



Secular Humanism: America's Establishment of Religion

Although the U.S. Constitution forbids the creation of a national establishment of religion, the closest we have come to the creation of such an establishment is that of Secular Humanism, the worldview philosophy that now governs the curriculum of our tax-funded public schools. Some humanists claim that secular humanism is a religion; other humanists claim that it isn't.

However, In March 1987, U.S. District Judge W. Brevard Hand ruled that Secular Humanism was a religion. Indeed, Phyllis Schlafly, a graduate of Harvard Law School, wrote in 1980, "Secular Humanism has become the established religion in the U.S. public school system." The landmark 172-page ruling in this case of *Smith v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County, Ala.*, affirmed what Christians had been saying for years: that the government school curriculum is based on and teaches the tenets of Secular Humanism and that this, therefore, constitutes an establishment of religion sponsored and sanctioned by the state, which is expressly forbidden by the Constitution of the United States.



The case really boiled down to determining what is a religion. The plaintiffs contended that Secular Humanism is a religion; the defendants argued that it is not. Since the U.S. Supreme Court had not stated an absolute definition of religion under the First Amendment, Judge Hand wrote that "any definition of religion must not be limited, therefore, to traditional religions, but must encompass systems of belief that are equivalent to them for the believer."

He then wrote: "[A]ll religious beliefs may be classified by the questions they raise and the issues they address. These ... may be grouped as [follows]: (1) The existence of supernatural and/or transcendent reality; (2) The nature of man; (3) The ultimate end, or goal, or purpose of man's existence, both individually and collectively; (4) The purpose and nature of the universe."

Here are several excerpts from Judge Hand's lucid, logical, and concise examination of Secular Humanism as a belief system that easily qualifies it to be regarded as a religion. He wrote:

[Humanism] purports to establish a closed definition of reality; not closed in that its adherents know everything, but in that everything is knowable: can be reconciled by the human intellect aided only by the devices of that intellect's own creation or discovery. The most important belief of this religion is its denial of the transcendent and/or supernatural: there is no God, no creator, no



divinity. By force of logic, the universe is thus self-existing, completely physical and hence, essentially knowable. Man is the product of evolutionary, physical forces. He is purely biological and has no supernatural or transcendent spiritual component or quality. ...

In addition, humanism, as a belief system, erects a moral code and identifies the source of morality. This source is claimed to exist in humans and the social relations of humans. ...

Secular humanism ... has organizational characteristics. Some groups are more structured and hierarchical, others less so. ... These organizations proselytize and preach their theories with the avowed purpose of persuading nonadherents to believe as they do.

On the matter of morals education in the schools, the judge had this to say:

Teaching that moral choices are purely personal and can only be based on some autonomous, as yet undiscovered and unfulfilled, inner self is a sweeping fundamental belief that must not be promoted by the public schools. The state can, of course, teach the law of the land, which is that each person is responsible for, and will be held to account for, his actions. There is a distinct practical consequence between this fact, and the religious belief promoted, whether explicitly or implicitly, by saying "only you can decide what is right or wrong."

As the result of his decision, Judge Hand determined that those disputed textbooks in use in the schools that were based on the tenets of Secular Humanism had to be removed. He wrote:

There is no doubt that adherents to the religion of the *Humanist Manifestos* affirmatively seek the exclusion of influence by theistic religions in the public schools. ... The vast majority of Americans, for most of our history, have lived in a society in which religion was a part of daily life. ... One would never know it by reading these books.

The most significant result of Judge Hand's decision is that it finally provided Christians with a clearly worded definition of Secular Humanism as a religion. Previous to this, humanists played dumb, claiming that trying to define humanism was like trying to nail Jell-O to a wall. Judge Hand had based his definition on a meticulous reading of *Humanist Manifestos I* (1933) and *II* (1973) as well as *A Secular Humanist Declaration* (1980). But that didn't stop the humanists from issuing *A Declaration of Interdependence: A New Global Ethics* (1988) and *Humanist Manifesto 2000*, which sums up all of the doctrines of Secular Humanism, leaving no doubt that it is a non-theistic philosophy of life meant to replace "outmoded" theistic religion.

The only difference between a theistic religion and a non-theistic, or atheist "religion" is a matter of semantics. They are both religions in the sense that they deal with the meaning of life and provide human beings with overall guidance in how to morally conduct one's life. For example, biblical religion has the Ten Commandments, which spell out what a believer may and may not do. Those "Thou shalt nots" have been the ethical foundation of the Western world and still largely undergird our criminal code.

Secular Humanist and biblical moral codes are at war with each other. For example, the Bible opposes sex out of wedlock. Secular Humanists believe in sexual freedom, or premarital recreational sex. The two sexual moral codes produce two very different results for society. The biblical moral code leads to courtship, marriage, the rearing of a family, and the real possibility of social happiness based on healthy and productive attributes. It produces social stability. The humanist moral code leads to sex before marriage, unwanted pregnancies, abortion, children out of wedlock, poverty, venereal diseases, irresponsibility, unhappiness, and societal dysfunction. The possibilities for happiness under such a



code are practically nil.

