

December 12, 2007

**COURT ATTACK ON “UNDER GOD” AND “IN GOD WE TRUST”**

**ATHEIST CASE BACK IN 9th CIRCUIT** - On December 5th atheist Michael Newdow was back on familiar ground as he once again argued before the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals -- and not just to have “under God” stricken from the Pledge.

The ultra liberal 9th Circuit Court actually allowed Newdow to argue two anti-God cases in just one day. It was the 9th Circuit that found for Newdow in 2002 and declared “under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional. Later the Supreme Court found against Newdow, but not on the issue. Rather they found that he had no “standing” in the case because he did not have custody of the daughter he claimed was “offended” by those words. This time he has brought the case in the name of an anonymous child known only as Doe.

On the three judge panel hearing the case was radical judge Stephen Reinhardt who makes clear his position against anything related to God’s name being in public view. Reporters in the courtroom said that Reinhardt seemed “committed to Newdow.” Often he would interrupt other judges to make points on Newdow’s behalf.

During the arguments it did appear that one of the three judges, Carlos Bea, did not seem to buy atheist Newdow’s arguments. In the second case they heard, in which Newdow wants “In God We Trust” removed from our currency, it was Bea who noted that the 9th Circuit had a precedent case from 1970 upholding the national motto.

If Judge Reinhardt gets his way on the three judge panel, national headlines will again scream out that the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has crossed “under God” out of the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**PLEDGE PROTECTION ACT** - Congressman Todd Akin of Missouri continues to push the Pledge Protection Act forward to stop the lawsuit filed by atheist Michael Newdow. In previous sessions of Congress the Pledge Protection Act has passed the House but was never voted on in the Senate. Last year the Congress was in the hands of Republicans, and social conservative legislation was relatively easy to get a vote on. The same is not true with radical left-wing Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi in charge.

Speaker Pelosi has made it clear that she will not allow votes on any bills important to social conservatives. Not a single pro-life bill has had a vote, but she has found time to allow funds for abstinence training to be cut to zero. The only way to get a vote on the Pledge Protection Act this year is to have 227 members of the House sign a discharge petition. Congressman Todd Akin has prepared the discharge petition for the Pledge Protection Act and it is being circulated among members. The Religious Freedom Coalition is taking an active role in assisting Congressman Akin to obtain the signatures of other congressmen on the petition.

At the same time the Religious Freedom Coalition is continuing the petition drive to convince Nancy Pelosi to turn from her wicked ways and allow a vote on the Pledge Protection Act.

## THE HOUSE

**CHRISTMAS RESOLUTION** - In October the Democrats, headed by radical Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, were full of glee as they passed a Ramadan Resolution through the House proclaiming Islam as one of the world's "great religions." Now let's see how Pelosi and her secularist followers react to the Christmas Resolution put forward by Congressman Steve King (R-NY). The official title of H.Res 847 is "Recognizing the importance of Christmas and the Christian faith." Some of the statements in the resolution are:

Whereas Christians identify themselves as those who believe in the salvation from sin offered to them through the sacrifice of their savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and who, out of gratitude for the gift of salvation, commit themselves to living their lives in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Bible;

Whereas Christians and Christianity have contributed greatly to the development of western civilization;

Whereas the United States, being founded as a constitutional republic in the traditions of western civilization, finds much in its history that points observers back to its roots in Christianity;

The document goes on to "resolve" that the House of Representatives "acknowledges and supports the role played by Christians and Christianity in the founding of the United States and in the formation of the western civilization." Can you just imagine the look on Nancy Pelosi's face? She led the vote to make similar statements about Islam and its Ramadan celebration. Can she now turn her back on Christmas while still pretending to be a Catholic? Of course, she has scheduled no vote on the resolution as yet.

**WHAT ARE iPS CELLS?**- Social conservative, pro-life members of Congress are on the attack against embryonic stem cell funding since scientists announced the recent breakthrough with iPS cells. Induced pluripotent stem cells are created from human skin cells, and there is no need to kill a human embryo to obtain them. Most scientists admit the use of iPS cells means that cures will be developed faster, and in fact there is already one major breakthrough.

**CONSERVATIVES MOVE ON iPS CELLS** - The "Patients First Act" offered by Rep. Randy Forbes (R-VA) and Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-IL) would prioritize funding for iPS cell research at such time as the research demonstrates potential for patient benefit. Pro-life members and groups support the "Patients First Act" because it encourages stem cell research that is most likely to provide near term treatments for patients, while also respecting the dignity of all human life beginning at the earliest stages. Contact your congressman about HR-2807.

**GREAT PRO-LIFE CHAMPION PASSES** - It was just last year that Congressman Henry Hyde left the Congress of the United States after 32 years of service. Following the Roe v. Wade case that legalized abortion in the United States, he became the single greatest champion in Congress of the pro-life movement, giving eloquent speeches. Mr. Hyde's efforts against abortion began in 1976, when his amendment to an appropriations bill prohibited Medicaid from paying for abortions. Known as the Hyde Amendment, it is still the law today. The world will miss this great pro-life champion.

## THE SENATE

**IN GOD WE TRUST** - While atheist Michael Newdow is in court trying to get "In God We Trust" off of all currency, Senator Sam Brownback is trying to make the national motto more visible. In December he introduced legislation to move the inscription, "In God We Trust" from the side of the new one dollar coins to the front of them.



