



PhD thesis

**Towards a ressourcement of Dwight D. Eisenhower's belief that
"Our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in
a deeply felt religious faith"**

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Towards a Ressourcement of Dwight D. Eisenhower's Belief that "Our
Form of Government Makes No Sense Unless it is Founded in a Deeply
Felt Religious Faith"

**A Thesis submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

by

James Clement Lanshe

*Middlesex University Supervised
at London School of Theology*

July 2024

Abstract

James Clement Lanshe

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This Thesis examines Dwight D. Eisenhower's contention that our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith. In this context, it examines the beliefs of the Founding generation that support Eisenhower's contention. It also examines the beliefs prevailing during 1950s America that came to known as American civil religion. It then turns to a review of the First Amendment jurisprudence developed by the Supreme Court of the United States in the decades following the Eisenhower administration, which essentially introduced novel, ever-evolving tests and standards governing the separation of church and state that inevitably reoriented religious attitudes in the country away from the animating principles which were the hallmark of both the Founding and the Eisenhower era. Indispensable to Eisenhower's basic inclinations and contention is an understanding that he was the inheritor of a strong moral tradition, *i.e.*, a Judeo-Christian tradition, that had been passed on to him in his youth through an intensively biblically based education and upbringing, which, in turn, deeply influenced his later life and career; and, in particular, his Presidency. It shaped the way in which he saw the world, and the resultant policies and consequences that characterized his administration. The Thesis concludes that Eisenhower acted upon a generalized belief that we are not the end-users of the faith tradition underpinning our form of government; rather, we are obliged to pass along this tradition for the benefit of a durable and cohesive society.

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Historical research projects, by their nature, stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before them. This project is no different in that regard. I am indebted to the staff at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abilene, Kansas, particularly Ariel Turley and Michelle Kopfer, without whose assistance I would never have been able to access the archival materials requisite to developing an authentic understanding of Dwight D. Eisenhower. I am also appreciative of the assistance received from the staff at the Milton S. Eisenhower Library at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, as well as the assistance received from the staff of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Oral History Project at Columbia University Library, New York, New York. And finally, I am appreciative of Barbara Sedlock's assistance in providing access to the McCann-Eisenhower collection at the Pilgrim Library at Defiance College, Defiance, Ohio, which proved invaluable in assessing the religious dimensions of the Eisenhower administration.

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, Jane, without whose love and support it would never have been possible. She is an extremely wise woman, guided always by the Word. I am so grateful for her counsel. It is dedicated, too, to my three children and eight grandchildren in the sincere hope that in an increasingly secular world their hearts and minds continue to remain open to the wisdom of Scripture.

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"That which man builds man destroys, but the city of God is built by God and cannot be destroyed by man."

Augustine¹

Chapter One: Introduction

A. Preface

With his 1952 election secured only a month before - and still weeks away from his inauguration - the grandeur of the Waldorf Astoria Hotel was an unlikely backdrop for Dwight D. Eisenhower, the war hardened general now-turned president. There, in an address to the Freedoms Foundation, he solemnly averred that "our form of government [makes] no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith, and I don't care what it is."² With us, of course, it is the Judeo-Christian concept, but it must be a religion that all men are created equal."³ This was not a random remark by the then President-elect.⁴ It was borne of a belief that evolved over a lifetime of biblically based education and military experience that culminated in his positions as Commanding General of the Allied Forces in Europe during World War II and later serving informally as the chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington before eventually assuming the Presidency of the United States.⁵ As Weigel has observed, one of the crucial lessons that Eisenhower had drawn from the debacle that was World War II was that

¹ Augustine and Marcus Dods, *The City of God*, 1st edn (New York: Modern Library, 1994). Roche notes that: "Biblical religion understands the City of Man is not an end in itself—it is only the proving ground for the City of God. If we truly want to achieve the good society in this life, we must return to proper goals—to the individual and his spiritual capacities. To put this another way, while we cannot find lasting salvation in this life, we can find the good society, by first discovering the road to salvation in the next life." See: George Roche, 'Faith and Freedom' 8, no. 8 (1979): 1–5, 3.

² As developed herein and observed by Holl, "Ethically, Eisenhower's faith embraced a conservative, duty driven covenant to serve God and country, but theologically, it stretched beyond the bounds of his national allegiance towards a radical form of universalism. His faith was pulled in two directions creating a tension between the religious covenants of the chosen tempered by a radical inclusivity of all God's children. This fundamental tension in the Protestant principle, as described by Paul Tillich (*The Protestant Era*, 1948), not only directed Eisenhower's religious journey from his childhood in Abilene to his death at Walter Reed Hospital [in Washington] but, as noted by Robert Bellah (*The Broken Covenant*, 1975), has also characterized much of America's religious history from John Winthrop's "City on the Hill" to the present." See: Jack M. Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower: Duty, God, and Country*, Library of religious biography (Grand Rapids Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2021), 5.

³ Eisenhower, Dwight D. Address at the Freedoms Foundation, Waldorf-Astoria. American Presidency Project. New York City, New York, 1952. See also George Weigel, 'Ike's Insight', *Institute on Religion and Public Life*, May 17, 2023, 1–5.

⁴ Holl notes that although this statement has been variously interpreted, it reflects one of Eisenhower's fundamental guiding principles: that for a country to thrive, it needs a shared identity, formed through common values, history, and purpose. For Eisenhower, this could be found most distinctly in shared faith - a concept that came to be known as American civil religion, which defined and drove much of the cohesion of the 1950s, under Eisenhower's leadership. Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, Cover comment.

⁵ In 1949, almost immediately after assuming his new position as President of Columbia University in New York, Eisenhower was summoned to Washington by President Harry Truman and James Forrestal, the first Secretary of Defense, and asked to serve informally as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. See Morin, *infra*.

"democracy" is not a matter of institutions and procedures alone. It takes a critical mass of citizens, living by certain virtues and the convictions that undergird them, to make a democracy work so that the result is individual human flourishing and social solidarity.⁶ Respect for the dignity of every human person is indispensable; as is openness to the possibility that others may be right about a contested policy; openness to a firm commitment to the rule of law rather than the rule of brute force; and the acceptance of electoral defeat or incremental legislative success. They are the by-products of prior convictions and moral commitments that, for Americans, have typically been borne from what Dwight D. Eisenhower called "a deeply felt religious faith"—or its analogues in the nation's public philosophy.⁷

Bergman et al. have noted that, due in large measure to his strongly held religious beliefs and attitudes, General Dwight David Eisenhower was widely regarded one of the most important leaders of the last century.⁸ As supreme Allied Commander in the fight against the Nazis, his position as a five-star general was crucial in achieving a positive outcome in World War II. Today, he is also considered one of the most respected US presidents, but the critical role that his religious beliefs played in his life and work are frequently less well understood.⁹ Moreover, Bergman contends that the reality is that Eisenhower was the most religious president in the twentieth century, in no small part because he was critical in influencing the nation's enlarged accommodation to faith, specifically the Christian faith.¹⁰ More recently, Holl has

⁶ Holl notes in this regard that Eisenhower held a lifelong belief that the group, whether it be a football team or a nation, should develop a unique identity based on shared values, history and purpose, and that in this context Eisenhower felt that the United States Constitution, American history, and American civil religion should serve as key sources of national identity. Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 2.

⁷ Weigel, 'Ike's Insight'.

⁸ Jerry Bergman, Paul Jungmeyer, and Andrew J. Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency: A history of the influence of religion in his life and leadership as WWII Supreme Allied Commander and President of the United States* (Eugene Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2019), 206.

⁹ Historical opinions of Eisenhower's presidency have evolved significantly over time. Shortly after his presidency, many historians held a low opinion of his leadership in comparison with contemporary historians who have come to appreciate his accomplishments and legacy, emphasizing the wisdom of his foreign policy decisions, the significance of his domestic achievements, and his leadership qualities, as discussed *infra*. One year after Eisenhower left office, historian Arthur Schlesinger Senior's poll of American presidents ranked him 20th among his peers - near the bottom third of the men who preceded him. See: Arthur M. Schlesinger, 'Rating the Presidents: Washington to Clinton', *Political Science Quarterly* 112, no. 2 (1997): 179–90. By 1996, when Arthur Schlesinger, Junior issued his new rankings, he described Eisenhower as "an astute, crafty, confident, and purposeful leader" and ranked him number 10. *Ibid*. Greenstein is commonly credited with conducting the first major scholarly reexamination of Eisenhower's presidential legacy. He examined the long-term effects of his presidency and concluded that the earlier perceptions of him as a disengaged and reluctant president were incorrect. Instead, Greenstein revealed him to be a perceptive political strategist and highly effective leader. See: Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1994).

¹⁰ Bergman, Jungmeyer, and Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency*, 206. In his book *Spiritual Lives*, Hankins makes a counterargument that Woodrow Wilson was the most religious president of the 20th century. Unlike other presidents who may have used religion for political gain or merely paid lip service to faith, Hankins argues Wilson's spirituality was a fundamental part of his character, a devout Presbyterian who believed in the importance of moral values and the role of religion in shaping the nation's destiny. Hankins maintains that Wilson's faith was the guiding force in his life. Hankins highlights Wilson's role in the moral and ethical debates of his time, particularly during World War I. Wilson's Fourteen Points, which outlined his vision for a post-war world, reflected his deeply held religious principles. However, Wilson's implementation of segregation in government offices severely

argued that the importance of religion in Eisenhower's public life cannot be overstated.¹¹ Nevertheless, while most biographers note that Eisenhower grew up in a devoutly religious family, once they move onto the "main story" of his military life and Presidency, the significance of the religious theme is usually left far behind.¹² Consequently, although Eisenhower's religious beliefs have received some attention from recent scholars like Bergman and Holl, there are few comprehensive or accurate histories of Eisenhower's religious journey and its legacy for, and impact on, American society, culture and politics.¹³ Nor are there any comprehensive treatments that bear on the ressourcement presented in this thesis regarding Eisenhower's conviction that our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith.

It is against this historical backdrop that during an interim period from 1948 to 1952, when Eisenhower served as President of Columbia University in New York, that he appears to have first formulated a more definitive theory about religious faith and the human instinct to be free, which became the foundation for his remarks at the Waldorf Astoria in 1952 on the relationship between our form of government and the need for a deeply felt religious faith.¹⁴ He thought they were intertwined, that faith in God is the necessary base for a free nation. As examples, he cited the Early Christians and the Jews.¹⁵ He often mused over the phrase in the Declaration of Independence which says that "all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights...." The significant word in it, he said, is "Creator."¹⁶ It signified to him that the American

undercuts Hankins' arguments. See: Barry Hankins, *Spiritual Lives: Woodrow Wilson, Ruling Elder, Spiritual President*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

¹¹ Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 3.

¹² Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 3.

¹³ Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 3–4.

¹⁴ As early as 1947 Eisenhower had written to his close childhood friend, Swede Hazlett, expressing similar sentiments, saying: "I believe fanatically in the American form of democracy -- a system that recognizes and protects the rights of the individual and that ascribes to the individual dignity accruing to him because of his creation in the image of a supreme being and which rests upon the conviction that only through a system of free enterprise can this type of democracy be preserved." Letter from DDE to Captain Everett Hazlett, Naval Hospital, Annapolis, Maryland, dated July 19, 1947.

¹⁵ See Morin, *infra*.

¹⁶ This thesis makes limited use of internet references in favor of academically cognizable primary and secondary sources. However, there may be instances where internet references might amplify or summarize relevant concepts legitimately derived from preferred sources. Nevertheless, it should be noted that internet references herein, while evaluated for rigor and veracity, should be weighed accordingly. For example, Lindsay describes God in this context as "Creator" based upon 1 Peter 4:19 where the distinctive characteristic of Deity, as the Creator, is that He is the Cause of the existent universe - Cause of its being, not merely of its evolution or present arrangements, noting that the doctrine of His being the Creator implies that He is the real and the exclusive Agent in the production of the world. The thought of the Creator is the most fruitful of all our ideas. As Creator, He is the Unconditioned, and the All-conditioning, Being. The universe is thus dependent upon Him, as its causative antecedent. He calls it, as Aquinas said, "according to its whole substance," into being, without any presupposed basis. His power, as Creator, is different in kind from finite power. But the creative process is not a case of sheer almightiness, creating something out of nothing, but an expression of God, as the Absolute Reason, under the forms of time and space, causality and finite personality. In all His work, as Creator, there is no incitement from without, but it rather remains an eternal activity of self- manifestation on the part of a God who is Love. Bible Study Tools, 'What is Creator? Bible Definition and Scripture References', accessed November 10, 2023, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/creator/>

nation was founded on a basis of religious faith.¹⁷ It was in this context that he opined, "A free government without a foundation of deep religious faith makes no sense."¹⁸ It is of particular interest to note that whilst at Columbia he asked faculty specialists to examine his theory.¹⁹ However, there is no record of Columbia faculty ever having pursued this matter on the President's behalf.²⁰

Consequently, this thesis strives to address Eisenhower's unanswered challenge to the Columbia faculty to examine his contention that our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith. In the process of doing so, it necessarily examines the beliefs of the Founding generation that support Eisenhower's contention. This thesis concludes with a brief overview of selected decisions by the United States Supreme Court on the separation of Church and State which were issued in the years after the Eisenhower presidency that undermined Eisenhower's core premise, as well as certain consequences flowing therefrom.²¹ In framing the discussion around Eisenhower's contention, this thesis begins by tracing his early childhood social, cultural and familial experiences, all for the purpose of developing a clearer understanding that he was an inheritor of a strong moral tradition, i.e., a Judeo-Christian tradition,²² that had been passed on through a biblically based upbringing and education which deeply influenced his later life and career; and, in particular, the direction of his Presidency.²³ In this regard, the manner of Eisenhower's education was not dissimilar to Presidents who preceded him, including Presidents from the Founding generation. However, as further shown herein, biblically based education was not the norm going forward.²⁴

¹⁷ Relman Morin, *Dwight D Eisenhower: A Gauge of Greatness*, An Associated Press Biography (New York, N.Y.: The Associated Press, 1969), 133–34.

¹⁸ Morin, *Dwight D Eisenhower*, 133–34.

¹⁹ Morin, *ob. sit*.

²⁰ Inquiries with archivists of the Dwight David Eisenhower collection at Columbia University Library indicate there is no record of any faculty ever examining Eisenhower's theory.

²¹ A November 10, 2023, article in Newsweek magazine described an interesting attitudinal shift when it reported that recent polling showed a majority of American adults would not be willing to serve in the military were the United States to enter into a major war, while public confidence in the armed forces appears to be waning. *Newsweek*, 'Americans Don't Want to Fight for Their Country Anymore', accessed November 23, 2023, <https://www.newsweek.com/american-military-recruitment-problems-public-apathy-1842449A>

²² As expressed herein, American Founders were Christians, if not theologically then culturally, with knowledge of the Old Testament to the extent that Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, both purportedly Deists, designed a seal for the United States that depicted God leading Israel out of Egypt, evidencing their conviction that God was leading America out of Europe. See: <https://www.greatseal.com/committees/firstcomm/reverse.html>

²³ Will argues that there is a yearning for a national recovery that focuses both on the current distresses and anxieties, such as economic irresponsibility and educational laxity, as well as on things that are paramount in social arrangements, such as the intellectual wellsprings of (American) politics. George F. Will, *Restoration: Congress, Term Limits, and the Recovery of Deliberative Democracy* (New York NY: Free Press (Reprint Edition), 2010), 7–8.

²⁴ It is beyond the scope of this thesis to access each President in comparison to Eisenhower, but historians generally acknowledge that there is a distinction between pre-Eisenhower presidencies and post-Eisenhower presidencies with respect to the relative importance of faith and religion in their individual lives and Administrations based upon the numbers of references to God and faith in their speeches and other public pronouncements. See: William I. Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower: America*

In retrospect, while the religious aspects of the Eisenhower presidency may have been ignored or undervalued by the initial commentators immediately after his presidency;²⁵ it is further argued that Eisenhower's religiously based beliefs, philosophies and attitudes that led him to believe that "our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith" resulted in ultimately placing him among the first rank among America's political leaders; and, further, that those beliefs, philosophies and attitudes had profound, seminal impacts on post World War II societal cohesion in America, particularly in the country's strong and unified opposition to the spread of Communism, both domestically and abroad.²⁶

B. Hypothesis

This thesis seeks to investigate and, in the process, affirm or disaffirm the assertion made by President Dwight D. Eisenhower that "our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded on a deeply felt religious faith, and I don't care what it is," insofar as that statement evidences his core belief in the significance of religious faith as a foundational element in the context of American governance and societal cohesion.²⁷

In support of this hypothesis, this study will explore the extent to which religious faith, regardless of its specific denomination or nature, played a substantial role in shaping the political landscape and governance structure of the United States prior to and during the Eisenhower presidential era (1953-1961), and whether Eisenhower's statement reflects a broader historical truth about the relationship between religious belief and democratic governance. In doing so, the thesis will reflect upon the complex history of the interplay between religious faith and the American political landscape leading up to Eisenhower's presidency, evaluating whether there exists a significant relationship

and the World in the 1950s (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2018); and, Richard V. Pierard and Robert D. Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency* (Grand Rapids Mich.: Academic Books, 1988).

