AIA defends academic freedom for both professors and students.

How AIA Reports A Classroom Story

- AIA investigates reports from students of seriously slanted or inaccurate information being imparted by classroom instructors — either through lectures or required reading material.
- When we receive a complaint, we request and review the course catalog description of the class, the syllabus and reading list, students' class notes, and any hand-outs; we also contact other students in the class.
- We attempt to discuss the class with the professors.
- AIA publicizes cases of biased teaching in its monthly newspaper, Campus Report. This publication is sent to AIA members, editors of campus newspapers, educators, students, and members of the media.

Comments on AIA

Are there problems on campus?

"...Everything from racism to the horrors of war are treated in some books as if they had been invented in America...Parents, students, taxpayers have a right to know what's going on. Accuracy in Academia has no power to do anything more than tell them."

Thomas Sowell, The Hoover Institution

Can Accuracy in Academia help?

"As AIA suggests, a good beginning would be to get some accurate information...Could that be what the complainers are really afraid of?"

M. Stanton Evans, Columnist

"The existence of AIA is in the back of your mind. It's like AIDS—you know it exists, so you're cautious of it."

George Wright, Chico State University

Is the classroom above criticism?

"No professor has the right to complain if someone reads his book and reports the findings in newspaper articles...Nor has he any right to complain if people report on, comment on, or criticize his teaching."

John Silber, President, Boston University

"Is academic freedom endangered by monitoring of courses to see that their contents live up to their labels? Of course not...The only thing threatened by insisting on honesty is dishonesty."

Editorial, Indianapolis Star