

AMSPECBLOG

Thank God for the First Amendment

By Doug Bandow on 12.1.10 @ 7:46AM

If we ever need further evidence of why constitutional safeguards for liberty are necessary, we should look to our friendly neighbors up north. PC restrictions on free speech are far-advanced, and increasingly threaten the ability of Canadians to engage in a vigorous public dialogue about public issues.

Writes Mark Hemingway in the *Washington Examiner*:

Except in a hockey rink at the Winter Olympics, our Canadian friends are well-mannered and polite neighbors. Americans rarely have a reason to pay attention to politics north of the border.

But it has become clear in the past few years that democracy in Canada is seriously threatened, and it's time Americans spoke up. We had better, because Canadians can't.

On Nov. 20, Canadian journalist Ezra Levant was ordered by an Ottawa judge to pay \$25,000 for libeling Giacomo Vigna, a Canadian Human Rights Commission lawyer. According to the judge, Levant "spoke in reckless disregard of the truth and for an ulterior purpose of denormalizing the Human Rights Commission across Canada."

Despite the judge's ruling, not only is Levant right to "denormalize" these commissions -- they should be immediately abolished.

Hemingway lists a number of commission rulings that penalize liberty--including ordering a minister not do discuss his opinion of homosexuality in any forum! The logical next step is the demand that he and his fellow miscreants attend a reeducation camp. After all, a truly good society can't allow its members to even think bad thoughts.

There is no more compelling evidence of the illiberal nature of modern liberalism than the criminalization of dissenting speech.

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