²⁵ As an example, Eisenhower created the Reorganization Plan of 1958, which, in turn, created the Office of Civil Defense Mobilization Staff College under the Executive Office of the President. The Office was responsible for the preparedness of the federal government from a threat of nuclear attack during the 1950s. In one of its official manuals, it stated: "During the period following nuclear attack, religious worship and prayer would be useful to people in fallout shelters." Sears *et al.* note that this statement matched the tenor of Eisenhower's presidency, *viz.*, religious faith was a critical element of American society and something that should be encouraged rather than discouraged. Alan Sears, Craig Osten, and Ryan Cole, *The Soul of an American President: The Untold Story of Dwight D. Eisenhower's Faith* (Grand Rapids Michigan: Baker Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2019), 18–19.

²⁶ A contemporary commentator, Chantal Delsol, maintains that just as the turn to Christianity in the late Roman Empire represented a massive civilizational change, *viz.* a new way of seeing the world, we are now living through a similar change, except that the current change is a return to paganism which is intolerant of Christianity and its beliefs, instead requiring adherence to a new set of anti-Christian beliefs. This theme is discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters of this thesis. Chantal Delsol, *La fin de la chrétienté: L'inversion normative et le nouvel âge* (Paris: Les éditions du Cerf, 2021).

²⁷ Eisenhower's reflections on societal cohesion may reflect his extensive knowledge of Scripture discussed *infra*, in particular Matthew, 12:25: "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." *Holy Bible: King James Version* (Vereeniging: Christian Art Publishers, 2017). Nearly one hundred years before Eisenhower's 1952 speech at the Waldorf Astoria, on June 16, 1858 Abraham Lincoln delivered an address at the statehouse in the Springfield, Illinois, titled, "A house divided against itself cannot stand," a concept familiar to Lincoln's audience as a statement by Jesus recorded in all three synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke). "'House Divided' Speech by Abraham Lincoln", accessed November 24, 2023, <https://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/house.html>

between the degree of religious faith among the American populace and the stability, functionality, and overall success of the democratic form of government as it was practiced prior to and during his presidency.²⁸ Essential to this analysis is an understanding of the broader implications these relationships have had, and continue to have, on issues related to the separation of church and state.²⁹ In the specific context of the Eisenhower presidency, however, this will be most clearly demonstrated through an investigation of the extent to which religious beliefs influenced domestic and foreign policies, particularly Eisenhower's attitude toward desegregation and toward Communism, as well as the effect those beliefs had on his public rhetoric and the overall decision-making process during his Administration.

C. Methodology

Prefatory to describing the methodology employed in this thesis, it is necessary to sketch out the trajectory of two intersecting narratives associated with the hypothesis. The first narrative involves the ascendancy of Eisenhower's reputation and status in historical terms. The second narrative involves an arc of revisionist treatment accorded to the nature and proper role of the relationship between church and state.

In regard to the first narrative, the attitudes of historians toward the importance and ranking of Dwight D. Eisenhower as President of the United States have, with the benefit of hindsight, evolved markedly over the past fifty years as a consequence of a reevaluation of his leadership and of his Administration's accomplishments, which have resulted in a meaningful shift of his historical significance. This transformation in perspective reflects not only the changing political and social landscape that has taken place since his presidency, but also the emergence of new historical methodologies and the reconsideration of previously overlooked aspects of his leadership.³⁰

In the immediate aftermath of his presidency, Eisenhower's historical standing was often overshadowed by his predecessors, Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945) and Harry S Truman (1884-1972), as well as his successor, John F. Kennedy (1917-1963). Historians initially portrayed him as an interim "caretaker" president, emphasizing his perceived reluctance to engage in major policy changes and his preference for

²⁸ In support of a reexamination of Dwight D. Eisenhower's belief that "our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith" it is not the intention of this thesis, as the title might otherwise suggest, to give a complete account of the role of faith in this country, or even a compendium of American ecclesiastical or theological history (which would properly be distinct works in themselves), but rather to show how the spirit of Christianity entered into the foundations and elements of America's national existence; and, how it affected the country's civil and political history and gave shape and structure to its institutions - to exhibit the historical relations it has had to the state and the inspiration it has given to the actors in the course of American independence, and the support it continued to provide to civil institutions of the American people, as well as its general influence upon their fortunes and their destiny.

²⁹ The debate accompanying this issue is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six. However, it is germane at this point to cite the historian, E. R. Norman, who along with others, protested that "the separation of church and state in the federal constitution of the United States was not originally intended to disconnect Christianity and public life; it was a device to prevent the supremacy of one sect over another." Edward R. Norman, *The Conscience of the State of North America*, Cambridge studies in the history and theory of politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 9.

³⁰ Jean E. Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace* (New York: Random House Publishing Group, 2012), p. 119.

maintaining the status quo.³¹ However, as historical analysis has matured, Eisenhower's presidency began to be reevaluated. One of the key elements in this reassessment was the recognition of his leadership during a pivotal period in American history.

Eisenhower assumed office during the height of the Cold War and managed to maintain peace and stability during a time of intense global tension. His leadership in this regard, including his ability to avoid direct military conflict with the former Soviet Union, has been viewed more favorably in retrospect.³²

In addition to his other achievements,³³ Eisenhower's legacy has received increased attention for his approach to civil rights. While he was criticized at the time for not taking more aggressive action on civil rights issues, historians now recognize his strategic support for desegregation and the enforcement of the Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*.³⁴ His actions laid the groundwork for future civil rights legislation, and his stance on racial equality is seen as a significant advancement in the fight for racial equality that was one of the hallmarks of this era.³⁵

In brief, the changing nature of historical research has allowed for a more nuanced understanding of Eisenhower's presidency as historians have delved into previously unexplored aspects of his leadership, his management style, and his use of executive power. These deeper examinations have contributed to a more comprehensive assessment of his presidency and the evolving view that his presidency warrants a more prominent place in American history.³⁶

Regarding the second narrative dealing with separation of church and state issues, the Eisenhower years were marked by the early stages of what eventually became a lengthy transition in First Amendment jurisprudence.³⁷ The United States Supreme Court departed from the Founders' original intent to an eventual wholesale reinterpretation of the meaning of "separation of church and state." More specifically, over the last seventy years the Court's attitude toward the separation of church and state has reflected novel

³¹ Jim Newton, *Eisenhower: The White House Years* (New York NY: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2011).

³² Paul Johnson, *Eisenhower: A Life* (East Rutherford: Penguin Publishing Group, 2014), p. 46.

³³ Eisenhower presided over a period of economic prosperity and expansion, often referred to as the "Eisenhower Era." His administration successfully managed the economy, promoted infrastructure development, and expanded access to education through initiatives like the Federal-Aid Highway Act and the National Defense Education Act. These accomplishments have garnered greater appreciation over time. Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*.

³⁴ *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). On May 17, 1954, U.S. Supreme Court delivered a unanimous ruling in the civil rights case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, ruling that state-sanctioned segregation of public schools was a violation of the 14th Amendment and was therefore unconstitutional.

³⁵ Chester J. Pach and Elmo Richardson, *The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, American presidency series (Lawrence, Kan.: Univ. Pr. of Kansas, 1991), p. 111.

³⁶ Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President*, vol. 2 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984)

³⁷ The First Amendment provides that Congress make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting its free exercise. It protects freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and the right to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. *U.S. Constitution, First Amendment*.

legal theories and concepts unknown at the Founding, as well as quasi-political responses to growing cultural tensions and societal shifts unique to the United States.³⁸

Prior to World War II the Court issued relatively few decisions interpreting the "Religious Clauses" of the Constitution set forth in the First Amendment.³⁹ It was not until after the war that a revolutionary change occurred in the way the Court viewed religion.⁴⁰ Since that time, the Court has steadily expanded the scope of religious liberty to include many things which were arguably not intended by the framers of the Constitution, and it has narrowed the permissible scope of religion in public life, barring most kinds of public aid to religious schools and forbidding almost all forms of religious expression in the public schools.⁴¹

Originalists⁴² maintain that: "the separation of church and state in the federal Constitution of the United States was never intended to disconnect Christianity and public life in the way in which the Supreme Court has done over the last seventy years; it was simply a device to prevent the supremacy of one sect over another."⁴³ However, over time revisionist views on separation of church and state issues have become more manifest in Supreme Court decisions issued after the 1960s, with the effect that the Court incrementally revised both the meaning and the application of the Religious Clauses of the First Amendment according to its own preferences.⁴⁴

Understanding these two contrasting narratives is pivotal to addressing Eisenhower's contention concerning the connection between faith and our form of government. Additionally, comprehending these narratives also requires knowledge of, and an appreciation for, the history adjacent to each of these narratives, as well as the accompanying historicism and historiography. On the one hand is the towering figure of Eisenhower, uniquely qualified through education, experience and political position,

³⁸ Donald L. Drakeman, *Church, State, and Original Intent* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 151.

³⁹ The "Religious Clauses" refers to the first sixteen words of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," which were intended to protect the right of every person to practice religion in accordance with conscience and guard against creation of a sectarian state. The Free Speech Center, 'Establishment Clause (Separation of Church and State)', accessed November 7, 2023, <https://firstamendment.mtsu.edu/article/establishment-clause-separation-of-church-and-state/>

⁴⁰ See, for example, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black's assertion for the first time in the history of American jurisprudence in *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U.S. 1 (1947) that "[t]he First Amendment has erected a wall between church and state," and "[t]hat wall must be kept high and impregnable."

⁴¹ James Hitchcock, *The Supreme Court and Religion in American Life: The Odyssey of the Religion Clauses*, New Forum Books, 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 97.

⁴² Originalism is a theory of the interpretation of legal texts, including the text of the Constitution. Originalists believe that the constitutional text ought to be given the original public meaning that it would have had at the time that it became law. The original meaning of the Constitution can also be inferred from the background legal events and public debate that gave rise to a constitutional provision. It exists independently of the subjective "intentions" of those who wrote the text or of the "original expected applications" that the Framers of a constitutional text thought that it would have. National Constitution Center – constitutioncenter.org, 'On Originalism in Constitutional Interpretation | Constitution Center', accessed November 8, 2023, <https://constitutioncenter.org/the-constitution/white-papers/on-originalism-in-constitutional-interpretation>

⁴³ Norman, *The Conscience of the State of North America*, 9.

⁴⁴ See Chapter Four, *infra*.

to recognize the intrinsic importance of the need for a deeply felt faith to undergird our form of government; and, on the other hand, is one of the three major institutions of government in the form of the Supreme Court whose decisions gradually revealed the consequences of governance in the absence of a shared deeply felt religious faith.

In addition to evaluating these two narratives, and in further aid of describing the methodology employed in this thesis, definition should be given to three basic terms: "history," "historicism," and "historiography". These terms are frequently, and inappropriately, used interchangeably; however, they actually represent three distinct concepts within the field of historical study. While all three are integral to our understanding of the past, they serve different purposes and involve distinct approaches.

History, in the context of historical study, typically refers to the study and interpretation of past events, developments, and occurrences.⁴⁵ It involves the creation of narratives or accounts that aim to represent the past as accurately and comprehensively as possible.⁴⁶ Historians engage in the study of history to uncover and understand the past, often relying on primary and secondary sources, critical analysis, and research methods to construct a coherent chronological narrative. Nevertheless, historical knowledge is conditioned by the character of the sources and methods of the historians who work on them.⁴⁷ Tosh notes that "some see history as a study in itself which needs no wider justification while others see it in terms of the inexorable march across time of great forces, human or even divine, which explain both how we got to where we are and where we might be heading. Historians explain the past in response to present-day concerns and questions. History can allow us to experience situations and face alternatives that we would not otherwise encounter, and in that sense it serves a useful purpose; it can also reveal that aspects of modern life are not as old, or as new, as we have assumed." ⁴⁸

Historicism is a term describing the view that the history of anything is a sufficient explanation of it, that the values of anything can be accounted for through the discovery of its origins, that the nature of anything is entirely comprehended in its development.⁴⁹ Contemporary professional historians tend to be guided by the principles of nineteenth-century historicism which taught that the past should be studied on its own terms, 'as it

⁴⁵ John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), 5.

⁴⁶ Lane notes that: "We need to read about the past in order to *understand the present*. People without a grasp of history are like a person without a memory. Many of the current beliefs in our society are properly grasped only when we see how they have emerged. A knowledge of history [helps] to understand better both ourselves and those with whom we might disagree.....We also need to read about the past to *escape the present*....By studying the thought of past generations we can be challenged where our views are defective and helped to see our ideas in a proper perspective. We do not need an excessive degree of humility to recognize that our own grasp of truth might be less than perfect and that it is possible to learn from those with a different perspective." Anthony N.S. Lane, *A Concise History of Christian Thought* (Grand Rapids Mich.: Baker Academic, 2006), 1.

⁴⁷ Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 1–10.

⁴⁸ Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 22–44.

⁴⁹ Dwight E. Lee and Robert N. Beck, "The Meaning of "Historicism"", *The American Historical Review* 59, no. 3 (1954): 568, 568.

actually was'. However, this more detached approach to the past can put historians in conflict with people who feel their cherished versions of the past are under threat.⁵⁰

Historiography provides information about histories and historians, through compilations of the contribution which each historian has made to the total of verified historical knowledge now on hand.⁵¹ It is the study of how history is written, interpreted, and constructed. It goes beyond the content of historical narratives and focuses on the methodologies, theories, and approaches employed by historians in crafting their interpretations of the past. Historiography involves critical examination of historical texts, the analysis of historical schools of thought, and an exploration of the influences, biases, and contexts that shape historical writing.⁵² It often seeks to answer questions about why and how historians interpret the past in particular ways.⁵³

Historiography is not concerned with the events themselves but rather with how history is written and interpreted. It delves into questions such as "How and why do historians interpret the past the way they do?" and "What influences their perspectives?" In asking such questions, historiography takes the position that historical accounts are not objective truths but rather subjective constructions influenced by the historian's perspective, biases, and the historical context in which they are written. It involves a meta-analysis of historical texts, evaluating the sources, methods, and ideologies employed by historians throughout different periods and cultures.⁵⁴

Consequently, it is relevant in the context of this study to bear in mind the terms "history," "historicism" and "historiography" represent distinct but interconnected aspects of the study of the past. Each discipline can potentially provide useful analytical support for parsing the competing narratives under consideration, all in the service of examining Eisenhower's contention that our form of government makes no sense unless founded on deeply felt religious faith.

More generally, the unique nature of the methodology employed in any thesis is integral to, and ultimately determinative of, the quality and validity of the research findings. Hence, the particular methodological approach set out below seeks to rely upon the nuanced understandings of "history," "historicism" and "historiography" as reflected in the following outline:

i. The first element in the methodology is the formation of the hypothesis, as set out above in Section. B.

⁵⁰ Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 15–21.

⁵¹ Carl Becker, 'What is Historiography?' *The American Historical Review* 44, no. 1 (1938): 20, 20

⁵² Michael Bentley, *Modern Historiography: An Introduction* (Routledge, 2005).

⁵³ Lane notes that: "in the nineteenth century the adjacent discipline of historical criticism emerged. This was a new and more rigorous approach to history, practiced by a new generation of professional historians where the critical historian no longer thinks in terms of *authorities*, who would rarely be questioned, but of *sources*, which must be questioned and tested." Lane, *A Concise History of Christian Thought*, 235.

⁵⁴ Eileen K. Cheng, *Historiography: An introductory guide* (London: Bloomsbury Academic; Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021).

ii. The second element of the methodology is the development of a comprehensive annotated bibliography of the relevant literature germane to the hypothesis, including all primary and secondary sources.

iii. The third element of the methodology is an examination of hypothesis primarily employing historiographical analysis, clarified with the aid of historical and historicism analytics wherever appropriate, for the purposes of identifying when the history was written, who wrote it, and what factors influenced how it was written.

