

March 25, 2010

THE CONGRESS

A CHURCH SERVICE AT THE CAPITOL – On Sunday, March 21st at 11:00 AM, Members of Congress held a church service in Statuary Hall (the old House chamber) in the Capitol. Only members of Congress, their spouses and staff were permitted to attend. The church service was called by Republican leaders because Speaker Nancy Pelosi had called a Sunday vote for the “historic” Obama Care entitlement program. Members felt they would not be able to attend church in their home districts and still make it back in time for votes. Because the Chapel in the Capitol is far too small to hold the number of people that would be in attendance, the church service was held in Statuary Hall.

This was an historic moment. To my knowledge no church service has been held in the Capitol Building itself since 1868. It has been well over 100 years since the Capitol Building was used for a church service; however, from the time of the Revolution through the Civil War church services in Washington were held weekly in the Capitol Building.

It is ironic that on the day government was literally declaring itself as god, dissident lawmakers who believe freedom is a right given by God, not an entitlement from government, met to worship in the old House chamber. We can only pray that the service will have a sanctifying effect on the Capitol and a sobering effect on those in Congress who want government rather than God or family to be the focus of humanity.



Statuary Hall (old House chamber) where a special church service was held on March 21, 2010, as seen from the south entrance

As Members and their families left, they passed by the statue of Reverend John Peter Muhlenberg who pastored two churches in Virginia in the early 1770's, one an English speaking Episcopal church and the other a German speaking Lutheran church. He was also a member of the Virginia legislature at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. After the British seized Virginia's armory in Williamsburg, Pastor Muhlenberg chose action over mere words. On January 21, 1776 he stood at his pulpit and delivered a message from Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3 (“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven”). In that message he told his flock that the time was not one of peace, but of war.

At the conclusion of his sermon he took off his clerical robe to reveal his uniform as an officer of the Revolution. Outside he rallied some 300 men from his congregations that day to join him. This was the birth of the Eighth Virginia Regiment that fought throughout the war, including the last battle at Yorktown in which the British were defeated. At Yorktown he protected Washington's right flank with the First Brigade of Lafayette's infantry. Without Pastor Muhlenberg the possibility exists that the British could have been victorious at Yorktown and the war lost.

Where are the Pastor Muhlenbergs of today who will stand up to fight as radical leftists like Nancy Pelosi attempt to erase God and set government upon the throne of an unworkable utopian dream world?

THE PRESIDENCY

HOW NOT TO GOVERN - Criticizing your own nation abroad, while threatening your allies and coddling your enemies, is not a formula to successfully govern. President Barack Obama in early 2009 had a far left agenda that included socialized medicine, and at that time he had the popularity to pass his agenda through Congress. Instead of concentrating on his agenda, he went on one victory lap after another around the world, apologizing for America and thanking Islam for its contributions to our society. His latest victory lap was supposed to be to Indonesia where he attended an Islamic madrassa as a child. That trip was first postponed and then cancelled completely because his agenda was failing in a Congress dominated by his own party.

Obama's ego allowed him to believe that he was so loved, not only in America but worldwide, that anything he suggested would become law. Suddenly he found himself clawing and fighting in Congress for every vote to save his "health reform" agenda by alternately threatening and bribing lawmakers. Fifteen months after announcing his entitlement agenda he has finally won to some degree, but he is badly wounded. There is political blood in the water and both sides can smell it. Republicans are eager for the battle they hid from just months ago, while Democratic congressmen are in hiding from their constituents. The only winner, at least in her own mind, is Nancy Pelosi whose very outwardly expressed love for Barack Obama has torn the Democrat Party to shreds.

What was the victory? Over the next four years the government will force health insurance companies to accept rules that will drive premiums up about 30%. Individuals and companies will be forced to drop coverage, only to learn that the IRS has been empowered to take \$2,250 from each person in the United States who fails to buy health insurance to the government's liking. But not a single uninsured person will be assisted by the government until 2014. Medicaid is supposed to fill the gap by adding 15 million people to its rolls, but the cash strapped states have been ordered to pay most of the bills. Because Medicaid does not even reimburse at cost in most states, few doctors actually accept Medicaid patients. In some states pharmacy chains will not even fill Medicaid prescriptions because they are reimbursed less than the cost of the drugs. This is the victory President Obama and Speaker Pelosi are celebrating.

DOES OBAMA HATE ISRAEL? - During his early education at an Islamic madrassa in Indonesia, Barack Obama was taught the "evils" of the Jewish race. As a politician, even as a Senator, he attended a church where anti-Semitism was preached from the pulpit. Some of it must have rubbed off, because he is insisting that Israel reduce itself to the size of a large ghetto and allow Palestinians who have not lived a day of their lives in Israel to become citizens and be allowed to vote. The terms for "peace" that Barack Obama has given to Israel would have the effect of ending its existence. With a straight face he then tells the world that Israel is "our closest ally." If this is how we treat our "closest ally," the member nations of NATO may want to turn to Russia as a partner.

CLINTON'S TIRADE AGAINST ISRAEL - Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu on the phone this month and lectured him for 45 minutes because it was an "affront" to America that Jews would announce building homes in Jerusalem while Vice President Biden was visiting there. (Honestly ... The Obama Administration is angry to the point of being vicious and threatening to Israel because Jews want to build homes in Jerusalem!)

During the one way conversation, she told the Prime Minister that in order to even hold "peace talks" Israel must agree in advance to stop all construction on any land that Palestinians claim. And Secretary of State Clinton's demands went further.

