

"ONLY GOD IS HOLY, AND

ONLY HONOR AND FREEDOM ARE SACRED"---

HUMANITY IS NEITHER

Please, first, read my today's letter to the editor, noting especially the words which appear also in this Thinksheet's title.... Understandably, the editor gave to my letter a heading appropriate to his central concern vis-a-vis the global flap over "the book" that has temporarily terrorized his business, viz, print journalism, &, also temporarily, emptied more than thirty embassies of their ambassadors. It is perfectly true that "no compromise on press freedom" is a straightline implication of what I'm saying. But the title I submitted more accurately & adequately represents my message: "Freedom Is Sacred, Life Is Not."

1. Because in our society transcendence has collapsed into immanence & God into man(kind), I let pass few opportunities to sound the biblical note, "**only God is holy.**" How Isaiah needed it when he entered the temple & heard the choral Trisagion (6³)! And how the exiled Jn. the Revelator needed it when in a vision he entered the heaven temple & heard the same (Rev.4⁹)! If you ask, What really is Willis up to in this letter? the answer is clear: it is to sound once more this note, preach once more this sermon in an unexpected pulpit. And it's what I'm up to in dozens of letters to the editor, which goes some way to explain why 3/4ths of my letters don't get printed: "up to his same old trick, that Elliott!"
2. In this letter, also up to another trick: an off-the-wall attack on the **fetus idolaters**, one denomination in the church of **anthropolatry**, humanity-worship. The costs of misplaced worship add up to divine judgment-punishment: sickening, antirational sentimentality; myopia; flight into fantasy (as panned in this cartoon).
3. And I'm criticizing the editor for have a soft (rotten) spot for humanity, a hypocritical yielding to terrorist threat while persistently preaching that Washington shouldn't. Credit, though, for printing the criticism.
4. Note that while occupying the "high ground," I'm also waving the flag. Why not two good things at once?

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No compromise on press freedom

Your Feb. 17 editorial on "The Satanic Verses" shocked me by suggesting a compromise between press freedom and book burning.

You suggest that the publisher "decide, voluntarily, to cease publication of the novel for now," because some find it offensive and some have died in the uproar over the book.

"For now" comports poorly with the fact that those who are threatening death to the author, the publishers and the distributors have made it clear that there is no time limit.

The public temperature will decline, but the cold malice will remain.

Would you care to state a time for the restoration of active press freedom, that is, the "voluntary" free action of Salman Rushdie's publishers?

In taking the book off the shelves of their chain, Waldenbooks uses your argument. The lives of the employees are more sacred than the free selling of the book.

This decision is flawed not only because it is an inversion of the sacred as we Americans understand it, but also because a decision was made for the employees without consulting them.

What is the sacred as we Americans understand it? Where is it located? Not in human life, though that is where "pro-life" and other sentimentalists lodge it.

Our Founding Fathers invested "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor" rather in honorable behavior and in freedom.

For them, only God is holy, and only honor and freedom are sacred.

It saddens me to see you depart from that high ground.

WILLIS ELLIOTT
Craigville

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