In order to perform an historiographic analysis of past and present interpretations, it will be necessary to:

- i. Identity the most influential literature that shaped historians' opinions on religion's influence in the Founding era through to, and including, the Eisenhower Presidency;
- ii. Identify the most influential Supreme Court decisions that either shaped, or in some way responded to, religion's role in informing democratic governance within the American experience;
- iii. Demonstrate which scholars have been most effective over that time in changing the perceptions of religion's influence in governance considerations;
- iv. Describe the current trends in this field of scholarship, including which interpretations have already been challenged and which interpretations are currently in the mainstream;
- v. Evaluate the accumulated historiographic evidence for the purpose of determining if a new perspective is warranted; and,
- vi. Formulate a thesis in response to the hypothesis premised upon the weight of the historiographic evidence supported by historical analysis.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of this thesis, it will rely to a lesser extent on various aspects of social and intellectual history, as well. Social history, in the context of this thesis, will focus on the social, economic, and cultural aspects of a particular historical period, with a view to better understanding how people lived, worked, and interacted with each other during the relevant periods under consideration. The aspects of intellectual history cited herein will focus, with the benefit of historiographic analysis, on the ideas and beliefs that shaped the way people understood the world around them. In particular, it will strive to understand how ideas and beliefs were transmitted and transformed over time.

D. Defining Certain Terms Used in this Thesis

This thesis involves, *inter alia*, comparing and contrasting different theories and accounts of historical events. Writings in the areas under consideration herein often involve complex concepts and specialized terminology. Therefore, defining certain terms used in the thesis' title is intended to lay a coherent and comprehensible foundation for this study. In addition, identifying and defining these key terms is also intended to eliminate or lessen potential ambiguities in an effort to ensure that readers have a common understanding of the terminology. Without the benefit of these definitions those who come from different backgrounds or experiences may misinterpret the arguments and findings. Consequently, the terms set out below are

defined with the intent of ensuring clarity, establishing common ground with the reader and common ground with existing scholarship, as well as avoiding misinterpretations.

Ressourcement. The term "ressourcement" has its origins in theological and philosophical discourse, particularly within the Catholic Church. According to Congar, the term "ressourcement" was coined by the poet and social critic, Charles Peguy (1873-1914).⁵⁵ It is derived from the French word "ressourcer," which means to "return to the source" or "re-source." The "ressourcement movement" refers to French ressourcement theologians whose influence pervaded French theology and society in the period from 1930 to 1960. They inspired a renaissance in twentieth-century Catholic theology, which, in turn, initiated a movement for renewal that made a decisive contribution to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).⁵⁶ The more contemporary and colloquial understanding of the term "ressourcement" is that it refers to a scholarly and reflective process of revisiting foundational sources and principals.⁵⁷ In this sense, "ressourcement" is intended to describe the process of reconnecting with and revitalizing the original sources, ideas, and traditions that form the foundation of a particular belief system or philosophy.

As used in the title "Towards a Ressourcement of Dwight D. Eisenhower's Belief...", the term is intended to convey the effort herein to revisit the intellectual and historical origins of Eisenhower's convictions regarding the interplay between government and religious faith for the purpose of gaining a deeper insight into the fundamental principles that shaped Eisenhower's views with the aim of reevaluating, revitalizing and, if warranted, reinterpreting these beliefs for their contemporary relevance.

Religion. The term "religion" as used herein may be considered archaic by contemporary standards. It is a definition taken from an 1849 edition of *An American Dictionary of the English Language*.⁵⁸ However, this definition is more likely familiar to Eisenhower as the definition initially understood by him during his formative years in the latter part of the nineteenth century.⁵⁹ Consequently as used in reference to Eisenhower, religion signifies "a belief in the being and perfections of God, in the revelation of his will to man, and man's obligation to obey his commands, in a state of reward and punishment, and a man's accountableness to God. Religion comprehends the belief and worship of pagans and Mohammedans, as well as of Christians; any religion, consisting in the belief of a superior power or powers governing the world, and in the worship of such power or powers."⁶⁰ Barton expands on this concept of "religion," saying: "Therefore, to be a religion required a belief in some Supreme Being who set forth commands by which He expected his followers to live and conduct their affairs - religion required a belief in the existence of some Supreme Being who was to

⁵⁵ Yves Congar, 'Le Prophete Peguy', *Temoignage Chretien* (26 August, 1949): 1, 1.

⁵⁶ Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray, *Ressourcement: A movement for renewal in twentieth-century Catholic theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1.

⁵⁷ Andrew D. Swafford and Edward T. Oakes, *Nature and Grace: A new approach to Thomistic ressourcement* (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2015), 26–31.

⁵⁸ Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1849 Ed.), (New York: Published by S. Converse, Printed by Hezekiah Howe, New Haven).

⁵⁹ See Chapter II, *infra*, for a more detailed argument in support of this position.

⁶⁰ *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1849), s.v. "religion".

be worshiped and obeyed by His followers. Groups that did not acknowledge some type of Supreme Being, were never considered to be religious."⁶¹ The definition stands in sharp contrast to later (1965 and 1970) re-definitions of "religion" by the Supreme Court of the United States.⁶²

Notwithstanding Eisenhower's boyhood understanding of "religion," by the time of his Presidency (1953-1961), religion was more commonly regarded as referring to a set of beliefs and practices that related to the worship of a deity or deities, and the pursuit of spiritual or moral goals. Throughout the 1950s, this would typically be understood to refer to the various faith traditions practiced by individuals and communities around the world. Nevertheless, while Eisenhower was serving as President it is argued in the succeeding chapters of this thesis that he acted consistent with the faith ideals, notions, and impressions of religion developed during his earlier life consistent with the definition initially set out above.

Theology.⁶³ "Theology" is a term closely associated with "religion," and often used interchangeably with it on a casual basis.⁶⁴ For the purpose of this thesis, however, a more precise definition is required. In the context of the arguments made herein "theology" is regarded as "the study of God, God's character, God's actions in relation to the *cosmos*, and especially God's relationship to humanity (the character and history of humankind) in its responsive relationship to God within the panorama of the world and history, space and time."⁶⁵ Bowald maintains that there are four types of theology consistent with this definition. They include biblical theology, historical theology,

⁶¹ David Barton, *America's Godly Heritage*, 3rd edn (Aledo, Texas: WallBuilder Press, 2022), 47.

⁶² In the 1960s and 1970s, the Supreme Court of the United States rejected long-standing interpretations of the First Amendment, as detailed, *infra*, in Chapter Five. It rejected the long-standing meaning of "religion." The Court's redefined "religion" whereby whatever a person believed so strongly that it affected the way he or she behaved was considered his or her religion. Consequently, many beliefs, creeds, and philosophies that completely denied the existence of any Supreme Being suddenly became religions. See *United States v. Seeger*, 380 US 163 (1965) and *Welsh v. United States*, 398 US 333 (1970).

⁶³ Barth believed that: "theology is a theology of the Word. It is the Word of God, God's revelation, that is the subject matter of theology. Barth laid a heavy stress on God's revelation, on the Bible, and saw himself as returning to many of the insights of the Reformers, especially Calvin. However, he was not returning to the traditional understanding of the Bible; rather, his insight was a neo-orthodoxy." See: Lane, *A Concise History of Christian Thought*, 274. The discussion that follows is not intended to materially differ or depart from Barth's view but is intended to be more nuanced in aid of better understanding the arguments made in this thesis. For additional commentary on theology, see: Banks, *Redeeming the Routines: Bringing Theology to Life* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic 1993); Franke, *The Character of Theology: An Introduction to Its Nature, Task and Purpose* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); McFarlane, *A Model for Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020); Robinson, *Exploring Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014); and, Veeneman, *Introducing Theological Method: A Survey of Contemporary Theologians and Approaches* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017).

⁶⁴ Whereas the term "religion" may be understood to refer to a broader set of beliefs, practices, rituals and social institutions that constitute a specific faith tradition, the term "theology," as expressed herein, may be understood to refer to the narrower study of God or the Divine. Both terms should be distinguished from two other concepts: "philosophy of religion" and "religious studies." Philosophy of religion refers to fundamental concepts related to religion, i.e., is there a God. Religious Studies refers to the examination of religion as a cultural and social phenomenon.

⁶⁵ Grace Theological Seminary, 'What are the Four Types of Theology? Answers from a Theology School', accessed November 5, 2021, <https://seminary.grace.edu/what-are-the-four-types-of-theology-answers-from-a-theology-school/>

systematic (or dogmatic) theology, and practical theology.⁶⁶ Notwithstanding these distinctions, Hill maintains that "the task of theology today, as it has always been in every age, is to restate the Christian message in terms that contemporary people can understand. Consequently, the work of theologians, writing in a time of uncertainty, when to some the world seems to have lost its faith in both reason and religion, offers an unparalleled resource for that ongoing task."⁶⁷

Breitenberg makes a relevant and useful distinction in this regard between public theology and other streams which are related to public theology, but do not duplicate it in essence or purpose, including: civil or public religion, political theology,⁶⁸ public church, public philosophy, and public or social ethics⁶⁹ The term "civil religion" is specifically discussed in greater detail in succeeding chapters of this thesis. However, it is helpful at this point to briefly draw a distinction between "civil religion" and "public theology." Breitenberg notes that:

both civil religion and public theology are concerned with the relationship between, on the one hand, political authority, government, and society, and, on the other hand, God, the gods, or that which is perceived by a people to be sacred and holy. However, while civil religion emphasizes the public life and social responsibilities—the national life—of a people, public theology is also concerned with, among other things, the relationship of individual believers to the civil government. Whereas civil religion begins with the nation and its people and discerns the conception of God held by them, public theology moves from religious faith and practice to considerations of their import for the broader society. In addition, public theology is often but not consistently understood to approach these and other issues from the perspective of specific religious communities and traditions as well as the individual religious believers who comprise them. Thus, public theology deals with the public import and explication of theological concepts, vis-à-vis the larger society, in ways civil religion does not, in part because civil religion is distinct from particular faith traditions upon which public theology is based and out of which it develops.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ See: Grace Theological Seminary, 'What are the Four Types of Theology? Answers from a Theology School', 1, accessed January 27, 2022, <https://seminary.grace.edu/what-are-the-four-types-of-theology-answers-from-a-theology-school/>

⁶⁷ Jonathan Hill, *The History of Christian Thought: The Fascinating Story of the Great Christian Thinkers and How They Helped Shape the World as We Know It Today* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 263.

⁶⁸ Nelson describes "political theology" saying: "In Medieval and Renaissance Europe, political thought was fundamentally Christian, an exercise in applied theology. To ask what form our lives should take was, during this period, inevitably to ask what form God wished them to take. Questions about politics quickly became questions about Revelation, about the proper understanding of God's commands as reflected in Scripture. Eric Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 1.

⁶⁹ E. H. Breitenberg, 'To Tell the Truth', *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 23, no. 2 (2003): 55–96, 55–96.

⁷⁰ Breitenberg, 'To Tell the Truth', 58.

Faith. When Eisenhower spoke of "deeply felt religious faith," he was not advocating a particular religious doctrine or creed as evidenced by the fact that he went on to say "...and I don't care what [kind] it is."⁷¹ Rather, as argued herein, the statement was intended to emphasize the importance of faith as a moral foundation for the creation and sustaining of a virtuous society that underpins the principles of democracy.⁷² In this instance, the use of the term "faith" referred to a belief in a higher power or a Divine force.⁷³ To this extent, Eisenhower was suggesting that the American government must be rooted in a strong religious foundation, thereby acknowledging the role of religion in shaping the moral and ethical values that underpin democracy. Consequently, faith is understood not merely a personal matter but a collective and cultural one.⁷⁴

Feeling and Felt.

When Eisenhower referenced the notion of "feelings" in speaking of "deeply felt religious faith," he was conveying the idea of a genuine, heartfelt and personal conviction in one's religious beliefs as opposed to a superficial adherence to religion or a shallow acknowledgement of faith. It was intended to emphasize a sincere connection with one's religious values whereby individuals who hold deeply rooted religious convictions are more likely to exhibit moral and ethical virtues that are the underpinning of a just and harmonious society.

In a more abstract sense, the term "felt" employed by Eisenhower implies a sense of conviction and commitment. When someone has a deeply felt religious faith it is intended to suggest that they are not just casually adhering to a set of beliefs but are wholeheartedly committed to them.⁷⁵ This commitment manifests in their actions, values and priorities, which reflect a dedication to living in accordance with their faith. The term "felt" used herein emphasizes the depth of this commitment.

⁷¹ Kyprianou references the term "phyletism" in this context, i.e., the principle of nationalities applied in the ecclesiastical domain. by which he means that the Church should not be confused with the destiny of a single nation or a single race. See: Paulos M. Kyprianou, *Christian Orthodox Political Philosophy: A Theological Approach* (Jordanville New York: Holy Trinity Seminary Press, 2023).

⁷² James Madison, one of the Framers of the Constitution, argued for the necessity of virtue rather than faith, when he said: "Is there no virtue among us? If there be not, we are in a wretched situation. No theoretical checks, no form of government, can render us secure. To suppose that any form of government will secure liberty or happiness without any virtue in the people, is a chimerical idea. If there be sufficient virtue and intelligence in the community, it will be exercised in the selection of these men; so that we do not depend upon their virtue, or put confidence in our rulers, but in the people who have chosen them." Jonathan Elliot, ed., *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution*, vol. 3 (J.P. Lippincott Company, 1901), 536–37.

⁷³ Colson makes the point more plainly in asserting that: "The American experiment in limited government was founded on this essential premise; its success depended on a transcendent reference point and a religious consensus [citing John Admas, who wrote], 'our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other.'" Charles W. Colson, *God and Government: An Insider's View on the Boundaries Between Faith and Politics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2010), 52.

⁷⁴ Rev. Billy Graham, with whom Eisenhower frequently counseled, maintained that that "faith must always have an object, i.e., people do not simply have faith; they have faith in something or someone." Faith in "faith," for Graham, being meaningless. For the Christian, he asserted, "there is only one object of faith: the living God; anything less is insubstantial, unreal, even deceptive." Billy Graham, *Hope for Each Day: Words of Wisdom and Faith* (Nashville Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 2017), 287.

⁷⁵ See Chapter Seven, *infra*, for a discussion of deeply felt faith to the extent of a strong sense of religiously motivated selflessness and self-sacrifice.

It is contrasted with other possible interpretations of the term. For example, it is not intended to describe emotions or feelings in either the Romantic⁷⁶ or Schleiermachian⁷⁷ uses of the word. In Romanticism the word "felt" often referred to an emotional and subjective experience unique to an individual. Writers and artists of Romantic period often sought to convey the depth of human feeling, often portraying intense emotional experiences through their works.⁷⁸ The Romantics celebrated individual emotions, intuition, and the sublime in nature.

Schleiermacher offered a more abstract concept of feeling and its relation to religion.⁷⁹ Explains Hill: "religion, according to Schleiermacher,⁸⁰ is neither about knowledge nor action, because acts of great evil as well as great good have been done in the name of religion. If we are to have any criteria for telling which actions really reflect true religion, then the heart of religion must lie elsewhere." Instead, he argues, "there is a third component to human life in addition to knowledge and action. This Schleiermacher calls '*feeling*,' and it is here that religion is to be located."⁸¹ Hill elaborates by saying: "This notion of '*feeling*' has frequently been misunderstood. By '*feeling*' Schleiermacher does not mean a vague emotion, as when one feels pleasure. It is not irrational; rather, it is what underlies the possibility of reason. '*Feeling*' makes possible both emotion and knowledge, as the basis of all human experience. He describes it, in strikingly modern terms, as 'self-consciousness.'⁸² But if we are conscious of ourselves, then we are also aware of our own limitations and therefore aware of our dependence on something beyond us.....it is this consciousness of being absolutely dependent, which is the same thing as being in relation with God."⁸³

⁷⁶ Romanticism was a literary and artistic movement that emerged in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. See: <https://www.britannica.com/art/Romanticism>

⁷⁷ German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) held that belief, in the sense of accepting doctrines, is foreign to religion. See: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Friedrich-Schleiermacher>

⁷⁸ Nicholas Saul, *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 149–51.

⁷⁹ For a contrasting view to that set out below, see: Ballard who asserts that "what Schleiermacher is most known for is his theological method of deriving doctrine from religious experience. He believed that religious piety is to be found in the 'feeling of absolute dependence,' and all subsequent doctrines must be discovered through reflection upon religious experience. Understanding and critiquing Schleiermacher's theological method requires examining his theological influencesand a few examples of his systematic theology. In the end, Schleiermacher's theological method is ingenious but misguided because it is based on a faulty religious epistemology of human experience. What is needed instead is an objective standard of truth from outside of human nature - namely, God's revelation found in the Bible. Jordan P. Ballard, 'The Theological Method of Friedrich Schleiermacher', *Eleutheria* 6, no. 2 (2022): 136, 2.

