



WSJ's Bill McGurn: Chick-fil-A Intolerance Could Be "Just the Beginning"

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Bill McGurn on the new intolerance over pro-marriage speech:

"... The targeting of Chick-fil-A is but one front in an ugly campaign where the goal isn't so much to prevail in a political argument as to buffalo opposing voices into silence.

We saw this in California recently, when individuals who had contributed to Proposition 8—a ballot initiative backing traditional marriage—found gay-rights activists pressuring their employers. We saw it in the campaign to get corporations to withdraw from the American Legislative Exchange Council, a pro-market organization of state legislators that found itself branded racist for supporting state voter-ID and stand-your-ground laws. We saw it even earlier, in 2005, when the Schwab financial services firm came under fire for supporting the libertarian Cato Institute and Social Security privatization—not to mention similar efforts to get corporations to withdraw from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

In one sense, these examples are all different. In the Proposition 8 case, activists targeted individuals; the Chick-fil-A matter, by contrast, involves a private company threatened by government officials, while the attacks on Schwab and ALEC zero in on the donations of large, publicly traded companies.

In the most critical sense, however, the goal is the same. Whether the means involve Federal Election Commission disclosure requirements, Securities and Exchange Commission rules on shareholder resolutions, or simply tagging those with opposing views as "hate groups," the object is clear: to limit debate by forcing one side off the playing field. -- *Wall Street Journal*