



“Hail the Eternal Rebel!”? Was the Satanic Invocation at Recent Gov Meeting Constitutionally Required?

The men who crafted the First Amendment, the giants who birthed the Establishment Clause, opened the very first U.S. Congress in 1789 with *exclusively Christian prayers*. This practice continues to this day, too — and the prayers are still mainly Christian. So clearly, the Constitution does not dictate that A, “religion must be kept out of government”; or B, if it is there, that “all ‘religions’ must be given equal time.”

This hasn’t stopped local governments, however, from supposing that public-sphere religious displays/expression must sometimes make room for “Festivus,” the “Church of The Flying Spaghetti Monster,” and other conceptions of “religion” — including satanism. An example of rolling out a red carpet for the Devil just occurred earlier this week, too, in Nevada. And the fact that some government official thought it necessary means that he, like so many today, perhaps misses a simple point. As I [wrote](#) last month:

“We do have the right to freedom of religion. But this does not equate to the right to equal government *showcasing* of religion.”

As for the Silver State story, the *Daily Mail* [reports](#):

A prominent Satanist has given the opening prayer at a Nevada county commission meeting — sparking outrage among the members.

The address at the Washoe County Commission meeting on Tuesday ended not with an ‘Amen’, but a ‘Hail, Satan.’

It was delivered by Reno Satanic’s Jason Miller and caused one board member to storm out in protest.

Ironically, that staffer, Commissioner Clara Andriola, was the one to dream up adding invocations to the meetings in the first place.

The 67-year-old successfully campaigned for adding prayers as precursors just last year — but now may be regretting that decision.

‘The New Age is dawning that these decisions will play a role in,’ said Miller at a point during his relatively brief spiel, which began with a bit of Latin that included references to



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Satan and Lucifer.

'For our liberation, for here and now is our day of joy, here and now is our opportunity,' he continued.

'May we seize this glorious day and its enchanting nights to celebrate the wonders of the natural world, as we are all part of its boundless mysteries.

'Hail, Satan,' he eventually declared.

Notice the bias in the above. Andriola did not "dream up" the idea of invocations. Again, this is a longstanding American tradition that not only was exercised in 1789, but, in fact, at the First Continental Congress (1774). What's more, this was merely the continuation of a practice that began in England, officially circa 1558. As The UK Parliament website [informs](#):

"Sittings in both Houses begin with prayers. These *follow the Christian faith and there is currently no multi-faith element*. Attendance is voluntary." (Emphasis added.)

In other words, even left-wing Britain doesn't feel compelled to give the Devil "equal time."

As for the Nevada commission meeting, Andriola returned, expressed her displeasure with the satanic invocation, and asked "legal" for clarification as to why such evil must be facilitated.

Assistant District Attorney Nate Edwards, who was present, said that disruptive actions of that nature had become a "trend" and then mentioned "case law."

"If you do open your floor for invocations, federal law is that you have to let everybody have a turn signing up," the *Mail* relates him as saying.

"He finally concludes: 'So, um, I guess you take the good with the bad,'" the paper continued.

To repeat, however, constitutionally this is untrue. The "case law" saying otherwise is what is dreamt up, by activist or ignorant judges imposing their values from the bench. Note, too, that the Constitution, not case law, is preeminent.

Unfortunately, most Americans today, even those fancying themselves conversant with civics, misunderstand the First Amendment's religious dictates. This is evident in the MSN.com comments on the *Mail* article. As a representative example, a poster going by the handle "Critical Reasoning" [claimed](#):

First Amendment of the US Constitution working as designed.

No establishment of religion, so if you allow invocations for one religion, you cannot deny others.

The reality is that we now have legions of people — not just leftists, but also libertarians and many conservatives — who are busy conserving the above mistake. What's interesting, too, is that the conception of what the First Amendment dictates has, curiously, changed correspondingly with the spirit of the age: As the country has become increasingly secular, constitutional (mis)interpretations have increasingly facilitated the secular agenda.

But there may be recourse here. If satanic invocations aren't enough to offend people and jar them back into reality, then maybe their "open-mindedness" and equal-time "principle" needs to be put to a firmer



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test.

That is, if Festivus and the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster can be religions, anything can be. So maybe some brave soul (who's willing to endure intense scorn and hostility) could try to make a point by declaring a KKK- or Nazi-oriented "religion." His group could then apply to give an invocation before a government body, pray to a racist "deity," and expound upon the glories of white supremacy and racial superiority.

If this became a trend, would the happy pseudo-constitutionalists still be kvelling over the "First Amendment of the US Constitution working as designed"? Or, might they rediscover the Founders' original intent really, really fast?



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