

AS GORE SMEARS CHRISTIANS, WEBSITE ADVOCATES CHURCH ARSON

By Don Feder

The Democratic Party isn't inciting church arson – just yet. But, despite its occasional pious pretenses, the Democrats see Christian America as enemy terrain. Here, at least, the party of Howard Dean and Dennis Kucinich is willing to overcome its ingrained pacifism and engage in the rhetorical equivalent of war.

The latest issue of *The New Yorker* contains a 12,000-word profile piece on Al Gore, in which the former vice president disgorges his views on a variety of subjects.

Only a hopelessly partisan media would consider the reflections of a man who once defined *e pluribus unum* as “out of one, many” worthy of a dog's obituary, let alone 12,000 words.

In the course of inflicting his wisdom on readers, Gore had this to say about the faith of George W. Bush: “It's a particular kind of *religiosity*. It's the American version of the same *fundamentalist impulse* that we see in Saudi Arabia, in Kashmir, in religions around the world: Hindu, Jewish, Christian and Muslim.”

Webster's Dictionary defines *religiosity* as “affected or excessive devotion to religion.”

In other words, the man who he defeated in 2000 is saying that the president is either a big phony who feigns piety, or a wild-eyed fanatic -- like the Saudis who keep their women swathed in black from eyes to toes and make suspected adulterers shorter by a head.

When he speaks of a “fundamentalist impulse” in Christianity, Gore is also degrading and demonizing evangelical Christians. The term *fundamentalist* implies fanaticism, which suggests mental instability, which in turn insinuates a tendency to violence.

When the left says *fundamentalist* it means – “takes religion seriously, believes in the Bible literally, thinks The Ten Commandments are more than

suggestions, disagrees with the ACLU on abortion and gay marriage”: in other words, miscreants, mutants, degenerates and the criminally insane – the sort of folks who would never get a grant from The Heinz Family Foundation.

Liberals in the news media sneer at “fundamentalists” (the left’s code word for evangelicals) as ignorant bigots. Liberals in Hollywood caricature them (by portraying born-again Christians as trailer-park trash with room-temperature IQs, or Savonarola wannabes). Liberals in politics smear Bible-believing Christians by comparing them to the religion of holy war and suicide bombers.

As Gore does here, by speaking of Christians like the president in the same breath as Saudi Arabia and the Kashmir – where Moslems on steroids shoot, bomb, and behead infidels.

The clear implication is that fundamentalists/evangelicals are the American equivalent of suicide bombers. The late Ayn Rand, herself an atheist, used to call such a rhetorical device the “broad-brush smear.”

The absurdity of the comparison may be seen in this way: If you disagree with an evangelical on religious doctrine, he’ll pray for you. If you disagree with a Wahhabi Muslim on a matter of faith, he’ll try to kill you. No small difference, if you’re on the receiving end of a car bomb.

Still, Gore insists on lumping Americans who cling to their faith with Moslems who kill for theirs. Well, they both have strong feelings, don’t they?

Former Labor Secretary Robert Reich (another Clintonista) was more explicit in a December 1, 2003 article in *The American Prospect*. The “evangelical right” detests religious liberty and tolerance, Reich warned, and “seeks nothing short of a *state-sponsored religion*.” Like you-know-who, in Saudi Arabia, Iran, etc.

If school prayer, the public display of religious symbols and legislating traditional values constitute a “state-sponsored religion,” then clearly -- prior to the Supreme Court’s rulings of the ‘60s and ‘70s -- America was a theocracy. Was it Ayatollah Ike or Pope John I?

When it suits them, Democrats will go through the motion of trying to appeal to religious voters, as if to say: “Look, we really don’t hate you. Why, heck, we can even say nice things about that mythical being in the sky you superstitious ignoramuses cling to so irrationally.”

At their national convention – when they weren’t celebrating alternative lifestyles -- Democrats indulged in God-talk. Barak Obama, Democratic Senate candidate in Illinois, told delegates that blue-state Americans “worship an awesome God.” The party’s platform declares that the “common purpose” of Americans is to “build one nation under God.”

That assurance would have been more credible if, a few weeks earlier, the Democratic National Committee hadn’t appointed an adviser for religious outreach who wanted to take one nation under God out of the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Rev. Brenda Bartella Peterson was one of three dozen mainline clergy (Church of the Good Social Activist) who signed on to an amicus brief in support of the atheist father who argued the allusion to God in the Pledge violates the First Amendment’s establishment clause.

The Supreme Court dismissed the suit on technical grounds. The DNC dismissed its religion-outreach advisor when her position was exposed.

Who exactly did the Democrats expect Bartella-Peterson (a card-carrying member of the religious left) to reach out to – the National Council of Churches, Daniel Berrigan, the Rev. William Sloane Coffin or the ghost of Madalyn Murray O’Hair? They might as well have appointed Ibrahim Hooper of the Council on American Islamic Relations as advisor for Jewish outreach.

The Democrats have an entrenched anti-religious worldview. I speak here not of rank-and-file Democratic voters (who often are blue-collar Catholics and black evangelicals), but the party’s radicalized leadership.

Like the good liberals they are, Democrats see traditional religion as an impediment to human happiness and progress. Religious voters they view as an impediment to their quest for power.

Religious voters (defined as those who attend services weekly) tend to be patriotic, pro-defense, and in favor of limited government and judicial restraint – not exactly residents of blue country. Thus the most reliable Republican base is the Bible-belt. For Democrats, it's the secularized coasts, where church attendance is lowest.

The party of Gore and Reich doesn't go quite as far as an incendiary website, www.churcharson.com, but the same contempt for "religiosity" animates all three.

Apparently based in McLean, Virginia, www.churcharson.com advocates burning down houses of worship as "one way people get involved with activism to end the abusive practices of Judeo-Christian religions (and nations such as Israel)."

It calls Judaism and Christianity "forms of mind control," and predicts that as "the façade of control in the hands of organized religion is breaking... we will be closer to our goal of burning down the last temple and shattering the last church. The next thousand years are ours."

It reminds me of another gang that thought its rule would last 1,000 years. As they helped destroy synagogues on Kristallnacht, Adolf's Adolescent Auxiliary sang: "We are joyous Hitler Youth. We have no need of Christian virtue. Our leader is our savior. The pope and rabbi shall be gone. We shall be pagans again."

Or, at the very least, liberal Democrats.