

What Your Teacher *Probably* Won't Tell You About The Pledge of Allegiance



You have said it in school many, many, times. You have heard it at public gatherings from time to time. It sounds like such a nice affirmation of patriotism. Everybody says it, so...

Oh, wait; you have heard that some people refused to say the Pledge. You may have questioned their patriotism. You may have wondered why. This pamphlet will help you to understand some of the controversy behind the Pledge.

Why Do Some People Refuse to Recite The Pledge Allegiance?

There are a variety of reasons. Some people refuse to recite the Pledge on religious grounds. Others refuse to say the Pledge because it refers to God. Some people have ties to other nations and feel that such a pledge would be inappropriate. There are a number of other reasons as well.

However, some people object to the fact that information in the Pledge is completely erroneous and may even have ties to things patently un-American. They view it as a sham and even a government propaganda tool.

Isn't the Pledge an Affirmation that America is Under Divine Guidance?

No, in fact the words "under God" were only added in 1954 to cover up what was an otherwise clearly socialist message dating back to 1892. The Pledge had been a controversial statement from the start. Congress officially adopted the Pledge in 1942, but it had been recited in most schools long before that.

The mid-1950s was a watershed period of time in American history for many issues of faith and morality. At that time, no Roman Catholic had ever been President and few held high posts in U.S. government, in spite of the fact that they comprised a large portion of the American population. Organizations such as the ACLU were pushing to promote their atheist agenda in the courts. Evangelism was promoting the Gospel message to the masses in many new ways. The modern nation of Israel was less than a decade old, emerging from the ashes of the Nazi attempt to exterminate the Jewish people.

Amidst all this turmoil America's electorate clung to their Judeo-Christian values, having emerged for World War II and the faith revival that era had spawned. Could you image a popular song called "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition"? It may sound like a joke today, but it was quite a hit during World War II and still popular with many about the time the words "under God" were added to the Pledge.

So, What is the Pledge Allegiance?

Francis Bellamy, a socialist from Rome, New York wrote the Pledge in 1892. It was immediately promoted to schoolchildren as a secular creed. It makes several points that were in direct contradiction to the principles upon which the United States had been founded. While the wording has changed slightly over the years, the current version is worth examining.

1. *“I pledge allegiance to the flag”* - is nothing more than a statement of what the Bible calls “idolatry.” Pledging to an object or symbol is patently idol worship.

2. *“and to the Republic”* - It is good that they still considered America to have a republican form of government. America is not a republic, but a Union of Republics. Article VI, Section 4 of the United States Constitution guarantees that each state shall have a Republican form of government. Referring to the U.S. as a “Republic” is a gross violation of Article VI, Section 4.

3. *“for which it stands”* - is an empty attempt to link the idolatry to mere symbolism. However, if the flag stands for a singular Republic rather a system of government guarantying each State its own Republic, the flag itself would be an unconstitutional symbol contrary to the principles of the Founding Fathers.

4, *“one nation”* - This is clearly a myth; “America” is anything but one nation. A nation is a people of a specific ethnic identity. People of an American Indian tribe are a nation. The rest of us are from some foreign nation. There is a popular myth that America is melting pot, but look around you. We are different people north and south. We have ethnic neighborhoods within our cities. Some mix well with peoples of other ethnicities; some do not. We have been pretending for years that we are one people, yet ethnic organizations are as popular as ever. And they should be, as we all should be proud of our individual ethnic heritage whatever it may be.

5. *“indivisible”* - We are divisible and hopefully always will be. Recently, we have divided ourselves into “red States” and “blue States.” Since America was founded, we have divided States geographically. Many Americans believe in the right of secession. Many honor their ancestors’ sacrifice fighting for the right of secession in either the Continental military or the Confederate military. So, like “one nation,” America’s “indivisible” nature is a mere myth.

6. *“with liberty and justice for all.”* - Those are nice words. All governments should seek to promote justice to some degree. However, justice is a relative concept. Many of our laws give some people the right to come to a court and get a judgment, but one man’s justice is another man’s injustice. We all seek justice, but we should be a cautious about the word justice in any document written by a socialist.

The word “liberty” is likewise a worthy goal. We should be careful not to confuse liberty with license to do what we please. As every child reciting the Pledge knows well, he does not have the liberty to leave class whenever he wants. Our liberties are linked to responsibilities.

Why Would America Embrace a Pledge that a Socialist Wrote?

Looking back to 1892, the U.S. was looking to restore a very fragmented society. The South had been decimated in the War Between the States and ravaged by the occupation known as “Reconstruction.” It was in economic turmoil. The newly emerging system of finance left debt-ridden farms at odds with the Eastern establishment and seeking silver-backed money to elevate their economic woes. Immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe seemed to be threatening the radically alter American culture.

The temptation to completely ignore the Constitutional system of individual sovereign States had never been greater. Leftist ideas, such as anarchism, socialism and communism were reaching an all time high. Socialists were beginning to gain popularity at the poles and seemed like a party as legitimate as the Democrats and Republicans.

In those days, some socialist also considered themselves “Christians” in addition to being socialists. They preached a ‘social gospel” viewed Jesus’ messages of compassion as a Godly endorsement of earthly socialism. In fact, Bellamy was a Baptist minister as well as a socialist.

How Has the Pledge Allegiance Changed Over the Years?

At first, the Pledge was only to the “flag and the Republic.” Later, language was added to clarify “of the United States” and later further clarified as “of America.” Many political bodies are republics and other countries, such as Mexico, consider themselves to be “united states.” No other language was added until “under God” in 1955.

Yet, there was one subtle change instituted in the late 1930s that you cannot hear. For years, the Pledge had been recited with the socialist salute of the right arm stretched forward. As the Great Depression of the 1930s emerged, support for socialism and even communism was never higher in America. Yet, during the 1930s, the arm-stretched socialist salute was removed from the Pledge and children were told to place their hand over their chest during the entire pledge.

Why Was the Socialist Salute removed from the Pledge Allegiance?

The answer comes from across the Atlantic Ocean. Today, we think of socialism and communism as close cousins. However, in the 1930s, there was a form of socialism known as “national socialism” that sought to distinguish itself from communism. The national socialist, also known as Nazis, came to power in Germany during the 1930s. The raised right arm of the socialist salute was an integral gesture to open display of Nazism.

Early in the 1930s, some prominent Americans including Joseph Kennedy, Sr. and Charles Lindbergh were supportive of the Hitler’s Nazi Party. However, as their aggressive intentions in Europe became apparent, Americans’ ties with the Nazis became difficult to justify. So, the socialist salute was removed from the Pledge.

Can I Refuse to Say the Pledge at My School?

Yes, you have the right to free speech and the right to have your own opinions. However, be prepared for some pressure from your teacher and principal if you do. Also, be prepared for some peer pressure.

It is probably a good idea to have your parents’ support first. If you can’t make your case for resisting the Pledge to your parents, you may have considerable trouble explaining your position at school.

-By T.V. Weber, author of *The Crumbling Wall Against Tyranny*

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