

THEOCRACY! THE LEFT

CRIES

By Don Feder

The prize for the dumbest comment to come out of the Terri Schiavo tragedy goes not to a Democrat or the brain-dead media, but to a reputed Republican – Connecticut Congressman Christopher Shays.

The competition was fierce.

You might say that, when it came to liberal reaction to the murder of this disabled woman, stupidity was in season. To wit: She's in a persistent vegetative state (crying every time her mother left the room doubtless was a reflex reaction), attempts to save her life were "an invasion of her family's privacy" (along with Roe's "privacy right" to kill an unborn child, we now have an adulterous husband's right to murder his wife in privacy), death by starvation and dehydration is "compassionate" (making Heinrich Himmler humanitarian of the year) and "Republicans are playing politics" with the case (notwithstanding that a majority of House Democrats voted for the Terri Schiavo bill – making them political opportunists too).

But Shays takes the prize. To establishment acclaim, the Connecticut (quote, unquote) Republican declared, "This Republican Party of Lincoln has become a theocracy." His charge demonstrates the following: 1) Shays doesn't understand the meaning of the word theocracy. 2) Shays doesn't understand

Lincoln. 3) Shays has fallen into the annoying liberal habit of comparing those who want our government to reflect traditional values (the values of those who established our government) to ayatollahs and Torquemadas.

In essence, Shays is saying the following: Proponents of Judeo-Christian morality (including opponents of extending marriage to sodomites, right-to-lifers and those who objected to the Nazi-like murder of Terri Schiavo) want to establish a religious state where everyone will be told what to believe, forced to pay taxes to support a national church and have their tongues cut out if they blaspheme.

It's a good thing Shays is a congressman. He's never make it teaching a 101-level logic course.

The most common definition of "theocracy" (this from the Random House College Dictionary) is "a system of government by priests claiming a divine commission."

So, who are the religious leaders Shays believes the GOP of Tom DeLay and Rick Santorum wishes to put in power – the Southern Baptist Convention, the Catholic Bishops Conference, the Rabbinical Council of America, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints? On doctrinal issues, yawning chasms separate these faiths. What they agree on is the ethical code called Judeo-Christian morality. And this is real target of the secular left.

If today's Republican Party seeks a theocracy, then America was a theocracy circa 1961. (Most of us who were alive then somehow missed it. We thought we were living in a democracy.)

In the early 1960s, we had school prayer. There were crèches in public parks at Christmas. Abortion was a crime – as was homosexual conduct. Politicians spoke openly of their faith. The

suggestion that the union of two men (or two women) should be legally designated a marriage, would have been met with derisive laughter.

Did that state of affairs somehow constitute a theocracy? Who were the religious figures who then ruled America? What was our established Church?

The difference between then and now was that then the Supreme Court had only begun to warp and twist the First Amendment's establishment clause – transforming it from a barrier to government interference with church affairs into a prohibition against the mildest public expressions of faith, eventually leading to the separation of morality and state.

John Adams, that old theocrat, said, “Our government was made for a moral and a religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the governance of any other.” Even the left seems understands this, intuitively. By excluding religion from the statecraft, it has made representative government impossible and created a nation that can only be ruled by a judicial oligarchy.

When leftists like Shays throw around words like “theocracy,” they really mean that wicked conservatives in the party of Lincoln are legislating morality -- rather like Lincoln himself, when he signed the Emancipation Proclamation. (The Great Emancipator could also be accused of threatening judges, with the contempt he showed for Chief Justice Roger Taney over the Dred Scott decision.)

Let's see: Lincoln believed slavery was morally wrong. Lincoln legislated his morality with the Emancipation Proclamation. Therefore, Lincoln was theocrat.

Of course, the expression “morality legislation” is a redundancy. All laws – including tax laws and traffic laws – involve legislating someone’s values. With the exception of anarchists, everyone operating in the political arena is trying to force their conception of right and wrong on everyone else. (The progressive tax code is based on the moral principle that the worker who earns more should be required to surrender a greater portion of his income to maintain government services.)

What Democrats like Ted Kennedy, “Republicans” like Christopher Shays and propaganda organs like The New York Times are really saying when they whine about “legislating morality” (or theocracy), is: We object to government reflecting a Biblical worldview. We are determined to prevent this, to assure the triumph of our morality – situation ethics, pragmatism, sexual nihilism, a culture of death, etc.

For Shays to invoke the name of Lincoln is a travesty. It was our 16th president who first referred to America as a “nation under God” (“that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom”). He did so at the dedication of a federal cemetery. Quick, alert the ACLU!

In his Second Inaugural Address, Lincoln said that whether or not the Civil War (easily the bloodiest in our history) continued, was the will of God (“The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”). Our 16th president also instituted an annual National Day of Thanksgiving and Praise (otherwise known as Thanksgiving). The last act of Congress signed by Lincoln required that the motto “In God We Trust” be inscribed on the nation’s coins.

Another Republican president, Dwight Eisenhower, signed a bill adding the motto to our currency. In 1954, he supported and

signed into law an act adding “one Nation under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance.

No one accused either Lincoln or Ike of being an incipient theocrat.

Such stupidity and ignorance of history had to await the age of dumbed-down education, television sound-bytes and Blue-State Republicans.