

FAMILY BULLETIN ALERT

Faith, Freedom & Citizenship Class

Kempsville Presbyterian Church

January 4, 2004

The views expressed herein are the views of the Editor, Vernon Fix

HAPPY NEW YEAR

This should be an exciting year. It is an election year, a year when ACTIVISTS get the throw some weight around and they'll pretend to listen. We desperately need some good Christian candidates. We have seen how hard the other side fights to hold the ground they have captured, we need to fight harder to regain it. Christians must retake the political high ground, the public square. Editor.

War Powers

"The key fact is not that Jose Padilla is a U.S. citizen. It is that Mr. Padilla, a.k.a. Abdullah al-Muhajir, was an al Qaeda agent who worked directly with terrorist mastermind Abu Zubaydah to plan a dirty bomb attack on a major American city. He was captured in Chicago-O'Hare airport on his way back from Pakistan to scout potential targets. He was, in short, an active enemy fighter making war on the U.S. and its citizens, just as the 19 hijackers who attacked New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania were.

"A person making war on the U.S. who seeks to slaughter thousands of our citizens in the streets of our cities must face our military, not our judges. Such a person, U.S. citizen or not, is not a common criminal. He is an avowed enemy of our system of laws and government and a mortal threat to our way of life. The powers implicated are not the president's law enforcement powers but his war powers. "

"Rule of Law," Wall Street Journal, 12/29/03 quoted from the Chuck Muth's News & Views

Comment: Our liberal press would have you believe he is an innocent little boy. Ed.

Budgeteers Seek Lump of Coal for Retirees

On December 16, the Pentagon Comptroller issued a draft budget decision paper proposing large pharmacy copay increases for military retirees.

The paper recommended raising retiree copays from \$3 (generic) and \$9 (brand name) to \$10 and \$20, respectively. It also urged imposing the same copays on retirees using pharmacies at military hospitals and clinics (currently, military pharmacies have no copays for any eligible patron). Copays for non-network pharmacies would rise from \$20 or 20% of the prescription cost to \$30 or 20%, respectively. Given only two days to respond, all Services reportedly objected to the plan. Our sources indicate this initiative didn't start in the Pentagon, but was directed by the Office of Management and Budget - the budget arm of the White

House. Defense leaders have been urging the White House to defer any FY 2005 copay increase in favor of a study of the issue, with any recommended adjustments to be implemented in FY 2006.

As of Tuesday, no final budget decision had been made. **ACTION: This proposal will directly increase medical costs on all retired members. It will affect not only the medicine you buy outside but it includes a NEW copay for all military pharmacies, like Boone Clinic. You have only about two weeks to write letters, fax, call or email the White House and your Senators and Representatives. Tell them this is a kick in the face and they should reject it outright. Ed.**

Immigration Reform?

The chairman of the House Immigration Reform Caucus believes President Bush will support a pending bill in Congress that would give what amounts to amnesty to hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of illegal aliens. When Congress returns in January, both the Senate and the House will consider the so-called "AgJOBS" legislation. Congressman Tom Tancredo (R-CO) says it would allow those who have been in the country illegally for two or three years and have "kept their noses clean" the right to remain in the country as guest workers. That's what he's talking about - that bill right there." Tancredo says if such an amnesty is granted, the country can expect even more illegal aliens to come into the country to take advantage of the new law.

URL: <http://www.agapepress.org>

ACTION: Urge Cong. Schrock to vote against this bill.

THE ARMED CITIZEN

Justin Doyle was roused at 11 p.m. one night by loud banging on his back door. In order to protect his pregnant wife and 19-month-old child who were at home, Doyle retrieved his rifle while his wife dialed 9-1-1. Suddenly a glass door was smashed in with a cinder block and a man with a knife burst into their home. Doyle shot the home invader once in the torso, killing him. Police later identified the suspect as Manuel Villa., "The law allows citizens to use deadly force to protect their homes, lives, and property," said police spokesman Jeff Arbogast. "Out of fear for his life, and the lives of his family, Mr. Doyle armed himself with a rifle and shot the intruder. It's a tragic event to have to go through." (*Albuquerque Journal*, Albuquerque, NM, 08/22/03)

Morality Matters

by Steve Bonta in *THE NEW AMERICAN*, DECEMBER 15, 2003

If America continues to shed the values of her Judeo-Christian heritage, she will surely follow ancient Rome into bondage. Freedom cannot coexist with moral depravity.

