

Subject: For Mr. Rushdie: Columbia University uses New York Police to attack Free Speech
From: as@cuspeech.org
Date: Wed, June 2, 2004 9:02 pm
To: journal@pen.org
Cc: bollinger@columbia.edu

(Please forward to Mr. Salman Rushdie)

Dear Mr. Rushdie:

This is regarding prosecution of free speech by Columbia University (which I attended for a few years) and its President Lee Bollinger and others; for this purpose they used the used the New York Police Department (NYPD) and the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ). I hope this is a matter you would speak out on anyway, but more so because by recently sharing a platform with Bollinger and Columbia on the matter of right to expression you helped them publicly present themselves as champions of this freedom.

Columbia and Bollinger actually had me recently arrested in New York City for exercising my freedom of speech -- they had me led away in handcuffs with a criminal trial pending. This NYPD action was followed by Columbia using their contact(s) in the USDOJ to charge me with a visa violation and have me take "voluntary departure" from the USA and return to India.

The text which led to the arrest were two email letters available at the website <http://www.cuspeech.org>. At the site are further details along with some press coverage.

I hope you will choose to take a strong stand against such behavior. People attend Columbia and other major universities from various societies and it is a shock to find that a basic freedom one grew up taking for granted is not only unavailable at Columbia but can be cause for criminal arrest and prosecution if it used in a manner that goes against the likes of university administrators.

Regards,

Ashish Sirohi

(Email: as@cuspeech.org or as7y@yahoo.com)

CC: President Lee Bollinger, bollinger@columbia.edu

Public figures, media (on ongoing basis)