

## The Shotgun Blog

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Wednesday, November 17, 2010

### U of W Issues Apology to Christie Blatchford

From the University of Waterloo's Communications and Public Affairs department's home page:

The University of Waterloo was disappointed that a guest invited to share a particular perspective on a topic of importance to Canadians was silenced by protesters.

Globe and Mail columnist Christie Blatchford was scheduled to appear at the university on Friday night to discuss her new book *Helpless: Caledonia's Nightmare of Fear and Anarchy, and How the Law Failed All of Us*. Due to safety issues, the University decided to reschedule the event.

The university considers Friday's events as an attack on its presence as a place where issues are explored, discussed and at times debated. The freedom to speak and to learn is fundamental to the institution.

Waterloo's ethical behaviour policy states: "The University is an autonomous community which exists to further the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge and understanding through scholarship and teaching. The University aims to ensure an environment of tolerance and respect and believes that the right of individuals to advance their views openly must be upheld throughout the University."

To ensure there is no doubt of the university's convictions, Waterloo President Feridun Hamdullahpur apologized to Ms. Blatchford, on behalf of the university community, for Friday night's disruption. He has asked the community to begin planning for a safe, open and respectful dialogue featuring Ms. Blatchford and her book.

Rather than silencing Christie Blatchford, the so-called protestors have created a firestorm against themselves and their actions. The International Free Press Society has denounced the "protestors." Letters to the Editor at the *National*

*Post* condemn the behaviour of these juvenile fascists. MPP Toby Barrett spoke out against the U of W thugs in the Provincial Legislature, supported by pro-freedom stalwart Randy Hillier. Mark Vandermaas has a full rundown over at his *Helpless* site. The *Post* has a lengthy selection from *Helpless*, detailing the persecution of Gary McHale. At a book signing in Hamilton, where a peaceful protest against the book was staged, Blatchford dismissed the accusations against her:

"I'm not a racist," said Blatchford, who also called the protest crazy. "My book is not racist and they are idiots."

She also said if their intention is to intimidate her into halting speaking engagements to promote her book, "they are not going to do that. I am mystified a bit ... I am not a writer of inflammatory screeds. I am a newspaper reporter."

Facts are stubborn things. In Caledonia they've become dangerous as well. If I were Blatch, I wouldn't have bothered saying "I'm not a racist." That's kind of what the "protestors" want you to say, to place you on the defensive. It's a schoolyard taunt elevated into a political slogan.

Not an iota of evidence has been provided to show that Christie Blatchford is a racist, just as no evidence has been provided that Mark Vandermaas or Gary McHale are racists. There are no arguments, or discussions, with those who seized the Douglas Creek Estates nearly five years ago, or with their fellow travellers in the academy. They have no arguments or ideas, they have only force and violence. The constant shout of racist is a sure sign of intellectual bankruptcy. It is a not so subtle attempt to delegitimize opposition to blatantly criminal acts. For the sake of Canada, we cannot let them succeed.

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