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havior. It might work in Wilkes County but, extortion doesn't get you into heaven.

Burns thinks that Staten and Richey "aren't living in the real world" but, I believe that the world is what we make it. If we make it a place where it is okay to walk all over the Bill of Rights, then that's what kind of world we'll have to live with. If, however, we make the world (including Wilkesboro) a place where students are free to think for themselves and experience both sides of an issue, then we'll have a world of intelligent, competent, decision-makers. Burns worries about "how we represent ourselves to the community." Well, how does representing ourselves as oppressors of Freedom of Speech enhance the image of a community college? How does disregarding the Speaker Ban law reflect the values of the community? I don't appreciate being represented by people who are breaking the law and I know that many of the students here are embarrassed by the actions of the president and dean. Phi Theta Kappa students decided not to invite either Burns or Plexico to their Spring Induction as a result. I've also spoken with many students who wanted the chance to hear both sides of the Ten Commandments argument and come to their own decisions about it. How does it benefit the students to take away that opportunity? I thought there was supposed to be some independent thinking going on around here. If not, I'd really like a refund.

Burns and Plexico have recently insinuated that Dr. Staten and Mr. Richey are only hurting their students by abandoning the Honors Program. I say, at least they haven't abandoned their principles. They are doing what their "superiors" have failed to do...they are showing us that they still have backbones and that you have to stand for what you believe in, even at the risk of hurting your career. Last year, Dr. Burns spoke to a class about demonstrating "spizzerinctum": ambition, energy, that will to succeed in the face of adversity. What he's done with his, I don't know. Luckily, we have Alan and Karen to show us what the heck he was talking about. Spizzerinctum to them both! The future of your education depends on it.

*Editors Note: The county commissioners have not shown the proof of any funding for WCC faculty.

WCC Students Disappointed Over Lack Of Debate

By: Dr. Gordon Burns

Wilkes Community College President Gordon Burns issued a statement this week concerning a proposed debate between representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Wilkes County Commissioners that did not materialize.



Two of our college faculty invited representatives of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Wilkes county commissioners to a forum at Wilkes Community College to present their points of view on the posting of Ten Commandments plaques in county facilities and the whole issue of the relationship of church and state. When I first learned of the invitation, the representatives of the county had already declined to participate on the advice of their attorney. The attorney was concerned that the ACLU was contemplating litigation related to the issue, and in his legal judgment the prospect of litigation made it unwise for county representatives to take part.

"As president of the college, I am committed to open inquiry and free discussion of matters of public concern. For that reason, I never denied permission for the forum to go forward," Burns said.

"I did have two distinct concerns, however. First, I was concerned that if the ACLU point of view was the only one represented, the forum might not result in open inquiry and free discussion. To encourage such a result, the administration sought to find ways to conduct the activity, addressing the same issues, using different players, perhaps students, faculty, and/or experts from outside the community who would equally represent both sides. We continue to discuss such alternatives. Second, I recognize that Wilkes Community College reflects the values of the communities it serves. I was concerned that a forum be structured in a way not resulting in open inquiry and free discussion might jeopardize the esteem the college enjoys in those communities, because of the appearance of unfairness and non-neutrality," according to Burns.

Burns stated, "I wish to reiterate that the college remains open to ideas for structuring this forum in a fair, open and neutral way. I will remain dedicated to open inquiry and free discussion as long as I am the president of this fine college. I will also remain dedicated to the college's historic and respected position of neutrality and nonpartisanship."

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