

# **WHAT IS PATRIOTISM IN THE UNITED STATES**

**Alonzo T. Jones**



# Foreword

*Fellow Citizens, Lovers of Right and Truth: As announced, I am going to speak to you this afternoon on the question: What Is Patriotism in the United States?*

*The first point in this inquiry is, What is patriotism in any country? What is patriotism in itself? Patriotism is usually defined, in brief, as love of country; but love of country is more than the love of the mountains and hills, the plains, valleys, rivers, and rills, of which the country is composed. More fully defined, patriotism is the spirit which prompts obedience to the laws of one's country, and to the support and defense of its existence, rights, and institutions. Thus, love of country is really love of the institutions and the principles which make a country what it is in all respects.*

*If love of country were simply love of the mountains and hills, valleys and plains, rivers and rills, —the landscape, —of which the country is*

*composed, there could never be any such thing as civil war; for plainly there could never be any dispute over that, among people inhabiting the same territory. It is evident, therefore, that patriotism in truth lies in love of the principles and institutions which make a country what it is in all respects; it is loyalty to those specific principles and institutions. Hence, the patriot is correctly defined as “any defender of liberty, civil or religious.”*

*What, then, is patriotism in the United States? In order that this question shall be rightly answered, it is essential that we study the fundamental principles which characterize this nation, which are the basis of its government, and which have made it all that it has ever been among the nations of the earth. Having learned this, and knowing that patriotism is the spirit which prompts obedience to the laws of one’s country, and the support and defense of its principles and institutions, it will be easy for all to discern what is, and what is not, patriotism here. Firm allegiance, strict adherence, to these fundamental*

*principles is in the nature of the case patriotism. Any forgetting, any ignoring, or any disregarding of these principles, however much those who do so may proclaim their patriotism, is in truth, the very opposite.*

*Alonzo T. Jones*

## Chapter 1

# The first of all principles

There can be no question but that the Declaration of Independence was the beginning of this nation. And the first principle embodied in that immortal declaration is that “all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights.”

The first and greatest of all the rights of men is religious right. And “religion” is “the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it.” The first of all duties is to the Creator, because to him we owe our existence. Therefore the first of all commandments, and the first that there can possibly be, is this: “Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.” (Mark 12:29, 30)

This commandment existed as soon as there was an intelligent creature in the universe; and it will continue to exist as long as there shall continue one intelligent creature in the universe. Nor can a universe full of intelligent creatures modify in any sense the bearing that this commandment has upon any single one, any more than if that single one were the only creature in the universe, for as soon as an intelligent creature exists, he owes his existence to the Creator. And in owing to him his existence, man owes to him the first consideration in all the accompaniments, and all the possibilities of existence. Such is the origin, such the nature, and such the measure of religious right.

Did, then, the fathers who laid the foundation of this nation in the rights of the people—did they allow to this right the place and deference among the rights of the people which, according to its inherent importance, are justly its due? That is, did they leave it sacred and untouched, solely between man and his Creator?

The logic of the Declaration demanded that

they should; for the Declaration says that governments derive “their just powers from the consent of the governed.” Governments, then, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, can never of right exercise any power not delegated by the governed. But religion pertains solely to man’s relation to God, and to the duty which he owes to him as his Creator, and therefore in the nature of things it can never be delegated.

It is utterly impossible for any person ever, in any degree, to delegate or transfer to another any relationship or duty, or the exercise of any relationship or duty, which he owes to his Creator. To attempt to do so would be only to deny God, and renounce religion: and even then the thing would not be done; for, whatever he might do, his relationship and duty to God would still abide as fully and as firmly as ever.

As governments derive their just powers from the governed; as governments can not justly exercise any power not delegated; and as it is

impossible for any person in any way to delegate any power in things religious; it follows conclusively that the Declaration of Independence logically excludes religion in every sense, and in every way, from the jurisdiction and from the notice of every form of government that has resulted from that declaration.

This is also according to Holy Writ. For to the definition that religion is, “the recognition of God as an object of worship, love, and obedience,” the Scripture responds: “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” (Matthew 4:10) “It is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” (Romans 14:11)

To the statement that religion is “man’s personal relation of faith and obedience to God,” the Scripture responds: “Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God.” “So, then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” (Romans 14:22, 12)



And to the word that religion is “the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it,” the Scripture still responds: “For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10)

No government can ever account to God for any individual. No man nor any set of men can ever have faith for another. No government will ever stand before the judgment-seat of Christ to answer even for itself, much less for the people or for any individual. Therefore, no government can ever of right assume any responsibility in any way in any matter of religion.

