

SEXUAL RIGHTS vs. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Nowhere in the U.S. Constitution does it mention sexual rights, but it does cite religious liberty. To be sure, the courts have granted a generalized right to privacy (also not mentioned in the Constitution) that covers sexual rights. Still, such newly crafted rights cannot legitimately trump the two religious-liberty protections explicitly stated in the First Amendment. Yet the Obama administration seems to think otherwise.

Archbishop Timothy Dolan, the president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), spoke eloquently recently about the need to safeguard religious liberty. Another sign that the bishops are taking new threats to religious rights seriously is the formation of a new Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, chaired by Bridgeport Bishop William Lori. Driving these concerns are such sexual issues as abortion and homosexuality.

The USCCB has filed a Freedom of Information Act request seeking to uncover why the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) dismissed the findings of an independent review board that deemed acceptable a USCCB program to combat human trafficking. Moreover, 27 U.S. senators have asked the Obama administration to explain its unprecedented denial of this grant. We know the conclusion—HHS denied the grant because the Church opposes abortion as a way to “help” women in need—but we would like to know more about its reasoning. Furthermore, HHS is trying to force Catholic hospitals to cover sterilization and contraceptive services, allowing an “exemption” that is nothing more than a Hobson’s choice.

This attack on religious liberty is not limited to the federal government. In Massachusetts and Illinois, Catholic social

service agencies have been forced to drop their adoptive and foster care programs because they refuse, on religious liberty grounds, to include homosexual parents.

This is the most determined onslaught on religious liberty we've seen in decades, and all of it is driven by a debased understanding of sexual freedom