⁸⁰ See: Friedrich Schleiermacher, ed., *Christian Faith: A New Translation and Critical Edition*, trans. Tice, Terrence N., Kelsey, Catherine, Lawler, Edwina (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016).

⁸¹ Hill, *The History of Christian Thought*, 232–33.

⁸² In a recent article (June 19, 2024), Weigel opines that "the reduction of religious faith to a matter of sentiment rather than of rationally defensible conviction (the beginnings of which can be traced to the German theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher in the early nineteenth century) is perhaps the single most important factor in the decay of liberal Protestant denominations into small causes of religious wokery with the thinnest tether to Great Tradition Christianity." See: George Weigel, "Ticket to Oblivion?" *First Things*, <https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2024/06/ticket-to-oblivion>

⁸³ Hill, *The History of Christian Thought*, 233. By locating religion in the realm of the self-conscious feeling, Schleiermacher accomplished several extraordinary things at once. First, he protected religion against the advance of Enlightenment rationalism. Science was at the time increasingly displacing religion as the explanation for the world. But for Schleiermacher, religion and science performed totally different functions to begin with. Science is part of "knowing" and religion is part of "feeling." They are quite

Throughout this thesis, Eisenhower's aphorism or dictum regarding the "need for faith" and "our form of government" should be viewed as encapsulating his belief that democracy, as practiced in America, is intrinsically linked to a particular kind of religious faith. As will be shown, the Eisenhower era was characterized by a Judeo-Christian ethos that permeated America's institutions, cultural norms, and societal values. This framework provided a moral compass, fostering important virtues, including justice, charity,⁸⁴ and individual dignity – and most pertinent, moral integrity – which were deemed crucial to the sustenance of democracy. That deeply felt religious faith, as Eisenhower suggested, cultivated these virtues by promoting a sense of responsibility towards fellow citizens and the common good. Nevertheless, it is important to grasp at the outset of this thesis that not just any religious faith would suffice. The particular kind of religion that inculcated this type of faith was one that embraced the principles of freedom, equality, and individual rights – core tenets of American democracy.⁸⁵ As described *infra*, in Eisenhower's mind the Judeo-Christian tradition, with its emphasis on the inherent worth of every individual created in the image of God, aligned symmetrically with these democratic ideals. It was this alignment that made such a religious faith indispensable for the kind of democracy Eisenhower embraced and which he advocated at every opportunity.

E. Chapter Summaries

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter introduces Eisenhower's biblically based belief that a deeply felt religious faith is essential for the American form of government, insofar as he viewed democracy as dependent not merely on institutions but on the virtues and convictions of its citizens, as well. Despite being a crucial figure in American history, his religious beliefs have often been overlooked. This chapter introduces ensuing discussions on i) the beliefs of the Founding generation, ii) early perceptions of the role of religious faith in government, iii) the parallels between Eisenhower's educational and religious

distinct. Religion is not about knowledge of the scientific kind. For Schleiermacher, no atheistic arguments can topple God, and no advances in scientific knowledge, even if they succeed in explaining the entire universe perfectly, can remove the need for Him. We do not deduce God rationally; we experience Him as part of our self-consciousness, and nothing can ever take that away. Hill, *The History of Christian Thought*, 233.

⁸⁴ During the Eisenhower era (1953-1961), charity played a significant role in providing social services, reflecting a broader reliance on private and community-based initiatives over extensive government programs. Eisenhower emphasized limited government intervention in social welfare, advocating a balanced federal budget and reduced government spending. Subsequent presidential administrations, particularly those of Lyndon B. Johnson and his Great Society programs, expanded federal involvement in social welfare. Johnson's administration enacted significant government programs aimed at reducing poverty and improving education, healthcare, and civil rights, marking a shift towards a more active federal role in social services that complemented and, in some areas, supplanted the reliance on private charity seen during the Eisenhower years. See: <https://www.history.com/topics/1960s/great-society>

⁸⁵ To understand and validate Eisenhower's aphorism, the thesis delves into the nature of this religious foundation and examines how it is essential for nurturing the kind of democracy Eisenhower envisioned, especially in contrast to the atheistic Communism he vehemently opposed, as described in Chapter Four, *infra*.

influences and those of the Founders; and, iv) selected Supreme Court decisions which have taken the country in a different direction. The exploration of these topics is intended to illuminate the extent to which religious faith influenced American governance during and before Eisenhower's presidency and its implications for the separation of church and state in a contemporary context. The methodology included in this thesis includes defining key terms to ensure clarity, the use of historiographical analysis, and the evaluation of the impact of selected Supreme Court decisions.

Chapter Two: Eisenhower's Education and Formative Years

This chapter examines the significance of education in shaping Eisenhower's character and achievements, drawing on Benjamin Franklin's belief in the paramount importance of educating youth in wisdom and virtue. It describes Eisenhower's education, deeply rooted in the religious teachings and practices of his family and his community, as being key to his successes in later life. His family's regular Bible readings and his own diligent study of the Scriptures are explored as foundational elements of his moral and ethical worldview. The chapter continues by drawing a parallel between Eisenhower's religious upbringing and that of America's Founding Fathers, who viewed Bible as a source of profound philosophy and moral guidance, integral to the development of the nation. This chapter also examines historiographic debates about the influence of religious and secular philosophies on the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Chapter Three: America in the 1950s, Graham and Niebuhr

This chapter examines 1950s America in the context of understanding the religious and political climate during Eisenhower's presidency. The 1950s witnessed a resurgence of religiosity, influenced by the aftermath of World War II, the Cold War, and anti-Communism. Despite the tensions of the Cold War, the prevailing climate of Eisenhower's America was one of measured confidence, optimism, and conservatism. This period saw prominent clergymen and theologians such as Billy Graham and Reinhold Niebuhr gain significant religious and cultural influence. Graham, an evangelist, had a close relationship with Eisenhower, while Niebuhr, a public intellectual, influenced a wide range of issues beyond academia. These figures exemplified the intersection of religion and politics during Eisenhower's presidency, reflecting the influence of religious faith on American governance.

Chapter Four: The Eisenhower Presidency and Civil Religion

This chapter explores several aspects of Eisenhower's presidency, including: his personal and public prayer life, the religious aspects of his speeches and writings, his opposition to Communism, and his civil rights legislation. The chapter selectively demonstrates how Eisenhower's actions and decisions were always aligned with his faith-based beliefs. The chapter concludes with a brief historiographical commentary on the extensive literature analyzing the Eisenhower presidency and introduces the concept of "civil religion" as a framework for understanding his governance.

Chapter Five: The Supreme Court and the Privatization of Religion in America

This chapter analyzes landmark Supreme Court rulings starting in the 1960s, such as *Engel v. Vitale* and *Abington Township v. Schempp*, that began to reshape the legal landscape, moving away from religious practices in public institutions, particularly in

schools. These decisions, including subsequent rulings like *Stone v. Graham* and *Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe*, reinforced a secular approach, distancing public education from religious activities and emphasizing government neutrality in religious matters. It concludes with an historiographical analysis showing that earlier interpretations of the First Amendment were more accommodating of religion in public life, as seen in the writings of Justices like Joseph Story and John McLean. These perspectives contrast with the more recent emphasis on strict separation, which the thesis posits as a privatization of religion, relegating it to personal belief rather than public influence.

Chapter Six: Jasper Adams and Deuteronomy

This chapter examines the lectures and writings of Jasper Adams (1793-1841), a significant figure in understanding the separation of church and state, who explained the nexus of religion, particularly Christianity, with American civil governance. Adams argued that prosperous states historically relied on religious foundations and that government should uphold moral laws, which are effectively sanctioned by religion. He asserted that both state and national governments have implicitly respected Christian principles, despite no explicit constitutional mandate. In support of his thesis, Adams asserted that the adoption of English common law incorporated Christian tenets. As part of this analysis, this chapter looks at the Book of Deuteronomy, in particular, and its influence on American legal theory. Adams maintained that religion's role in public life was crucial for social stability and moral behavior, advocating a balanced approach where religion informs public values without dominating the political sphere.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The concluding chapter undertakes to perform a *ressourcement* of Eisenhower's belief that our form of government requires a deeply felt religious faith. It evaluates each of the constituent elements of the aphorism, including the role of character, the meaning of faith, the original meaning of "our form of government," and their combined function in promoting societal cohesion. The thesis concludes with a prescription for "cultural irredentism," which would involve steps to reclaim lost or estranged aspects of American society, particularly religious values, to support Eisenhower's vision as the best way forward for the long-term viability of the nation.

"The thing is to understand myself, to see what God really wishes me to do; the thing is to find a truth which is true for me, to find the idea for which I can live and die."
Søren Kierkegaard⁸⁶

"No theory of history can do without teleology."

Anon.⁸⁷

Chapter Two: Eisenhower, Education, and the Formative Years

A. Education

Benjamin Franklin⁸⁸ once observed on the importance of education....." I think [like] you, that nothing is of more importance for the public weal, than to form and train up youth in wisdom and virtue. Wise and good men are, in my opinion, the strength of the state; more so than riches or arms....I think also, that general virtue is more probably to be expected and obtained from the education of youth, than from the exhortations of adult persons; bad habits and vices of the mind being, like diseases of the body, more easily prevented [in youth] than cured [in adults]. I think, moreover, the talents for the education of youth are the gift of God; and that He on whom they are bestowed, whenever a way is open for the use of them, is as strongly called as if he heard a voice from heaven...."⁸⁹

This quote from Franklin lays bare the critical importance of quality education in the formation of character, and, in turn, the "strength of the state."⁹⁰ It is also suggestive, in this context of this thesis, of the need to explore what type or form of education Eisenhower received that he could have achieved all that he did and, as Commander in Chief and President, critically conjecture that our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith.

⁸⁶ Søren Kierkegaard et al., *Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967-).

⁸⁷ Certain of the arguments in this chapter proceed from a teleological basis, specifically that if there was no God there would be no free will, simply a Darwinist view that individuals are biological machines reacting to internal and evolutionary drives. A benefit of religion to society is people believing that free will does exist and does matter insofar as they have the capacity to change themselves and make different decisions other than what biology would drive them to do. See: Kevin Timpe, *Free Will in Philosophical Theology* (New York NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014).

⁸⁸ In 1790, one month before he died at the age of 85, Franklin sent a letter to Ezra Stiles, president of Yale College in which he said: "Here is my creed. I believe in one God, the creator of the universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental points in all sound religion, and I regard them as you do in whatever sect I meet with them. As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think his system of morals and his religion, as he left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is like to see; but I apprehend it has received various corrupting changes, and I have, with most of the present Dissenters in England, some doubts as to his Divinity; though it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble." See: <https://www.bartleby.com/lit-hub/a-library-of-american-literature/to-ezra-stiles-with-a-statement-of-his-religious-creed/>

⁸⁹ Koch, Adrienne, ed., *The American Enlightenment* (New York: George Braziller, 1965), 77.

⁹⁰ See Holsti (Chapter Five) for a discussion of the constituent elements of state power. Kalevi Holsti, *The State, War, and the State of War* (Cambridge [U.K.]: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 82–98.

In pursuing this inquiry, this chapter begins by focusing on the *religious* education and training Eisenhower received during his formative years. In historiographic terms, this period of Eisenhower's background is not controversial.⁹¹ However, this chapter concludes with a comparative overview of the Founders' biblically based education and its impact on their cultural and political views which are, in fact, the subject of some historiographic controversy, as described herein.⁹²

As a predicate to delving into the religious aspects of Eisenhower's background, a more complete profile of Eisenhower's non-religious biography is warranted in an effort to underscore the dimensions of all that he accomplished with the benefit of the education he did receive during his formative years on the plains of Abilene, Kansas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For this purpose, set out below are encomiums found in the *Congressional Record*, which were offered by former Congressmen Robert Franks and Jerry Moran shortly after Eisenhower's death in 1969.⁹³

Franks summarized Eisenhower's career as follows: "President Eisenhower distinguished himself in the military before being elected the 34th President of the United States. After graduating from the United States Military Academy at West Point, Dwight Eisenhower was promoted to captain and assigned to command tank training at Camp Colt in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. For his efforts during World War I, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. In 1919, President Eisenhower continued his tank training command, this time in Camp Meade, Maryland, where he met Colonel George Patton, who would become a lifelong friend. Before World War II, President Eisenhower spent time in the Panama Canal Zone, France and in the Philippines as chief of staff to General Douglas MacArthur. Eisenhower graduated at the top of his class from the military's command and general staff school at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. In 1939, President Eisenhower was 49 years old and held the rank of lieutenant colonel. By 1941, Eisenhower was promoted to brigadier general and after the bombing at Pearl Harbor, General George C. Marshall placed Eisenhower in charge of the war plans division. As chief American war planner, Eisenhower strongly supported the 'Europe first' strategy. Eisenhower's second major campaign during World War II occurred in North Africa where he headed the operations division before General Marshall placed him in command of the U.S. Army's European theater of operations. In 1944, Eisenhower was named Supreme Commander of the Allied expeditionary forces. The successful Normandy invasion launched on D-Day was the ultimate thrust which led to the German defeat. On December 15, 1944, Eisenhower was promoted to the Army's highest rank, General of the Army. In 1952, after serving as president of Columbia University and commander of NATO forces, Eisenhower sought and won the Republican nomination for President. President Eisenhower was overwhelmingly elected to serve two terms as our Nation's President. His accomplishments as President span from the peaceful resolution of the Korean War to

⁹¹ While this period is not controversial with respect to Eisenhower's formative years, there are historiographic issues with regard to the Russellites, with which Eisenhower's parents were affiliated. However, these issues developed after Eisenhower left the family home in Abilene to attend West Point and begin his military career. See: Appendix II in Bergman, Jungmeyer, and Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency*.

⁹² The term "comparative" as used in this context is intended to convey the correlation between the type of biblically based training Eisenhower received and the type of biblically based training the Founders received nearly a century beforehand.

⁹³ Congressional Record Volume 145, Number 147 (Tuesday, October 26, 1999), House, Pages H10816-H10821.

the implementation of desegregation, to fighting Communism, to implementation of the interstate highway system. He presided over a remarkable time of peace and prosperity in this country. President Eisenhower became an elder statesman following his two terms as President."⁹⁴

Congressman Moran's summary observations on Eisenhower were equally noteworthy: "The life of President Eisenhower serves as an inspiration to all Americans to work to make this country and this world a better place. Born in Denison, Texas, and raised in Abilene, Kansas, Eisenhower came from humble beginnings and grew to be one of the most influential figures in our Nation's history. Eisenhower is an American hero,⁹⁵ and few would disagree that his accomplishments warrant the numerous tributes to him across our great land.... Both as a soldier and a statesman, Eisenhower's more than 50 years of service to his country have had a profound effect upon the course of mankind."⁹⁶

The historian, Stephen Ambrose, summarized as follows: "Eisenhower was one of the outstanding leaders of the Western world of the twentieth century."⁹⁷ As a soldier, he was professionally competent, well versed in the history of war along with modern strategy, tactics, and weaponry, decisive, disciplined, courageous, dedicated, popular with his men, his superiors, and his subordinates. As President, he was a leader who made peace in Korea and kept the peace thereafter,⁹⁸ a statesman who safely guided the free world through one of the most dangerous decades of the Cold War, and a politician who captured and kept the confidence of the American people. He was the only President of the twentieth century who managed to preside over eight years of peace and prosperity."⁹⁹

⁹⁴ ob. cit. p. H10817.

⁹⁵ In a recent book, Paradis argues that it is not an exaggeration to say that based upon his lifetime accomplishments and services to the nation Eisenhower is a modern day George Washington. Michel Paradis, *The Light of Battle: Eisenhower, D-Day and the Birth of the American Superpower* (Boston, MA: Mariner Books, 2024).

⁹⁶ ob. cit. p. H10818.

⁹⁷ The attitudes of historians towards the importance and ranking of Dwight D. Eisenhower as President of the United States, as reflected in Ambrose's summary, have evolved significantly over the past fifty years as a consequence of a reevaluation that shifted his historical significance. This transformation in perspective reflects not only the changing political and social landscape but also the emergence of new historical methodologies and the reconsideration of previously overlooked aspects of his leadership. See: Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, 244.