## Chapter 2

# **The contest for this principle in Virginia**

Such is the logic of the Declaration as well as the truth of Holy Writ. But did the fathers who made the nation recognize this and act accordingly? — They did. Indeed, the enunciation of this principle in a public document, antedates the Declaration of Independence by about three weeks. For, June 12, 1776, the House of Burgesses of the Colony of Virginia, adopted a declaration of rights, composed of sixteen sections, every one of which in substance afterward found a place in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. The sixteenth section of that declaration of rights reads in part thus:

“That religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and therefore all men are equally

entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience.”

Then on July 4 following, came the Declaration of Independence with its notable principle that the Creator has endowed men with certain inalienable rights; and the people accepted and used the Declaration of Independence as having in this principle enunciated the absolute supremacy of religious right. For no sooner was the Declaration published abroad than the Presbytery of Virginia openly took its stand with the new and independent nation; and, with the Baptists and Quakers of that State, addressed to the General Assembly a memorial in which they said in substance, ‘We have now declared ourselves free and independent of Great Britain in all things civil; let us also declare ourselves independent of Great Britain in all things religious.’ This they did because the English Church was still the established religion of the State of Virginia. This excellent people, in their memorial, called for freedom of religion in Virginia, and in so doing said: —

“When the many and grievous oppressions of our mother country have laid this continent under the necessity of casting off the yoke of tyranny, and of forming independent governments upon equitable and liberal foundations, we flatter ourselves that we shall be freed from all the incumbrances which a spirit of domination, prejudice, or bigotry has interwoven with most other political systems.... Therefore, we rely upon this declaration, as well as the justice of our honorable legislature, to secure us the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of our own consciences....

“In this enlightened age, and in a land where all of every denomination are united in the most strenuous efforts to be free, we hope and expect that our representatives will cheerfully concur in removing every species of religious, as well as civil bondage. Certain it is, that every argument for civil liberty gains additional strength when applied to liberty in the concerns of religion; and there is no argument in favor of establishing the Christian religion but may be pleaded with equal propriety

for establishing the tenets of Mohammed by those who believe the Coran; or, if this be not true, it is at least impossible for the magistrate to adjudge the right of preference among the various sects that profess the Christian faith without erecting a claim to infallibility, which would lead us back to the church of Rome.”

The result of this memorial was that the Episcopal Church was disestablished in Virginia, dating from Jan. 1, 1777. This was the disestablishment of a particular sect, or denomination. This was no sooner done, however, than a strong movement was made by certain denominations to secure the establishment of “Christianity” as such, without reference to particular sects, under cover of a bill introduced in the General Assembly of Virginia to establish by general tax “the support of teachers of the Christian religion.” This movement was opposed by the same churches, and others who had accomplished the disestablishment of the English Church in Virginia. Accordingly, they presented again a memorial to the General Assembly, repeating much

of their former memorial, and adding considerable to it, in which they said:—

“We would also humbly represent that the only proper objects of civil government are the happiness and protection of men in the present state of existence, and security of the life, liberty, and property of the citizens, and to restrain the vicious and—to encourage the virtuous by wholesome laws equally extending to every individual; but that the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can only be directed by reason and conviction, and is nowhere cognizable but at the tribunal of the universal Judge. To illustrate and confirm these assertions, we beg leave to observe and to judge for ourselves and to engage in the exercise of religion agreeable to the dictates of our own consciences, is an unalienable right which, upon the principles on which the gospel was first propagated and the Reformation from popery carried on, can never be transferred to another.”

Jefferson and Madison espoused the cause of

religious right, as represented in these memorials. By their efforts, and also the “strenuous efforts of the Baptists,” the “Bill establishing a Provision for Teachers of the Christian Religion,” was defeated in 1779. Then Jefferson prepared with his own hand, and proposed for adoption as a part of the revised code of Virginia, an “Act for Establishing Religious Freedom,” of which the following is a part:

“Well aware that Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burdens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the Holy Author of our religion, who, being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either as was in his almighty power to do; that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who, being themselves but fallible, and uninspired men, have assumed a dominion over the faith of others, setting upon their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only

true and infallible, and as such, endeavoring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world and through all time; that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical; ...

“Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly, that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to express, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in nowise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities. And though we well know that this assembly, elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, have no power to restrain the acts of succeeding assemblies, constituted with powers equal to our own, and that therefore to declare this act irrevocable would be of



no effect in law, yet we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present, or to narrow its operation, such act will be an infringement of natural rights.”