Brownback said, "Since the colonial beginnings of the United States, citizens of this nation have officially acknowledged their dependence on God. It is important that our national motto, 'In God We Trust,' is prominently displayed on all of our currency."

Brownback earlier this week met with officials from the United States Treasury to discuss moving the national motto from the side to the face of one dollar coins. Presidential one dollar coins are the only U.S. coins currently being issued by the National Mint that have inscriptions along the side. Contact you Senator about S-2417.

**"HATE CRIMES" DROPPED -- FOR NOW** - I was on a national Christian radio program on Friday, December 7th when it was announced that Ted Kennedy's pro-gay Hate Crimes legislation had been "barred by Congress." If you heard the same thing as I did, forget about it! Ted Kennedy's amendment that would give homosexuals special rights was simply dropped from the Defense Authorization bill at the conference committee level. (The conference committee has members from both the House and Senate that reconcile the differences between the two versions of the same bill.) It was simply determined by the Democrats in charge that there were not enough votes in the House for the Defense Appropriations Bill to pass with Ted Kennedy's "Hate Crimes" amendment in it.

Over the next few weeks Ted Kennedy could add this vile legislation onto the Health and Human Services (HHS Authorization), or for that matter any bill dealing with employment or law enforcement. The battle is far from over and now is not the time to declare victory. We must remain vigilant to stop Ted Kennedy's anti-family agenda.

**ANOTHER GOP SENATOR LEAVES**- Senator Trent Lott (R-MS) has announced that he is resigning his seat from the Senate. He did not intend to run for this current term, but did anyway so he could help get federal funds for his home state after the Hurricane Katrina disaster. His own home was lost to Katrina, and he is not a wealthy man as are most Senators. He will take a position with a lobbying firm in DC that pays probably triple his Senate salary. Republican Governor Haley Barbour will appoint his successor.

Many conservatives want to take a slap at Democrats in the Senate by pushing Barbour to choose retired federal Judge Charles Pickering. The Democrats in the Senate blocked this brilliant jurist's nomination to a Circuit Court judgeship simply because of his deeply held Christian beliefs.

## INTERNATIONAL

**EXPERT: CHRISTIANS VANISHING IN BETHLEHEM** - Speaking at the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs the week of December 2nd, international human rights lawyer Justus Weiner this week said, "The systematic persecution of Christian Arabs living in Palestinian areas is being met with nearly total silence by the international community, human rights activists, the media and NGOs," He cited Muslim harassment and persecution and said there was an "acute human rights crisis" facing Christian Arabs.

He predicted that there will be no more Christian communities in Palestinian controlled territories within 15 years and that only a few token Western Christian clergymen would be in the area. I have visited with Justus Weiner on numerous occasions in Jerusalem, and have arranged meetings for him with congressmen and Senators here in Washington, DC. He has provided clear evidence that Christianity in the birthplace of Christ is being destroyed, yet our government and the entire Western world look on with indifference. Will God look on indifferently at America's failure to care?

**IRAQI REFUGEES AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT** - Inside the Beltway, the State Department is referred to as "Foggy Bottom," partly because of the building location, but mostly because of the logic by which it operates. On Monday, December 2nd, members of our fact finding team who had traveled to the Middle East met with Assistant Secretary Sauerbrey and seven fairly high ranking members of her department concerning a draft of our report on the condition of Iraqi refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. Secretary Sauerbrey is a George W. Bush political appointee to the State Department; the rest of those present were "career" officers.

While the Secretary was present, the tone of the meeting was conciliatory, and it appeared that progress was being made. Upon her departure from the room, the tone quickly changed to one of an aggressive defense of status quo policy. Ninety-nine percent of State Department employees, including most ambassadors, are "career" people who have their own agendas while working under various presidents. Often their own agendas and desire to protect their careers overshadow the will of the political leaders of the nation. Unlike career professionals in the Armed Forces, those at State rarely are obedient to the desires of the elected political leaders of this nation.

At the meeting with Secretary Sauerbrey, our fact finding team learned for the first time that there is a Jordanian-American staffer at the embassy in Amman tasked with the duty of "refugee liaison." However, when we were in Jordan, Ambassador Hale told us flatly that no one was actually meeting with refugees outside the Embassy walls. One of his staff, the USAID officer, told us "It isn't our job to go to church." Not a single church leader or member of the refugee community we met with had ever met this "liaison" individual and did not know of the person's existence. Perhaps this individual was meeting with UNHCR, CARITAS, and other NGO's. But, to the knowledge of church leaders in the refugee community there was no contact with this individual.

When members of our fact finding team departed from the meeting on Monday we were all very concerned about the "on paper" presence of the officer tasked with refugee liaison, verses the personal witness of virtually every church leader in Jordan including Catholic, Orthodox and evangelical.

***NOTE : Several weeks after our departure from Jordan our team received reports from church leaders saying the Embassy had begun to have contacts with the refugee community. The findings of our team had been delivered directly to King Abdullah of Jordan who then presented it directly to Ambassador Hale. It was not until the King inquired as to why there was no contact between the Embassy and refugees that contact visits began.***

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William J. Murray, Chairman