

## **Banning Taylor promotes climate of fear**

Letter to the Editor

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According to Joel Ferguson ("Jared Taylor protest," 24 January 2007), some of the people who were happy to prevent Jared Taylor from speaking in Halifax thought that shouting Taylor down was good constructive political work. I can't for the life of me see how it could have been. We need to be able to speak freely and candidly about what matters to us if we are to identify problems and find solutions. Disrupting Taylor creates a climate of fear and silence, not a climate of candour.

Much better politically is to discuss Taylor's views. If Taylor's views are false or obnoxious, then expose the fallacies in his arguments, demonstrate the falsity of his conclusions, and explain how his values or vision is ignoble. One's own commitment to multiculturalism might well be deeper and stronger for having done so and one will be better able to represent one's views and values to others.

Some of us value freedom of expression and candid discussion for their own sakes; those of us who don't, though, should realize that expression and discussion are better tools toward such ends as equality and respect than are suppression and silence.

Olivier Jarda has the right attitude. In his editorial "Yale Schmale" (24 January 2007), Jarda states Taylor's views dispassionately, draws attention to Taylor's errors of fact, shows the faults in the reasoning by which Taylor defends his views, opposes his own views to Taylor's, and explains how multiculturalism is superior to ethnic or racial separatism. (Jarda seems to have changed his mind about how to respond to what he dislikes. He used to be on the side of suppression. Good for him!) For anyone who seeks to defuse some threat Taylor's views present, Jarda's way is the way to do it.

One final point: I'm grateful to Ferguson for correcting the exaggerations of mainstream media reports of the protest against Taylor. It's good to know that really only half the protesters were hooded Gestapo Stormtroopers.