

7/2004

Re: God in Government

Dear Editor,

Though it may be argued that the Declaration of Independence contained some poetic references to "deistically" derived qualities of liberty and freedom, our founding fathers labored mightily to avoid the taint of religious belief in the U.S. constitution.

This avoidance was carefully and determinedly deliberate, because these men knew all too well, from the European example, just how dangerous it was to mix politics and religion. That we are not as wise as our founding fathers can be seen by the disastrous example of our current president (who believes that his foreign policy is god's will), and the words of a former president:

"The United States of America have exhibited, perhaps, the first example of governments erected on the simple principles of nature... it will never be pretended that any persons employed in that service had interviews with the gods, or were in any degree under the influence of heaven... These governments were contrived merely by the use of reason and the senses."- John Adams in "A Defense of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America, 1788

That these ideas were fairly uncontroversial 200 years ago, can be seen in the lack of disagreement at the time, regarding the following article of law which was written by the administration of President George Washington, signed by President John Adams and later ratified by the US Senate, unanimously and without debate or dissension: "The government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian Religion..."- Treaty of Tripoli, Article XI, 1797.

Let us all work hard to preserve the original intent and meaning of the framers of our constitution! Although they weren't perfect, they were both wise and wary to avoid irrational disunity and bloody conflicts that inevitably arise when politicians presuppose they are being guided by supernatural beliefs.

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