

The Legal Light

The J. Reuben Clark Law Society, Orange County Chapter
September, 2004 Volume V

A Big Fan

By Don D. Sessions
Chair of the Orange County Chapter

For almost three decades, I have been an enthusiastic fan of John Welch. As you know, he will speak at our annual dinner on the topic, "Law in the New Testament," on September 17.



While serving a mission in Germany in the sixties, he discovered chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. He studied at Oxford University, as well as Duke Law School. He formerly practiced with O'Melveny & Myers. In 1979, founded the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies ("FARMS"), which supports and confirms the validity of the Book of Mormon. Its publications are absolutely fascinating. Its work continues what Hugh Nibley started in scholarly research and validation of our Scriptures.

John Welch became editor of the Collected Works of Hugh Nibley. He was on the Board of Directors for the Encyclopedia of Mormonism. He was Editor-in-Chief of BYU Studies, the premier LDS scholarly journal. He has authored numerous books and articles, especially on ancient legal and literary elements in the Book of Mormon.

Besides all that, he has had time to be a Bishop twice and in a Stake Presidency. Over the years, his insights validating our beliefs have impressed and inspired me . . . and made a few Sunday School lessons a lot more interesting. We are deeply indebted to him for his great accomplishments.

His comments at our annual dinner will be fascinating to anyone, whether they are members of our Church or not. Don't miss it!

Remarks at an Ecumenical Prayer Breakfast in Dallas, Texas August 23, 1984 - Ronald Reagan

The following are edited remarks by the late Ronald W. Reagan at a prayer breakfast in Dallas, Texas on August 23, 1984.

"I believe that faith and religion play a critical role in the political life of our nation -- and always has -- and that the church -- and by that I mean all churches, all denominations -- has had a strong influence on the state. And this has worked to our benefit as a nation.

Those who created our country -- the Founding Fathers and Mothers -- understood that there is a divine order which transcends the human order. They saw the state, in fact, as a form of moral order and felt that the bedrock of moral order is religion. The Mayflower Compact began with the words, "In the name of God, amen." The Declaration of Independence appeals to "Nature's God" and the "Creator" and "the Supreme Judge of the world." Congress was given a chaplain, and the oaths of office are oaths before God.



James Madison in the Federalist Papers admitted that in the creation of our Republic he perceived the hand of the Almighty. John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, warned that we must never forget the God from whom our blessings flowed.

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Ronald Reagan on Prayer and Religion

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George Washington voiced reservations about the idea that there could be a wise policy without a firm moral and religious foundation. He said, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man (call himself a patriot) who (would) labour to subvert these . . . finest [firmest] props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere Politician . . . (and) the pious man ought to respect and to cherish (religion and morality)." And he added, ". . . let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion."

But in the 1960's this began to change. We began to make great steps toward secularizing our nation and removing religion from its honored place. In 1962 the Supreme Court in the New York prayer case banned the compulsory saying of prayers. In 1963 the Court banned the reading of the Bible in our public schools. From that point on, the courts pushed the meaning of the ruling ever outward, so that now our children are not allowed voluntary prayer. We even had to pass a law -- we passed a special law in the Congress just a few weeks ago to allow student prayer groups the same access to schoolrooms after classes that a young Marxist society, for example, would already enjoy with no opposition.

The 1962 decision opened the way to a flood of similar suits. Once religion had been made vulnerable, a series of assaults were made in one court after another, on one issue after another. Cases were started to argue against tax-exempt status for churches. Suits were brought to abolish the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance and to remove "In God We Trust" from public documents and from our currency.

Today there are those who are fighting to make sure voluntary prayer is not returned to the classrooms. And the frustrating thing for the great majority of Americans who support and understand the special importance of religion in the national life -- the frustrating thing is that those who are attacking religion claim they are doing it in the name of tolerance, freedom, and openmindedness. Question: Isn't the real truth that they are intolerant of religion? They refuse to tolerate its importance in our lives.

If all the children of our country studied together all of the many religions in our country, wouldn't they learn greater tolerance of each other's beliefs? If children prayed together, would they not understand what they have in common, and would this not, indeed, bring them closer, and is this not to be desired? So, I submit to you that those who claim to be fighting for tolerance on this issue may not be tolerant at all.



The truth is, politics and morality are inseparable. And as morality's foundation is religion, religion and politics are necessarily related. We need religion as a guide. We need it because we are imperfect, and our government needs the church, because only those humble enough to admit they're sinners can bring to democracy the tolerance it requires in order to survive.

