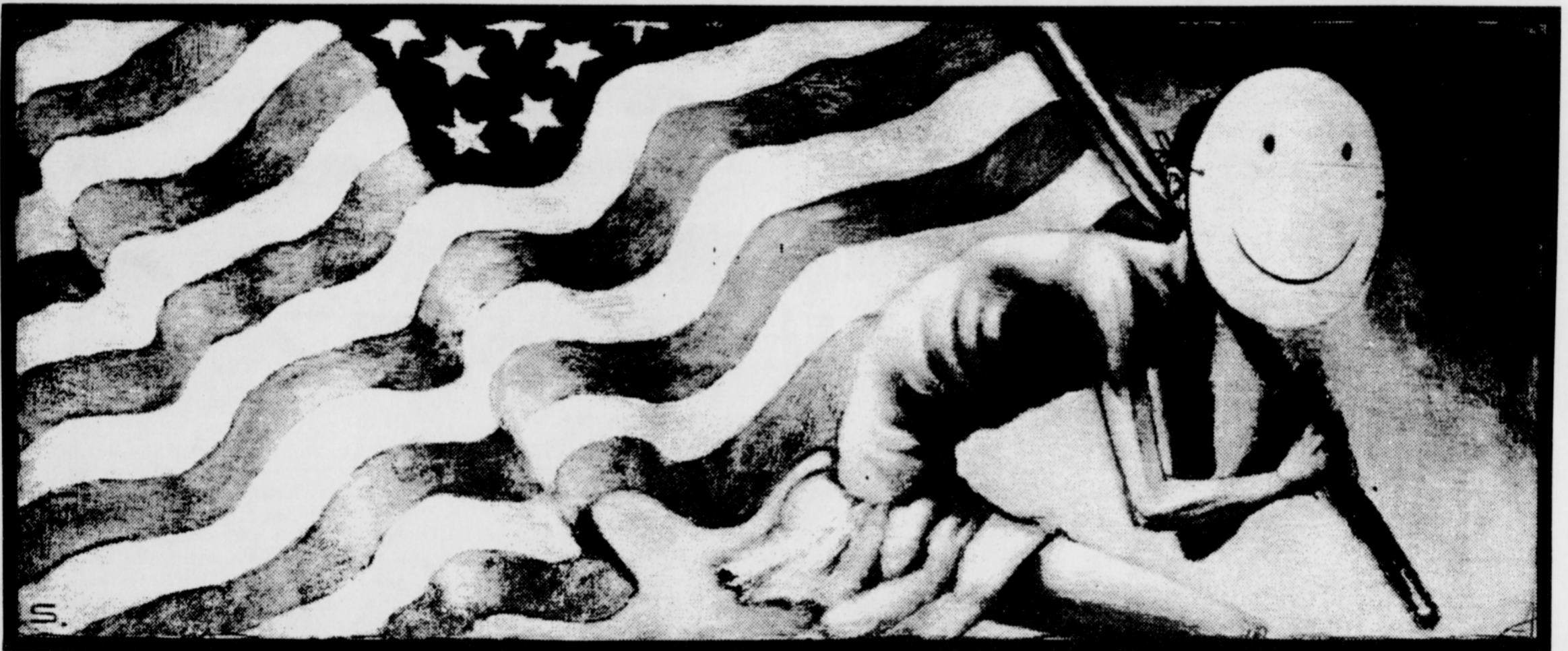




*In a dark time the eye begins to see.  
- Theodore Roethke*



DAVID SHANNON

# NEVER ON BENDED KNEE

BY CONNIE KIMBLE

DECLARATION OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS Appendix A  
#12 — That the freedom of the press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty and can never be restrained but by despotic governments.

THE FEDERAL BILL OF RIGHTS Appendix B  
Article I — Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment or religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievance.

Article IX — The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

The New York Times, June 22, 1990  
"AMENDMENT TO BAR FLAG DESECRATION FAILS IN THE HOUSE"

"The proposal, strongly supported by President Bush, would have amended the Constitution to allow prosecution of those who deface or destroy the flag."

"... may be only a prelude to an intense battle in the Congressional campaigns this fall."

Daniel 1:6-7

At some point in my years of both spiritual and worldly education, I came to understand the "Life" of Free Will. Granted by God given right. Free Will maintains choice. I also have been taught by various public educators that the foundation of the American Constitution was laid down by both idealistic and realistic individuals who desired to base this nation's government on that very precept. Hence the law of the land which upholds the right to free speech and dissent. Recognizing the world and politics for their corrupt and flawed natures, our forefathers designed the best they could an ironclad (they hoped) vehicle for the making of a good and free country. Somewhere between then and now the United States has lost sight of that inspiration.

We have now men and women who would worship a nation and deify a symbol. These persons would have it become law that I must also worship their confusion of State for God. I am reminded of a Sunday school story that many will remember.

The story was about a powerful King and three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednigo. Odd, I do not remember the King's name. I do recall this King had a sidekick who whispered seeds into the King's ear that made him think he was mighty and wonderful. So wonderful in fact, that they — They! — decided to make a new law. Everyone had to bow to the King. No disrespect, no dissent allowed. Failure to comply with this edict carried a penalty of death. Now, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednigo were righteous men who loved God. They were strong, good men, and they did not believe in giving honor to a kingdom. They refused to bow: not to a symbol, not to a King, not to a law. This made the King sore at heart. He did

not want to kill the spirit of these three men. However, a few jealous men used words and emotion and nationalistic pride and politicked to force the issue. They pressured the King to toss Shadrach, Meshach and Abednigo into a very large and fiery furnace. I leave you to research the end of the story. The point is... I don't have to respect or bow

## SONS OF LIBERTY

Two hundred and fourteen years ago, on July 2, 1776, a small group of terrorists betrayed their country and vowed to commit any and all acts of violence and treason which they claimed would be necessary to separate from their government. Two days later, on July 4, they publicly declared their intention of betrayal and categorically stated their reasons for turning against their country — and they threatened to murder or otherwise terrorize all who did not join with them.

They first began their terrorist acts several years before. They burned, looted, tortured, murdered, kidnapped and held hostage representatives and supporters of their government. They ambushed and killed soldiers and policemen.

Numerous attempts at negotiation only increased their demands and brutality, until finally the previous year, in April 1775, they committed open rebellion by attacking government forces sent to protect loyal citizens from their terrorism.

The terrorists cloaked their atrocities and treachery with a specious document that claimed the support of God and the sympathy of humanity. They named their perfidious seditious a Declaration of Independence.

— MICHAEL PAUL McCUSKER

to a symbol, a piece of cloth, a President or King. I choose my worship carefully and for my own reason, and I maintain my right to dissent and petition for change in worldly government. It is a true shame that such basic rights should come into question in this place and time.

In the midst of support for the current liberation of the communist bloc our leaders begin to suppress in our country various forms of public dissent. It seems that each day brings a new loss of worldly freedoms; censorship of print and airwaves, broadened police, corporate and government powers over individual freedoms. The country seems desperate in a rapidly changing world to hold onto an illusion of nationalistic supremacy, and will allow the root freedoms that underly the national spirit to wither and die.

I do not mean this as an attack upon those who love their place of birth and regard the flag as a reminder of their birthright. I do not mind when they stand to attention when the flag passes by in a parade, or when a hand covers a heart at its raising. I am not far removed from them. But I would say to any who are ready to burn me because I do not choose honor their particular symbol, that they ought to examine the contradictions and hypocrisy of their priorities.

Words, ideas, laws, art, symbols: none must be suppressed, and none should ever become idols. This I know. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednigo told me so.

Connie Kimble lives in Astoria.