This proposed law was submitted to the whole people of Virginia for their “deliberate, reflection” before the vote should be taken in the General Assembly for its enactment into law as a part of the revised code.

By this time the war for independence had become the all-absorbing question, and forced into abeyance the movement for the establishment of “the Christian religion.” At the first opportunity, however, after peace had come to the country, the subject was again forced upon the General Assembly of Virginia in the fall of 1784, by the introduction of the original” Bill, Establishing a Provision for Teachers of the Christian Religion.” Personally, Jefferson was out of the country, being minister to France, but his bill for establishing’

religious freedom which had been submitted to the people in 1779 was still before them; and though personally absent, he took a lively interest in the question, and his pen was active. His place in the General Assembly was most worthily filled by Madison as a leader in the cause of religious right. Against the bill” establishing the provision for the teaching of the Christian religion, he said:

“The assessment bill exceeds the functions of civil authority. The question has been stated as though it were. Is religion necessary? The true question is, Are establishments necessary to religion? And the answer is, They corrupt religion. The difficulty of providing for the support of religion is the result of the war, to be remedied by voluntary association for religious purposes. In the event of a statute for the support of the Christian religion, are the courts of law to decide what is Christianity? And as a consequence, to decide what is orthodoxy, and what is heresy? The enforced support of the Christian religion dishonors Christianity.”

The bill was put upon its third reading and passage, and its opponents succeeded in checking it only by a motion to postpone the subject until the next General Assembly; meanwhile to print the bill and distribute it among the people that their will in the matter might be signified to the next General Assembly which then could act accordingly. “Thus the people of Virginia had before them for their choice the bill of the revised code for establishing religious freedom and the plan of desponding churchmen for supporting religion by a general assessment.”

“All the State, from the sea to the mountains and beyond them, was alive with the discussion. Madison, in a remonstrance addressed to the Legislature, embodied all that could be said against the compulsory maintenance of Christianity, and in behalf of religious freedom as a natural right, the glory of Christianity itself, the surest method of supporting religion, and the only way to produce harmony among its several sects.”

This noble remonstrance, which “embodied all

that could be said” upon the subject, should be ingrained in the minds of the American people to-day; because all that it said then needs to be said now, and with a double emphasis. I have quoted considerable already; and I know that reading in a public address is always tedious; yet in this case, because these things are so largely forgotten, necessity compels, and I must beg your indulgence. This masterly document on the subject of religious right, holds the same high place as does the Declaration of Independence on the subject of rights in general. The material passages of it I beg you to consider. So I read:—

“We, the subscribers, citizens of the commonwealth, having taken into serious consideration a bill printed by order of the last session of General Assembly, entitled ‘A Bill Establishing a Provision for Teachers of the Christian Religion,’ and conceiving that the same, if finally armed with the sanctions of a law, will be a dangerous abuse of power, are bound as faithful members of a free State to remonstrate against it, and to declare the reasons by which we are

determined. We remonstrate against the said bill:

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“Because we hold it for a fundamental and undeniable truth that religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence. The religion, then, of every man must be left to the conviction and conscience of every man; and it is the right of every man to exercise it as these may dictate. This right is in its nature an unalienable right. It is unalienable, because the opinions of men, depending only on the evidence contemplated in their own minds, can not follow the dictates of other men. It is unalienable, also, because what is here a right towards men is a duty towards the Creator. It is the duty of every man to render to the Creator such homage, and such only, as he believes to be acceptable to him. This duty is precedent, both in order of time and in degree of obligation, to the claims of civil society. Before any man can be considered as a member of civil society, he must be considered as a subject of the Governor of the

universe; and if a member of civil society who enters into any subordinate association must always do it with a reservation of his duty to the general authority, much more must every man who becomes a member of any particular civil society do it with a saving of his allegiance to the universal Sovereign. We maintain, therefore, that in matters of religion no man's right is abridged by the institution of civil society, and that religion is wholly exempt from its cognizance.

“Because it is proper to take alarm at the first experiment upon our liberties. We hold this prudent jealousy to be the first duty of citizens, and one of the noblest characteristics of the late Revolution. The free men of America did not wait till usurped power had strengthened itself by exercise, and entangled the question in precedents. They saw all the consequences in the principle, and they avoided the consequences, by denying the principle. We revere this lesson too much soon to forget it. Who does not see that the same authority which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other religions, may establish, with the same case,

any particular sect of Christians, in exclusion of all other sects? that the same authority which can force a citizen to contribute threepence only, of his property, for the support of any one establishment, may force him to conform' to any other establishment in all cases whatsoever?