⁹⁸ On the matter of peace, in a June 1964 interview with prominent American journalist, Walter Cronkite, while visiting the American cemetery in France to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the D-Day invasion of Europe, as Eisenhower viewed the 9,000 graves in the cemetery he said: "I devoutly hope that we will never again have to see such scenes as these. I think and hope and pray that humanity will learn more than we had learned up to that time. But these people gave us a chance, and they bought time for us, so that we can do better than we have before. So every time I come back to these beaches, or any day when I think about that day twenty years ago now, I say once more we must find some way to work to peace, and really to gain an eternal peace for this world." See: <https://www.nytimes.com/1964/06/06/archives/eisenhower-recalls-the-ordeal-of-dday-assault-20-years-ago.html>

⁹⁹ Ambrose, *Eisenhower*, 11–12. Similarly, Smith notes that as president, Eisenhower restored stability to the nation. His levelheaded leadership ensured that the United States would move forward in measured steps under the rule of law at home, and collective security abroad. Smith describes Eisenhower's sensible admonition upon leaving office to be wary of the military-industrial complex as the heartfelt sentiment of a president who recognize the perils of world leadership. Eisenhower gave the country eight

These memorial remembrances were further justified by the fact that throughout his presidency, Eisenhower regularly earned first place on Gallup's Most Admired List.¹⁰⁰ Out of a total of twenty-one appearances on the list, he was ranked lower than second only once. It is possible Eisenhower would have had an even longer tenure on the Gallup Top-10 list had the measure been instituted earlier than 1948, which was only a few years after he led the Allied forces in Europe including the D-Day invasion at Normandy. In brief, Eisenhower was named Gallup's Most Admired Man of the Year twelve separate times, including, as noted, all eight years of his two-term presidency¹⁰¹

Leading up to the 1952 election in which Eisenhower successfully won the presidency for the first time, The Gallup Poll found that Americans of both major parties said they would welcome him as their party's standard-bearer.¹⁰² According to a June, 1950 survey, 42% of Democrats nationwide wanted to see Eisenhower named as their party's candidate for president in the next election, and a larger total of 54% of Democrats named him as either their first or second choice.¹⁰³ Support for Eisenhower was similarly widespread among Republicans nationwide, with 40% naming him their first choice for the Republican nomination, and a total of 52% choosing him either first or second.¹⁰⁴

Once he assumed office the following year, President Eisenhower enjoyed broad support from the American people. In Gallup polls conducted throughout his two terms in office, he never received a job approval rating lower than 49%. His highest rating was 79%, taken shortly after his re-election in 1956.¹⁰⁵ After several years of consistently high ratings -- at or above 70% -- public approval dipped into the 50s and 60s in his last few years; however, his overall two-term average wound up being 65%.¹⁰⁶ The fact that Eisenhower was well liked by the vast majority of Americans during his lifetime was reflected in his favorability ratings. Shortly after taking office in 1953, a noteworthy 89% of Americans indicated they had a favorable opinion of him, including 57% who gave him the highest favorable rating possible. Ten years later, after he had been out of office for nearly three years, nearly as many Americans, 85%, felt favorably about the former general, including 37% who gave him the highest possible rating.¹⁰⁷

years of peace and prosperity. No other president in the twentieth century could make that claim. Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, xv.

¹⁰⁰ See: Gallup.com

¹⁰¹ Frank Newport, David W. Moore, and Lydia Saad, 'Most Admired Men and Women: 1948-1998: Fascinating parade of personalities voted most admired over last half century', 8, accessed November 26, 2022, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/3415/most-admired-men-women-19481998.aspx>

¹⁰² Newport, Moore, and Saad, 'Most Admired Men and Women: 1948-1998', 9.

¹⁰³ Newport, Moore, and Saad, 'Most Admired Men and Women: 1948-1998', 9.

¹⁰⁴ Newport, Moore, and Saad, 'Most Admired Men and Women: 1948-1998', 9.

¹⁰⁵ Eisenhower was especially popular in his first term, winning approval from 70% of the American public in those four years. The lowest score he tallied was in the midst of a recession in the spring of 1958, when his approval rating dropped briefly to 48% - still higher than the average rating for Truman's entire presidency. Source: "Presidential Approval Ratings: Gallup Historical Statistics and Trends," *Gallup*, www.gallup.com/poll/116677/presidential-approval-ratings-gallup-historical-statistics-trends.aspx, cited Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower*, 244.

¹⁰⁶ Newport, Moore, and Saad, 'Most Admired Men and Women: 1948-1998', 10.

¹⁰⁷ Newport, Moore, and Saad, 'Most Admired Men and Women: 1948-1998', 11.

Given such popularity, it would seem reasonable to inquire into what made the man who he was. For this purpose, it is necessary to go back into Eisenhower's family history. Eisenhower's forbearers had emigrated from the Susquehanna Valley of Pennsylvania to Abilene, Kansas, in 1878.¹⁰⁸ They formed part of a colony of prosperous River Brethren, a sect of the Mennonites, who were searching for a new start in the wide-open plains of the West.¹⁰⁹ The family patriarch, Jacob Eisenhower, a minister of the River Brethren Church, saw opportunity in Kansas and desired greater distance from the spreading influence of modernity that was starting to encroach upon the plain-living people of south-central Pennsylvania.¹¹⁰ In rural Abilene, Jacob Eisenhower bought hundreds of acres of rich farmland, built a large homestead with ample room for gatherings of his church flock, and settled into a life of farming and worship.¹¹¹

David Eisenhower, Jacob's son, was born in 1863. He is described as being quiet, scholarly, and without ambition. Instead, he preferred the quiet realm of books and thought to the rigors of working in the farm fields or participating in the world of the pulpit as his father did. While attending Lane University for one year in nearby Leocompton, Kansas, David met Ida Elizabeth Stover, a strong-willed, yet lovely, pacifist.¹¹² The two fell in love and were married on September 23, 1885¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower*, 4–5.

¹⁰⁹ Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower*, 7–8. The Mennonites had their roots in the Anabaptist movement. The Anabaptists originated in Switzerland in 1525 as a group of radical reformers not happy with what they perceived to be the slow pace of others calling for reformation. They launched a movement to bring about what they believed were more quickly needed changes. They desired a "pure church," which, in their view, meant a church separated from both Catholics and other Reformers such as Luther and Calvin. They wanted to do away with tithing, usury, and military service, and sought to eliminate the role of the church in civil government while protecting freedom of conscience. The Anabaptists rejected infant baptism and taught that only those who accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by their own volition were eligible for baptism. "Ana" meant "again," as many of those baptized as infants who left other churches to become Anabaptists were rebaptized. See: Christian History Institute, '1525 The Anabaptist Movement Begins: Christian History Magazine', accessed December 8, 2023, <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/anabaptist-movement-begins>

¹¹⁰ The River Brethren's lifestyle mirrored that of the Mennonites from whom they descended. Although internally they were highly communal and close knit, to the outside world the community appeared stark and plain. The men wore black suits, long beards, and covered their heads with bowl shaped hats. The women wore long black dresses. The River Brethren forbade dancing, drinking alcohol, and gathering too many worldly possessions. They called themselves, aptly, "The Plain People."

"PLAIN PEOPLE Definition & Usage Examples | Dictionary.com", accessed December 8, 2023, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/Plain%20People>

¹¹¹ Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower*, 8. Jacob Eisenhower and his wife, Rebecca, built a nine-room house on Main St. in Dickinson County, Kansas, a house that quickly became the center of activity, not only for Jacob's growing family, but also for the River Brethren. Eventually, the Eisenhower house served as a place of worship for the congregation and by the middle of the century, Jacob Eisenhower was an active, respected and influential minister of the church. See: Sears, Osten, and Cole, *The Soul of an American President*, 28–29.

¹¹² Carlo D'Este, *Eisenhower*, 17

¹¹³ John F. Wukovits, *Eisenhower: The Great General Series*, Great generals series (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006), 8.

Their son, Dwight D. Eisenhower, was born on October 14, 1890.¹¹⁴ He was the third of seven brothers born to David and Ida Eisenhower.¹¹⁵ Their home in Abilene, though modest and located in a poorer section of the community, was adequate for their purposes, being centered around the Bible with prayers in the morning and evening as well as throughout the day.¹¹⁶ Once a week, the family held an evening Bible study, reading from three versions of the Bible. David would read aloud from a Greek Bible and then from Jacob's German Bible. Finally, Ida and the children would read from the King James Bible.¹¹⁷

While there were numerous forces and factors that influenced Eisenhower's early development; nevertheless, religion and the Bible, in particular, played outsized roles.¹¹⁸ Eisenhower was deeply influenced by the teachings and practices of the River Brethren Church, a denomination which emphasized pacifism, humility and community.¹¹⁹ Dwight and his brothers attended Sunday school classes at the Church of the Brethren in Christ in Abilene, and would compete to see who could read the

¹¹⁴ Wukovits, *Eisenhower*, 8.

¹¹⁵ Arthur B. (1886-1956), Edgar N. (1889-1971), Dwight D. (1890-1969), Roy J. (1892-1942), Paul A. (1894-1895), Earl D. (1899-1968), and Milton S. (1899-1985). 'The Eisenhower Brothers | Eisenhower Presidential Library', accessed December 7, 2023, <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/eisenhowers/eisenhower-brothers>

¹¹⁶ Bergman notes in this regard that Eisenhower "grew up on the wrong side of town." Quite literally, the Eisenhower home was adjacent to, and immediately south of, the railroad tracks which separated the town of Abilene and served as the demarcation for the more affluent families on the north side of the tracks versus the poorer families who lived south of the tracks. Bergman, Jungmeyer, and Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency*, 4.

¹¹⁷ Kenneth S. Davis, *Soldier of Democracy: A Biography of Dwight Eisenhower* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1952), 49.

¹¹⁸ In addition to the religious influences discussed here, Eisenhower recalled that his first reading love was ancient history. "At an early age, I developed an interest in the human record and I became particularly fond of Greek and Roman accounts. These subjects were so engrossing that I frequently was guilty of neglecting all others.... Even to this day there are many unrelated bits of information about Greece and Rome that stick in my memory. The battles of Marathon, Zama, Salamis, and Cannae became as familiar to me as the games (and battles) I enjoyed with my brothers and friends in the schoolyard." Dwight D. Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I Tell My Friends*, 1981st edn (Fort Washington, Pennsylvania: Eastern National. with permission of the original publisher, Doubleday & Company, 1967), 39. Wukovits, too, notes that two other Abilene residents influenced Eisenhower. One, Bob Davis, was a man who typified the city's Wild West heritage. He taught Eisenhower how to fish, hunt, shoot a gun, and adapt to the rigorous outdoor environment of the Kansas plains. More importantly, he imparted the ability to quickly evaluate people and situations and react accordingly, which was taught to Eisenhower as they sat around nighttime campfires. In addition, Joseph Howe, a local businessman who traveled extensively and owned a substantial library, opened a world beyond Abilene for the high school students, including Eisenhower. While some of his classmates were content to grow up and live within a thirty-mile radius of Abilene, Eisenhower is said to have yearned to see more of the world and know more about what was going on outside Kansas so he could understand that Kansas was not the whole world. See: Wukovits, *Eisenhower*, 12.

¹¹⁹ Menno Simons, leader of the Mennonite movement, was a Dutch Roman Catholic priest in the early part of the 16th century. However, he harbored doubts about various Catholic doctrines and went through a crisis of faith which culminated in his leaving the Catholic Church and joining the Anabaptist movement. Unlike Martin Luther and John Calvin, Simons did not believe that "infant baptism is the most certain form of baptism." By 1536 Simons had not only left the Catholic Church but he was ordained and rose to a place of great prominence in the movement, just as divisions regarding pacifism began to appear in the group. Simons aligned himself with the Anabaptists who remained pacifists. The Mennonites, from which the River Brethren descended, take their name from Menno Simons. See: Sears, Osten, and Cole, *The Soul of an American President*, 26.

Bible aloud with the most precision.¹²⁰ Eisenhower had read the entire Bible by the time he was twelve, and then he read it again before enrolling at the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1911.¹²¹ Davis adds that "each boy was to retain all his life a profound respect for the moral tenets that the parents derived, or thought they derived, from their religion".¹²² Holl makes the observation that having been brought up in a devout family - first as part of the River Brethren and later the Bible Students movement (also known at the time as Russellites¹²³), Eisenhower continued to see the world in terms of a struggle between divine and demonic forces throughout his life, even after joining the Presbyterian Church much later in life following his inauguration as President.¹²⁴ Chernus concludes that: "Foremost, while growing up [Eisenhower] learned the 'religious values of self-discipline and self-sacrifice,' values that guided him throughout his entire life."¹²⁵

In later years, the brothers were unanimous in acknowledging the influence of their mother, Ida.¹²⁶ Eisenhower himself repeatedly attributed his many achievements to his mid-Western upbringing in rural Abilene, Kansas; especially due to the unstinting religious and moral guidance of his parents,¹²⁷ and in particular, his mother, whose own background is noteworthy.¹²⁸ Ida's mother had died in 1867 and her father in 1873,

¹²⁰ Carlo D'Este, *Eisenhower: A Soldier's Life*, 1st edn (New York: Henry Holt & Co, 2002), 15.

¹²¹ D'Este, *Eisenhower*, 33.

¹²² Davis, *Soldier of Democracy*, 49.

¹²³ Dwight was also influenced by the religious ideas of his father, David Eisenhower, a member of the Russellite movement for several years around the turn of the century. Although David's early upbringing was in the River Brethren, he briefly attended the Lutheran, then later the Methodist church before and during his college days. He subsequently became a Russellite sometime after his wife did in the 1890s. However, he did not remain a lifelong member, having left the sect in 1915. David's rejection of Russellite theology presages its rejection by each of the Eisenhower boys. However, the rejection of Russellite theology should not be misconstrued as a rejection of Biblical theology. On the contrary, and as previously noted, each of the Eisenhower sons were deeply steeped in Scripture, which influenced them for the remainder of their lives. See: Gladys Dodd, 'The Early Career of Abraham L. Eisenhower, Pioneer Preacher', *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 29 (Autum 1963): 225.

¹²⁴ Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, cover comment.

¹²⁵ Ira Cernus, *General Eisenhower: Ideology and Discourse* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2002), 91.

¹²⁶ Abilene itself, as well as the boys religious experience there, both played major roles in shaping their character, morals, and worldview. Holl notes that Eisenhower embraced the mythic American saga by frequently attributing his success to being raised in small-town Kansas. David Eisenhower, the father, was a strict disciplinarian who did not hesitate to use a leather strap when he believed the punishment was warranted. The boys performed numerous daily chores, including carrying their father's lunch to the creamery where he worked. Nor were Scripture lessons or prayers optional, with both parents engaged in the Biblical training of their boys. In addition, public school attendance, at a time when high school was not a universal expectation, was also required. See: Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 39–40.

¹²⁷ Noted Eisenhower: "It was part of the privilege into which I was born that my home was a religious home. My father and mother believe that 'the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.' The Bible was a daily and vital influence in their lives. They tried their best to instill its truths and its faith into their six sons." See: *Life* magazine, December 1955, 12-13.

¹²⁸ Bergman, Jungmeyer, and Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency*, 4. Bergman further notes that understanding Dwight Eisenhower as a man requires an examination of his childhood, and, in particular, the influence of his mother as the source of much that allowed him to accomplish the following: (1) become the soldier that successfully commanded the Allied victory in Europe, (2) direct the American occupation forces in Germany, (3) become Army Chief of Staff, (4) become President of Columbia University, (5) achieve best-selling author status, (6) become President of

leaving her, then an eleven-year-old, an orphan.¹²⁹ As the only girl with seven brothers, she went to live with her mother's family the Links.¹³⁰ The Links did not believe that girls should receive a formal education; but they did, however, require Ida to study the Bible instead, which would result in her becoming a Bible memorization champion, having memorized one thousand three hundred sixty-five verses.¹³¹ Eisenhower apparently inherited his mother's skill in Bible verse memorization insofar as his military contemporaries, and subsequently political colleagues, recalled that he could "quote Scripture by the yard."¹³²

Later in his life Eisenhower would liberally intersperse Biblical references and specific verses in the ordinary course of conversation, stating on more than one occasion that "to read the Bible is to take a trip to a fair land where the spirit is strengthened and faith renewed."¹³³ D'Este confirms that Eisenhower delved into the Scriptures with so much passion he "could recite passages from memory by the hour."¹³⁴

B. The Founders and the Bible

Dwight Eisenhower's intimacy with Scripture rivaled many of the major figures of America's Founding era, as discussed further herein below. Consequently, at this juncture it is useful to digress from Eisenhower's youthful religious training to that of the Founders in an effort to explore the commonalities between his intimacy with Biblical knowledge and the Founders' grounding in Scripture, as both may provide part of the key to explicating why "our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith." As Driesbach has noted in respect of the Founders:

[they] read the Bible as evidenced by their many quotations from, and allusions to, both familiar and obscure Scriptural passages confirming they knew the Bible from cover to cover. Biblical language and themes literally seasoned their rhetoric. The phrases and cadences of the King James Bible, especially, inform their written and spoken words. Its ideas shaped their habits of mind.¹³⁵

Several Founders even wrote Bible commentaries and learned discourses on theology and Christian doctrine and practice.¹³⁶ No less a founding figure than John Adams,

the United States of America, and, (7) be reelected for a second term as president. Bergman, Jungmeyer, and Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency*, 4.

