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RECLAIMING THE AMERICAN DECLARATION

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One of the most encouraging signs of our times is the Christian reclamation of America's past. The Humanism which has long dominated our statist educational system, our schools of "higher learning," our media and our politics is by nature a militant, crusading, persecuting and deceitful religion. Its natural aim, as the religion of rebellious, would-be-autonomous man, is the suppression of the truth, of Biblical Christianity, in unrighteousness (Rem. 1:18). This inevitably involves Humanism in a life-and-death struggle with Christianity, a fact which many of today's Believers have only recently begun to recognize. A key area of this struggle is the battle for the past.

Fundamentally, Humanism must struggle to capture the past from Christianity because Humanism is nothing other than a sophisticated, developed variety of Original Sin. As such, Humanism is simply a crafty and virulent manifestation of man's ethical rebellion against his Creator, and rebellion against the Creator involves the attempt of man to re-create the universe, to abolish the fact of man's creaturehood by denying the fact of God's Creatorhood. Rebellious man strives to repeal his past in order to assert his "autonomous" will. It is not so much the past in general which Humanism seeks to abolish (although it is not necessarily friendly to the past, *per se*) as it is in particular the Christian past, for it is the Christian past which speaks to his sin, calls him to repentance and promises judgment and death for his apostate attempt to be his own god. When Christianity has been actively present **not only as doctrine, but also as a moving, shaping force** in history, culture and especially politics, Humanism is driven with greatly increased intensity to eradicate the past, for Humanism is supremely a religion of political "salvation."

In the case of America the hostility of Humanism is particularly manifest, for the history of the United States represents, to a greater degree than that of any other nation (save ancient Israel), the powerful and pervasive impact of varying degrees of Biblical Christianity. It is the influence of Christianity, and particularly of the fullest development of Biblical Christianity, Calvinism, on American culture and politics—together with the manifest covenantal blessings of God on the American people—which constitutes the great offense to Humanists, not the mere presence of Christian doctrines. To the degree that Christianity has been influential on society biblical teachings thwart humanistic dreams and designs for culture, society and mankind. And to that degree they must increase their efforts to overcome what, from their perspective is a hostile doctrine and cultural fact.

In short, our past was, especially in its early years, before the deadly seeds of Renaissance and "Enlightenment" Humanism

grew to fertility and fruition in European soil—and were imported by ignorant, intellectually schizophrenic and/or like-minded Americans—dominantly Christian. This fact was uniformly recognized by historians of all creeds throughout much of the Nineteenth Century. The response of the Humanist intellectuals was to attempt to repeal this past, by ridicule, by smuggling into the fold Humanistic religion in the name of natural science, and by reinterpreting, rewriting and obscuring the historical record.

The Declaration of Independence has been a focal point of attack, and has been all but captured by humanistic "Liberals" to be used as a weapon against the remnant of Christian influence on our politics. Basically, the Declaration seems to have been chosen because it is easier—being far shorter, more abstract and less detailed—to subvert than the Constitution.

Not that "Liberal" Humanists have not tried, or succeeded in, subverting the Constitution! As the Christian conservative M. Stanton Evans points out at length in his valuable text on contemporary American politics and issues (Clear and Present Dangers, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975), the "Liberals" have approached the Constitution in three ways, all of them related in the aim of subversion. (Truly a perverse trinity of strategies) First, they have tried the "subliminal" approach: find within the Constitution the justification for the centralized, planning state. This requires both the neglect of the history surrounding the Constitution and a distortion of the intentions of the Framers, as well as a wrenching of selected clauses from their context on the governmental framework and its purposes. Such an effort is manifestly open to scholarly attack, as well as to criticism by plain folks who will bother to read the document. Consequently, the "explicit" approach had to be added: interpret the Constitution as a "flexible," "evolving" document, as an amoebic vessel into which new content must be poured by present interpreters and policymakers. Since this approach is open to easy refutation by careful students of history and the Framers' intentions, another approach was added (especially when humanistic "Liberals" were in positions of power—though not used for public consumption): the brazen. The brazen approach is simplicity Machiavellianized: since the Constitution is in the way of our plans, we'll just ignore it and abandon it, *de facto*.

Accompanying this perverse trinity of humanist strategy have been two related phenomena. First, tactically, Humanists in the schools and universities have omitted firsthand study of the Constitution and Framers' intentions—even in graduate schools. If students were actually required to study *The Federalist* and the Records of the Federal Convention of 1787 (the Constitutional Convention) (edited, in a handy four volume paper edition by Max

Farrand, Yale U. Press, 1966), they might discover that the Framers were far more learned and brilliant than 99 and 44/100% of today's professors. Worse yet, folks would learn principles which are alien to humanistic statism. And worst of all, many would learn to value those principles from a Christian past. Politically, what students don't know won't hurt them—"them" being radicals' plans.

