

FOR LEFT, HATRED OF GOD AND COUNTRY GO HAND IN HAND -- by Don Feder

What is it about the left and God? Why do the mildest public expressions of faith drive them nuts? Is there a connection between the treason of liberals and their war on religious expression?

Rep. Jim McDermott (D-WA.) went to Iraq in the fall of 2002 and loudly proclaimed that Saddam Hussein had no weapons of mass destruction and Bush would knowingly lie to the American people to foment a war. If there was a Nobel Prize for giving aid and comfort to the enemy, McDermott would be the odds on favorite.

On Tuesday, Mc Dermott struck again. The Washington state Democrat was given the honor of leading the House of Representatives in The Pledge of Allegiance. In discharging that duty, he did a bit of secularist editing, omitted the words “one nation, under God.”

When asked to explain the revision, a spokesman for the Congressman replied that McDermott hesitated to recite the Pledge as written, because a 9th Circuit Appeals Court decision (declaring God in the Pledge unconstitutional) is currently under review by the U.S. Supreme Court. According to the psychiatrist-cum-politician, until the Supreme Court grants God a place in the Pledge, He should be left out.

Or, maybe McDermott thinks that invoking the God of Judaism and Christianity will offend Moslem fighters in Fallujah.

Unlike McDermott, Supreme Court justices did not travel to Baghdad to flack for Saddam prior to the war. Still the court is doing its part to give God the old heave-ho, weakening our moral defenses in the process. (Do the justices actually believe young Americans go into battle inspired by the latest judicial reinvention of the Constitution, instead of by the God of the Bible?)

While McTraitor was taking God out of the Pledge, the Supremes declined to hear an appeal from two lower court decisions banning cadets at the Virginia Military Institute from praying before meals.

We've all seen pictures of American military in Iraq praying in the field – and over the bodies of their fallen comrades. One can imagine Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg jumping out from behind a sand dune during one of these impromptu services, shouting: “Cease and desist! You're shredding the Constitution. A state church is imminent!”

When it comes to removing religion from our public life, the left (commanded by the ACLU, Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, and People for the American Way) marches triumphantly from victory to victory.

In the past 40 years, its banned school prayer (including silent meditation), eliminated graduation invocations, driven crèches and menorahs from public parks, taken carols out of school assemblies, purged Ten Commandments monuments and now has called into question God in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The atheist dad who initiated the Pledge case says he'll next challenge House and Senate chaplains and the practice of opening sessions with a prayer. Can “In God We Trust” on our currency be far behind?

The left claims its defending freedom of conscience. Apparently, for liberals, freedom of conscience begins and ends with those offended by religion.

Christian parents whose kids are given condoms in school or subjected to indoctrination in the guise of sex education, taxpayers compelled to subsidize the latest blasphemy from the National Endowment for the Arts, college students who are forced to listen to tax-paid Marxist propaganda spewed by their professors, traditional Catholics forced to fund population control – no one on the left cares about their consciences.

God in the Pledge of Allegiance -- what's the big deal? No one is being forced to recite the pledge. It's no longer mandatory in public schools. If they hear those fateful words, “One nation, under God, indivisible,” will leftists faint, suffer emotional trauma requiring years of therapy, melt away like the Wicked Witch of the West?

It's an excuse – and a weak one at that. I think even the most die-hard ACLU-er understands that the Founding Fathers weren't Benjamin Spock, Margaret Sanger and George Soros, and that the Declaration of Independence isn't the 18th century equivalent of the Humanist Manifesto II.

There's more involved here than a need to maintain the mythical wall of separation. The left's antipathy to God and its hostility to America go hand in hand. It views both nationalism and traditional religion as outmoded and dangerous.

Marxists (the ideological precursors of modern liberals) expected God and the nation state to fade away together.

As they conceived it, the future would find mankind in a workers' paradise with no need for flags, crosses and other symbols of a savage past. Marxists themselves were building on the legacy of the Jacobins of Revolutionary France, who closed churches, persecuted clerics and set up statues of a Goddess of Reason.

While some '60s radicals tried to harness religion to their cause (Fr. Drinan, the Berrigans and the Maryknoll order come to mind), it was a fad whose fading echoes reverberate in the pronouncements of the National Council of Churches. The anti-war movement found more in common with the God-is-dead movement than with even the trendiest mainline churches.

Like the flag, God commands loyalty. Both the nation and traditional faith call for sacrifice. And while God and country can conflict, in America, religion provided the rationale for nationhood.

From the very beginning, the colonists viewed America as providential – working out God's purpose in history.

Thus the multiple references to God in the Declaration of Independence. Thus the allusions to the Deity in the words of our greatest presidents (“That this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom” – Abraham Lincoln.) Thus the appeals to God in times of trouble – “And this be our motto, in God is our trust. (The Star-Spangled Banner) “Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition” (World War II) and “God Bless America” on bumper-stickers that adorned a million cars after 9/11.

Alexis de Tocqueville observed: “Religion in America...must be regarded as the *foremost* of the political institutions of that country; for if it does not impart a taste for freedom, it facilitates the use of it.”

Confirmation of this observation may be found in the colonial churches that preached independence, and in the northern churches that preached abolition.

Perhaps the left believes that spiritual sanitation will weaken America, thus facilitating the downfall of what it sees as the principal impediment to peace and justice in the world.

In his oft-quoted farewell address, George Washington (no secular humanist, he) advised his countrymen: “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens.”

For the left, patriotism isn't a tribute but a reproach. What Washington called supports and pillars, leftists view as obstacles to their deconstruction of America.

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