Israel, she said, must agree to split Jerusalem in half so that Palestinians can have an Islamic capital there. Her final demand was for Israel to agree to allow the "descendants of the original Palestinians" to return to Israel to live. This "right of return" is the Holy Grail to Palestinians, because it means they become the majority in Israel. In essence Clinton demanded that Israel agree to destroy itself as a precondition to peace talks.

Concerning the 330 rockets that have been fired into Israel from the Gaza Strip in the last year, Secretary Clinton had nothing to say. The man who was killed in the latest rocket attack against Israel means nothing to her. In Clinton's mind the Palestinian extremists can do no wrong and they are justified in their murderous actions because of Israel's refusal to hand over Jerusalem to them. REALITY: Oil rich Muslim royal families hold so much of the U.S. debt that they can dictate our foreign policy. America has sold its soul to the highest bidder for cash, to pay for the entitlement programs that buy votes.

Israel is about the last nation left in the world the United States can beat up on, and that may be a part of Obama's willingness to punish that nation. While in Moscow, Secretary Clinton was told by President Medvedev to take a hike when she asked him to back sanctions against Iran's nuclear program. Oil rich Russia has no need to heed a debt ridden America. When our Treasury Secretary tried to force an increase in the value of the Chinese yuan to help the balance of trade, he was lectured by Chinese officials on the evils of America's debt level. Debtor nations don't have much clout. The United States cannot hand out orders to other nations at the same time Uncle Sam has his hand out begging for money to pay for the circus in Washington.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM VICTORY

“UNDER GOD” IN PLEDGE IS CONSTITUTIONAL! - A near miraculous ruling was made on March 18th when the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that both “One nation under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance and also the national motto “In God We Trust” on our currency, are constitutional. The amazing thing about the decision was that the Court did not just grudgingly tolerate these expressions of faith, but actually accorded respect to the underlying principles. In decisions from the higher courts in the past few decades, the best that could be hoped for was that judges would agree that such traditional expressions of faith were to be tolerated as “ceremonial deism.”

Under this “ceremonial deism” theory, phrases such as “under God” are part of the traditions of our national life left over from another era, and now essentially harmless and inoffensive because they are meaningless in today's society.

The Beckett Fund filed a clear brief in defense of “under God,” not demeaning it as an example of “ceremonial deism,” but explaining how it expresses the concept of inalienable rights and limited government under the authority of a higher power. From the Declaration of Independence and our Constitution through Lincoln's Gettysburg Address the concept of being “under God” was political, and a valid expression of the distinctive character of our government. Indeed the brief filed by the Beckett fund claimed that the very essence of our type of democracy was expressed in “under God,” as it limited the role of the government as stated above.

On the other hand atheist Michael Newdow, who filed the lawsuit against “under God” in the Pledge essentially presented this pathetic argument to the Court: “As an atheist I am personally offended by these words, so public schools must be ordered not to publicly use the phrase ‘One nation under God’ in the Pledge.”

Newdow believes any minority that is offended has the right to censor not only the majority but the entire government. On the basis of this personal grievance claim, a previous Ninth Circuit Court agreed with Newdow in 2002 and found “under God” in the Pledge unconstitutional. The Supreme Court threw out that decision, ruling that he did not have “standing” to bring the case, since he did not have custody of his daughter in public school. Thus no meaningful decision was rendered, allowing Newdow to find allies and refile the case in the 9th Circuit Court. The challenge to our national motto, which was heard the same day, was also based on Newdow’s complaint that he had the right not to be offended.

The “Nutty Ninth” has a long history of decisions so radical they have been reversed more often by the Supreme Court than those of any other Circuit Court. Everyone expected yet another ruling against freedom of religious expression.

Yet Judge Carlos Bea, an appointee of President George W. Bush, wrote this landmark opinion: “The phrase ‘under God’ is a recognition of our Founders’ political philosophy that a power greater than the government gives the people their inalienable rights. Thus the Pledge is an endorsement of our form of government, not of religion or any particular sect.” He further said, “The Pledge of Allegiance serves to unite our vast nation through the proud recitation of some of the ideals upon which our Republic was founded.”

More information on the history of the Pledge can be found in my book, [The Pledge, One Nation Under God](#), which is available at www.pledgeundergodbook.com.

INTERNATIONAL

CHRISTIANS SLAUGHTERED IN NIGERIA - The Muslims came in the middle of the night, March 8, 2010, and fired guns into the air. When the women and children ran from their homes they were slaughtered with machetes. Pregnant women, children and infants were not spared. In retaliation for less severe attacks on Muslims, President Bill Clinton bombed Christian Serbia for weeks, and eventually a part of Serbia was taken to provide an independent Muslim nation in Europe. But, when Christians are massacred, there does not seem to be much interest in Washington, DC.

Journalists counted more than 500 bodies of Christians after the bloody attack by Muslims in central Nigeria. One mass grave in Dogo Na Hawa contains 332 Christians, according to the Nigerian Red Cross. Although Nigeria is half Christian, it has a Muslim president. Officially the government police claim that only 109 died and say it was a reprisal for Muslim cattle being killed in January. Actually there were more than 300 Christians killed in January in the same area. President Obama has no comment on the massacre of Christians. At the time of the attack he was preparing for a trip to Indonesia where he was expected to make yet another speech thanking Islam for its great contributions to civilization.

William J. Murray, Chairman
Blog located at www.MurrayontheHill.com