It is a Machiavellian principle that those who would rule the future must capture the past. This, of course, on a deeper level, is precisely what Satan tried to do in tempting our first parents, and what Adam and Eve tried to do in attempting to be as gods (Gen. 3:1-5). Together with the negative assault on the Constitution (taught to un-thinking students as a "positive" contribution) therefore, there developed a corollary strategy of re-founding American government upon some other basis. Enter the Declaration! The strategy of re-founding America upon the basis of the Declaration has been a device of radicals at least since the time of Lincoln (see Gottfried Dietze's quite temperate analysis of Lincoln's treatment of the Constitution in his study of **America's Political Dilemma: From Limited to Unlimited Democracy**, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1968).

Basically, the tactic of the radical Humanists is to remove the rather abstract second paragraph of the Declaration from its historical and documental contexts, remove the clause about all men being created equal from the other clauses in the second paragraph, and then remove all evidences of Christian influence from the entire document. We are told, for example, that Jefferson, who was a Deist, wrote the document, upon the basis of the philosophy of John Locke, who was at least implicitly another Deist. Now, it is neither true that Jefferson alone wrote the document (It was by no means original—see **The Journal of Christian Reconstruction**, Vol. iii, No. 1, Summer, 1976—and it was revised by a committee, and then revised by the whole body some of whom rejected Locke's philosophy). Nor that Locke was a Deist (He was an Arminian Christian, who asserted belief in the infallibility of Scripture and the depravity of man.). Nor is it true that the Declaration is a Deistic document (see **The Journal**). But what the Humanists leave us with is a document canonizing humanist egalitarianism, revolution and statist coercion to achieve **social and economic equality**: a perversion of both the content and the intent of the Declaration, as well as a perversion of biblical principles.

Providential Revisionism vs. Humanist Revisionism

In order to have their political aims of "salvation" via government planning and controls, Humanists must engage in historical revisionism; they must abolish the past by rewriting American History. A "Ministry of Truth," as Orwell noted, is a necessity of modern humanism's direction and content, for it must control the past to control men in the present and the future. The fruit of humanistic historical revisionism it is now obvious, is the moral, cultural, political and economic crisis of survival of liberty in our country. It is a crisis of manifold dimensions and terrors, not the least of which is the threat of God's judgmental destruction of our civilization.

Happily, however, history is not man's story but God's story. We do not yet know God's intentions for American civilization. To the realistic observer, the situation, morally, strategically, militarily, economically and politically, indeed looks grim. But there are signs of hope.

The moral corruption and academic failures of the government schools has produced a gigantic increase in the Christian school movement. The immoral consequences of Humanism have created a massive exodus from the government schools (by Christians, Jews and others), a realization among many Christians of the necessity of education of children in a biblical perspective on all things, and simultaneously created a growing constituency for

tuition tax credits. Statist pressures from federal, state and local governments on Christian schools, frequently in the form of the most absurd perversions of the Constitution and our political tradition, have created a seedbed of potential resistance to humanistic tyranny and the stirrings of political activity for the defense of parents' biblical duties and liberties.

Perhaps the most encouraging sign is that the movement is intellectual, not just political. God has raised up men who are dedicated to uncovering the Christian roots of our American heritage, men who are writing books, recording tapes, founding schools, writing curriculum materials, teaching, preaching, disciplining the leaders of tomorrow. Amidst all this there is a movement toward applying all of Scripture to our individual and cultural problems (II Tim. 3:16), toward a renewed appreciation of the value of God's word in the Old Testament for our lives today, toward a re-thinking of all disciplines, of all areas of life and thought in terms of the infallible word of God.

Christian scholars are laboring successfully to uncover our Christian past from a century of humanistic obscurantism and Christian neglect. R.J. Rushdoony's valuable studies on **This Independent Republic** and **The Nature of the American System** (Craig Press, 1964 and 1965), have been joined by Russell Kirk's massive **The Roots of American Order** (Open Court, 1974), and Peter Marshall and David Manuel's best selling **The Light and the Glory** (Revell, 1977), **The Journal of Christian Reconstruction** (P.O. Box 158, Vallecito, Calif. 95251), and other publications. Nor have Christian writers neglected the present aspect of our duty. Harold O.J. Brown's **The Reconstruction of the Republic** (Arlington House, 1977), Third Century Publishers' **In the Spirit of '76** and **One Nation Under God** (authored by Rus Walton) have been joined by Dr. Don Howard's **Rebirth of Our Nation** (Accelerated Christian Education, 1979) to provide Christians with knowledge of both fundamental theoretical reasons for Christian involvement in politics and practical programs for Christian political victory.