“Because the bill violates that equality which ought to be the basis of every law, and which is more indispensable in proportion as the validity or expediency of any law is more liable to be impeached. ‘If all men are by nature equally free and independent,’ all men are to be considered as entering into society on equal conditions, as relinquishing, no more, and, therefore, retaining no less, one than the other of their natural rights. Above all, are they to be considered as retaining an equal title to the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience. Whilst we assert for ourselves a freedom to embrace, to profess, and to observe the religion which we believe to be of divine origin, we can not deny an equal freedom to them whose minds have not yet yielded to the evidence which has convinced us. If this freedom

be abused, it is an offense against God, not against man. To God therefore, not to man, must an account of it be rendered.

“Because the bill implies either that the civil magistrate is a competent judge of religious truths, or that he may employ religion as an engine of civil policy. The first is an arrogant pretension, falsified by the contradictory opinions of rulers in all ages throughout the world; the second, an unhallowed perversion of the means of salvation.

“Because experience witnesseth that ecclesiastical establishments, instead of maintaining the purity and efficacy of religion, have had the contrary operation. During almost fifteen centuries has the legal establishment of Christianity been on trial. What have been its fruits?—More or less, in all places, pride and indolence in the clergy; ignorance and servility in the laity; in both superstition, bigotry, and persecution. Inquire of the teachers of Christianity for the ages in which it appeared in its greatest luster; those of every sect point to the ages prior to



its incorporation with civil polity. Propose a restoration of this primitive state in which its teachers depend on the voluntary regard of their flocks, many of them predict its downfall. On which side ought their testimony to have greatest weight—when for, or when against, their interest?

“Because the proposed establishment is a departure from that generous policy which, offering an asylum to the persecuted and oppressed of every nation and religion, promised a luster to our country, and an accession to the number of our citizens. What a melancholy mark is this bill, of sudden degeneracy! Instead of holding forth an asylum to the persecuted, it is itself a signal of persecution. It degrades from the equal rank of citizens all those whose opinions in religion do not bend to those of the legislative authority. Distant as it may be in its present form from the Inquisition, it differs from it, only in degree. The one is the first step, the other is the last, in the career of intolerance. The magnanimous sufferer of this cruel scourge in foreign regions, must view the bill as a beacon on our coast, warning him to seek

some other haven, where liberty and philanthropy, in their due extent, may offer a more certain repose from his troubles.

“Because, finally, ‘the equal right of every citizen to the free exercise of his religion, according to the dictates of conscience,’ is held by the same tenure with all our other rights. If we recur to its origin, it is equally the gift of nature; if we weigh its importance, it can not be less dear to us; if we consult the declaration of those rights ‘which pertain to the good people of Virginia as the basis and foundation of government,’ it is enumerated with equal solemnity, or rather with studied emphasis. Either, then, we must say that the will of the Legislature is the only measure of their authority, and that in the plenitude of that authority they may sweep away all our fundamental rights, or that they are bound to leave this particular right untouched and sacred. Either we must say that they may control the freedom of the press, may abolish the trial by jury, may swallow up the executive and judiciary powers of the State; nay, that they may despoil us of our very rights of suffrage, and erect

themselves into an independent and hereditary assembly, or we must say that they have no authority to enact into a law the bill under consideration.

“We, the subscribers, say that the General Assembly of this commonwealth have no such authority. And, in order that no effort may be omitted on our part against so dangerous an usurpation, we oppose to it this remonstrance, earnestly praying, as we are in duty bound, that the Supreme Lawgiver of the universe, by illuminating those to whom it is addressed, may, on the one hand, turn their councils from every act which would affront his holy prerogative or violate the trust committed to them; and, on the other, guide them into every measure which may be worthy of his blessing, redound to their own praise, and establish more firmly the liberties, the prosperity, and the happiness of the commonwealth.”

Washington, being asked his opinion on the question, as it stood in the contest, answered that “no man’s sentiments were more opposed to any

kind of restraint upon religious principles” than were his, and further said:—

“As the matter now stands, I wish an assessment had never been agitated; and as it has gone so far, that the bill could die an easy death.”

