

CHRISTIAN COLLEGE PRESIDENT WARNS: PRESIDENT OBAMA'S POLICIES
ENDANGER OUR VERY EXISTENCE; CLOSURES OF FAITH-BASED
INSTITUTIONS LIKELY UNLESS CONGRESS INTERVENES

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(Los Angeles, CA) August 3, 2009 - Dr. Everett Piper, President of Oklahoma Wesleyan University, and one of the nation's youngest presidents of a faith-based college and a member of the 111-member Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities is speaking out about President Obama's campaign promise to fully implement the 1964 Civil Rights Act in a manner that goes far beyond the legislation's intent. Piper believes that such a move would inevitably lead to mass closures of his and other faith-based institutions of higher learning.

"I am very concerned about what is just around the corner," said Piper. "From the outset, President Obama has made it explicitly clear that he advocates government imposed hiring standards for religious colleges and other faith-based organizations that may violate our deeply held religious views. Such state intrusion cannot help but lead to government control of what ideas can and can't be taught on our campuses. The bottom line is that State imposed hiring practices and the corresponding truncation of religious expression should cause all universities that are Christian, Jewish, or otherwise religious, to be concerned for their very existence."

Specifically Piper is concerned that President Obama will fulfill his promise to remove all exemptions from the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which currently exempts all faith-based colleges and universities when it comes to hiring faculty and staff. Piper is convinced that if the exemption is removed, many private religious universities will be forced to either remove staffing conditions or lose any form of government aid, much of which comes in the form of federal grants for students.

"By definition a Christian-oriented college has the right to expect its teachers to be Christians, a Jewish college should be able to hire only those who are Jewish, a Catholic school could require its faculty to be Catholic and so on," said Piper. "This has been common sense and common practice. The logical privilege and legal right of a school to refuse employment to those who hold views antithetical to the institution – to its ideological, theological, and historical moorings – to its very mission statement and reason for existence – has been a given. It would be absurd to force a Jewish school, for example, to hire an advocate of Al Qaeda ideology. Students and parents choosing such a school would assume that, by definition, they would not have someone teaching such a worldview at odds with the mission of the school."

Piper says his concerns stem directly from President Obama's own words from his official campaign web site, where candidate Obama wrote that "religious organizations that receive federal dollars cannot discriminate with respect to hiring for government-funded social service programs; and [faith-based organizations] can only use taxpayer's dollars on secular programs and initiatives."

At the Saddleback Civil Forum with Rick Warren, then-candidate Obama commented specifically on Christian colleges, noting, “When it comes to the programs that are federally funded, then we do have to be careful to make sure that we are not creating a situation where people are being discriminated against [in hiring practices].”

Piper says the problem with Obama’s statements is that almost every college in the nation – religious or secular – has students who qualify for and receive federal funds in the form of grants, loans, and scholarships.

“My question is this: Will students be prohibited by law from using their financial aid to attend any school that hires faculty in a manner that is consistent with its faith, values and theological distinctions? If so hundreds of colleges and universities across the land would be forced into immediate financial exigency and imminent closure without intervention by Congress.”

Piper has been exploring this topic in his columns at PoliticalMavens.com where he is a Fellow, as well as in recent media interviews. Most recently, columnist Austin Hill interviewed Piper. The interview can be viewed here: <http://www.ktar.com/index.php?nid=680&sid=1194324>

“The freedom for students to pursue higher education at an institution that shares their world view is in extreme danger and we cannot let that freedom be taken away from our children,” noted Piper.

Dr. Piper is available for select interviews. To schedule an interview with Dr. Everett Piper, please contact Toni Burge at: coordinator.publicityassistant@gmail.com

To read Dr. Piper's writings on Political Mavens, please go to: www.PoliticalMavens.com/everettpiper

To learn more Dr. Piper, please visit www.EverettPiper.com

To learn more about Oklahoma Wesleyan University, please visit: www.okwu.edu