

The One Issue Obama Is Using to Destroy Religious Liberty

At a recent Democratic Party fundraiser, President Obama reportedly said:

"We affirm that we cherish our religious freedom and are profoundly respectful of religious traditions ... But we also have to say clearly that our religious freedom doesn't grant us the freedom to deny our fellow Americans their constitutional rights."

This is a perfect example of the incrementalism by which rights are diminished, relegated to second-class status, and eventually dismissed altogether.

President Obama's comment may sound innocuous on its face, but what he's actually saying is the First Amendment is to be subjugated to his own vision of society as implemented through his own view of the Fourteenth Amendment – a view which for our nation's entire history was never even seriously considered right up to a few years ago. It's noteworthy that President Obama also publicly opposed same-sex marriage in the not-too-distant past – a fact which should tell us (and his current swooning supporters) something about his convictions. The "constitutional rights" to which he now so confidently refers are actually nonexistent in the text or meaning of the Constitution, only imposed on the nation through one ill-formed opinion of the Supreme Court.

On the other hand, the First Amendment (which he fails to even mention) has plainly and openly provided protection as the first of our Bill of Rights for centuries (since the founding of our country), clearly protects wide-ranging and robust religious practice, speech, and action, explicitly protects the "free exercise" of religion (which protects far more than

the “religious traditions” and “religious institutions” the president references), explicitly prevents the government from “establish[ing]” what citizens must believe (in *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*, the Court said, “no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion, or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein”), and has been consistently held by the courts to provide strong and wide-ranging protection from government interference and coercion in religious matters.

Thus, with one off-putting comment, President Obama attempts to use “rights” which aren’t even mentioned in our primary written legal authority (the Constitution) to denigrate rights which are clearly protected by the first provision of the Bill of Rights of that same Constitution.

As it’s said: “Where there’s a will, there’s a way.”