The foregoing remonstrance was so thoroughly discussed and so well understood, and the will of the people on the subject was made so plain and emphatic, that “when the Legislature of Virginia assembled, no person was willing to bring forward the assessment bill; and it was never heard of more. Out of one hundred and seventeen articles of the revised code which were then reported, Madison selected for immediate action the one which related to religious freedom. The people of Virginia had held it under deliberation for six years. In December, 1785, it passed the house by a vote of nearly four to one. Attempts in the Senate to amend, produced only insignificant changes in the preamble, and on the 16th of January, 1786, Virginia placed among its statutes the very words of the original draft by Jefferson with the hope that

they would endure forever: ‘No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; opinion in matters of religion shall in nowise diminish, enlarge, or affect civil capacities. The rights hereby asserted are ‘of the natural rights of mankind.’”

Of this blessed result Madison happily explained:—

“Thus in Virginia was extinguished forever the ambitious hope of making laws for the human mind.”

The effect of this notable contest in Virginia could not possibly be confined to that State, nor was such a thing desired by those who conducted it. It was understood and intended by those who then and there made this contest for religious right, that their labors should extend to all mankind this blessing and this natural right. The benefit of it was immediately felt throughout the country; and “in

every other American State, oppressive statutes concerning religion fell into disuse, and were gradually repealed.”

This statute of Virginia is the model upon which the clause respecting religious right has been framed in the constitutions of all the States in the Union to this day. In every instance this statute has been embodied in its substance, and often in its very words, in the State constitutions.

Nor was this all. It had also “been foreseen that ‘the happy consequences of this grand experiment ... would not be limited to America.’ The statute of Virginia translated into French and into Italian was widely circulated through Europe. A part of the work of ‘the noble army of martyrs’ was done.”

## Chapter 3

# **The contest for this principle, in the nation**

Yet the work of those who accomplished this grand victory was not then fully done, even in their direct efforts relating to their own country.

As we have seen, this victory was completed Jan. 16, 1786. Just a month before this, December, 1785, a proposition made by Maryland to Virginia to call together commissioners from all the States to consider and “regulate restrictions on commerce for the whole” had been laid before the very legislature which passed the “Bill Establishing Religious Freedom in Virginia.” This proposition, of Maryland created the opening which was instantly seized by Madison, through which to push to successful issue the desire for the creation of the nation by the forming of the Constitution of the United States. And in pushing to successful issue the desire for the creation of a national power,

there was carried along, also, and finally fixed in the Constitution of the United States, the same principle of religious right that had been so triumphantly fixed in the code of Virginia.

The sole reference to religion in the Constitution as formed by the convention and submitted to the people, is in the declaration that “no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.”

The national government being one of delegated powers only, no mention whatever of religion, nor any reference to the subject in the Constitution, would have totally excluded that subject from the cognizance of the government. And this sole mention that was made of it was a clear and positive evidence that the makers of the Constitution intended to exclude the subject of religion from the notice of the national power. So the people-understood it when the Constitution was submitted to them for their approval. And the assurance of “the perfect liberty of conscience



prevented religious differences from interfering with zeal for a closer union.”

As we have seen, the contest for religious right in Virginia in 1785-86 had awakened a deep interest in the subject in the other States, and when the principle of this natural right had triumphed in Virginia, the effect of it was felt in every other State. And when the Constitution came before them with a clear recognition of the same principle, this was a feature immensely in its favor throughout the country.

After five States had ratified the Constitution, “the country from the St. Croix to the St. Mary’s fixed its attention on Massachusetts, whose adverse decision would inevitably involve the defeat of the Constitution.” Massachusetts ratified the Constitution, and in the doing of it, she considered this very question of religious right.

One member of the convention objected against the proposed Constitution that “there is no provision that men in power should have any

religion. A papist or an infidel is as eligible as Christians.” He was answered by three members that “no conceivable advantage to the whole will result from a test.”

Another objected that “It would happy for the United States if our public men were to be of those who have a good standing in the church.” To this it was answered that “human tribunals for the consciences of men are impious encroachments upon the prerogatives of God. A religious test, as a qualification for office, would have been a great blemish.”

Again it was objected that the absence of a religious test would “open the door to popery and the inquisition.” And to this it was answered: “In reason and the Holy Scriptures, religion is ever a matter between God and individuals, and therefore no man or men can impose any religious test without invading the essential prerogative of the Lord Jesus Christ. Ministers first assumed this power under the Christian name; and then Constantine approved of the practise when he

adopted the profession of Christianity as an engine of state policy. And let the history of all nations be searched from that day to this and it will appear that the imposing of religious tests has been the greatest engine of tyranny in the world.”