¹²⁹ 'Eisenhower Ancestry | Eisenhower Presidential Library', accessed December 8, 2023, <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/eisenhowers/eisenhower-ancestry>

¹³⁰ D'Este, *Eisenhower*, 15.

¹³¹ D'Este, *Eisenhower*, 16.

¹³² As a soldier, Eisenhower's use of biblical imagery and his familiarity with Scripture are well documented by Bergman. The statement of one of Eisenhower's aides that he could "quote Scripture by the yard," and that he used Scriptural quotations in his speeches provides only one indication that he was not the nonreligious person thought by some. Bergman, Jungmeyer, and Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency*, x.

¹³³ American Bible Society, 'Dwight Eisenhower's Bible Based Legacy', *American Bible Society* July/August (1969).

¹³⁴ D'Este, *Eisenhower*, 46.

¹³⁵ Daniel L. Dreisbach, *Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1.

¹³⁶ Among the influential Founders who wrote about Christian theology and doctrines are Elias Boudinot, John Dickinson, Oliver Ellsworth, John Jay, Benjamin Rush, Roger Sherman, and John Witherspoon.

America's second President, in an 1807 letter to Dr. Benjamin Rush said: "the Bible contains the most profound Philosophy, the most perfect Morality, and the most refined Policy, that ever was conceived upon Earth. It is the most Republican Book in the World, and therefore I will still revere it."¹³⁷ America's first President, George Washington, opined in 1783 that Americans were fortunate that "the foundation of our Empire was not laid in the gloomy age of Ignorance and Superstition, but an Epocha when [,]...when above all, the pure and benign light of Revelation, have had a meliorating influence on mankind and increased the blessings of Society."¹³⁸

There is substantial scholarship suggesting that the Bible was the most important literary text in eighteenth-century America.¹³⁹ According to Sandoz, "Bible reading was ubiquitous in America throughout the period identified as 'the Founding.'"¹⁴⁰ The culture was religious, and the American people were biblically literate.¹⁴¹ Not surprisingly, therefore, politicians and polemicists of the age often invoked the text most sacred to the American people in their sermons, lectures and writings.¹⁴² The Bible, historian Joyce Appleby observed, was "[t]he most important source of meaning for eighteenth-century Americans."¹⁴³

Dreisbach, *Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers*, 49–70. Hutson notes that: "Perhaps only Cromwell's parliaments can compare to Congress in the number of deeply religious men in positions of national legislative leadership. Charles Thomson (1729-1804), the soul of Congress and the source of its institutional continuity as its permanent secretary from 1774 to 1789, retired from public life to translate the Scriptures from Greek to English; the four-volume Bible that Thomson published in 1808 is admired by modern scholars for its accuracy and learning. John Dickinson (1732-1808), who, as the 'Pennsylvania Farmer,' was the colonies premier political pamphleteer, and who, as a member of Congress in 1776, wrote the first draft of the Articles of Confederation, also retired from public life to devote himself to religious scholarship, writing commentaries on the Gospel of Matthew. So did Elias Boudinot (1740-1821), president of Congress, 1782-83, who tuned out 'warm' debates on the floor to write his daughter long letters, praying that, through the blood of God's 'too greatly despised Son,' she should be 'born again to the newness of Life.' Resigning as director of the U.S. Mint in 1805, Boudinot wrote religious tracts such as *The Second Advent* (1815) and the next year became the first president of the American Bible Society. Henry Laurens (1724-1792), president of Congress, 1777-78, was 'strict and exemplary' in the performance of his religious duties. He 'read the Scriptures diligently to his family' and 'made all his children read them also. His family Bible contained in his own handwriting several of his remarks on passing providences.' John Jay (1745-1829), Laurens successor as president of Congress, 1778-79, and later first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, was extolled for 'the firmness, even fervor, of his religious conviction.' When he retired from public life he also became president of the American Bible Society (1821). Even two congressmen who defected to the British were distinguished by their religious, if not their patriotic, ardor: John Joachim Zubly of Georgia (1724-1781) was a Presbyterian minister and Joseph Galloway of Pennsylvania, a major figure at the first Continental Congress, later published commentaries on Revelations, which he prescribed as a 'pill for the infidel and the atheist.' That a deeply religious society should produce deeply religious leaders is no surprise...". James H. Hutson, *Religion and the Founding of the American Republic* (Washington, D.C: Library of Congress, 1998), 49–50.

¹³⁷ University of Virginia Press, 'Founders Online: From John Adams to Benjamin Rush, 2 February 1807', accessed December 17, 2023, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/99-02-02-5166>

¹³⁸ John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington: Circular to the States, June 8, 1783*, vol. 26 (Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1931-1940), 484–85.

¹³⁹ Dreisbach, *Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers*, 49.

¹⁴⁰ Ellis Sandoz, *Republicanism, Religion and the Soul of America*, Eric Voegelin Institute series in political philosophy (Columbia Mo.: University of Missouri, 2006), 78.

¹⁴¹ Dreisbach, *Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers*, 49.

¹⁴² Dreisbach, *Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers*, 49.

¹⁴³ Joyce Appleby, *Liberalism and Republicanism in the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 225.

One key to the widespread Bible literacy in Colonial America was found in a textbook predominantly used throughout this period, *The New England Primer*.¹⁴⁴ It "was the most widely read school book in America for over one hundred years."¹⁴⁵ First published in the late 1600s, *The New England Primer*, was reprinted countless times in numerous editions over the course of two centuries.¹⁴⁶ This concise volume, nearly everywhere present in colonial homes and schools, was replete with Biblical passages, allusions and doctrines.¹⁴⁷

Education laws in colonial America were supportive of this particular literacy initiative which was premised on tenets promoted in *The New England Primer*, expressly encouraging literacy so that believers could gain a better knowledge of God's will by reading and studying the Bible unaided by religious authorities.¹⁴⁸ *The New England Primer* played a key role in support of this effort and "soon became the cornerstone of early American education," insofar as it was read by generations of American school children, not least of whom were the Founders.¹⁴⁹ An illustrative feature of most editions was "An Alphabet of Lessons for Youth," which was a series of moral and instructive sentences taken from the Bible and arranged so that each sentence began with a successive letter of the alphabet (often with the exception of a few letters such as J, X and V).¹⁵⁰ One popular version commenced with the following Biblical instruction:

A Wise son maketh a glad father, but a foolish son is the heaviness
of his mother (Proverbs 10:1)

BETTER is a little with the fear of the Lord, than a great treasure &
trouble therewith (Proverbs 15:16)

COME unto Christ all ye that labor and are heavy laden and He
will give you rest (Matthew 11:28)

DO not the abominable thing which I hate saith the Lord (Jeremiah
44:4)

EXCEPT a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God
(John 3:3)¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁴ Paul Leicester, *The New England Primer: A History of Its Origin and Development*, With a Reprint of a Unique Copy the Earliest Known Edition (Legare Street Press, 2022).

¹⁴⁵ Butts, R Freeman and Cremin, Lawrence A., *A History of Education in American Culture* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1953), 69.

¹⁴⁶ Dreisbach, *Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers*, 36.

¹⁴⁷ Dreisbach, *Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers*, 36.

¹⁴⁸ For example, "The Old Deluder Satan Act" of 1647, often described as the first public education law in North America, in which the General Court of Massachusetts Bay colony instructed every township of requisite size to hire a schoolmaster or establish a grammar school financed by the parents and/or the community to thwart the "one chief project of that old deluder, Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the Scriptures." See: *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England*, ed. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff (Boston: William White, 1853), 2:203; "The Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts" (1647), in *Colonial Origins of the American Constitution: A Documentary History*, ed. Donald S Lutz (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1998), 129; Ford, *New England Primer*, 3.

¹⁴⁹ Dale Roynance, 'Of Sin and Salvation: Early American Children's Books at Princeton', *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 59, no. 2 (1998): 214.

¹⁵⁰ Leicester, *The New England Primer*.

¹⁵¹ Leicester, *The New England Primer*.

The following quotations from various prominent Founders, while not dispositive, are offered as examples typifying the byproduct of this educational system and the resultant thinking pervasive during the Founding era. In 1813, for example, writing to Thomas Jefferson, Founding Father and former President John Adams forcefully declared: "The general principles on which the fathers achieved independence were.....the general principles of Christianity."¹⁵²

Benjamin Rush,¹⁵³ a signer of the Declaration of Independence asserted that "The Bible contains more knowledge necessary to man in his present state than any other book in the world."¹⁵⁴ In an 1807 letter to John Adams, Rush went on to say that "by renouncing the Bible, philosophers swing from their moorings upon all moral subjects....[as the Bible] is the only correct map of the human heart that ever has been published."¹⁵⁵

John Jay,¹⁵⁶ President of the Continental Congress, author of several of the *Federalist Papers* and first Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court wrote in a 1784 letter to Peter Augustus that "the Bible is the best of all books, for it is the Word of God and teaches us the way to be happy in this world and the next. Continue therefore to read it and regulate your life by its precepts."¹⁵⁷

James Wilson, a signer of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, as well as the founder of the first law school in America and subsequently one of the

¹⁵² John Adams, *The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States: Letters and State Papers 1799-1811 (Annotated)*, trans. editor Charles Francis Adams, IX (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1854), Vol.X, pp. 45-46. to Thomas Jefferson, June 28, 1813. Barton has noted that abundant documentary evidence proves that the general principles of Christianity were indeed firmly embraced by the vast majority of our Founding Fathers, and that those principles formed the foundation of American government. In addition to the proof that is readily evident in the Founder's own writings and public acts, additional confirmation is also found in what many today might consider a surprising source: the publications of the American Tract Society. See: *Publications of the American Tract Society*, (New York: American Tract Society, circa 1823), Vol. 1, pp. 191-192, 288; Vol. VII, pp. 89-99. That organization, noted for publishing gospel tracts and literature, was formed in the early 1800s; and significantly, several of its published tracks were penned by famous Founding Fathers. Yet considering the educational system and textbooks that produced our great Founding Fathers, it is not surprising that so many were Christians and were outspoken about the importance of Christian principles and American government. See: Barton, *America's Godly Heritage*, 17.

¹⁵³ Founding Father Benjamin Rush has been hailed as "the American Sydenham," "the Pennsylvania Hippocrates," the "father of modern psychiatry," and the founder of American medicine. The American Medical Association erected a statue of him in Washington, DC, the only physician so honored. A medical school is named after him. R. L. North, 'Benjamin Rush, MD: Assassin or Beloved Healer?' *Proceedings (Baylor University. Medical Center)* 13, no. 1 (2000): 45-49.

¹⁵⁴ Benjamin Rush, *Essays, Literary, Moral and Philosophical*, A Defence of the Use of the Bible as a School Book (Philadelphia: Thomas and Samuel F. Bradford, 1798), 93.

¹⁵⁵ L. H. Butterfield, ed., *Letters of Benjamin Rush* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951), 936.

¹⁵⁶ John Jay was president of the Continental Congress during the American Revolution and was one of three Founding Fathers who drafted and signed the peace treaty with Great Britain to establish America as an independent nation in 1783. After the United States Constitution was written, Jay helped pen the *Federalist Papers* and is considered one of the three men most responsible for the adoption of the United States Constitution. When George Washington became President, John Jay served as his Secretary of State and then was appointed as the original Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. See: Barton, *America's Godly Heritage*, 21.

¹⁵⁷ Richard B. Morris, ed., *John Jay: The Winning of the Peace: Unpublished Papers, 1780-1784*, II (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1980), 709.

first Justices appointed to the United States Supreme Court said " Our all-gracious Creator, Preserver, and Ruler has been pleased to discover and enforce His laws by revelation given to us immediately and directly from Himself. This revelation is contained in the Holy Scripture."¹⁵⁸

On July 4, 1837 (sixty-one years after the Declaration of Independence had been signed) an elderly John Quincy Adams¹⁵⁹ delivered a patriotic oration to a large gathering in Massachusetts.¹⁶⁰ Barton notes that "Adams distinguished political career spanned seven decades. Following his service in the American Revolution, he was a foreign ambassador under Presidents George Washington, John Adams, and James Madison.¹⁶¹ He was also a US senator under President Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State under President James Monroe, and was elected the nation's sixth President before finishing his career by serving an additional seventeen years in the United States House of Representatives."¹⁶² Consequently, it is even more noteworthy to inquire, as did Adams on this occasion:

Why is it that, next to the birthday of the Savior of the world, your most joyous and most venerated festival returns on this day [i.e., the Fourth of July]? Is it not that in the chain of human events, the birthday of the Nation is indissolubly linked with the birthday of the Savior? That it forms a leading event in the progress of the gospel dispensation? Is it not that the Declaration of Independence first organized the social compact on the foundation of the Redeemer's mission upon earth? That it laid the cornerstone of human government upon the first precepts of Christianity?¹⁶³

Barton concludes that John Quincy Adams [and other like-minded Founding Fathers], as demonstrated in that Fourth of July oration, had absorbed a great number of Biblical principles that came into the world through the birth of Jesus Christ and used them to birth a nation, thus joining together Christian principles and civil government in an indissoluble bond.¹⁶⁴

A more detailed examination of what those principles are, and precisely how they are incorporated into and / or interact with our form of government, is reserved for further

¹⁵⁸ Bird Wilson, ed., *The Works of the Honorable James Wilson*, I (Philadelphia: Bronson and Chauncey, 1804), 137–38.

¹⁵⁹ (1767-1848), son of Abigail and John Adams, second President of the United States.

¹⁶⁰ Barton, *America's Godly Heritage*, 20.

¹⁶¹ Madison, regarded by historians as a 'separatist' in church - state matters, nevertheless ascribed the success of the Constitutional Convention to the power of God, writing in *Federalist* 37 that the Convention agreed upon a constitution with "a unanimity almost unprecedented..... [making it] impossible for the man of pious reflection not to perceive in it the finger of that Almighty hand which has been so frequently and signally extended to our relief in the critical stages of the revolution." Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers: A collection of essays written in favour of the new constitution as agreed upon by the Federal Convention, September 17, 1787* ([Dublin, Ohio]: Coventry House Publishing, 2015), *Federalist* 37.

¹⁶² Barton, *America's Godly Heritage*, 19.

¹⁶³ John Q. Adams, *An Oration Delivered Before the Inhabitants of of the Town of Newburyport, At Their Request, on the Sixty-First Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1837* (Newburyport, MA: Charles Whipple, 1837), 5,6.

¹⁶⁴ Barton, *America's Godly Heritage*, 20.

discussion in Chapter Six, *infra*.¹⁶⁵ However, it is appropriate to note here, as Driesbach has, that:

The Bible figured prominently in the Founders political project because they thought it fostered the religion and morality essential for Republican self-government. Even influential Founders who rejected the Bible as God's revealed word [nevertheless] valued the Bible -- especially the moral teachings of Jesus Christ-- because it was a great source for moral instruction and, thus, promoted the virtue necessary for a people to govern themselves. The challenge the Founders confronted was how to nurture personal responsibility and social order in the political system committed to self-government. Authoritarian rulers and tyrants throughout history have resorted to the whip and rod to compel their subjects to behave as they desire, but this approach [was] unacceptable for free, self-governing people. In response to this challenge, the Founders looked to religion -- and specifically the moral instruction found in Christianity's sacred text [the Bible] -- to provide the internal monitor that would prompt citizens to behave in a disciplined, responsible manner and, thereby, foster the social order and political stability that would facilitate self-government.¹⁶⁶

Boorstin reinforced the notion that the early colonists looked to the Bible as their guide because through it, they explained, "every man could find the design of life and the shape of the Truth."¹⁶⁷ As he further explained:

Scholarly dispute as to whether early New England law was primarily Scriptural or primarily English is beside the point. For early New Englanders these two turned out to be pretty much the same. These pious settlers believed Biblical law and English law were in substantial harmony. They were trying, for the most part, to demonstrate the coincidence between what the Scriptures required and what English law had already provided.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ In this regard, Hutson notes that: "The first federal Congress, which convened in April 1789, patterned its religious policies after those of the [prior] Congress [under the Articles of Confederation], insofar as the members attended a church service en masse immediately after Washington was sworn in as President on April 30, 1789. Officiating at the service was Samuel Provoost (1742-1815), Episcopal Bishop of New York, who was appointed congressional chaplain on May 1, along with the Reverend William Linn, a Dutch Reformed pastor. Selecting two chaplains of different denominations, as required by a joint congressional resolution of April 15, copied the policy of the [former] Congress, and satisfied the revolutionary imperative of treating Christian denominations in an equal, non-preferential fashion. Congress passed legislation, implementing the Confederation Congress's Northwest Ordinance, with its affirmation that 'Religion, Morality and knowledge [were] necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind,' and it also rephrased its predecessor's legislation for imposing Christian morality on the Army and Navy." Hutson, *Religion and the Founding of the American Republic*, 78-79.