Valuable work is still in process. Dr. M.E. Bradford, of the University of Dallas is working on biographical sketches of the Framers of the Constitution as part of Liberty Press' republication of the valuable but neglected sourcebook on the intentions of those who ratified the Constitution, **Elliott's Debates** (in the state ratifying conventions). His discovery, or recovery of the overwhelming Christian belief of the men who drew up the Constitution—he calculates that of the fifty five men present, only five were possible Deists, while fully thirty were militant Christians and the remainder, while not vocal, were orthodox—will blow humanistic obscurantist revisionism out of the scholarly water.

Not to be outdone, the Institute for Christian Economics' own Dr. Gary North has, by the grace and providence of God, rediscovered a valuable old (1864) work by the Rev. B.F. Morris, **The Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States**. In the future we shall see a number of interesting facts brought to light by this long-neglected work. For the present, let us consider the implication of the material from only the tenth chapter of Morris' work, "Christian Legislation of the Continental Congress; for the reclamation of the American Declaration from under the mountain of pseudo-historical revisionism generated by the labors of generations of humanist scholars.

Humanist radicals, remember, have taught us that the Declaration is both the founding document of America (It isn't, does not claim to be, and cannot be, since it established no government to rule over all Americans, but rather, as Willmoore Kendall said, established "a baker's dozen of new nations." By the way, the Constitution is our truly founding document.) and a humanistic document. By the works of humanistic historical revisionism, we are given a humanistic, egalitarian, implicitly statist "founding,"

based on the Declaration of Independence.

Now, if the Humanists wish to ground their "founding" on an historically and textually uprooted, procrusteanized Declaration, they will have to explain away the actions of the Continental Congress, which officially recognized the Christian religion and incorporated it into their legislative acts, before and after the signing of the Declaration. (We shall take it for granted a fact massively documented by Morris, that it is obvious that the background of America's people and statesmen prior to the Declaration was markedly, overwhelmingly Christian. Future readers of Morris' work will have ample proof of this, and presently available scholarship has rather convincingly testified to the truth of this point, anyway.)

The first act of the First Continental Congress was the passage of a resolution to open the Congress with prayer. Despite the diversity of denominational and religious views represented, Sam Adams, though a well-known foe of prelacy, successfully moved to have the Rev. Mr. Duche say the prayer, because "he was no bigot, and could hear a prayer from a gentleman of piety and virtue, who was at the same time a friend to his country." Adams' remark goes a long way toward explaining the Founders' attitude toward Christianity.

On Saturday, July 15th, 1775, the Congress resolved to attend, as a **body**, both morning and afternoon worship services on the next Thursday.

In September of 1777, the Congress ordered the Committee of Commerce to import twenty thousand Bibles, for use by Americans.

In September of 1781, the Congress in effect acted as a Bible society, recommending to all inhabitants of America an edition of the Bible published at great personal expense by the Rev. Mr. Robert Aitken. The language of the resolution is interesting:

"... Resolved, That the United States, in Congress assembled, highly approve of the pious and laudable undertaking of Mr. Aitken, as subservient to the interests of religion, as well as an instance of the progress of the arts in this country. ... recommend this edition of the Bible to the inhabitants of the United States, and hereby authorize him to publish this recommendation in the manner he shall think proper."

Today our central government funds humanistic studies, excluding, under the guise of "separation of church and state," Christian studies. Humanists can find no precedent for this in the actions of the Continental Congress.

A final illustration is the resolution of Congress on October 12, 1778:

"Whereas true religion and good morals are the only solid foundations of public liberty and happiness:

Resolved, That it be, and it hereby is, earnestly recommended to the several States to take the most effectual measures for the encouragement thereof, and for the suppressing theatrical entertainments, horse-racing, gaming, and such other diversions as are productive of idleness, dissipation, and a general depravity of principles and manners.

Resolved, That all officers in the army of the United States be, and hereby are, strictly enjoined to see that the good and wholesome rules provided for the discountenancing of profaneness and vice, and the preservation of morals among the soldiers, are duly and punctually observed."