As the action of Massachusetts by its example, made sure the adoption of the Constitution; and as this particular point of religious right was specially discussed in that convention, and was decided in favor of the Constitution as it stood, with reference to that subject; it is certain from this fact alone, if there were no other, that it was the intent of the Constitution and the makers thereof, totally to exclude religion in every way from the notice of the general government.

Yet this is not all. In the Virginia convention, objection was made that the Constitution did not fully enough secure religious right, to which Madison, “the father of the Constitution,” answered:-

“There is not a shadow of right in the general

government to intermeddle with religion. Its least interference with it would be a most flagrant usurpation. I can appeal to my uniform conduct on this subject that I have warmly supported religious freedom.”

Nor yet was this all. By the people of the United States, even this was not deemed sufficient. Knowing the inevitable tendency of men in power to fall in love with power, and to give themselves credit for inherent possession of it, and so to assert power that in nowise belongs to them, the people of the United States were not satisfied with the silence of the national charter; nor yet with this clear evidence of intention to exclude religion, from the notice of the national power. They demanded positive provisions which should in so many words prohibit the government of the United States from touching any question of religion. They required that there should be added to the Constitution articles of the nature of a Bill of Rights; and that religious right should in this be specifically declared. Here is a letter of Jefferson's, dated Paris, Feb. 2, 1788, which tells the whole

story as to this point:-

“Dear Sir: I am glad to learn by letters, which come down to the 20th of December, that the new Constitution will undoubtedly be received by a sufficiency of the States to set it agoing. Were I in America I would advocate it warmly till nine should have adopted, and then as warmly take the other side to convince the remaining four that they ought not to come into it until the declarations of rights is annexed to it; by this means we should secure all the good of it, and procure as respectable opposition as would induce the accepting States to offer a Bill of Rights; this would be the happiest turn the thing could take. I fear much the effects of the perpetual re-eligibility of the President, but it is not thought of in America, and have, therefore, no prospect of a change of that article. But I own it astonishes me to find such a change wrought in the opinions of our countrymen since I left them, as that three fourths of them should be contented to live under a system which leaves to their governors the power of taking from them the trial by jury in civil cases, Freedom of Religion, freedom of the

press, freedom of commerce, the habeas corpus laws, and of yoking them with a standing army. That is a degeneracy in the principles of liberty to which I had given four centuries instead of four years, but I hope it will all come about.”

To see how fully this letter stated the case, it is necessary only to read the first ten amendments to the Constitution. These ten amendments were the Bill of Rights which the people required to be added to the Constitution as it was originally framed. The first Congress under the Constitution met March 4, 1789, and in September of the same year, these ten amendments were adopted. And in the very first of these provisions, stands the declaration of the freedom of religious right under the United States government:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

Thus the people of the United States, in their own capacity as such, made the supreme law of the

land positively and explicitly to declare the total exclusion of religion from any consideration whatever on the part of the national government.

Nor was the matter permitted to stand even thus on that question; for in 1797 the treaty of Tripoli was made and signed by President Washington, and approved by the Senate of the United States, in which it is declared that:

“The Government of the United States is not in any sense founded upon the Christian religion.”

This being a material part of a treaty, “made under the authority of: the United States,” it thus became a material part of “the supreme law of the land.”

Such is the history, such the establishment, and such the perfect supremacy of religious right in the United States. Thus for the people of the United States, and for the world, “religion was become avowedly the attribute of man and not of a corporation.”

## Chapter 4

# **The principle and the supreme law disregarded**

I present to you this matter thus fully because most of the people of the United States have forgotten that these invaluable documents ever existed, and that this history was ever made; and further, because the identical things which were then attempted, and which produced this history, are now being attempted throughout this whole land in defiance of these essential principles of the nation. And since this is so, it is all-important that the principles upon which this evil thing was then defeated, and which became the fundamental and constitutional principles of the government of the United States, should now be carefully considered; because these are the only principles upon which the same evil repeated in our day can be rightfully opposed. The same contest is now on throughout the whole larger nation, that was then on throughout the nation—then small in numbers and



in territory, but exceeding great and mighty in prospect because of the force and inherent value of its immortal American and Christian principles.

I have said that the same thing is now being attempted upon the nation that was then attempted upon the State of Virginia; namely, the establishment of the “Christian religion” as such, “not sectarian Christianity, but broad, general Christianity.” Ever since 1863, there has been an organization—the National Reform Association—whose sole purpose of existence is to secure an amendment to the Constitution of the United States,” acknowledging Almighty God as the source of all authority and power in civil government; the Lord Jesus Christ as the ruler among the nations, and his revealed will as the supreme law of the land; and place all the Christian laws, institutions, and usages upon an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the land.”

