



# COMMENTARY



## Point/Counterpoint

# I pledge allegiance, to the flag ... Trust in God's morals

Only in a country that has strayed from its roots could a judge strike down as unconstitutional the phrase "under God." This latest liberal effort to separate this Union from its beginning and its people from the real Constitution should make every true American outraged — not only at those judges, but at ourselves that we have let such un-American foolishness go on for so long.

For a long time in American history, the courts held that this was a Christian nation. Therefore, to be "under God" was and is an American belief. It was this very view of existence — being "under God" — that compelled the Founding Fathers to take the action of structuring a constitutional republic.

This nation has given greater freedom and liberty to its people than any other country in history. I do not mean freedom from moral restraint, but liberty within the confines of doing what pleases The One True God.

Our governmental system, known as a constitutional republic, was specifically constructed on Christian principles. James Madison said these words:

"We have staked the whole future of American civilization, not upon the power of government, far from it! We have staked the future of all of our political institutions upon the capacity of mankind for self-government; upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the ten commandments of God."

In these words, Madison not only describes principled politics — i.e., to govern yourself by moral principle — but he also describes the absolute necessity for each of the nation's citizens to order their lives in such a manner. This constitutional republic could only come about and can only be maintained when people put Christian moral principle over all other concerns.

The Founding Fathers, like all of us, were not perfect, but you don't have to be perfect in

### GUEST COMMENTARY

**Lon Mabon**

order to aspire to it. They attempted to order their lives by moral principle and they built this nation on these same principles. It was a life and a nation "under God." Thus, they wrote a Constitution likewise "under God."

Patrick Henry confirms this truth:

"It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but Christians, not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ!"

Today, many people openly advocate ungodly principles, while others who say they hold to the Christian principles of our Founding Fathers act and vote as if they didn't. We must believe in the Constitution as our Founding Fathers wrote and meant it, and that means it is based on Christian moral principle.

For those of you that have bought the liberal ACLU lie called "the separation of Church and state," hear what John Quincy Adams said:

"The highest glory of the American revolution was that it connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity."

Some people may refuse to believe it, and some may even teach others that it was not so, but this attempt to rewrite history does not alter the truth; it only reveals what set of principles is guiding your own life.

We must not let revisionists, even if they wear black robes, rewrite history or the Constitution. It is the only civil document we have that guarantees our God-given rights. And the power of the Constitution is our resource to keep it powerful.

"Under God" is a good place to be. He can be trusted with our lives and our country.

Lon Mabon is the chairman of the Oregon Citizens Alliance. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

# Leave God out of it

Now we have truly entered the era of ultra-patriotism-or-else. Immediately on the heels of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals' decision that the words "under God" make school recitation of the pledge of allegiance unconstitutional, national leaders frothed at the mouth with condemnation.



**Michael J. Kleckner**  
Editor in chief

"Just nuts," was the response from Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D. "This is the worst kind of political correctness run amok," Sen. Kit Bond, R-Mo., said. And a spokesman for President George W. Bush, leader of the fight against "terrah," said it was "ridiculous."

Wait a minute. If I do not pledge that my country is "under God," an idea wholly

unprovable and subject to myriad interpretations and permutations, depending on one's religion, somehow I am a ridiculous, unpatriotic PC nut?

I beg to differ. If there were one facet of America to stand out as truly patriotic, it would be my right to pledge loving allegiance to my country without having any state employee or government agency tell me whether or not I ought to believe in God.

The fervent appeals to tradition brought forth in the wake of the decision sound eerily like, "We've always discriminated against non-believers. Do you want us to stop now and destroy this great country?"

Our elected officials' responses are proof that Judge Alfred T. Goodwin — in the interest of full disclosure, he is an Oregon Daily Emerald alumni — was correct in his ruling.

We need to be protected from the tyranny of politicians who don't want to seem soft on "terrah." Somehow patriotism, desperate flag-waving and the quest to stop al-Qaida are all wrapped up together in the response. It's frighteningly reminiscent, in fact, of the early 1950s, when patriotism,

desperate flag-waving and the quest to stop "godless communists" were hopelessly tangled.

Back then, the government inserted the words "under God" into the pledge in the hopes that blind propaganda would make more people believers and would protect us from the scourge of Godlessness. Instead, it encouraged the McCarthy-ites to continue their witch hunts.

I'd be happier if we were protected from the scourge of unethical business decisions and the immoral looting of low-income workers. Belief in God doesn't instantly make you a good person — look at Enron or WorldCom if you need proof.

And now, Paul Greenberg, editorial page editor for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, has made the national panic even worse. In a column, Greenberg asks if the "little plaintiff in this case (couldn't) just leave out those two words when she recites the pledge?"

In a word, no. And she shouldn't have to. The unfathomable gall of the religious defenders absolutely amazes me. Why should it be my burden to ignore the government-sanctioned acknowledgment of some God?

Why don't we *all* just leave the words out, and then I won't have to feel like a second-class citizen simply because I won't join a God club. Everyone who wants God in our pledge can simply *insert* those words when they recite.

None of this is "political correctness." It is simply offensive that I be required to say I believe in God when I pledge to my flag. It is offensive that my currency trusts in God even if I do not. It is offensive that my representatives have to be blessed by someone's God before they begin government business. Remove it all.

Freedom in America should mean something more than blind adherence to tradition or angry political posturing. No one's religion is threatened by the Circuit Court's decision. In fact, it strengthens everyone's right to be patriotic.

Contact the editor in chief at editor@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

### CORRECTION

Thursday's summer movie preview ("Summer crop of blockbusters offers good, bad and stupid," ODE, June 27) incorrectly identified M. Night Shyamalan's second film. The movie's title was "Unbreakable." The Emerald regrets the error.

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