A state is nothing more than a reflection of its citizens; the more decent the citizens, the more decent the state. If you practice a religion, whether you're Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, or guided by some other faith, then your private life will be influenced by a sense of moral obligation, and so, too, will your public life. One affects the other. The churches of America do not exist by the grace of the state; the churches of America are not mere citizens of the state. The churches of America exist apart; they have their own vantage point, their own authority. Religion is its own realm; it makes its own claims.

We establish no religion in this country, nor will we ever. We command no worship. We mandate no belief. But we poison our society when we remove its theological underpinnings. We court corruption when we leave it bereft of belief. All are free to believe or not believe; all are free to practice a faith or not. But those who believe must be free to speak of and act on their belief, to apply moral teaching to public questions.

I submit to you that the tolerant society is open to and encouraging of all religions. And this does not weaken us; it strengthens us, it makes us strong. You know, if we look back through history to all those great civilizations, those great nations that rose up to even world dominance and then deteriorated, declined, and fell, we find they all had one thing in common. One of the significant forerunners of their fall was their turning away from their God or gods.

Without God, there is no virtue, because there's no prompting of the conscience. Without God, we're mired in the material, that flat world that tells us only what the senses perceive. Without God, there is a coarsening of the society. And without God, democracy will not and cannot long endure. If we ever forget that we're one nation under God, then we will be a nation gone under. ***



The Orange County Chapter of the JRCLS would like to thank our Sponsors for the
13th Annual JRCLS Dinner:

Smith, Smith, & McFaul, LLP

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JULY LUNCHEON

By Stephen C. Kimball

We were pleased to have a large turnout for our summer luncheon in the middle of the vacation season. The Honorable Lou Correa, 69th Assembly District, began the meeting with two presentations.

First, he gave our own Joseph I. Bentley a California Legislature Assembly Resolution, recognizing him for his 35-year legal career, and extensive community involvement.

Assemblyman Correa also presented the Church with official recognition by the County of Orange for its assistance in educating registered voters with the new Direct Record Electronic voting system. Our Wards and Stakes provided 99 volunteers, attended 92 events in which at least 47 were held at church buildings, demonstrated the use of the new system to over 5,000 voters, and distributed thousands of flyers, brochures, and posters.

Greg Rampton, Director of the North American LDS Church Security Department, and a retired 30-year veteran of the FBI, was the keynote speaker. He provided fascinating insight into church security operations in the United States and throughout the world. In addition to protecting the Prophet and other personnel protection, the Security Department oversees security for thousands of missionaries and thousands of buildings and temples throughout the world, among other things. He mentioned that the effects of the recent civil unrest in Haiti was a considerable task on the Church Security Department. They had to evacuate all the non-native missionaries with little notice and whisk them to safety. They also had to monitor and provide the appropriate intelligence to determine when to return the missionaries. As an example of the level of sophistication of the Church Security Department, he stated that the U.S. Government relied on the information provided by the Church Security Department in assessing the problems.

It was a wonderful meeting. We hope to see all of you at our Thirteenth Annual Dinner.

ATTORNEYS SEEKING POSITIONS: Lauri Reijonen, BYU 2004 e-mail: lar57@lawgate.byu.edu

Date	Topic	Speaker
September 17	Law in the New Testament (Annual Dinner)	John Welch, Founder of F.A.R.M.S., Attorney, Author, Law Professor, Bishop
November 17	Influencing Man's Laws with a Religious Background	Charles Jones, Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court,

SEPTEMBER MEMBER NEWS

Kelly O'Reilly recently formed Wilner & O'Reilly, a full-service immigration law firm with locations in Cerritos and Burbank.

William B. Bunker was just called as a member of the Presidency of the newly formed San Clemente Stake.

Robert L. Davis was just called to the Laguna Niguel Stake Presidency.

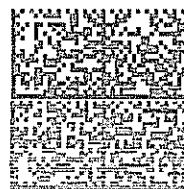
David Koch, formerly with O'Melveny & Myers, joined Turner, Green, Afrasiabi & Arledge—a litigation boutique in Costa Mesa. He will continue to practice business litigation.

R. Craig Scott, former Mayor of Laguna Hills, who represents employers and executives in employment law matters, has just published his fourth text on workplace law, California's New Paid Family Leave Law.

Terry Allen, formerly of Paul Hastings, recently joined Julander Brown & Bollard as a partner. He will continue to practice business litigation.

Dan Anderson has settled in with Citadel Law Offices. So far he has drafted over 330 comprehensive estate plans

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