This association has secured, and wrapped up in alliance with itself to accomplish this thing which our fathers repudiated, the Prohibition party,

the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the American Sabbath Union, the Young Peoples' Christian Endeavor Societies, the Christian Citizenship League, and the most prominent officials of the Catholic Church in this country. These all are enlisted, and are working in combination, to secure the governmental recognition and establishment of the Christian religion in this country,—the very thing which was definitely excluded and repudiated in the making of the nation,—in defiance of the principles which our fathers established as the fundamental principles of the nation in the noble efforts which they made in expressly repudiating it.

These principles which our fathers established, the history of the establishment of which I have sketched before you this afternoon,—it is these which have made this nation what it has been, and is, in all that deserves the attention and respect of the nations of the earth. These principles, then, being that which has made this nation what it is in all respects as a worthy nation; and patriotism being the spirit which prompts allegiance to the

principles and fundamental laws of one's country; it follows that allegiance to these principles, and these alone, is true patriotism in the United States.

And in view of this mighty combination of the loudly self-proclaimed "patriots," who are using their utmost endeavors to supplant these principles with that thing which our fathers repudiated when they established these principles, it is high time, and all-important, to awaken and arouse in the people throughout this whole land "the spirit which prompts to allegiance to the fundamental law and principles" of this nation—the spirit of true patriotism,

Yet this is not all. Nor yet is it the worst. It is a fact, and a disgraceful fact, that the three branches of the United States government have been by official action definitely committed to this thing,—to this unpatriotic thing,—which was definitely repudiated by the noble men who established this nation upon the principles, and by the history, to which I have called your attention.

Ever since the year 1886 the different administrations and Congresses of the United States Government have been paying hundreds of thousands of dollars of the money of all the people to the churches to support them in carrying on their own church work and the propagation of their own church doctrines, in their own church schools. All these years the government has, from the public revenue, been making “a provision for teachers of the Christian religion,” the very thing the makers of the nation repudiated as “sinful and tyrannical,” the very thing that was the specific point around which clustered the whole controversy, and the repudiation of which developed the principles and established the supreme law of this nation as I have brought to your attention to-day.

Feb. 29, 1892, the Supreme Court of the United States unanimously rendered a decision, in which, as the result of a long, and professedly “historical” argument, there was made the declaration, as “the meaning of the Constitution,” that “this is a Christian nation.”

In the summer of 1893, in the matter of closing the World's Fair on Sunday, the Congress of the United States, in each House respectively, did by definite action exclude from its place the Sabbath of the fourth commandment; and did put in its place the Sunday as the Christian Sabbath, recognized and sustained by the national authority. This action of Congress was definitely approved by the national executive.

And thus the three branches of the government of the United States, which is the whole government of the United States, have in defiance of the essential principles of the government, definitely adopted, and committed the government to, the very thing which the makers of the nation definitely repudiated.

In their contention against the evil thing of governmental recognition of the Christian religion, the men who made this nation declared that it is impossible for the magistrate to adjudge the right of preference among the various sects professing the Christian faith without erecting a claim to

infallibility which would lead us back to Rome. In that transaction in the United States Senate, July 10 and 12, 1892, with reference to closing the World's Fair on Sunday, the fourth commandment was read from the Bible as the "reason" for such legislation. But when it was discerned that the fourth commandment says only that "the seventh day is the Sabbath," and that if left standing so the management of the Fair might possibly choose to close the gates on the seventh day, and open them on Sunday, then this argument was made:—

"The language of this amendment is that the Exposition shall be closed on the 'Sabbath day.' I submit that if the senator from Pennsylvania desires that the exposition shall be closed upon Sunday, this language will not necessarily meet that idea....

"The word 'Sabbath day,' simply means that it is a rest day, and it may be Saturday or Sunday, and it would be subject to the discretion of those who will manage this Exposition whether they should close the Exposition on the last day of the

week, in conformity with the observance which is made by the Israelites and the Seventh-day Baptists, or should close it on the first day of the week, generally known as the Christian Sabbath. It certainly seems to me that this amendment should be adopted by the senator from Pennsylvania, and, if he proposes to close this Exposition, that it should be closed on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday....

“Therefore I offer an amendment to the amendment, which I hope may be accepted by the senator from Pennsylvania, to strike out the words ‘Exposition on the Sabbath day,’ and insert ‘mechanical portion of the Exposition on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday.’”

This argument was accepted, and this proposed amendment was adopted. The House of Representatives accepted all this, and so made it the action of the legislative branch of the government.