We've come a long way, baby, and it hasn't all been uphill!

Even assuming that the Declaration of Independence was influential—it wasn't really very influential—humanistic revisionists will have a difficult time explaining the above events away, once they are known to the public. And there are more such

examples of the conjunction of Christianity and the actions of the early American government.

Not only can the humanistic theory of the Declaration not explain the content of the Declaration and the Christian acts of the Continental Congresses, but it cannot explain the manifold evidence from the governmental record so assiduously compiled by Rev. Morris. If the Declaration and "Revolution" were the work of deistic Humanists, how can one explain the manifest, multitudinous affirmations of reliance upon the blessings and protection of Divine Providence by Washington, and other military leaders, state legislatures, the Continental Congress, state constitutions, resolutions and proclamations before and after the war, and Declaration itself? How can one, on the Deist theory of Humanism, explain the numerous days of public fasting, humiliation, and prayer for forgiveness and deliverance proclaimed by the Continental Congress, state legislatures and governors, the Congress under the Constitution, and (among others) presidents Washington, Adams, Madison and their successors? If America was founded on Deism, why were U.S. presidents sworn into office with the Bible open to Deuteronomy 28? For that matter, why did presidents have to affirm an essentially Christian oath of office? And why were they sworn into office upon the basis of an open Bible?

Why would men who were Deists make obviously Trinitarian statements, if they could get away with panning a deistic Declaration? Why would Deists call on the providence of God to preserve true—Christian—religion, to establish piety and virtue, and to banish vice and irreligion? In fact, why would Deists call on a providential God, anyway? The god of Deism is not a God of Providence. It is Christians, not Deists, who call upon "the Ruler of the universe, beseeching him to diffuse a spirit of universal reformation among all ranks and degrees (Oops! What happened to Equality?) of our citizens, and make us a holy, that we may be a happy, people..." It is Christian statesmen who, in 1782, call upon the Providential God to "take under his guardianship all schools and seminaries of learning, and make them nurseries of virtue and piety; that he would incline the hearts of all men to peace, and fill them with universal charity and benevolence, and that the religion of our Divine Redeemer, with all its benign influences, may cover the earth as the waters cover the seas." (Amillennialists, please note this prayer.)

In light of the historical evidence, the Humanists cannot utilize the Constitution for their radical, anti-Christian ends. Nor will their resort to the Declaration provide them haven for their historical memory hole. For a reading of the Declaration as a whole destroys the attempt to construe it as an endorsement of Humanism (see *The Journal of Christian Reconstruction*, Vol. III, No. 1, Summer, 1976). And rediscovery of the actions of the Continental Congress destroys the possibility of explaining how a body of supposed Deists could give such ready assent to the promotion of True Religion.

The battle for the Declaration, like the battle for the Constitution, is no mere academic controversy. The discerning Christian citizen should ponder the words of Webster, in his address to the New York Historical Society

"If we and our posterity shall be true to the Christian religion,—if we and they shall live always in the fear of God and shall respect his commandments,—if we and they shall maintain just moral sentiments, and such conscientious convictions of duty as shall control the heart and life,—we may have the highest hopes of the future fortunes of our country; and if we maintain those institutions of government, and that political association, we may be sure of one thing, that, while our country furnishes materials for a thousand masters of the historic art, it will be no topic for a Gibbon,—it will have no decline and fall. It will go on prospering and to prosper. But if we and our posterity neglect

religious instruction and authority, violate the rules of eternal justice, trifle with the injunctions of morality, and recklessly destroy the political constitution which holds us together, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us that shall bury all our glory in profound obscurity." (Morris, p. 270)

The providence of God is raising up and equipping new soldiers in the cause of Christ. The reclamation of our Declaration from the clutches of the Humanists is an important step in the reconstruction of our Christian heritage.

SPOIL THE **PAGANS!**: CIRCULAR THINKING AND DOMINION (Knowledge and Politics, Part III)

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But we can learn from church history. And, more importantly, our duty remains the same. We have the same Sovereign Lord and the same command. The pagans have differently titled philosophical religions, but their gods remain as false, their thinking as flawed. Our cause is won, but we need to carry out our orders in order to see victory's fruits. The pagans are without the gates and have left us a gift. It is, to be sure, a pseudo-gift; but perhaps some godly use can be made of it. We cannot remain within our Lord's gates we must deal with the pagans and their horse:

