



Letters to the Editor

IRS Interferes With Pastors' Speech

The Patriot Pastor (April 4 edition) faces a terrible enemy: the Internal Revenue Service. Its policies for churches and religious organizations are an egregious violation of the First Amendment. Because of their tax-exempt status, churches are now controlled by the IRS in ways which are totally contrary to the intent of our Founders. A religious leader may not preach from the pulpit on political issues nor offer his or her views or guidance in church bulletins and paid advertisements. Likewise, that leader may not endorse or criticize a candidate while acting in an official capacity. Specifically, the IRS says in its Publication 1771 that churches and religious groups are "absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office."

This is a profound violation of the principles of free speech, freedom of religion, and the obligation that our Founders saw for religious leaders to lead — that is, to speak out forcefully on moral and spiritual aspects of political issues and politicians, and especially from the pulpit. The IRS is censoring religious speech; that is unconstitutional. It is also acting as attack dog for the political establishment; that is unconscionable. It is terrorizing religious free speech.

Since the 1960s, when such legislation was first enacted, our way of life has been stood on its head. It is now assumed by the IRS that a church's wealth is the government's, and out of the goodness of Congress' heart, as interpreted by the IRS, churches are allowed to keep it. But they'd better watch their step in who or what they criticize, or they'll get their tax-exempt status yanked, followed by penalties and fines. Moral leadership has been muted and muffled by Congress and the IRS. It doesn't matter whether the leadership is liberal or conservative, Left or Right; the important thing is that its God-given right to free speech and its God-given obligation to lead its flock in temporal matters, including politics, is now handcuffed. They're golden handcuffs, but they work just as well as iron ones. And the moral decline of America continues because of it.

John White
Cheshire, Connecticut

What Democracy Looks Like

Regarding your "Wisconsin Erupts" cover-story articles in the March 21 issue of TNA, the recent demonstrations in Madison, Wisconsin, were an expression of pure democracy, something our Founders never intended for America. Instead, they gave us a constitutional republic. The U.S. Constitution guarantees to each state a "republican" form of government, not a democracy. As James Madison said, "Such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security, or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths."

Protesters told us, "This is what democracy looks like," so here's how it looked: ear-splitting noise from drums, megaphones, and thousands of screaming protesters inside and outside the capitol building; legislators afraid to leave their locked offices and fearful for the safety of their families back home; signs calling Gov. Walker the new Hitler; communist and socialist signs, leaflets, and organizations



Written by [Staff](#) on May 9, 2011

Published in the issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 27, No. 09

everywhere; Senate Democrats absconding to Illinois in order to deprive the Senate of the necessary quorum for a vote; and millions of taxpayer dollars spent for repair and cleanup after the “democracy” crowd left the Capitol.

The anti-reform protesters shut down Wisconsin government because they didn’t have the votes in the legislature to stop the Republican majority from passing the Budget Repair Bill. Drawing their inspiration from radical left-wing organizers like Saul Alinsky, they stopped just short of full-blown violence and anarchy.

Ruthless “win at any cost” tactics can prevail without violent confrontation only if the other side uses restraint and obeys the rules. If, however, the other side had also organized large, angry mobs and tried to occupy the Capitol like the protestors did, Madison would have had a truly serious problem. The patience and tolerance of Wisconsin citizens was pushed to the limit this time. Next time we may not be so fortunate.

Rosalie Greenley

Sent via e-mail



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