



The Marxist Attack on America's Cherished Symbols

The American Flag is the most prominent and revered symbol of our country. At the Olympics, the TV close-ups of teary-eyed, proud American medal winners as they watched Old Glory raised, thrilled us all. The folded flag given at grave-side to a military member's next-of-kin is not just an empty gesture—it has profound meaning and symbolism for both the government presenter and the recipient.

A COMFORT ZONE

Symbols have always been important to the American people and most Americans enjoy comfort in their religious and patriotic symbols. In his wonderful short book *The Four Loves*, Christian philosopher, C. S. Lewis described patriotism in terms of *affection*. To him *affection is the humblest form of love*. It is a form of comfort one feels for a pet, a good friend, or a favorite book. It is something personal that has become intimately intertwined with one's own sense of self-worth. It does not matter if someone was born in America or migrated to her shores. It becomes part of what people are and what they cherish.

This patriotic affection beamed brightly after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. The national outpouring of patriotic fervor bordered on a par with a deep religious sentiment. The public landscape was festooned in a surfeit of American flags and banners. From automobiles, lapel pins, front lawns and window decals to tee shirts and baseball caps, displays of *Old Glory* appeared majestically on the American public landscape.

THE RIGHT COUNTRY

As Commander-in-chief of the armed forces, the President of the United States has always been a visible symbol of a nation's history, greatness, and patriotism. As the heir to the Puritan tradition of America's messianic promise, President George W. Bush wears his deep religious and patriotic faith on his sleeve. The president firmly believes that he is not only fulfilling America's historical promise but also a divine mission.

The president's rhetoric echoes what Benjamin Franklin once pointed out. America's cause *is the cause of mankind*. Since the mid-seventeenth century, America has been a *city on a hill*: the true Christian community that would serve as a beacon to the world.

As a result the president regards himself as heir to the aggressive traditions of the *Republican Roosevelt*. Warren Zimmerman states in his book, *First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country A World Power*, how Teddy Roosevelt *really did believe* the United States *had a mission to spread the bounties of its civilization beyond its borders*. In his State of the Union message on January 28, 2003, President Bush stated that Americans were *called to defend the hopes of all mankind...this call of history has come to the right country*.

DIFFERENT PATHS

Given the major changes and discordant in society, communication, education in the U.S.A. the country's most revered symbols have come under severe attack these last 50 years. In an on-line essay for *Viewpoints*, Bishop J. Thomas Curry of Santa Barbara, California makes an interesting contrast: in 1789 both the French Revolution and the promulgation of the American Bill of Rights occurred. Each had an important effect on the future of Church and State relations. The French Revolution made the state supreme and empowered it to replace religion with a new ideology based on reason. They turned Notre Dame Cathedral into a *Temple of Reason*, renamed all the months of the calendar, and reorganized weeks into ten-day intervals. The United States took a different path. They created secular but limited government that had no power over religion. Originally the free exercise clause of the First Amendment meant freedom from government interference.

That all changed shortly before World War II, when the Cultural Marxists imported their multi-cultural poison from Europe. Since then there has been a decided effort to eliminate

patriotic and religious symbols from the public square. American jurisprudence has fallen prey to the Marxist ideas of moral relativity and the *Living Constitution*.

Paul Gottfried's 2005 book, *The Strange Death of Marxism: The European Left in the New Millennium*, underscores this cultural Marxist watershed. In France, the Marxists held that every opposition to multiculturalism was a remnant of Nazi fascism and had to be tossed in the trash bin of history. A descendant of the French Revolution, this *cultural Trotskyism* treated all opposition to its unending progressive goals as a reactionary aberration that reduced political and moral discourse to a *vocabulary of eradication*.

Any attempt to promote the family or children was construed as a *pretext for anti-feminism*. The Marxist struggle against homophobia is central to their struggle against fascism: they regarded homosexuality and even pederasty as an integral part of Marxism. Marxism offers the progressive promise of a thoroughly secularized society, one in which the Catholic Church and all religious and patriotic symbols are forbidden.

FLAG BURNING

The American Flag as a symbol for the American heritage has been a very visible and convenient target for the left. At the Republican Convention in 1984 in Dallas, Gregory L. Johnson voiced his protest against President Ronald Reagan by setting fire to an American flag outside the Dome. He was arrested and convicted of desecrating a venerable object. In 1988 the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals overturned his conviction. The following year, the Supreme Court ruled in Texas v. Johnson that flag burning fell under the free speech provisions of the Bill of Rights.

In 1990 Congress passed the Flag Protection Act which imposed a federal ban on flag desecration. Senators opposing the ban included future presidential candidate and naval veteran, John Kerry. In a 1995 case, U.S. v. Eichman, the Supreme Court struck down the protective legislation as unconstitutional. Several proposals for a constitutional amendment to protect this vital U.S. symbol from degradations and abuse still patiently linger in the Halls of Congress.

To think that the immolation of an American flag qualifies as *free speech* stretches the imagination beyond human boundaries. The burning of a flag is akin to shouting *fire* in a crowded theater or yelling "*bomb*" at 35,000 feet. These dangerous utterances should enjoy no constitutional protection. The burning of a flag can incite riots, disturb the peace and cause civil unrest. To protect such an abuse of law, language, and common sense is another step in the direction of national suicide.

TUMBLING DOWN

Led by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), anti-religious obstructionists have vowed to remove all religious symbols from public view, especially crosses and the Ten Commandments. The most celebrated case involving a cross occurred in La Jolla, California. According to Phyllis Schlafly's book, *The Supremacists: The Tyranny of Judges and How to Stop it*, American atheists *have carried on a fifteen year battle to get supremacist judges to remove a twenty-nine foot cross*.