Obviously, if one believes in the pursuit of happiness, the biblical moral code is the one to follow. But our schools deliberately lead children in the wrong direction because that is the philosophy of Secular Humanism. Thus, children are given condoms to facilitate their irresponsible behavior. *Humanist Manifesto 2000*, which is characterized as a Plan for Peace, Dignity, and Freedom in the Global Human Family, is actually a blueprint for political correctness. If you follow its precepts, you will be politically correct. The new *Manifesto* calls for a Planetary Humanism. It states:

While most of the provisions of these earlier Manifestos and Declarations are still viable, it is apparent that as the world enters a new millennium a new Manifesto is necessary. ... Yet, as the world becomes a global family, ethnic-religious rivalries have sought to divide territories into contending factions. Fundamentalist religions have rekindled, contesting the principles of humanism and secularism and demanding a return to the religiosity of a premodern era. ... The realities of the global society are such that only a new Planetary Humanism can provide meaningful directions of the future.

Note that the humanists have had to update their principles because of fundamental changes in technology and economic conditions. But biblical religion has had to change nothing in the 2,000 years since it became the moral foundation of the Christian West. Whenever and wherever that foundation has been violated by atheists, communists, socialists, anarchists, and nihilists, the world has suffered.

However, the humanists believe that scientific and technological progress will provide us with the means to solve all of the modern world's problems: overpopulation, global warming, unemployment, disease, terrorism, discrimination against women, endangered species. While previous Manifestos advocated Socialism, this new Manifesto states:

The belief in some quarters that the free market will cure all social problems remains a *faith*. How to balance the demands of the free market with the need for equitable social programs to assist the disadvantaged and impoverished remains an unresolved issue in many countries of the world. ...

The persistence of traditional spiritual attitudes often encourages unrealistic, escapist, otherworldly approaches to social problems, inculcates a disrespect for science, and all too often defends archaic social institutions. ...

Planetary Humanism seeks to recommend long-range attainable goals. This is a principal distinction between humanism and premodern, religiously based moralities.

While humanists believe that science is all we need to solve our problems, they are against all attempts by some scientists to deal with the mysteries of life apart from evolution. The *Manifesto* states:

We decry the efforts of a few scientists ... to impose transcendental interpretations upon natural phenomena. Neither the standard modern cosmology nor the evolutionary process provides sufficient evidence for intelligent design, which is a leap of faith beyond the empirical evidence. We think it time for humanity to embrace its own adulthood — to leave behind the magical thinking and myth-making that are substitutes for tested knowledge of nature.

Eliminating religion from human life is as impossible a goal as can be imagined. And that is why the goals of Secular Humanism will appeal only to a very small minority of intellectuals who enjoy planning the lives of everyone else. It is also a very impractical philosophy. For example, moral relativism is at the heart of the humanist doctrine that "the state should allow a wide plurality of moral values to



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coexist.” How can a single nation embrace more than one moral code without creating moral chaos? The *Manifesto* states:

[H]umanists maintain that we should be prepared to modify ethical principles and values in the light of current realities and future expectations.... We cannot look back to the moral absolutes of the past for guidance here. We need to respect autonomy of choice.

In other words, late-term abortions, infanticide, and euthanasia are all on the table. American civilization is based on the moral code of the Bible. Indeed, it was John Adams who said that the U.S. Constitution was “made only for a moral and religious people” and is “wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

The result has been the freest, most prosperous and advanced nation in all of human history. De-Christianize America, and what will we get?

The humanists not only believe in the separation of school and religion, but also the moral separation of children from their parents. The *Manifesto* states:

Although parental moral guidance is vital, parents should not simply impose their own religious outlook or moral values on their children or indoctrinate them.

They should leave the indoctrination up to the Secular Humanists who preach moral relativism. As for what will be taught in the schools:

The curriculum should promote an understanding of scientific methods of inquiry and critical thinking. No limits should be placed on free inquiry [except in the case of intelligent design!]. Education should include an appreciation of the natural, biological, and social sciences. The theory of evolution and standards of ecology should also be studied. ...

The opportunity for appropriate sexual education should be made available from an early age. This should include responsible sexual behavior, family planning, and contraceptive techniques. {Sounds like something written by the NEA.}

Also, proclaim the humanists, American children must stop thinking of themselves as Americans. “We need to develop a new human identity — membership in the planetary community.” Why? Because, according to the *Manifesto*, national sovereignty is an obstacle to world peace. It states: “Although loyalty to one’s own country, tribe, or ethnic group can take individuals beyond selfish interests, excessive chauvinism among ethnic groups and nation-states frequently becomes destructive.”

The solution to the problem of “excessive chauvinism”? A world government.

(To be continued.)



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