

ABORTION

Former Senator Barry Goldwater, respected, longtime standard bearer for American Conservative politics, was quoted as saying:

"Every good Christian should kick Jerry Falwell in the ass."

Falwell was co-founder of the Moral Majority, which became one of the largest political lobby groups for Evangelical Christians in the United States during the 1980s.

The Moral Majority was promoted as being "pro-life, pro-traditional family, pro-moral, and pro-American.

Falwell consistently lobbied for and supported Republican candidates who would follow his re-defined version of conservative politics; and slowly but steadily, turned traditional American Conservatism into a religious movement - focused on the contentious issue of abortion.

Because of the size of the Evangelical base in the contemporary Republican Party, their influence has grown, until it has taken over many state Republican Parties and heavily influenced the National Republican Party.

The Republican Party, which once stood for individual liberty, has now evolved into a Christian based Party, willing to brand those opposed to its overt religious dogma as heathens.

There are those today who believe that the Constitution is a direct outgrowth of the Bible and conflate the Ten Commandments with the ten amendments of the Bill of Rights.

Not grasping the difference between religious men infusing their laws with Christian morality, these "religious conservatives" demand Christian dogma be substituted in place of secular law - in essence wanting an American theocracy.

This is done at the expense of a large minority of citizens in many states, and the overall majority of all Americans, who oppose religious dogma as law.

These Republicans refuse to differentiate between a fetus as a living organism and actual life in the form of a viable baby in the womb. The potential threat to women's liberty when any fetus is held to be a person is frightening. There may just come the day when the pregnancy police begin locking up pregnant women when they are caught smoking or drinking, eating poorly or staying up too late at night.

Abortion is at its core prohibition. We know what the prohibition of Alcohol led to - political corruption, crime and murder. It did nothing to prevent alcoholism. The prohibition of drugs is now having the same results, massive crime, wide-spread corruption, numerous murders and an increase in drug use.

Keeping abortion illegal will not stop abortions. Abortion seekers will once again turn to the back alleys or be faced with heavy expenses and a disruption of their life, as they seek an abortion hundreds of miles from home. It can be expected that abortion related deaths and maiming of women's reproductive organs will once again increase.

Overturing Roe V. Wade is not the crux of the issue - as Roe was not necessarily good Constitutional law. The problem is that many states, where individual liberty should thrive, are now controlled by Pro Life Republicans, who are willing to forsake Individual Liberty with an *Interest Balancing Approach* to abortion legislation and suppress the rights of the minority in the name of their religious beliefs.

This *Interest Balancing Approach* to abortion legislation is the very same doctrine used by do-gooders to limit gun ownership - in the name of preventing gun deaths

Rather than focusing on Individual Liberty, Abortion is at the top of the Republicans' "to do" list.

If Right to Lifers would accept rational abortion laws that respect the concept of fetal viability, all would be right in American politics; but they won't; and they have imposed their belief that life begins at conception into law.

Life at conception was put into the Tennessee Constitution in 2014 as Amendment 36.

I will support repealing and revamping the 36th Amendment and will support Legislation that respects the viability of a fetus as the basis for any intervention by a state authority in an abortion. Once viability exists, I would respect that abortion only be performed when a continuing pregnancy would endanger the woman's life or health, or if it is discovered that the fetus is irreparably damaged. I will also support the right of abortion for pregnancies conceived through rape or forced incest.

I will not support abortion of a healthy fetus up until the moment of birth, or post birth infanticide.