The history of ancient Rome is the classic example of the descent from virtue into corruption, from the moral restraint of republic to the intemperance of empire. Many Roman historians and commentators living in the early decades of imperial decadence - Cicero, Suetonius, Tacitus, Juvenal and others placed great emphasis on the loss of virtue, both among citizens and rulers, as a major cause of Rome's decline. "How few were left who had seen the republic," lamented Tacitus of the early years of the empire. "The state had been revolutionized, and there was not a vestige left of the old sound morality."

Historians have long drawn parallels between ancient Rome and the United States, and with good reason. Both Rome and America began their climb to prominence as republics, with written constitutions, popular participation in government, and clearly defined limits on the powers of state. Both saw almost uninterrupted military success and growth in commerce. Both began to expand their commercial and military presence abroad, until they became the preeminent powers of their respective times. And both saw a gradual erosion in popular morality that accompanied their rise in power and prosperity.

Moral Decline

In the case of Rome, as Tacitus pointed out, this decline in morality betokened the end of the republic and its replacement with imperial tyranny. In the case of the United States, the final chapter has not yet been written. But if America continues to shed the moral values of her Judeo-Christian heritage, she will surely follow ancient Rome, sooner or later, into bondage. Freedom cannot long coexist with moral depravity.

Empires such as ancient Rome have always aroused admiration, and their fall, regret. This is because empires, the greatest of all the works of human hands, embody man's endless quest to deify himself and his works - to erect, as it were, another Babel to set at defiance the laws of heaven. The enduring monuments that empires build for themselves, from the Pyramids to the Colosseum, inspire wonder from succeeding generations. Empires usually fall because of material causes - political, economic and military decrepitude. The Roman, Ottoman, Mongol, Aztec, British and countless others all followed this same trajectory.

Republics arise because of man's upward reach, his desire to frame laws and organize a state in conformity with unchanging principles, and to maximize his opportunities for improvement. The indispensable characteristic of republican government, as Montesquieu pointed out, is virtue. "When... virtue ceases," the great French political thinker warned, "ambition enters those hearts that can admit it, and avarice enters them all.

Desires change their objects: that which one used to love, one loves no longer. One was free under the laws, one wants to be free against them. What was a maxim is now called severity; what was a rule is now called constraint; what was vigilance is now called fear. There, frugality, not the desire to possess, is avarice. The republic is a cast off husk, and its strength is no more than the power of a few citizens and the license of all."

People of moral character are free under the laws of a republic, because they recognize that restraints, properly limited, amplify and sustain liberty. People lacking virtue, by contrast, chafe at all laws and bounds to their freedom to act. They seek for absolute freedom from restraint, a condition that cannot be realized because of man's social nature and moral agency.

The pre-Christian concept of virtue only partially encompassed Judeo-Christian moral values. In the Christian era, however, virtue has a much broader meaning. The modern Western notion of virtue includes Christian standards of sexual conduct, charity, forgiveness, and so forth.

Self-restraint

However, all virtuous traits, whether of the older, military kind or of the more modern, humanitarian kind, are really shades of a single, cardinal attribute upon which popular government always finally depends self-restraint. The august Edmund Burke understood this perfectly. "Men," he remarked, "are qualified for civil liberties in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains upon their own appetites.... Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there must be without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things, that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fetters."

Why is this so? Because men were created with both the desire and the capability to associate and to form societies. We have divinely ordained moral obligations one to another, which cannot be fulfilled outside of human society. But to preserve society, some sort of ordering principle is necessary, to harmonize, as far as possible, our individual and often conflicting free wills. In the absence of self-restraint, social order can only be achieved by external force - that is, by government.

Comment: I've quoted from the first pages of this excellent article. If you get the feeling that America is living on borrowed time, you are right. History teaches and we as a people are not listening. This is not the only article on this subject, there are many with the wisdom to see the downfall of America coming. We must get in the fight to stop the moral decline of our beloved country. This year resolve to be a Christian Activist. Editor.

Learn what you can do. Go to Richmond with the Family Foundation on Jan. 19th. Take the plunge! Be an activist. Ed.
