

J.D. Vance, "The Universities are the Enemy," National Conservatism Conference, 2 November 2021 (partial transcript).

So much of what we want to accomplish, so much of what we want to do in this movement, in this country, I think are fundamentally dependent on going through a set of very hostile institutions, specifically the universities, which control the knowledge in our society, which control what we call truth and what we call falsity, that provides research that gives credibility to some of the most ridiculous ideas that exist in our country.

And so, I'm excited to close this conference with this particular set of remarks because I think if any of us want to do the things that we want to do for our country and for the people who live in it, we have to honestly and aggressively attack the universities in this country.

Now I am as of July of this year a senate candidate in the state of Ohio, which is a very unique situation for me to be in — thank you. You can all go to jd Vance.com and make yourselves as poor as possible to support my campaign. But you know one of the things that consistently comes up in my campaign, because I was one of these people who didn't quite get Donald Trump in the beginning, and didn't sort of fully appreciate where he was coming from or what he was about, and now I very much do, is this concept of red pilling, and if you ever heard this term it comes from the movie The Matrix, which as I understand it was made by a couple of people who do not share the politics of the people in this room.

But the basic idea is that once you see the way that knowledge is transmitted, once you see the way that public policy works in this country it's very hard to unsee it. And so there's this scene in the movie The Matrix where the chief protagonist is given an opportunity to take the blue pill or the red pill, and he takes the red pill. And the red pill effectively reveals to him the fundamental corruption that laid at the heart of the society that he lived in. And I'm going to come back to this analogy later on in my remarks, but I think it's important to understand that so much of what's going on in our country, so much of what drives truth and knowledge as we understand it in this country, is fundamentally determined by, supported by, and reinforced by, the universities in this country. That is the world that we live in we live in a world that has been made effectively by university knowledge.

And if you ask yourself why have we consented to this, why have we accepted a world in which the universities — which by the way are not exactly politically sympathetic with any of the people in this room — why have we done that? The universities will make two claims: the first claim, what they provide for our society is that they provide for the dissemination of knowledge and truth. That's what the universities do. That's the first thing, and the second thing the universities do in this country is that they train young minds to think in innovative and thoughtful ways about the problems that we'll experience, because no society can fully anticipate or appreciate what's about to come around the corner, and so it must train the next generation of leaders to know what the next problems will be, to apply first principles to those problems and to

eventually solve the issues that our society encounters. That is what the universities do, to disseminate truth and knowledge and to train the next generation of young minds.

It's worth asking ourselves whether the universities today actually do that. Do the universities disseminate truth and knowledge? Do they train the next generation of young minds to actually anticipate the world as it is, to apply first principles to critical and difficult problems? I think the answer is obviously no, that's obviously not what the universities do. Ladies and gentlemen, the universities do not pursue knowledge and truth, they pursue deceit and lies, and it's time to be honest about that fact

Now we ask ourselves – this is ridiculous of course – I imagine that I don't have to convince any more of any of you that this is preposterous, that the universities in our country are fundamentally corrupt and dedicated to deceit and lies, not to the truth, but ask ourselves: Why is this true? Why is it that our universities are so committed to some of the most preposterous dishonesties in the world instead of committed to the truth, and my argument here is that it's about power. So, I want to talk to you just a little about a few of the people who are affected by the lies that are told in our universities.

So right now, if you are a lower class person in our country of any race and you want to live a good life, very often the story that you're told is that you must go to a college or university. If you want to live and work in a middle class life you must go to a college or university. Ladies and gentlemen, who does that benefit? Who benefits from being told they have to go and acquire 60, 70, 80, 200,000 dollars of student debt to live a good life in our country.

The fundamental lie of American feminism over the past 20 or 30 years is that it is liberating for a woman to go and work 90 hours a week in a cubicle at Goldman Sachs, shipping her fellow countrymen's jobs off to a regime that hates them, and that is liberation compared to the problems of family and patriarchy in our modern society. Think about environmental justice – a term that you'll hear if you're ever on a university campus these days – where the net result of the policy of environmental justice is to ship a large number of manufacturing jobs off to the dirtiest economy in the world – that's China, and frankly India as well – in exchange for the good feeling that you have done something for climate change, when in reality if you're shipping millions of manufacturing jobs off to China, you're making our planet dirtier not cleaner and the people who lose their jobs in the process have a right to complain about it.

Say you're a middle class Ohioan, where I'm running for senate right now, and you're worried about the fact that your heating bills this winter look to go up by 50 or 60 percent, say you're worried about the fact that your grocery bills, your gasoline bills, are skyrocketing even as we speak – ladies and gentlemen, don't dare complain about it, because – didn't you know, the person who has implemented these policies is the first female treasury secretary of the United States. She's a great trailblazer. Who cares that you can't afford basic necessities for your family the universities tell us that so long as we're trailblazing on diversity, equity, inclusion, normal

people don't matter, all that matters is progressive orthodoxy and whether our society reinforces it.

This is the world that we live in, and I hate to say: This is the world created by universities that care more about fake culture wars, they care more about identity politics, they care more about diversity, equity, and inclusion than they do their own society.

But really ask yourself what critical race theory does and what its purpose is. Right now in American schools there are millions of children who are learning about the fundamental evil of American slavery and America's racist past. Of course, we have a complicated past and there are a lot of sins that we have to atone for. But ask yourself why American children are learning about America's racist past 180 years ago, instead of the fact that this very moment there is a major multinational corporation named Apple that is employing slaves in China. Not 180 years ago, ladies and gentlemen, but right now this very moment. And you realize that progressive politics, it's not about uplifting minorities, it's not about healing our planet, it's not about looking after the poor. Progressive politics is a language, a language used by our new oligarchy to do two things: On the one hand to rob the American people blind, and on the second hand to tell them to shut up about it if they dare complain. That is the purpose of American progressive politics. That is its net effect, and that is the ideology that is reinforced, that is given legitimacy, and that is taught at our universities.

Why, ladies and gentlemen, are school children learning from school teachers that America is a fundamentally racist and evil country? Because those same school teachers learned it from some progressive professor at a university 10 or 15 years ago. That is the fundamental problem of American truth and knowledge today. We create, we have created a system where to work in the modern economy, to live a middle class life, you have to go to a university. That is what our elites tell our young people. And yet at those universities they are told that working with your hands is looked down upon. They are told that America is a fundamentally racist and evil country. They are taught the children who go through this university system, that this country built by our fathers and grandfathers, is an evil and terrible place. Ladies and gentlemen, we are giving our children over to our enemies and it's time we stop doing it.

We have got to get out of the mindset that the only way to live a good life in this country, the only way for our children to succeed, is to go to a four-year university, where people will learn to hate their country and acquire a lot of debt in the process. That is a necessary component of our ideas ultimately carrying the day.