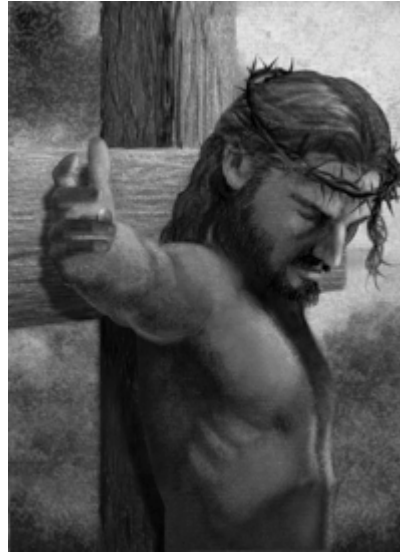




Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on April 29, 2011

Obama Oblivious to Religious Persecution of Christians

Native Christian Iraqis, in a nation where Obama still has American troops, have fled their ancestral homeland in droves to escape the brutal persecution of Muslims and the “blessings” of democracy without individual rights. Christians in China are arrested, their Bibles confiscated, and their churches ransacked — all for the state offense of practicing their faith as they wish. In fact, no communist regime allows the free practice of religion.



Nations such as India, with an unmerited reputation for tolerance, allows attacks on Christians as brutal as anything seen in the Islamic world — almost especially upon those Dalits, or “untouchables,” who have converted to Christianity.

Though America does not have an established state religion (despite the fretting of federal judges and the ACLU), there are plenty of other nations of the world that do: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Sikkim, Bhutan, and a host of others. These countries with non-Christian state religions do not trouble the Obama administration at all. Though President Obama delivers serious messages to celebrate Ramadan, Kwanza, and just about every religious holiday except those of the Christian religion such as Easter, leaders of Buddhist, Hindu, and Islamic nations would not dream of giving an official government Easter or Christmas message.

Many people in European nations such as England, Denmark, Scotland, and Norway — which still have established state churches — have a low view of Christianity, even as brutal Muslim religious law is being enforced in their countries by street thugs, as well as by anti-religious government offices and court systems. The definition of “hate crimes” in much of the West has come to mean any sincere profession of the ancient Christian faith.

So it should surprise no one that since President Obama took office, his administration has not designated a single “country of particular concern” (CPC) for religious freedom violations. The term CPC is grounded in the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act, which was intended to tie America's foreign policy to the promotion of religious freedom. It identifies any country that is a “systematic, ongoing, and egregious” violator of religious freedom. President Bill Clinton in 1999 designated Burma, China, Iran, Iraq, and Sudan as CPCs. President George W. Bush, on January 16, 2009, gave eight nations that designation — Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Uzbekistan.

Though it is highly doubtful that the Religious Freedom Act can do much to help persecuted Christians in other countries, President Obama's failure to even make a symbolic gesture to protect such people may violate this federal law, which requires him to take specific actions against any CPC, including sanctions and diplomatic protests.



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The U.S. Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) wrote to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in January 2010 urging her to take action on CPC designations, and repeated the exhortation last January. Nothing has happened. Leonard Leo, chairman of the USCIRF, observed:

The Obama administration continues to rely on the prior administration's designations but hopefully will make new designations and apply meaningful actions very soon in order to underscore America's resolve in bolstering the freedom of religion or belief around the world.

According to CNSNews.com,

Although Saudia Arabia is widely viewed as a particularly severe violator of religious freedom, an indefinite waiver prevents the imposition of sanctions ... as a consequence of its designation. Uzbekistan has also been covered by ... waivers.

Chairman Leonard Leo noted, "As a result of these waivers, the United States has not implemented any policy response to the particularly severe violations of religious freedom in either country."

The USCIRF also reported that:

The promotion and protection of religious freedom is underutilized in U.S. foreign policy. This has been the case in both Democratic and Republican administrations, which is unfortunate, as IRFA provides the U.S. government with unique capabilities to address some of the most pressing foreign policy challenges the United States faces today. The U.S. government is working to encourage respect for human rights around the world, while at the same time engaging in conflicts where actors are motivated by ideas advancing violent religious extremism. In light of this, promoting religious freedom can help policymakers achieve crucial foreign policy goals, given that many egregious limitations on freedom of religious practice not only constitute human rights abuses but also can impact national security.

None of this should be very surprising to Americans. President Obama has shown a profound, though often subtle, disdain for serious Christian faith, and has almost never condemned anti-Semitic comments from his friends in the radical Left. It should also come as no surprise that federal statutes and specially created federal commissions have failed woefully to protect liberties in America or to champion religious freedom abroad.

When Americans have acted effectively to protect Christians and Jews, it has almost always come from private, voluntary cooperation (such as the boycott of German goods in the 1930s to protest Nazi anti-Semitism, or the church protests against the imprisonment of prelates in the Soviet empire. Likewise, the promotion of faith and the dispelling of slanders of Judeo-Christian traditions comes most effectively from the private donations and missions of individual Americans and organizations, who go around the world with help, comfort, and love.



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