

THERE IS NO GOD BUT LIBERALISM, AND OBAMA IS ITS PROPHET[©]

Lionel Tiger (*WSJ* 3/27-8/10) asserts, “80% of human beings are associated with one or another of the [world’s] 4,200 religions” and that “Far more likely than [conversion to religion] is that their faith emerges from the group with which they are affiliating. . .” Enlightened by Tiger’s perspicacity, I postulate that Liberalism is a religion.

Religion noun: a personal or institutional set of attitudes, beliefs, and practices; a cause, principle or system of beliefs held to with great ardor, zeal and faith.

My purpose here is not normative, but descriptive. I disparage none of the 4,200. Rather, I hypothesize that Liberalism—significant government control over individual liberty—is in fact a religion. Though most Liberals are reportedly secular, how better to understand their words and deeds, so well dissected by Thomas Sowell, *The Vision of the Anointed*, documented by Bernard Goldberg, *A Slobbering Love Affair*, and epitomized by Chris Mathews “a thrill runs up my leg”?

It is dauntingly difficult to constructively debate religious beliefs. Those challenged *know* that at best the debater is un(or mis)informed; at worst, deranged and/or morally bankrupt. To test my point here, consider the reaction of a fundamentalist Christian to the assertion that the Bible is not inerrant, or that of an extreme Muslim to the claim that cartoons mocking Mohammed are free-speech protected. Compare such reactions to contemporary words and deeds of extreme Liberals: the Black Panther nightstick incident; SEIU members beating of a tea-partier; the University of Ottawa student/faculty reaction to a scheduled Ann Coulter speech.

Of course, most religionists do not go to such lengths. But the boundary between productive religious debate and hate speech/violence has too often been breeched: Roman crucifixion of Jesus, the Crusades, Puritanism, Nazism, Jihadism. I believe that Liberalism by any name—Theocracy, Liberation Theology, Marxism, Fascism, Socialism, Communism—practiced by extremists fits without doubt the definition of religion. Even with the best of intentions, “mainstream” Liberalism—progressivism, center-left, democratic socialism—has an inherent proclivity to view its tenets as given by God.

Consider how difficult is civil debate on such current Liberal beliefs as deficit-deepening entitlements, man-made global warming, Israeli/Palestinian equality, or denial of American exceptionalism. Are such Liberal positions approaching the boundary?

No, not yet in America do we have widespread Liberal hate speech/violence. But we Americans do honor the separation of church and state. That separation was breeched in World War II—Nazis preached *Gott Mit Uns* and the emperor was worshipped in Japan. Today Iran is ruled by theocracy and Dear Leader Kim Jong-Il is worshipped in North Korea. So, if my hypothesis that Liberalism is a religion is correct, what becomes of

church/state separation in America? What can non-believers in Liberalism like myself do?

Well, I am an economist. Thus, I know that, in general, monopoly is bad; competition good. Our Founding Fathers confounded the church/state monopoly of King George III by designing competition into government: checks and balances among government institutions, and competition among religions (including non-belief—Atheism) by prohibiting establishment of a single state religion.

I therefore advocate that we non-believers—Conservatives and Republicans—civily, respectfully compete with Liberalism for personal and economic liberty: free minds and free markets. Ronald Reagan, in my view, provided our competitive direction in his 1964 speech *A Time for Choosing*: “You and I are told we must choose between a left and a right, but I suggest there is no such thing as a left or a right. There is only up or down. Up to man’s age-old dream, the maximum of individual freedom consistent with order, or down to the ant heap of totalitarianism.”

To follow Reagan in competing with Liberalism, we must integrate the thinking of scholars (Friedman, Hayek, Sowell, Schumpeter and of course Adam Smith) and the preaching of religious leaders (the Pope, the Dalai Lama, Rick Warren, Joel and Victoria Osteen, et. al.) with the actions of such public officials and figures (mentioned here without their knowledge or assent, but with great respect) as Senators Jim DeMint and Tom Coburn, Congressmen Ron Paul and Eric Cantor, pundits Charles Krauthammer and Andrew Napolitano, and politicians Mitt Romney and Mike Huckabee, among many others. And we must do so with religious-like zeal and fervor.

My closing benediction is from Nobelist Gary Becker (also 3/27-8/10 *WSJ*): “Liberty can’t be bought on the cheap. But it’s not a hopeless fight . . .not by any means. I remain basically an optimist.”

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