

“I pledge allegiance to the flag...”

On June 26, 2002, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals held that the words “under god,” added to the nation’s pledge of allegiance in 1954 during the communist scare, render the pledge unconstitutional in our public schools. The Supreme Court decided last week that it will review the case and will probably decide it by next June. If the question today were whether to add the words “under god” to the pledge, rather than take them back, there would be no real debate. Nor if we were just now considering adding “in god we trust” to our currency. Or proposing to place the words “god is great” in the middle of Old Glory. It all comes down to the argument, or apology, “this is the way we’ve always done it,” or something about a “time-honored tradition.” Whenever you hear these words, you know there’s a problem.

The problem is not only that we tell our children every school day for twelve years from the time they’re six to assume and recite the existence of a god – yahveh, jesus, allah, marduk, ishtar, choose your poison. The problem is also that the daily recitation in the pledge of allegiance, “one nation under god,” sears into the mushy consciousness of youth the idea that yahveh, jesus, allah, marduk, ishtar, whatever, has specially chosen this nation above all others.

The concept of “one nation under god” has disrupted humanity for over 6,000 years and threatens today to destroy everything that our species has ever accomplished. When a president, king or ayatollah says he’s been chosen by his god to crusade against evil, we shouldn’t be surprised when the first thing he does is start a war. It is more than suspicious that those who take this god thing seriously today are the most likely to push for war to spread the American way, blow themselves up in crowds or fly airplanes into public buildings.

There are no atheists in a foxhole. They’re mostly Christians, Muslims and Jews trying to kill each other.

Gods have been patron gods from the beginning. For thousands of years, a god was like a flag – when the people were accepted, their god was added to the flagpole. Then someone decided that his god was the only one. The idea spread. Believers pretend that their god is everyone’s, but they don’t really believe it and they have never acted like it. The christian, jewish, and islamic gods choose their people today as they always have.

Why do alleged liberty-loving people oblige their children to pledge allegiance to anything, god or no god, every school day? This is the tactic of a dictator or an ayatollah. The Supreme Court held in 1943, before “under god” was added, that public schools cannot require children to recite the pledge, saying: “If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion, or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein.” (The objection came from a religious group who cited the commandment in Exodus, Chapter 20, Verses 4 and 5, against bowing to graven images.) Nevertheless, a majority of the states require it.

“I pledge allegiance” is the most absurd sound ever uttered by a six-year-old. Webster’s defines allegiance as “the relationship of a vassal to his feudal lord.” Synonyms are devotion, fealty,

loyalty, and obedience. The German translation is “Treue,” the foremost Prussian virtue. To pledge means to “bind to the performance of some engagement or obligation by giving a pledge or security; to engage solemnly.” The strategy is timeless – have your kids pledge fealty every day from the time they can speak, “allah akhbar,” “heil hitler,” “father, son and holy ghost,” “I pledge allegiance to the flag...one nation under god,” pound it into their brains before they have a clue.

The first words in every classroom in America should be, “Children, today we will learn...”