



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on October 23, 2010

Juan Williams' Forgotten Victimizer: The Man in the Mirror

If anyone should feel loved right now, it's social commentator Juan Williams. His firing by National Public Radio (NPR) for comments he made on Fox News' O'Reilly Factor has drawn harsh criticism from all quarters, left, right and center. And I join this defensive phalanx. Sacking a man for saying that he gets "worried" and "nervous" aboard a plane when he see people "identifying themselves first and foremost as Muslims" with their traditional garb is an example of political correctness run amuck. Heck, Williams was merely giving voice to a disquiet felt by a majority of Americans.



And if any entity should feel unloved — and unlovable — it's NPR. Not only was their action grossly unjust, but then we found out that it might have been taken in response to a complaint from the Council on American Islamic Relations. The station has also been disingenuous, claiming that the pink slip was rendered because NPR commentators "should not participate in shows ... that encourage punditry and speculation rather than fact-based analysis," yet never applied this standard to its very own speculating, fact-bereft Mara Liasson and Nina Totenberg. To top it all off, station President and CEO Vivian Schiller struck a mercenary note, saying she was "profoundly sorry that this happened during fundraising week." Islamist-leaning, dishonest, and greedy, NPR casts itself as the perfect villain and Williams as hapless victim. He has become just a bit of a martyr and a bit more of a hero.

But not so fast. Does it occur to anyone that Williams has been victimized by a politically correct environment that he, as a decades-long supporter of the Left, is partially responsible for creating? Now, don't get me wrong, I know that the commentator is no frothing-at-the-mouth Jacobin; he's a liberal more in the 1975 mold. It's also true that he appears a gentleman, willing to debate civilly and not at all given to speech-code squelching of opposing points of view. That is not the point, however. It is that the iron curtain dropped over American social commentary did not magically descend from the heavens. It also wasn't woven by those of us on the Right; rather, it's the handiwork of social engineers in politics, the media, entertainment, and academia — and their supporters, people such as voters, readers, viewers, and alumni donors. And Juan Williams is one of those supporters.

I know that what I'm saying may not be popular. After all, Williams is a nice fellow and man is easily charmed. People also don't like dissent in the posse when a propaganda outlet such as NPR is rightly being lynched by a wave of almost monolithic pundit and public opinion — going against the flow is always perilous. But while I would welcome the demise of NPR, remember, there's a reason why Williams was working there in the first place: Even if he's not the Left of the Left, he is a man of the Left.



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And if someone sides with the barbarians at the gate and the city falls, does it help if he says, “Well, I didn’t agree with all their positions, and of course I didn’t want civilization to collapse. It’s just that I found them more palatable than our nation’s defenders and had to choose a side”? Having good intentions is fine, but we all know what they’re used to pave. Being sincerely wrong is still being wrong, and ammunition used against what’s right kills even if supplied by a saint.

And it has been killing careers and opportunities — mainly of those on the Right — for years. Radio talk-show host Michael Savage has been banned from Britain, Rush Limbaugh lost his job as a National Football League commentator and his chance to buy the St. Louis Rams, scientist James Watson [had to resign](#) from the chancellorship of the Cold Spring laboratory, and golf commentator Kelly Tilghman and I have something in common: We both were targeted by the thought police for innocently using the word “lynch.” She was [suspended](#) by Golf Channel for two weeks and I was [featured](#) on the Southern Poverty Law Center’s HateWatch page. I wonder, should I, as a Christian, get upset over liberal Mitch Perry’s [headline](#), “NPR getting *crucified* for Juan Williams firing”? (Emphasis added.)

And the greatest tragedy here is not that honest debaters are destroyed — it’s that honest debate is. We can’t as a society discover the truth on important issues of the day if we’re afraid to discuss them frankly. And, frankly, this is precisely what those whose agenda is contrary to truth want.

Speaking of those folks, when a conservative is targeted and honest debate squelched, when does the Left *ever* line up with the right to defend him in the way the Right is defending Williams now? It simply doesn’t happen; it is the behavior of the principled, not the petulant.

And since we must be the former, we should be passionate in our defense of Williams. We must uphold truth no matter who utters it and combat political correctness whenever it rears its ugly head. I just wish the Williamses of the world would come to understand who their friends really are and that leftists, like nations, generally don’t have friends — they have interests. Because history is littered with the corpses of good men who learned only too late that, to those they considered brothers in ideological arms, they were never anything but a certain useful something.



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