

What About "Hate Crimes"

by Bill Willis

On Tuesday, September 28th, 2004, I was watching a debate in the House of Representatives on C-SPAN. The bill that was being debated was a defense bill. What quickly caught my attention was an attempt by the left to include "hate crimes" legislation into this bill. In my opinion, this was an attempt by the left to encumber a bill with legislation that didn't apply to the expressed purpose of the bill in question, but that was not the part that really bothered me.

The argument made by the left in support of "hate crimes" legislation is based on the opinion that many crimes are perpetrated on particular victims because of their race, religion, gender, disability or sexual preference. While I am sure that in certain instances, these considerations are a large part of the reason that a particular victim is selected by a criminal, the fact is that the committed offense is a crime, whether we apply the title "hate crime" to it or not. Since these acts are crimes, they will undoubtedly be dealt with as crimes. Why, then, does the left want to pass "hate crimes" legislation that would provide federal jurisdiction in these cases and stiffer penalties?

The answer to that question can be found by looking back at the history of the liberal agenda over the past half-century. A large part of the liberal agenda has been what I would call the 'Robin Hood Syndrome' – the idea that it is right to rob from the rich and give to the poor. Instead of the rich, though, the liberals would rob from everyone not included in certain special-interest groups and give preferential treatment to those groups. Affirmative Action is a prime example. When the Equal Rights Amendment did not provide preferential treatment for certain groups, Affirmative Action was pushed through by the left. The same principle applies to "hate crimes" legislation.

Shouldn't "hate crimes" be punished, though? The truth is, they are punished. The legislation that the left seeks simply adds more penalties and federal jurisdiction for crimes against certain special-interest groups. That, though, is not the primary problem with this type of legislation.

The liberal agenda has been one of restricting or denying the rights of the people ostensibly for their own good. This legislation could very easily be used to go after our right of free speech. There have already been attempts to define and outlaw "hate speech." If "hate crimes" legislation is allowed to pass and "hate

speech” is outlawed, the stage would be set for our First Amendment rights to be summarily stripped away.

Remember that this type of legislation addresses crimes where the victim is singled out because of race, religion, gender, disability or sexual preference. So what can we expect if this type of legislation is allowed to pass?

Crimes against whites, Christians or Jews and heterosexuals, not to mention seniors and children, both born and unborn, will be treated as less important than those against certain special-interest groups. Then there is the question of free speech. The only acceptable “hate speech” will be against whites, Christians, Jews and heterosexual males. It doesn’t take a great stretch of the imagination to see where that will take us, since it has already started.

Anytime a minister stands in a pulpit and states what the bible says about homosexuality, there stands someone ready to publicly condemn that minister for “hate speech.” Anytime a minister stands in a pulpit and states what the bible says about Jesus being the only way to salvation, there stands someone ready to publicly condemn that minister for “hate speech.” What will happen to these ministers when “hate speech” is outlawed and the purveyors of the liberal agenda are allowed to determine what speech is unlawful?

***Note: Since this article was written, the state of California and several others have passed "hate crime" legislation.

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