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[SEND TO FRIEND](#) | [POST OPINION](#)**Left-leaning professors overpopulate campuses***Commentary by Joseph Perkins*

July 24, 2003

Michael Ballou couldn't understand all the fuss. All he did was assign his political science students at Santa Rosa Junior College to write an e-mail and at the bottom include the words: "Kill the president, kill the president."

One of the professor's students sent his e-mail to the office of Napa Valley's Rep. Mike Thompson (D-Calif.), which passed it on to the U.S. Capitol Police, which passed it on to the Secret Service.

The Secret Service paid Ballou a recent visit. He insisted that his e-mail assignment was misconstrued. It wasn't that he was suggesting to his students that President Bush deserved to be killed, he claimed. He said he assigned this exercise so his students can experience "the wave of fear and paranoia" many Americans feel because of their government.

Although we cannot be sure of this professor's political leanings, the preponderance of concern about "fear and paranoia" in America today comes from the left. Today our nation's college campuses are overpopulated with liberal professors. It simply does not occur to them that most Americans do not share their contempt for their country.

Indeed, in a Harris Poll last year, 36 percent of Americans identified themselves as conservatives, compared to the 19 percent who described themselves as liberal. Contrast that with the survey last year by UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute, which canvassed more than 32,000 full-time undergraduate professors. Some 48 percent identified themselves as liberal compared with a mere 18 percent that considered themselves conservative.

That ideological disparity on college campuses explains the findings of the Luntz Research Companies, which surveyed more than 150 Ivy League professors. Of those who voted in the 2000 presidential election, 84 percent cast their ballots for Al Gore, while only 9 percent voted for George W. Bush.

The hypocrisy of it all is that college administrators throughout

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the nation profess their commitment to "diversity" and "tolerance." While they promote racial diversity on their campuses, while they preach tolerance of individuals who are non-white, non-male, non-Judeo-Christian, non-heterosexual, they do not practice ideological diversity in faculty hiring.

So students from the lowliest junior colleges to the loftiest Ivy League universities are subjected to liberal proselytizing. That has to be galling to parents who send their kids to college to be educated, not indoctrinated.

But that matters not to the liberal professoriate, which feels it has the right to bring its political views into the classroom. Rosalyn Kahn, a professor at Citrus College in Glendora, assigned students in her Speech 106 class to write letters to President Bush concerning the looming war with Iraq. Kahn made it clear to the students that she would give them extra credit only if they sent letters of protest rather than support.

The speech instructor's brazen classroom politicking came to the attention of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, a Philadelphia-based campus watchdog group. It issued a complaint to Citrus College President Louis Zellers on behalf of Kahn's students. Zellers responded by sending Bush a letter of apology. He acknowledged that Kahn "did abuse her authority."

Zellers' response was quite rare. Most college administrators either share the views of liberal professors or are unwilling to challenge the political activism of such professors for fear of being accused of trampling upon "academic freedom."

That's why non-liberal parents and non-liberal college students must become more active themselves. Unless they make their voices heard, the liberal professoriate will continue to wield disproportionate influence on the nation's campuses.

Joseph Perkins is a columnist for The San Diego Union-Tribune.

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