

## Speech rights threatened again by Obama administration

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By [Art Parker](#) , Editor

President Barack Obama is at it again. He misused his power to go after the Tea Party to try and squelch them with an enforcement agency known as the IRS by placing pressure and intimidating members because that organization was critical of his administration. Now, he is using the same agency to enforce a new interpretation on an old law so he can silence his critics even more. It is the same law that allowed tea party organizations to engage in some electioneering activity, in addition to unlimited social welfare or education, providing the electioneering activity does not constitute a majority of its activities. Now, that rule looks to be one tossed into the murky waters of the Boston Harbor.

The day after Thanksgiving the IRS issued a new regulation that interpreted the same law (IRC Section 514-C) differently. According to Americans for Limited Government, the limitations will now be "imposed not simply on advocacy for or against a candidate for public office, as has been the case for over 50 years, but on any communication that even mentions a public official who happens to be a candidate." Specifically, the regulations will define "certain communications that are close in time to an election and that refer to a clearly identified candidate as electioneering communications."

What else could we possibly expect from the Obama administration or any politician who hates being criticized? Here is the best way to explain it: The law says the sky is blue. But, as of today, the IRS says that the law doesn't say that; the sky is actually purple, even though the words of the law remain the same.

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Kind of like "you can keep your current policy if you want to" no longer means "you can keep your current policy if you want to."

And who is to say that Obama, or subsequent Presidents, will not use this technique against us on other occasions. Imagine a President that wants to "straighten us out." Just interpret an old law a different way and enforce that interpretation with the guns of the U.S. Treasury.

But the impact of this is far worse than you can imagine. There are countless organizations that fall under this section of the Internal Revenue Code, who have websites and have archives that "mention" the names or even voting record of candidates. And even if this mention was a dozen years ago, the organization may be in violation of the new rule simply because that same politician is still running for office.

The new rule does not currently apply to labor unions or trade organizations because they are governed under another portion of the 501 section, but it appears that even those organizations may soon be yanked into the mix as well, and if they are, it may become a dangerous thing for organizations to even breathe the name of a candidate. That will be devastating for the promotion of free speech. Many good community organizations, like the Millbrook Men's Club and Chambers of Commerce, all over this land could become fearful of even holding a candidates forum. Can you image your local community organizations scared to hold a candidates debate for fear of the United States Treasury Department?

And why is this? Because of politicians like Obama that do not want us to dissent. They do not want us to criticize them. It is the same reason that city councils, county commissions and even state legislatures all over this nation try to find ways to keep information from the public. This type of action is not limited to the president, it comes from elected officials from all parties at all levels.

The good news is that you can bank on this going to the Supreme Court. The bad news is that it may take a couple of years to have this resolved, and that means many elections could be decided based upon new rules of free speech.

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This episode with the 501 section is another perfect example of why we can never trust anyone elected to public office. Never.