

# RELIGIOUS LIBERTY FRIGHTENS SECULARISTS

January 16 was Religious Freedom Day, a day that most Americans are proud to support. There were some, however, who were frightened by it.

Frederick Clarkson was frightened. He is the author of *When Exemption is the Rule: The Religious Freedom Strategy of the Christian Right*, an analysis of Christian legal organizations and their impact on society. His thesis is that “the evangelical Protestant Christian Right and American Roman Catholic bishops [have] forged a lasting alliance.” Specifically, they want to carve out “theocratic zones of control.” As such, it poses a threat to religious liberty.

Supporting Clarkson is Patricia Miller. What really interests her, and Clarkson, is sex. They detest religious exemptions that “threaten reproductive and LGBT rights.” Both have their work flagged on the website of Religion Dispatches, an anti-Christian site. Not surprisingly, Clarkson formerly worked for Planned Parenthood, and Miller is the author of a pro-abortion book.

This is the way the Left works. First, they promote a libertine agenda, one that does violence to liberty, properly understood, and to civil society. Second, they foster increasing encroachments by the state on religion. Third, when religious-liberty advocates fight back, seeking to insulate practicing Christians and Jews from an overreaching state, they are accused of creating a theocracy. Indeed, Rev. John C. Dorhauer, who wrote a preface to Clarkson’s work, says we are faced with the prospect of turning America into “a theocratic state, or a collection of mini-states.”

Yuval Levin offered a more astute understanding of this

subject. Writing in the February edition of *First Things*, he noted that Madison recognized that “religious liberty is the freedom not to be coerced into doing that which your religion prohibits you from doing.” The Catholic League stands with Madison.

Clarkson and Miller should be worried: Our side is not walking away from this fight for freedom.