Now note the principle: The Seventh-day

Baptists and their observance of the seventh day as the Sabbath of the commandment quoted, were definitely named in contrast with those who observe “the first day of the week, generally known as the Christian Sabbath,” with reference to the commandment quoted. And the preference was adjudged in favor of the latter.

Now the Seventh-day Baptists are a sect professing the Christian faith. The original Sabbath commandment was quoted word for word from the Scriptures. The words of that commandment, as they stand in the proceedings of Congress, say “the seventh day is the Sabbath.” The Seventh-day Baptists, a sect professing the Christian faith, observe the very day—the seventh day—named in the scripture quoted in the Record. There are other sects professing the Christian faith who profess to observe the Sabbath of this same commandment by keeping “the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday,” and hence it is that that day is “generally known as the Christian Sabbath.” These facts were known to Congress, and were made a part of the record. Then upon this statement of



facts as to the difference among sects professing the Christian faith, touching the very religious observance taken up by Congress, the Congress did deliberately, and in set terms, adjudge the right of preference between these sects professing the Christian faith. Congress did adjudge the right of preference in favor of those sects which observe “the first day of the week, generally known as the Christian Sabbath,” as against the plainly named sect which observes the day named in the commandment which Congress quoted from the Bible. Thus Congress did the very thing which the fathers of the nation declared it “impossible” to do “without erecting a claim to infallibility, which would lead us back to the church of Rome.”

## Chapter 5

# Now to the application

When patriotism is loyalty to the principles, laws, and institutions of one's country, —and this afternoon I have set before you the indisputable principles and the supreme law of this country, — which has been the patriotism of the administrations and Congresses which, since 1886, in utter disregard of these principles and this supreme law, and against protest, have sinfully and tyrannically made a “provision for teachers of the Christian religion”?

When patriotism is loyalty to the laws, principles, and institutions of one's country, —and this afternoon I have set before you the indisputable principles and the supreme law of this country as to religious right, and the absolute exclusion of religion from governmental cognizance, —where was the patriotism of the Supreme Court of the United States Feb. 29, 1892, when, as the conclusion of a long argument, in total

oblivion of these principles, and in direct contradiction of the supreme law, it declared that “this is a Christian nation”?

When patriotism is loyalty to the principles, laws, and institutions of one’s country, —and this afternoon I have set before you the indisputable principles and the supreme law of this country as to religious right, and the absolute exclusion of religion from legislative governmental cognizance, —where was the patriotism of those members of Congress who in total disregard, not to say defiance, of the fundamental principles and the supreme law of the country, took upon themselves to “adjudge the right of preference among sects professing the Christian faith”?

When patriotism is loyalty to the principles, laws, and institutions of one’s country, —and this afternoon I have set before you the indisputable principles and the supreme law of this country, — where was the patriotism of the President of the United States who, in 1892, in total disregard of these principles and this supreme law, and against

remonstrance, approved, and so made the law of the land, the unpatriotic action of Congress which adjudged the right of preference among sects professing the Christian faith, and so gave governmental recognition to a religious ordinance?

When patriotism is loyalty to the principles, laws, and institutions of one's country, —and this afternoon I have set before you the indisputable principles and the supreme law of this country, which, in the very words of those who made the nation, positively exclude religion and specifically the Christian religion from the cognizance of the government, —where is the patriotism of the members of the National Reform Association; of the members of the Prohibition party; of the members of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union; of the members of the Young People's societies of Christian Endeavor; of the members of the Christian Citizenship League; or, of the members of any other league, society, party, association, or organization; or of any individual anywhere, who calls for, or in any way favors, the governmental recognition of the Christian religion,

or legislation in favor of “the Lord’s day,” the Christian Sabbath, or any other religious rite or institution, or the payment of public money to any church or religious institution under any pretense whatever? According to indisputable American principles and supreme law, where is the patriotism of all these persons?

Yet once more: In view of all these things, where is the patriotism of all the people who without protest allow all these unpatriotic and unconstitutional things continuously to be done?

## Chapter 6

# Conclusion

With respect to religious right, then, What is patriotism in the United States? —It is unswerving loyalty to the principles and the supreme law of this nation in the absolute exclusion of all religion from any and all recognition of the government in any way or under any pretext whatever. On this subject, this and this alone, is patriotism in the United States.

Where then are the patriots? Where are the defenders of popular liberty, religious and civil? For only in the maintenance of, religious liberty, can there be any firm assurance of civil liberty.