

The Tyranny of Secularism

"But it seems that something has happened that has never happened before: though we know not just when, or why, or how, or where. Men have left God not for other gods, they say, but for no god; and this has never happened before."
(T.S. Eliot)

Sixty-one prominent scholars and writers issued a declaration that denounces absolute morality, the recent rise of "Christian fundamentalism." The statement, called "A secular humanist declaration," warns that the reappearance of dogmatic authoritarian religions "threatens intellectual freedom, human rights, and scientific progress." The group assails "fundamentalist, literalist and doctrinaire Christianity; a rapidly growing and uncompromising Moslem clericalism in the Middle East and Asia; the reassertion of orthodox authority by the Roman Catholic papal hierarchy; nationalistic religious Judaism; and the reversion to obscurantist religions in Asia." It also says that it is immoral to "baptize infants, to confirm adolescents, or to impose a religious creed on young people before they are able to consent."

The declaration appeared in the first issue of a secular humanist magazine, "*Free Inquiry*," edited by Dr. Paul Kurtz. In its statement, the group contends that "men and women are free and are responsible for their own destinies and that they cannot look toward some transcendent Being for salvation." Furthermore, it is asserted that supernatural religion and revelation are enemies of rational progress. "We are apprehensive that modern civilization is threatened by forces antithetical to reason, democracy and freedom." The group confesses their faith in the "scientific method" as the most reliable way of understanding the world.

What is secular humanism? It is a way of life and interpretation of life that embraces only the natural order of things. It believes that neither God nor the realm of spiritual reality are necessary for life and thought. Secular humanists call for greater personal freedom and a responsibility that goes along with such freedom. Such secularism is also the authority by which individuals are guided in the choices they must make. Autonomous man decides the values of man, what is morality and interprets the meaning of history. With this philosophy there is nothing that prevents the take over by some kind of ideology that can bring subjection to tyranny.

Secular humanism claims that as a philosophy it favours exclusion of religion in making moral and political decisions. But man cannot eradicate religion. Human beings are ineradicably religious and, therefore, the secularization process only produces a new form of idolatry. In our modern age, this idolatry has taken different forms, ranging from the worship of the state to astrology. During the early years of the French revolution, the Commune, the Jacobins, the Girondins, and the Montagnards all hoped that devotion to the young republic would become the religion of the people, that the new Trinity Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity would replace the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and the

furtherance of this new Trinity could be made the overriding aim of the social order and the final test of morality.

How tolerant was the secular religion of the French revolution? It tried to de-Christianize France. Joseph Fouche (1759-1820), prominent leader in the reign of Terror, minister of police under the Directory and the servant of Napoleon and Louis XVIII, issued rigorous rules for the clergy. They were not allowed to wear clerical dress, or perform religious ceremonies outside their churches, and must marry. He abolished Christian funeral services and cemeteries had to display an inscription telling the public that "death is an eternal sleep." So much for enlightened rationalistic secular tolerance!

Who were some of the co-signers of the "Secular humanist declaration?" Dr. Henry Morgenthauer from Montreal, the physician who became famous for his abortion practices; Dr. Joseph Fletcher, a theologian at the University of the Virginia Medical School, who became one of the most influential spokesmen for "situation ethics." He believes that "the ruling norm of Christian decision is love: nothing else." He says that love dictates abortion on the ground that no unwanted or unintended baby should be allowed to live. He declares that: "Whether any form of sex – hetero, homo, or auto – is good, depends on whether love is served."

Dr. B.F. Skinner, the noted retired Harvard psychologist, is well-known for his anti-Christian views. For Skinner, man is only the product of conditioning, a collection of what has been in the past: your genetic makeup and your environment. Dr. Francis Schaeffer comments about Skinner's behaviourist school of psychology: "Man is accepted as a machine, and he is treated as a machine. Such professionals are there by the hundreds, some of them with understanding, some of them with power, some of them only in little places. In some places they control the educational process down into the earliest days of school."

Secularism is the enemy of Biblical Christianity. The Christian life is based on the Word of God and directed to God's glory. Satan will try to destroy this God-centred living. God is not satisfied with partial service. Because He is God, He demands our complete surrender. He alone wants to have the first and the last word. He doesn't like to share Himself with anyone or anything else. Secular humanism doesn't liberate, but enslaves. Jesus said: "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31).

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