1. First and foremost be Christian% one must begin from faith in the Lord and Saviour who has revealed himself in Scripture.
2. Be rigorously, theologically, instructed by the whole counsel of God (II Tim. 3:16), and be doers of the word, not hearers only (Jas. 1:22).
3. Be **epistemologically** self-conscious—which is a fancy way of saying, know what you're doing—be continuously aware of the intellectual and practical destruction which is latent in all humanistic theories of knowledge. Reason from Scripture alone, prayerfully for the illumination of the Holy Spirit (Who will never contradict Scripture), being careful at all times neither to add to or take away from the doctrines of Scripture (II Tim. 3:15-17; Gal. 1:6, 9; Rev. 22:18, 19). "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. 2:8. Note that the word for "spoil" in this verse means "to lead off as plunder." Our aim is to spoil the pagans, not to have them spoil the kingdom of God.)
4. Keep the Trojan Horae of pagan thought outside the gate; it is accessible that way. But watch it always; keep it **illuminated** by the light of God's word.
5. Approach it fully armed with the Gospel armor (Rom. 13:12; II Cor. 6:7; Eph. 6:11, 13), with the sword of the Lord, His word drawn and ready for use. Do not trust the arm of flesh.
6. Don't approach it alone. Walk in the light of Christ and His word, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Go with other fully armed Christian soldiers, learned in and faithful to the word of God: "in the multitude of counsellors there is safety" (Prov. 11:14).
7. Don't turn your back on the Trojan Horse. Anti-intellectualism is one of the chief sins of today's Church. Scripture does more than reveal the Way to Heaven; it speaks to all of man's life, to every area of concern; it has no dichotomy between theory and practice. Fundamentalism, and Pietist neglect of the whole counsel of God, is responsible, humanly speaking, for driving many intelligent people away from God's word, either openly into the deadly arms of the Humanist, or into the arms of the Modernist and Neo-Orthodox Humanist soldiers inside the Trojan Horse. Christians' neglect of the biblical mandate of godly education for one's children has resulted in surrender of God's children to the Humanist

enemy in government, Private, and many nominally Christian schools and colleges, which in turn has produced our current civilizational crisis, with its attendant threat of God's wrathful judgment. Turning your back on the Horse is the surest way to intellectual schizophrenia, infiltration of the City, and opening the City's gates to barbarian pagan conquest.

8. So examine the Horse thoroughly, but don't forget what it is. See it whole, in its context and in its parts, examine the relationship of its parts to its functioning and structure. Note its strengths and weaknesses. Note the trap door—and guard against surprise attack from it. Note its grandeur, but remember what it really is—a pagan horse, a beautiful, deceitful weapon of stealth, war, plunder, death and destruction.
9. God is indeed a mighty fortress, to Whom we must frequently repair, but send Christian soldiers (join the army yourself,) out after it: and after the rest of the pagans. It is Satan's city, not the City of God, which is on the defensive, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against Christ's Church (Matt. 16:18).
10. Destroy it, piece by piece, vanquishing or taking captive for Christ the pagan soldiers hiding within the hollow horae of pagan thought.
11. **Salvage** what is useful, cleansing it of any Pagan accretions, and reconstruct it into biblically useful forms.
12. Never allow the light of Christ and His word to become obscured or extinguished. Work always in its light.
13. Never put down or **take** off your biblical armor, nor lay down your sword.
14. Sharpen your sword and renew your armor on the Sabbath and in your spare time (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 6 Prov. 1:7-103, etc.); be ever ready for battle. Beware of sneaky "Greeks".
15. Remember that the body of Christ is a division of labor and function. All have socialized tasks to do, and all are to work cooperatively to further the Kingdom of God. All Christians are members of the Body; only Christ is the Head: This is one crucial way to distinguish the Kingdom of God from the kingdoms of men, and this distinction is crucial to maintain if the pagans are not to **infiltrate** the City.
16. Teach your children: what God's word is; what it requires of man; what pagans are; why and how to defeat them for our King. Teach them also the covenantal blessings of godly obedience to His law, as well as the fear of the Lord and of His terrible curses on covenant breakers (Deut. esp. ch. 26).
17. Go and teach all nations to observe all things that He has commanded us to do (Matt. 26:19, 20). For this is not Satan's world, but Christ's all power is given to Him in heaven and in earth (Matt. 28:18 the earth is the Lord's—not the Devil's—and the fullness thereof (Ps. 241)).
18. Follow the law of God, toward all men; rejoice and give thanks in every thing; pray without ceasing and quench not the Spirit (I Thes. 5:15-19). For the victory is not of yourselves, but "it is God's which **worketh** in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13, and 5-13).