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War on Religious Freedom

Americans who believe in God had better wake up and realize that a well-orchestrated campaign is moving to fundamentally transform the United States into a scrupulously secular nation. If this succeeds, we will no longer enjoy our First Amendment right of "free exercise" of religion but will be forbidden to speak or display any prayers, Bible quotations, or other evidences of religion in any public place or event.

The major strike force working to accomplish this consists of the ACLU plus various atheist groups. They are always ready to file lawsuits to get some supremacist judge to restrict religious expression.

This effort is magnified by two other organizations that have a major impact on our culture: the military who feel the temptation to be politically correct and the liberal bureaucrats in public schools who now feel free to teach their leftwing views. Barack Obama's fingerprints are not on most of these acts, but his anti-religious attitudes are widely enough known to encourage those on the public payroll to charge ahead with extremist politically correct policies.

We'd like to know if Pentagon officials have met with any Christian leaders to balance the aggressive lobbying by those who want to silence all religious expression by members of the military. Nine senior Army or Navy officers were dismissed this year, and some wonder if this was a purge of senior officers suspected of not toeing the Obama party line.

A Young Marines program in Louisiana, which has been helping at-risk youth for 25 years, lost its federal funding because its graduation ceremony mentions God. The oath says simply, "I shall never do anything that would bring disgrace or dishonor upon my God, my country and its flag, my parents, myself or the Young Marines."

Graduation also includes a voluntary and non-denominational prayer that, in 25 years, no one ever complained about. But Obama's Department of Justice discovered the oath and prayer in a random audit and then demanded that both be removed or else the government would cut off its $15,000 in federal funding.

Some public school busybody bureaucrats are trying to suppress any and all religious mention on school property. Their orders are far more extreme than anything courts have ever held to be violations of the First Amendment.

Sports are a favorite target of the anti-religious crowd. A high school football coach, Marcus Borden, was forbidden even to bow his head or "take a knee" during voluntary student-led prayers before the games.

In Texas, a boy's track relay team ran its fastest race of the year and defeated its closest rival by seven yards, which should have enabled it to advance toward the state championship. The team's anchor runner pointed to the sky to give glory to God as he crossed the finish line, but someone didn't like the gesture so the authorities disqualified this winning team because of it.

The ACLU in Rhode Island filed a lawsuit to force Cranston High School to remove a prayer banner in the auditorium, even though there had been no complaints in 38 years. The banner reads in part: "Our Heavenly Father: Help us to be good sports and smile when we lose as well as when we win. Teach us the value of true friendship, help us always to conduct ourselves so as to bring credit to Cranston High School."

High school officials in Kountze, Texas, and a Wisconsin atheist group called Freedom From Religion made a tremendous effort to stop the cheerleaders from displaying a banner before a football game that read: "And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us."

In North Carolina, a high school junior knelt for a brief two-second prayer before a wrestling match, and the referee penalized him a point for doing so. A senior at Tomah High School in Wisconsin was given a zero on an art project because he added a cross and the words "John 3:16 A Sign of Love" to his drawing of a landscape.

You can laugh at the following rule issued by the principal at Heritage Elementary in Madison, Alabama, but she was downright serious. She allowed Easter observances including a costumed rabbit, but she issued this imperious warning, "Make sure we don't say 'the Easter bunny' because that would infringe on religious diversity."

America was founded on very different beliefs about government actions. As Alexis de Toqueville, the Frenchman who traveled around our country in the mid-19th century, wrote: "Upon my arrival in the United States, the religious aspect of the country was the

first thing that struck my attention. ... The Americans combine the notions of Christianity and of liberty so intimately in their minds, that it is impossible to make them conceive the one without the other."

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