¹⁶⁶ Driesbach, *Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers*, 67. The summary statement cited by Driesbach was first made in an essay entitled "School Books," which was first published in *The Mercury and New England Palladium*, January 27, 1801. See: Seth Ames, ed., *Works of Fisher Ames*, vol. 2 (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.), 406.

¹⁶⁷ Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Americans: The colonial experience*, 1st edn, A Caravelle edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1964, 1958), 18.

¹⁶⁸ Boorstin, *The Americans*, 24. See also: William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1765-1769), 1:42. "No human laws should be suffered to contradict" the "revealed or divine law" found in the Holy Scriptures.

Notwithstanding Boorstin's conclusions, his comments opened the way for further historiographic debates after he published his work in 1964. An inquiry into those historiographic debates, particularly as they relate to America's Founding documents, and especially as related to the Declaration of Independence, provide a well-spring of scholarship that collectively illuminates the core issue under consideration in this thesis, namely, whether "our form of government makes any sense should it not be predicated on deeply felt religious faith."

The author of the Declaration of Independence was Thomas Jefferson.¹⁶⁹ The reader is encouraged to review the version of the Declaration attached to this thesis as Appendix A in conjunction with the ensuing discussions of the various scholarly understandings which have been engrafted onto it at different times, particularly during the period following the publication of Boorstin's work in 1964. This version of the Declaration is a transcription of the Stone Engraving of the parchment Declaration of Independence on display in the Rotunda at the National Archives Museum in Washington, D.C. The spelling and punctuation in this transcription reflect the original engrossed copy of the Declaration.¹⁷⁰

Before delving into the layers of political interpretations discovered by Declaration of Independence scholars in more recent years, it is interesting to note, as Detweiler has, that during the first decade following the adoption of the Declaration of Independence it was not regarded as a political document,¹⁷¹ nor was Thomas Jefferson's authorship universally acknowledged.¹⁷² Instead, some of the first recorded speeches and addresses made Biblical references in addressing the tone, rationale and sentiment expressed in the Declaration. In September 1776, Peter Whitney, a New England clergymen, delivered a sermon which may claim the distinction of being the first address on the Declaration.¹⁷³ Relates Driesbach:

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826). A Founding Father from Virginia, Jefferson gave nearly six decades of his life to public service. He began his political career in the Virginia House of Burgesses and was elected a member of the Continental Congress, where he became a signer and the primary author of the Declaration of Independence. He was elected governor Virginia, became Secretary of State for President George Washington, vice president under President John Adams, and then was elected the third President of the United States, serving two terms. Throughout his life, he introduced numerous measures to abolish slavery (all of which were defeated) championed the cause of religious liberty, and late in life founded the University of Virginia. He died on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. See: David Barton, ed., *The Founders' Bible*, trans. Brad Cummings and Lance Wubbels (Shiloh Road Publishers, LLC, Newbury Park, CA, 2012), 64.

¹⁷⁰ The final version of the document in its prescribed form adopted by the Second Continental Congress July 4, 1776.

¹⁷¹ Purdie's *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg), July 19, 1776. Carl Becker pointed out that "during the Revolution, as a matter of course, men were chiefly interested in the fact that the Colonists had taken the decisive step of separating from Great Britain; the practical effect of taking this step, at this time, rather than the form, or even the substance, of the Declaration itself, was what chiefly engaged their attention." Carl Becker, *The Declaration of Independence: A Study in the History of Political Ideas* (New York, 1922), 226.

¹⁷² Philip F. Detweiler, 'The Changing Reputation of the Declaration of Independence: The First Fifty Years', *The William and Mary Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (1962): 557, 557-74. Detweiler contrasts this with later assessments of the Declaration of Independence as "the charter of American democracy," and the most sacred of all American political scriptures," p. 557.

¹⁷³ Detweiler, 'The Changing Reputation of the Declaration of Independence: The First Fifty Years', 559.

Speaking on the topic of "*American Independence Vindicated*," Whitney took his theme from the Bible, drawing a parallel between the revolt of the ten tribes of Israel from Rehoboam and the renunciation of allegiance by the thirteen colonies. The American "revolt," Whitney declared, was "undoubtedly, of God." Reviewing the oppressions of the eighteenth-century Rehoboam, George III, he quoted from the Declaration on The Taking Arms of 1775 and referred to "that incomparable pamphlet called *Common Sense*."¹⁷⁴

Detweiler cites other examples of early Independence Day orators who made mention of the preamble to the Declaration of Independence or any of its political philosophies. The first oration, delivered in Boston by William Gordon in 1777, was, like Whitney's address, a Biblical allegory; Gordon's text was based upon the Old Testament, not the later discovered political philosophies imbedded in the Declaration as described below.¹⁷⁵

Eventually, however, Jefferson was acknowledged as author of the Declaration. In a 1783 address given by Ezra Stiles,¹⁷⁶ President of Yale University, he unequivocally named Jefferson as the author of the Declaration, a fact, as previously noted, which had not generally been known during the American Revolution.¹⁷⁷ Equally noteworthy were the words Stiles used to describe Jefferson's work: he had "poured the soul of the continent into the monumental act of independence."¹⁷⁸ The expression has been much quoted, according to Detweiler, although it is not clear whether the "soul of the continent" in those years was a soul subscribing to the preamble of the Declaration of Independence or simply one yearning for political independence.¹⁷⁹

Notwithstanding the early history surrounding the Declaration, by the beginning of the twentieth century it had come to be regarded as a purely political document and its most prominent, early explicator was Carl Becker.¹⁸⁰ Becker's seminal work first published in 1922 was thought to have illuminated the intellectual journey that

¹⁷⁴ Detweiler, 'The Changing Reputation of the Declaration of Independence: The First Fifty Years', 559. *Common Sense* is a 47-page pamphlet written by Thomas Paine in 1775–1776 advocating independence from Great Britain to people in the Thirteen Colonies. Paine marshaled moral and political arguments to encourage common people in the Colonies to fight for egalitarian government. It was published anonymously on January 10, 1776, at the beginning of the American Revolution. It was sold and distributed widely and read aloud at taverns and meeting places. Paine connected independence with common dissenting Protestant beliefs as a means to present a distinctly American political identity and structured *Common Sense* as if it were a sermon. See: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, 2016 edn. (Philadelphia: Dover Publications, 1776), 1–47.

¹⁷⁵ Detweiler, 'The Changing Reputation of the Declaration of Independence: The First Fifty Years', 559.

¹⁷⁶ American educator, academic, Congregationalist minister, theologian, and author. He is noted as the seventh president of Yale College (1778–1795).

¹⁷⁷ Detweiler, 'The Changing Reputation of the Declaration of Independence: The First Fifty Years', 560.

¹⁷⁸ Detweiler, 'The Changing Reputation of the Declaration of Independence: The First Fifty Years', 560.

¹⁷⁹ *The United States Elevated to Glory and Honour: A sermon Preached...at the Anniversary Election, May 8, 1783*, 2d ed. (Worcester, 1785), 79–80. The sermon was reprinted in John W. Thornton, *The Pulpit of the American Revolution* (Boston, 1860). For comment on it see Moses Coit Tyler, *The Literary History of the American Revolution, 1763–1783* (New York, 1807), II, 334; Ola Elizabeth Winslow, *Meetinghouse Hill, 1630–1783* (New York, 1952), 304; and Julian P Boyd and others, eds. *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* (Princeton, 1950), XV, 241n.

¹⁸⁰ See: Carl L. Becker, *The Declaration of Independence: A study in the history of political ideas* (New York: Random House, 1922).

transformed America's revolutionary aspirations into a blueprint for a new nation. His book offered valuable insights into the intellectual journey that shaped Thomas Jefferson's thinking and ultimately contributed to the creation of the United States' founding document.

One of the central themes of Becker's book was the profound influence of John Locke's political philosophy on Thomas Jefferson.¹⁸¹ Locke, an English philosopher, was renowned for his contributions to the theory of natural rights, government by consent, and the idea of a social contract.¹⁸² These concepts were thought to have been fundamental to understanding Jefferson's thinking and his perspective in crafting the Declaration of Independence.¹⁸³ Jefferson's assertion in the Declaration that "Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed" mirrored Locke's principles.¹⁸⁴ Becker also elucidated how Jefferson's assertion that "whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it", reflected Locke's core belief in the right of citizens to overthrow tyrannical rulers.¹⁸⁵

Nevertheless, and as previously noted, following Boorstin's 1964 book numerous revisionists' works began to appear that deviated from Becker's interpretation which had served as the prevailing theory of the political orthodoxy imbedded within the Declaration of Independence. The first was in 1967 by Harvard historian, Bernard Bailyn.¹⁸⁶ Bailyn was followed in 1969 by J.G.A. Pocock, perhaps the most prominent revisionist, who wrote extensively about the influence of classical republicanism on the Founders' thinking.¹⁸⁷ Pocock insisted that the influence of Locke and natural rights

¹⁸¹ See: John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, P. Laslett, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), second *Treatise*, sections 25-30. For Locke, the investment of individual labour endows the object so invested with the characteristic of private ownership. What is appropriate from the state of nature (a realm characterized by the presence of natural law and, in turn, freedom of action and equality of right) thus becomes the property of the individual who appropriates it. The role of government is to guard the right of ownership that springs from this initial act of appropriation, the long-term consequence is a social contract and the institution of civil society.

¹⁸² Becker, *The Declaration of Independence*, 27, 108.

¹⁸³ Becker, *The Declaration of Independence*, 171-72.

¹⁸⁴ For Becker, the "lineage was direct: Jefferson copied Locke, and Locke quoted Hooker." See: Allen Jayne, *Jefferson's Declaration of Independence: Origins, Philosophy and Theology* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1998), 3.

¹⁸⁵ Becker, *The Declaration of Independence*, 7, 8.

¹⁸⁶ Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press, 1967). Bailyn detected another philosophical strain in colonial pamphlets and sermons. He identified five major sources from which American colonists drew their political thinking - the writings of classical antiquity, the writings of Enlightenment rationalism, the tradition of English common law, the political and social theories of New England Puritanism (especially covenant theory), and the writers identified as being associated with the English Civil War and Commonwealth. According to Bailyn, this last group, the radical English Whigs, generated the perspective that brought order and synthesis to the other strands of writing, and more than any other source "shaped the mind of the American Revolutionary generation." See: Donald S. Lutz, 'The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought', *The American Political Science Review* 78, no. 1 (1984): 189-97, 189.

¹⁸⁷ J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969). Pocock drew from Aristotle's conception of classical republicanism, viz., "the civic humanist paradigm....makes its starting point a certain early modern articulation of the idea of virtue. The term 'virtue' referred not simply to morally desirable practices but to the practice of citizenship in the classical or Graeco-Roman

liberalism was a "myth" in America, easily and correctly replaced by classical republican ideology.¹⁸⁸ Later in 1969 Gordon Wood's work, *The Creation of the American Republic*, was published in which Wood argued that the American experiment began as classical republicanism, but ended as Lockean liberalism, saying that: "Although the Lockean notion of a social contract was not generally drawn upon by Americans in their dispute with Great Britain, for it had little relevance in explaining either the nature of their colonial charters or their relationship to the [British] Empire, it became increasingly meaningful in the years after 1776."¹⁸⁹ The debate was carried on in Banning's work, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion*, which accepted much of Wood's thesis that the Constitution is liberal, but qualified it with the claim that republicanism lived on in the presidencies of Jefferson, Madison and Monroe.¹⁹⁰ Wills followed with his *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* in which he argued the Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence was not Lockean in character, but rather grounded in the Scottish moral sense philosophy of Lord Kames, Thomas Reid and Thomas Hutchinson.¹⁹¹ A subsequent – and uniquely antithetical – perspective was put forward by Matthews in his book, *The Radical Politics of Thomas Jefferson*. Here Matthews critiqued the classical republican paradigm without returning to Lockean orthodoxy, instead seeing in Jefferson's political theory a combination of Scottish moral sense philosophy, Aristotelean and Rousseauian political theory, and radical democracy to produce a society of educated, economically independent, self-determining communities that engage in perpetual revolutions as ideas and institutions fail to keep up with the progress of knowledge and technology.¹⁹²

In 1984, Lutz put forward an empirical study that challenged the prior course of scholarship summarized above.¹⁹³ The intent of the study was to determine the relative influence of various prominent European writers on late eighteenth-century American political thought, including Montesquieu, Blackstone, Locke, Hume and others.¹⁹⁴ Lutz drew upon a comprehensive list of political writings by Americans published between 1760 and 1805 in which he used a citation count of 3154 references drawn from 916 items as a surrogate measure of the relative influence of those European writers upon

sense." See: J.G.A Pocock, "Cambridge Paradigms and Scottish Philosophers," in *Wealth and Virtue*, Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 235-236

¹⁸⁸ Garrett W. Sheldon, *The Political Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson* (Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 151.

¹⁸⁹ Gordon Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 238.

¹⁹⁰ Lance Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 93. Several other scholars have concurred with Banning's agreement with Wood's general assessment of the Constitution's liberalism, but with the continuation of classical republicanism as an alternative undercurrent in American political thought and practice. Isaac Kramnick, 'Republican Revisionism Revisited', *American Historical Review* 87, June (1982): 629-64, at 664.

¹⁹¹ Gary Wills, *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1978), 193–96. Wills book was described by Harvard's Judith Shklar as "terrible intellectual history." See: Judith Shklar, *The New Republic*, 26 August and 2 September 1978, p. 32.

¹⁹² Richard Matthews, *The Radical Politics of Thomas Jefferson* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1984), 5-7, 12-15, 119-23.

¹⁹³ Lutz, 'The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought', 189–97.

¹⁹⁴ Lutz, 'The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought', 193.

American political thought during that era.¹⁹⁵ Contrary to the general tendencies in the revisionists' accounts described above, the results of Lutz's study indicated that there was no one European writer, or one tradition of writers, that dominated American political thought; rather there was evidence for moving beyond the Whig-Enlightenment dichotomy as a basis for textual analysis, and for expanding the set of individual European authors considered to have had an important effect on American thinking.¹⁹⁶ More to the point, however, when one looked at general categories (versus individual writers), Lutz discovered that the Bible was the most frequently cited source during the American founding era.¹⁹⁷ Lutz further discovered that the book most frequently cited by Americans during the Founding era was the Book of Deuteronomy.¹⁹⁸ This thesis further discusses the role of the Book of Deuteronomy in Chapter Six, *infra*.

Lutz's work demonstrated that the Bible had a defining influence on the American Revolution and on the founding of the American nation. Due to the frequency of Biblical citations encountered by Lutz, he concluded that "when reading comprehensively in the political literature of the [Revolutionary] war years, one cannot but be struck by the extent to which Biblical sources used by ministers and traditional Whigs undergirded the justification for the break with Britain, the rationale for continuing the war, and the basic principles of Americans writing their own constitutions."¹⁹⁹ The frequent use of the Bible in public and private writings of the Founding era revealed the Bible's strong cultural influence in society at that time.²⁰⁰

Lutz carried out a further study in 1990 in which he analyzed the religious dimensions in the development of American constitutionalism.²⁰¹ In this study, Lutz acknowledged that his work was premised on earlier scholarship undertaken by McLaughlin, who had previously studied an aspect of America's political heritage beyond English common

¹⁹⁵ Lutz, 'The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought', 189.

¹⁹⁶ Lutz, 'The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought', 189.

¹⁹⁷ Lutz, 'The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought', 192. The distribution identified by Lutz during the decades from 1760 to 1805 indicated that the Bible was cited 34% of the time, Enlightenment writers were cited 22% of the time, Whig writers were cited 18% of the time, common law writers were cited 11% of the time, classical writers were cited 9% of the time and various other writers made up the balance of the citations. Lutz, 'The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought', 192.

¹⁹⁸ Lutz, 'The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late Eighteenth-Century American Political Thought', 192. Lutz noted in this regard that that anyone familiar with the literature would understand that most of the citations came from sermons reprinted as pamphlets; hundreds of sermons having been reprinted during the era, amounting to at least 10% of all pamphlets published.

