

Obama keynoting gay group's dinner

Posted on Oct 6, 2009 | by Michael Foust WASHINGTON (BP)

President Obama will deliver the keynote address to the nation's largest homosexual organization Saturday evening, the night before thousands of homosexuals are scheduled to march and rally on Washington calling for, among other things, "gay marriage" legalization.

It's not the first time Obama has spoken to a gathering of homosexual activists, but it may be the most prominent. Obama will speak in Washington at the Human Rights Campaign's 13th annual national dinner. The National Equality March will take place the next day, beginning at noon Eastern time. The march is taking place 40 years after the 1969 Stonewall Riots, which launched the modern-day "gay rights" movement.

"We are honored to share this night with President Obama, who has called upon our nation to embrace LGBT people as brothers and sisters," Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese said in a statement. "It is fitting that he will speak to our community on the night that we pay tribute to his friend and mentor Senator Edward Kennedy, who knew that as president, Barack Obama would take on the unfinished business of this nation -- equal rights for the LGBT community, and for every person who believes in liberty and justice for all."

In early June, Obama issued a proclamation naming June "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month," and later that month he welcomed several hundred homosexual leaders to the White House and told them in a 15-minute speech they have "an ally and a champion" in the Oval Office. During that speech he also reiterated his opposition to the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy as well as to the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which gives states the option of not recognizing another state's "gay marriages." If DOMA is overturned, every state could be forced to redefine marriage.

The two-hour march will end at the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol building, where a rally with speeches and music will commence. According to its website, the march "will be the first step toward a larger goal of creating a national movement." The goal of that movement is to demand of every representative in all 435 congressional districts "full equality under the law."

"We will no longer be told to wait," Kip Williams, a co-director of the march, said in a statement. "This march is our chance to demand full equal protection under the law, and it will help us realize the dream of Equality Across America: a committed group of grassroots activists in all 435 Congressional Districts."

Obama's June speech particularly frustrated evangelicals because he seemed to criticize orthodox interpretations of the Bible regarding homosexuality.

"[T]hough we've made progress, there are still fellow citizens, perhaps neighbors or even family members and loved ones," he said, "who still hold fast to worn arguments and old attitudes, who fail to see your families like their families, and who would deny you the rights that most Americans take for granted."

Bob Stith, the Southern Baptist national strategist for gender issues and representative of the denomination's Task Force on Ministry to Homosexuals (SBCTheWayOut.com), told Baptist Press in June that evangelicals haven't "arrived at our conclusions on homosexuality lightly."

"It isn't simply that we believe homosexuality is sin," Stith said. "We have wrestled with the texts, with the new apologetics of many activists and have come to a genuine, heartfelt belief that Scripture is clear on this."

If "God says something is wrong," Stith said, then those who deviate from God's commands are missing "out on God's best" and are "in an adversarial relationship with God." Obama's words, Stith said, marginalize not only evangelical Christians but also those homosexual persons who desire to change.

"If God says something is wrong, He also provides a way out," Stith said. "If, as seems evident, Mr. Obama is intent on marginalizing or eradicating any who hold to traditional biblical convictions, then he also eliminates the hope of many who struggle with same-sex attractions and want to be free from that struggle. It is tragic to think of the thousands of young men and women who will opt for an immoral choice without having the opportunity to hear all the options. This is neither compassionate, tolerant nor an expression of true freedom."

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