

"Writing the truth  
as I see it;  
trying not to  
offend  
those who will  
disagree."

# The truth as I see it™

Idaho Common Sense™



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## Elite universities – principled?

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Some of our nation's elite universities, including Harvard, Columbia, Brown, Yale, Dartmouth, Stanford, Cornell, Princeton and Penn, produce many of our nation's leaders. But, do they model the values we want in our leaders, the principles we aspire to as a country? Are they the principled guardians of the academic freedom and independent thought they claim to be? Do they really represent the best of America?

Many of these defenders of academic freedom ban ROTC and military recruiters from their campuses, even though they once educated large numbers of military officers. In past decades, Yale actually produced more Navy officers than the Naval Academy.

Why this animosity toward the military? During the Vietnam War, these universities faced anti-war student protests, providing their faculties and leaders with an excuse to ban the military from their campuses. Although Princeton, Dartmouth, Penn and Cornell have allowed ROTC to return to campus, it is without college credits.

With Vietnam long over, the current excuse to continue the ban is DADT – the military's "don't ask don't tell" policy regarding homosexuals. These elite universities, self-proclaimed guardians of academic freedom, are refusing to allow their students to develop their own opinions of the military. They hypocritically accuse the military of the very prejudice and intolerance they practice.

Perhaps it is easy because they so readily sold their ethics when the

Solomon Act was passed in 1995, which allowed the government to block all federal monies to any university that refused to allow the military on campus. In essence, the military politely told them to put their money where their mouth was.

What happened to their principled stance then? Rather than losing hundreds of millions of dollars of federal aid, some of these universities, including Harvard, which alone stood to lose \$450 million, had a surprising change of heart and allowed military recruiters to return to campus.

Sadly, these universities model these flawed values and ethics for our youth. No wonder so many of our government leaders have confused ethics.

Columbia, showing more moral bankruptcy than Harvard, proclaims on its Internet site its patriotism and support of ROTC, even though it is one of the schools requiring students to drive to other schools for that training.

Columbia revealed even more hypocrisy when it claimed defense of academic freedom by welcoming the Iranian terrorist Ahmadinejad to speak on campus. Its values? ROTC is barred from campus because the military bans gays from openly serving while Ahmadinejad, who aids and supports the killing of Americans, is welcomed.

Think about the principles of the leaders and faculties of these universities. While they are unwilling to risk anything for their claimed principles, the banned ROTC students are willing to risk their lives for their principles. What

values do we want? What principles should we model?

Do the elites have other ethical lapses? Yes. They also sell admissions to the highest bidder with a unique admissions program called "affirmative action for the wealthy," including legacy applicants who are the children of previous graduates.

Some of these universities are more adept at buying favors than Congress, referring to legacies as "check-writing graduates." According to the Wall Street Journal, Harvard accepts 40 percent of legacy applicants but only 11 percent of other applicants and when one irate father told an admissions officer that his son should be accepted despite a 2.4 grade-point average, he was asked, "Have you built a building?"

Some universities additionally target children of the rich and famous even if they had no previous connection to the university, calling them "development cases," ignoring their poor academic performance in lieu of "other areas of leadership."

The ethics of the elites are for sale to the highest bidder – be it the government, wealthy alumni, or rich and famous parents. Maybe the military should be indignant and refuse to be on campus because the values of these elite universities are unacceptable.