¹⁹⁹ Donald S. Lutz, *Colonial Origins of the American Constitution* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1998), p. 101

²⁰⁰ These public and private writings drew heavily on sixteenth and seventeenth century revival of the Hebrew language and on the consequences of that cultural and intellectual phenomenon for the development of European political thought, notes Nelson, who goes on to write that: "During this period, Christians began to regard the Hebrew Bible as a political constitution, designed by God Himself for the children of Israel. They also came to see the full array of newly available rabbinic materials as authoritative guides to institutions and practices in [a] perfect republic. Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic*, 3.

²⁰¹ Donald S. Lutz, 'Religious Dimensions in the Development of American Constitutionalism', *Emory Law Journal* 39 (1990): 21–40.

law, English Whig political theory, classical republicanism and the Enlightenment, namely "the profound impact of religion on American constitutional development."²⁰² The central contention in both Lutz's and McLaughlin's work was that in the same way as it is possible to trace the history of legal precedents, it is also possible to trace a pattern of linked political documents that are the functional equivalent of legal precedents and thereby demonstrate the logic of constitutional development.²⁰³

In this regard, Lutz maintained that it is impossible to understand the United States Constitution without understanding the individual state constitutions that preceded it, as well as the covenants and compacts that preceded those state constitutions.²⁰⁴ "The [early] political covenants written by the English colonists in America [e.g., The Mayflower Compact²⁰⁵] lead us to the church covenants written by the radical Protestant sects of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and these, in turn, lead us back to the covenant tradition of the Old Testament."²⁰⁶ "Put more simply," states Lutz, "the American constitutional tradition will be found to have derived much of its form and content from the Judeo-Christian tradition as interpreted by the dissenting Protestant sects that made up such a high percentage of the original European settlers in British North America."²⁰⁷

Lutz examined the Declaration of Independence in this context and concluded that it was derived largely from preambles to earlier state constitutions, and that in the early years of the country's history the Declaration was consistently viewed as a preamble to

²⁰² Andrew C. McLaughlin, *The Foundations of American Constitutionalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1932). In addition to the religious dimensions identified by Lutz, he acknowledged the impact of the various influences at work on American political thought during the Founding era in works previously cited herein, viz., B. Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (1967); G. Wills, *Inventing America: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence* (1978); G. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (1969); and Lundberg and May, *The Enlightened Reader in America*, 28 Am. Q. 262, 262-93 (1976). See: Lutz, 'Religious Dimensions in the Development of American Constitutionalism', 21.

²⁰³ Lutz, 'Religious Dimensions in the Development of American Constitutionalism', 21.

²⁰⁴ Lutz, 'Religious Dimensions in the Development of American Constitutionalism', 22.

²⁰⁵ IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, &c. Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern Parts of Virginia; Do by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the Presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better Ordering and Preservation, and Furtherance of the Ends aforesaid: And by Virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal Laws, Ordinances, Acts, Constitutions, and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due Submission and Obedience. IN WITNESS whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape-Cod the eleventh of November, in the Reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, Anno Domini; 1620. 'Mayflower Compact', accessed December 29, 2023, <https://www.mayflowercompact.org/>

²⁰⁶ Lutz, 'Religious Dimensions in the Development of American Constitutionalism', 22. Lutz further notes that there is substantial literature on the covenant idea, covenant theology, and the uses of covenants in politics, citing *inter alia* Delbert R. Hillers, *Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969).

²⁰⁷ Lutz, 'Religious Dimensions in the Development of American Constitutionalism', 23. Lutz notes that the one thing these immigrants brought with them that was admirably suited to the circumstances was their familiarity with religious covenants as the basis for forming communities, adding that much of what we now consider mainstream Protestantism in America shared a dissenting, Calvinist base, 24.

the United States Constitution – a preface to the American national compact, i.e., not a separate, unrelated document.²⁰⁸ Consequently, when the Declaration of Independence appealed in its closing lines to "the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions," these words called upon God as a witness, which was an oath; and, any compact which called upon God as a witness was also a covenant tracing back to the religious origins of early American compacts and covenants.²⁰⁹ "And thus" summarized Lutz, "our national compact [consisting of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution as read together] exemplifies the importance of religion [and the Bible] for politics in America."²¹⁰

Though Dwight D. Eisenhower was born nearly a half century after the passing of the last of the Founding generation, arguably there was a tangible connection with them in the sense that many of the Founding generation were infused with, and inspired by, Scriptural insights and understandings not dissimilar to what Eisenhower absorbed from his early education. Raised in a devoutly religious household, Eisenhower's Biblical knowledge and upbringing within the Church of the River Brethren in Christ and later the Bible Students movement, also known as the Russellites,²¹¹ influenced his perspective on religion, morality, ethics, and governance, as further discussed in Chapter Four, *infra*.²¹² For many of the Founders, as well as for Eisenhower, the Bible provided a common moral and ethical foundation that transcended religious denominations. Eisenhower frequently drew on Biblical knowledge in his leadership style in various ways.²¹³ The Founders, by comparison, drew on Biblical principles when drafting the Constitution, incorporating concepts such as liberty, justice and the idea that all individuals are created equally.²¹⁴ In comparing Eisenhower's Biblical knowledge with that of the Founding Fathers, the historical evidence demonstrates that they both had a deep respect for the Bible and recognized its influence on American society and governance.

²⁰⁸ Lutz, 'Religious Dimensions in the Development of American Constitutionalism', 37.

²⁰⁹ Lutz, 'Religious Dimensions in the Development of American Constitutionalism', 38.

²¹⁰ Lutz, 'Religious Dimensions in the Development of American Constitutionalism', 39.

²¹¹ See Footnote 123, *supra*, regarding Eisenhower's association with the Russellite movement.

²¹² Chapter Four details Eisenhower's frequent usage of Biblical references and metaphors in his speeches and writings to convey moral principles and inspire the American people.

²¹³ See, for example, Eisenhower's "Chance for Peace" speech, delivered on April 16, 1953, to the American Society of Newspaper Editors in which he referenced the Biblical story of the Tower of Babel to emphasize the importance of peace and unity among nations. See: <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-the-chance-for-peace-delivered-before-the-american-society-newspaper-editors>

²¹⁴ See, generally: Mark D. Hall, *Did America Have a Christian Founding?: Separating modern myth from historical truth* (Nashville TN: Nelson Books, 2019).

"Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

Psalms 90:12²¹⁵

Chapter Three: America in the 1950s, Graham and Niebuhr

A. America in the 1950s

This thesis turns next to an appraisal of 1950s America as the backdrop for a subsequent cultural moment in the country's history (*i.e.*, the years of the Eisenhower presidency), that embodied certain of the more productive elements of the intersection of religion and politics reflected in the Founders' philosophy of governance. This chapter is also intended to provide a contrasting summary of the social milieu prevailing a century and a half after the Founding era.

As suggested in the previous chapter, the Revolutionary era was marked by a strong connection between religion and politics. Religion had played a pivotal role in mobilizing the American populace during that period.²¹⁶ The religious discourse of the time emphasized the importance of moral governance.²¹⁷ Leaders were expected to uphold ethical principles, and the connection between religious virtue and political leadership was strong.²¹⁸

As the narrative in this chapter demonstrates, the 1950s witnessed a resurgence of religiosity, comparable in a number of respects to the country's earlier history, partly in response to the trauma of World War II, and partly due to other factors, including the Cold War²¹⁹ and Anti-Communism.²²⁰ The post World War II period echoed a renewed

²¹⁵ The commentary by Zondervan notes that: "This prayer of Moses, probably written near the end of his life, gives us some excellent insight into living. We need to seek wisdom, be sober minded and diligent, and seek to use our time wisely, living in the light of the Lord's commands [recognizing]: i) life is often painful, very painful but survivable; ii) we perpetually fall short of God's plan for us; iii) we are loved by an all-powerful yet merciful God who knows all about us; iv) the only true satisfaction is in knowing and obeying God; and, v) [consequently] we are to serve God to our fullest because our time on earth is short." *Holy Bible: NIV Foundation Study Bible* (Grand Rapids Michigan: Zondervan, 2015), 632.

²¹⁶ Witte and Nichols identify six principles that stand out in the American Founders writings: (1) liberty of conscience; (2) free exercise of religion; (3) religious pluralism; (4) religious equality; (5) separation of church and state; and (6) no establishment of a national religion. These six principles were part of the First Amendment religion clauses and also informed a number of other state constitutional Bill of Rights. See: Witte, John, Jr. and Nichols, Joel A., *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment* (New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2016), 4.

²¹⁷ Letter of John Adams to a Unit of the Massachusetts Militia (1798), Adams is quoted as saying: "We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion." Adams, *The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States*, 229.

²¹⁸ Letter of George Washington to the Clergy of Philadelphia (March 3, 1797), Washington said: "Religion and morality are the essential pillars of Civil society. Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports" John C. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799* (Lansing: University of Michigan Library, 1931), 416.

²¹⁹ For a discussion of the Eisenhower administration policy during the Cold War, See: Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower*, 107–14.

²²⁰ For a discussion of the Eisenhower administration policy directed at Anti-Communism, See: Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, 589.

sense of moral accountability among political leaders not dissimilar to that advocated in sermons and speeches of the Founding era.²²¹

Miller alluded to this sense of moral accountability during the 1950s when he observed: "Some of the country's more or less permanent moral attitudes toward politics were reflected in that moment [the 1950s]. Behind the broad politics of the day there [was] the broad culture of the day, and behind the broad culture of the day [were] the more or less enduring values of the people. Behind the politics of the fifties there was the peculiar spirit of the time, and behind that there were some perennial American traits and convictions. The spirit of the time.... was one of attempted repose, after the energetic efforts of the Depression and the New Deal, the Second World War, the shaping of the Cold War, and the Korean War. In such a time the semi-conservative values of the people showed through."²²²

Above all, however, the period was characterized by a revitalized religious fervor, a sense of religiousness arguably not seen during the previous one hundred years. Jacobs notes that "Religiousness, of course, is a slippery concept, but – if statistics mean anything – the 1950s were the most 'religious' decade of the twentieth century. Whereas previous periods of revivalism had been largely restricted to lower and middle-class Protestants, all faiths and classes were influenced in the 1950s: Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, rich and poor, urban and rural, suburbanites and city dwellers, black and white. Year after year, throughout Eisenhower's presidency, polls tracked greater numbers of Americans affirming a belief in God, an afterlife, the Bible as the literal word of God, the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the power of prayer." The percentage of Americans officially enrolled in a church or synagogue grew from forty-nine percent in 1940 to fifty-five percent in 1950 to a record enrollment of sixty-nine percent in 1959.²²³ Parenthetically - and for comparison purposes - Bonomi and Eisenstadt published a 1982 study showing that the church adherence of Americans in 1776 was between seventy-one and seventy-seven percent.²²⁴

In religious terms, the hallmark of the fifties was symbolized by the fact that Church membership rose nearly twice as fast as the general population was growing.²²⁵ Emblematic of this trend, *Life* magazine triumphantly proclaimed in its Christmas 1955

²²¹ Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, 524–25. In 1952 Professor J. Paul Williams argued: "I can see no escape from the conclusion that, in the present world situation, America runs a grave danger from lack of attention to the spiritual core which is the heart of her national existence. If we are to avoid this danger, democracy must become an object of religious dedication, Americans must come to look on the democratic ideal...as the Will of God." Williams recommended not only that democracy be taught as religion in churches and synagogues, but that government agencies be set up because a "systematic and universal indoctrination is essential." See: J. P. Williams, *What Americans Believe and How They Worship* (New York NY: Harper & Row, 1952), 368–75.

²²² Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, xiv.

²²³ Seth Jacobs, "'Our System Demands the Supreme Being': The U.S. Religious Revival and the ...: EBSCOhost", 591, accessed February 24, 2022, <https://web-p-ebSCOhost-com.ezproxy.mdx.ac.uk/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=862ea320-7e21-4322-807e-61b2745c1a79%40redis>

²²⁴ Bonomi, Patricia and Eisenstadt, Peter, 'Church Adherence in the Eighteenth-Century British American Colonies', *William and Mary Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (1982): 245–86, 274.

²²⁵ Jacobs, "'Our System Demands the Supreme Being" EBSCOhost', 591, citing "Growth of U.S. Churches," *Time* magazine, 2 April 1951, 81. In questionnaires inquiring "What is your religion?" about 96% of those responding identified themselves as Protestants, Catholics, or Jews. See: Will Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (Chicago, Ill.: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1994), 47–50.

issue: "The sights and sounds of an unprecedented revival in religious belief and practice were everywhere in the U.S. Religion was commanding the attention and energies of men [and women] as it had not since the days of the country's first devout settlers."²²⁶

Miller and Nowak report that during the fifties: "Signs of the religious boom were everywhere. Billboards were erected across the country urging people to 'bring the whole family to church.' These were sponsored by a national layman's committee, 'Religion in American Life.' By the [middle of the decade] this organization was receiving nearly six million dollars' worth of free advertising annually."²²⁷

While there were various manifestations of this renewed interest in religion, several indicators stood out, namely: i) Bible sales, ii) contributions to religious causes, iii) religiously focused entertainment, iv) the rise of religious "popularizers," and v) increased religious interest among intellectuals.²²⁸ Between 1949 and 1953 the yearly distribution of Bibles rose one hundred forty percent, reaching nearly ten million Bibles a year by 1953.²²⁹ Bible stories became common features in the comic sections of many Sunday newspapers.²³⁰ A *Reader's Digest* writer, Fulton Oursler, rewrote the Bible in *Digest* style, which, in turn, was syndicated in newspapers throughout the country with great success; and, studies reported continuing increases in the number of religious programs on television.²³¹ Contributions to religious causes totaled more than \$3.4 Billion by 1957, and a major religious building boom took place, particularly in suburban America.²³² The value of new religious buildings rose from \$409 Million in 1950 to \$868 Million in 1957.²³³

At the same time that America was experiencing a renewed interest in religion, the decade was also seeing a parade of scientific and technological discoveries.²³⁴ Older wonders, like television, transistors, and computers, were being steadily improved upon, while new ones appeared with amazing regularity.²³⁵ Summarized Oakley, "for most Americans in the mid-fifties, the United States was a very good place to live. Not since the 1920s had so many worshiped at the altar prosperity and felt that they lived in

²²⁶ "Mighty Wave Over the U.S.," *Life* magazine, 6 December 1955, 45. A *Time* magazine reporter asserted in 1954, "today in the U.S. the Christian faith is back in the center of things." *Time* magazine, April 19, 1954, 62.

²²⁷ Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were*, 1st edn (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 84.

²²⁸ In addition to these indicators, in the mid-fifties the United States Congress passed legislation changing the pledge of allegiance to include "under God," made "In God We Trust" an official slogan to be placed on all currency, and appropriated money for a new Congressional prayer room in the Capitol building. See: J. R. Oakley, *God's Country: America in the Fifties*, 1st edn (New York: Dembner Books, 1986), 321. During this same period, Vermont Senator, Ralph Flanders, though unsuccessful, gained support from several other U.S. Senators to procure a Constitutional Amendment proclaiming: "this nation devoutly recognizes the authority and law of Jesus Christ, Savior and Ruler of Nations, through whom are bestowed the blessings of Almighty God." See: William L. Miller, 'Piety Along the Potomac', *The Reporter*, August 17, 1954, 25–28, 25.

²²⁹ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 85.

²³⁰ *Life* magazine, April 11, 1955, 138.

²³¹ William L. Miller, *Piety Along the Potomac* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1964), 127.

²³² Paul Blanshard, *God and Man in Washington* (Boston, 1960), 14.

²³³ Blanshard, *God and Man in Washington*, 14.

²³⁴ Oakley, *God's Country*, 314.

²³⁵ Oakley, *God's Country*, 314.

God's country. In spite of the tensions of the Cold War and the growing threat of nuclear annihilation, the prevailing climate of Eisenhower's America was one of confidence, optimism and complacency."²³⁶ Oakley also noted that the mid-fifties were a time of consensus, i.e., not for many decades had so many Americans agreed upon so many fundamental issues.²³⁷ The conservatism of that period was not confined to the masses.²³⁸ Observed Oakley: "It [conservatism] was also characteristic of the intellectuals, the class that historically had often been alienated from bourgeois values and had served as the conscience of a complacent society; but [now] like the rest of the population, [had] moved toward conservative, middle-class respectability. The intelligentsia were sharing the prosperity of the time, for many had comfortable jobs in universities, foundations, government, industry, and mass communication."²³⁹ As another observer explained the unfolding phenomenon: "The avant-garde [was] becoming old-fashioned; religion [was] the latest thing."²⁴⁰

Amid this relatively halcyon time, numerous clergymen and theologians attained significant prominence. Notable among this group were the leading "popularizers" of religion - Reverend Billy Graham, