



centerforconstitutionalrights

on the front lines for social justice

January 20, 2011

Mr. Roger Ailes
Fox News
1211 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10036

By fax 212.301.4229, hand delivery, and mail

Dear Mr. Ailes:

We are supporters of Professor Frances Fox Piven. We request your immediate help in stopping false accusations by Glenn Beck that are putting Professor Piven in danger.

We are vigorous defenders of the First Amendment. We support full freedom of speech and full debate on all issues. However, there comes a point when constant intentional repetition of provocative, incendiary, emotional misinformation and falsehoods about a person can put that person in actual physical danger of a violent response.

Your employee Glenn Beck has repeatedly falsely accused Professor Frances Fox Piven of advocating violence. Mr. Beck has provoked emotional responses which have incited violent threats against Professor Piven. As a result, Professor Piven has been subjected to numerous threats on her life, many posted on Mr. Beck's own website.

As President of Fox News we ask you to intervene and bring a stop to this. We ask you to order this campaign of misinformation to end. You can stop the reckless endangering of the safety of Professor Piven.

Professor Piven is a Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Sociology at the Graduate Center of City University of New York. She is an acclaimed scholar and former President of the American Sociological Association. She is best known for her work in advocating for the organizational rights of poor persons and for encouraging voter registration.

Mr. Beck has repeatedly falsely accused Professor Piven of advocating violence. It is difficult to believe that Mr. Beck does not know that he is falsely accusing Professor Piven of advocating violence and provoking a dangerous and emotional response by viewers of his program. But whatever his motives, this must cease.

On September 13, 2010, Mr. Beck warned listeners that "if you don't think violence is coming, I'm going to share some audio of Frances Fox Piven that will boggle your mind." Beck said that "they don't mind violence. Violence will come. And violence will come from the left. Violence is part of the plan. Not mine, not yours."

On January 12, 2011, Mr. Beck accused Professor Piven of being in the same league as a group which the government said planned to murder law enforcement officers and to



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engage in armed war on the United States. He said "I denounce violent threats and calls for the destruction of our system – regardless of their underlying ideology – whether they come from the Hutaree Militia or Frances Fox Piven." <http://www.foxnews.com/on-air/glenn-beck/transcript/when-it-comes-tucson-tragedy-truth-has-no-agenda?page=2>

On January 17, 2011, Mr. Beck devoted a segment of his television show to Professor Piven, this time calling her an "enemy of the Constitution." Referencing an article in the January 10/17, 2011 issue of The Nation, he says, "She is talking about riots, violence...Is that not inciting riots? Is that not asking for violence...I go back to my definition of 'enemy.' An enemy of the Constitution..." He also equates her call for a social movement with "terrorism."

<http://www.foxnews.com/on-air/glenn-beck/transcript/frances-fox-piven-and-enemies-us-constitution>

A December 31, 2010 headline on Mr. Beck's website The Blaze announced: "Frances Fox Piven Rings in the New Year by Advocating Violent Revolution." The author Jonathon Seidl wrote "...she calls on the jobless to rise up in a violent show of solidarity and force,"...and "... violence has always been Piven's preferred method of collapse." <http://www.theblaze.com/stories/frances-fox-piven-rings-in-the-new-year-by-calling-for-violent-revolution/>

Beck has allowed death threats against Professor Piven to be put up on his website for weeks now and has not removed them.

Below are some samples of the dozens of threatening emails posted about Professor Piven on the Beck site. These illustrate the violent and threatening responses against Professor Piven provoked by Mr. Beck's repeated falsehoods and misinformation. It is important to note also that these threats and many others like them have been publicly posted and available to the public for weeks without rebuttal, apology or removal.

"Be very careful what you ask for honey. As I mentioned in previous posts - one shot, one kill. The people have to stand up for what's right. A few well placed marksmen with high powered rifles...then there would not be any violence." JFT 1425

"Maybe they should burst through the front door of this arrogant elitist and slit the hateful cow's throat." Reckless

"Somebody tell Frances I have 5,000 rounds ready and I will give my life to take our freedom back. Taking her life and any who would enslave my children and grandchildren and call for violence should meet their demise as they wish. George Washington didn't use his freedom of speech to defeat the British. He shot them." superwrench 4

"I am all for violence and change Frances: Where do your loved ones live?" Green Manilici



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"Again, why is this woman still alive?" capnjack

"We should blow up Piven's office and home." lepanto

"If she says it's OK to use violence, then I'd like to use some and snap her little chicken neck. This pinko filth needs a long dirt nap!" thejackal

"We need a target? OK...Here's one, Frances Fox Piven. Let's go string her up, as this mess is directly due to her and her husbands meddling." Voted against carter.

"For what it's worth department she resides in [town in NY]" doncarr61

"Big lots is having a rope sale I hear, you buy the rope and I will hang the wench. I will spin her as she hangs. Here is your revolution Piven wench, Allah Akbar!"
ham4mohammed

These threats must be taken seriously by Fox News. Professor Piven's life could well be at stake.

We are requesting that you order Mr. Beck to cease and desist. We ask you to stop Mr. Beck from continuing the constant intentional repetition of provocative, incendiary, emotional misinformation and falsehoods about Professor Piven. Mr. Beck is putting Professor Piven in actual physical danger of a violent response.

We ask you to order an immediate investigation into this and insist on a speedy and fair resolution which will stop the Fox and Beck generated threats on Professor Piven. Professor Piven's life could well be at stake.

Sincerely,

Vincent Warren, Executive Director
William Quigley, Legal Director
Center for Constitutional Rights