



Religion, Cause of Perilous Times - Privilege Without Responsibility

General Douglas MacArthur on June 2, 1931 made this speech based on the fact that 19,372 clergymen were opposed at that time to any form of military activity and wanted the military abolished and this country disarmed. MacArthur at that time was Chief of Staff in this country (1930-35). As Chief of Staff, he felt some responsibility to answer these clergymen.

“My predominant feelings with reference to the majority of replies received from your paper by 19,372 clergymen is that of surprise. Surprise that the knowledge of so many of our clergymen of our country have placed themselves on record as repudiating in advance the constitutional obligations that will fall upon them equally with all other elements of our citizenship in supporting this country in case of need.

To exercise privilege without assuming attendant responsibility and obligation is to occupy a position of license, a position sought by men who apparently do not hesitate to avail themselves of the privileges conferred by our democracy upon its citizens, but who in effect proclaimed their willingness to see this nation perish, rather than participate in its defense.

The question of war and peace is one that rests under our form of government in Congress. And exercising this authority, Congress voices the will of the majority whose right to rule is the cornerstone upon which our governmental edifice is built. Under the constitution, its pronouncement upon such an issue is final and is obligatory upon every citizen of the United States. That men who wear the cloth of the church should openly defend repudiation of the laws of the land with the necessary implications and ramifications arising from such a general attitude towards our statutes seems to me almost unbelievable.

It will certainly hearten every potential or actual criminal and malefactor who either has, or contemplates breaking some law. It apparently stamps the clergyman as a leading exponent of law violation at individual pleasure.

I am mindful of the right accorded to every American citizen to endeavor by lawful means to secure such changes in the constitution or statutes as he may desire, but to concede to him the right to defy existing laws, to recognize a state of anarchy and collapse of properly constituted authority is not right.

May I remark also, that if we acknowledge the prerogative of the individual to disregard the obligations placed upon him by American citizenship, it seems only logical to ask him to forgo all rights guaranteed by such citizenship. It also surprises me that, while apparently entering a plea for freedom of conscience, these clergymen are attempting to dictate to the conscience of those who honestly differ from them over questions of national defense.

Their sentiments and implied efforts are injecting the church into the affairs of state and endangering the very principles that they claim to uphold.

Perhaps the greatest privilege of our country which indeed was the genius of its foundation is religion freedom. Religious freedom however can only exist so long as governments survive. To render our country helpless would invite destruction not only of our political and economic freedom but also our religious freedom.

Another surprise comes in the revelation that so many clergymen seem to be unfamiliar with the struggle of mankind for the free institutions which we enjoy. The Magna Charta, the Declaration of Independence, the Emancipation of the rights of Small Nations, and other birthrights of this generation



have been bought with a high price of human suffering and human sacrifice, much of it on the fields of battle.

I'm surprised that men of clear and logical minds confuse defensive warfare with the disease which it alone can cure when all other remedies have failed. Do they not know that police systems in our national defenses are the human agencies made necessary by the deep-seated disease of individual depravity; the menace of greed and of personal hatred.

Should not these clergymen turn their attention to the individual sinner and rid the country of crime rather than attack the national keepers of peace, the most potent government agency yet devised for this purpose (military).

It is a distinct disappointment to know that men who are called to wield the sword of the Spirit are deluded into believing that the mechanical expedient of disarming men will transform hatred into love and selfishness into altruism.

May I also express surprise that some have lost sight of the fact that in one of our past wars have clergymen been required to bear arms, and under the terms of the Geneva Convention ratified by the United States in 1907 Chaplains are non-combatants and are not authorized to bear arms. And if the US Army chaplains are ever guilty of using inflammatory propaganda such activity is without warrant or authority by any statute or order ever promulgated in the history of his country.

I am curious to know how many of the clergymen who voted for the League of Nations have read the articles and understand that under them that the peace of the world is to be maintained in the last analysis by an armed military force. It is difficult to reconcile the faith of these people in the efficacy of newly organized international agencies to keep the peace and enforce respect for international covenants with their self-confessed intention to violate the existing laws of their long established government.

A few questions occur to me that could appropriately be asked the clergymen who replied to your questionnaire. In stating that they were in favor of the United States taking the lead in reducing armament, even if compelled to make greater proportionate reductions than other countries - would they be willing to do this if they knew that the existing total of our land forces including Regular Army, National Guard, and organized reserves is about 1/3rd of 1% of our regular population.

Did they know that in other great countries, except Germany (1931) whose army is limited by treaty, this ratio is from 3 to 45 times as great. Did they know our total forces in actual size are exceeded by those of at least 15 other nations, although in population we are exceeded only by Russia, China, and India?

Finally, did they consider the words of our Lord as given in the 21st verse of the 11th chapter of St. Luke, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." In all modesty may I not say to the opponents of our national defense that our Lord who preached the Sermon on the Mount later in His career declared, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I am come not to send peace, but a sword." Matthew 10:34.

It is my humble belief that the relation which He came to establish is based upon sacrifice . . . then He goes on and applies . . . that men and women who follow in His train are called by it to the defense of certain priceless principles even at the cost of their own lives. I can think of no principles no more high and holy than those for which our national sacrifices have been made in the past.

History teaches us that Christianity and patriotism have always gone hand in hand while atheism has



been invariably accompanied by radicalism, communism, bolshevism, and other enemies of free government. Have not those who oppose our modest and reasonable efforts for national defense miscalculated the temper and innate spirit of patriotism in the average American.

The fact that our Citizen's Military Training Camps are oversubscribed long before the opening of the camps comfort me that patriotism is still dominant in the land. (1931)

Any organization which opposes the defense of homeland and the principles hallowed by the blood of our ancestors which sets up internationalism in the place of patriotism, which teaches the passive submission of right to the forces of predatory strong, cannot prevail against the demonstrated staunchness of our position. I confidently believe that a red-blooded virile human which loves peace devotedly but is willing to die in the defense of the right is a Christian from center to circumference and will continue to be dominant in the future as in the past."

Why are clergymen this way? Because of religion! Because the thinking of this country is trained by religion. Because our educational system from the first grade through the college level is influenced by liberalism, the social action concept, the whole bit that MacArthur warns us about is here again, only with much greater intensity this time.

Frankly, things are so bad right now, our only hope is a resurgence of positive volition toward Bible doctrine. Even a conversion of clergy would help. It would help even if the clergymen who are converted could give the plan of salvation accurately and learn five basic doctrines.

In the meantime, our high schools are filled with kids experimenting with all kinds of drugs. In the meantime, there is a fantastic reaction to authority and its order. The Word of God taught is the answer to our problems. Then, it must be applied. 2 Tim. 3:8-13.

"Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith. But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all, just as Jannes's and Jambres's folly was also. Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived." (2 Timothy 3:8-13, NASB)

We have religion as the cause of perilous times. Perilous times is the coming of the fifth cycle of discipline or the destruction of a national entity. Religion was the great hang-up in the days of Paul and also in the days of Moses. Moses was the greatest man in the Old Testament field of Bible teaching, Paul in the New Testament. They both had considerable opposition.

Religion has always been the devil's ace for opposition to Bible doctrine. Moses and Paul were communicators as well as vehicles for the human authorship of some of the Scriptures. 2 Timothy 3:8 deals with opposition to Moses and to Paul and the source of that opposition to both men was religion. Paul had nothing to hide in his life. His invisible Christianity is visible in all for vindication purposes. Religion is the biggest con-game ever devised by the human race, of course, instigated by Satan.