After a long court fight Federal District Judge Gordon Thompson ordered San Diego officials to remove the historic Mt. Soledad Cross within ninety days or face fines of \$5,000 per day thereafter. The cross was erected in 1954 and is currently the centerpiece of a national memorial honoring American veterans of all wars.

This cultural battle originated in 1991 when atheist Philip Paulson charged that the Soledad Cross violates the separation of Church and State. His fellow supporters on godless.org argued that this is just another example of an archaic institution, like the Catholic Church, *recommending that law return America to the medieval morality of the dark ages*. While Paulson contends that he wished to establish neutrality between government and religion, he has been quoted as saying, *We need to attack Jesus...* This comment was followed by vulgar remarks about Christ, God and the Virgin Mary that cannot be printed.

Paulson's attorney, Jim McElroy, persuaded the Court to remove the long-standing cross. The left-leaning McElroy is the Chairman of the Board of the radical Southern Poverty Law Center based in Alabama. He has been involved in the case since 1996 when he volunteered to help Paulson file a motion. In the past he has sued white supremacist Tom Metzger and represented a group of abortionists in battles against Operation Rescue.

After the judge's ruling, Mayor Jerry Sanders, and Republican Congressman Duncan Hunter proposed that the federal government seize the La Jolla property by eminent domain. McElroy asked the judge to raise the daily fine. While the city and the St. Thomas More Society, a Catholic advocacy group, based in Ann Arbor, Michigan have promised to continue the fight, it appears that the Cross will come tumbling down.

A MEMORY HOLE

Attacks on religious crosses abound in a nation that is fast losing control over its national symbols. The ACLU has extended the battle to a county seal. According to *The Supremacists* they demanded that Los Angeles County remove

a cross, merely one of a dozen symbols from its seal. The centerpiece of the seal is the Greek goddess, Pomona. There is also a tuna and a cow. The ACLU finds no fault with these symbols, only the one depicting the county's long Catholic heritage. This is a blatant attempt, not only to revise California history, but drop it down an *Orwellian Memory Hole*.

In 2004 Mel Gibson pledged to spend \$140,000 to keep the cross in the seal. The Los Angeles County Council caved in to the ACLU's demands and voted to remove the tiny cross from the seal. The St. Thomas More Society filed suit on behalf of Ernesto Vasquez, a county employee who objects to the removal of the cross because it sends a government message of hostility towards Christians in violation of the United States Constitution.

These pernicious attacks on crosses have entered the Church's prominent Catholic universities such as Xavier in Cincinnati. After months of renovation, Xavier's St. Robert Bellarmine Chapel reopened without its tabernacle or Stations of the Cross. Oliver Cromwell could not have *purified* the chapel any better. According to Michael Rose, writing in the *St. Catherine Review*, the renovations had also replaced the large crucifix over the main altar with an *Icon of Seasons*, which bears little resemblance to anything Christian. William Schickel, better known for his 30-ton totem poles, *Totems of Salvation*, at the Mercy Wellness Centers, designed the chapel artwork.

ROOTS OF LAW

Another convenient target for the Cultural Marxists has been **A**Ten Commandments displays, which ironically provide the fundamental roots for American law. According to *The Supremacists*, the Supreme Court banned the Ten Commandments from the public school classroom in 1980. Private funds had been raised to place a framed depiction in Kentucky classrooms, but in *Stone v. Graham*, the Court ordered them removed. This initiated a national campaign to ban the Decalogue from all public parks and auditoriums around the country. Most of these suits emanated from the ACLU or its parallel group, Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

The most famous case occurred in Montgomery, Alabama where the ACLU sued for the removal of a Ten Commandments monument that had been installed in the rotunda of the Alabama State Judicial Building on August 1, 2001 by Chief Justice Roy Moore. The judge erected a four-foot cubic monument which had the 10 Commandments inscribed on its top.

In his ruling against Judge Moore, Judge Myron Thompson could not clearly explain how the monument violated the Constitution. According to Phyllis Schlafly's book it was the aura of the monument's location, augmented by its location *in*

front of a large picture window with a waterfall in the background so that you really can't miss seeing the monument. From this the judge decided that a *reasonable observer* would conclude that the state was endorsing, advancing, favoring, or preferring Christianity.

The Supremacists also tells the story of avowed atheist Michael Newdow's singular crusade against the Pledge of Allegiance and its reference to *under God*, which was added to the Pledge by an Act of Congress in the 1950s. The Court ruled against him because the reference was so tepid it was *beneath the constitutional radar*. His latest project is an assault on *In God We Trust* on American currency and coinage.

LITTLE PLATOONS

Once a nation loses track of its history and religious heritage, it is doomed to wander through an aimless fog of confusion and despair. As many of its traditional symbols become forbidden from public view, the country moves inexorably closer to adopting the French paradigm that abhors religious and patriotic symbols. If the discordant worldview were ever to triumph, the American flag would retreat to a symbolism, standing not for faith, family, and freedom but for abortion, sodomy, and tyranny. The country has just one strong hope of preventing its symbols from being swept away in a progressive tide of self-destruction. It is the necessary reliance on Edmund Burke's (1729-1797) *little platoons* of social activists, such as the St. Thomas More Society, the Eagle Forum, Concerned Women for America, the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation, and a myriad of other groups, fighting for the patriotic and religious good.

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ROMANS 1:7

"To all the beloved of God, called to be holy: grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Amen

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—Pope John Paul II

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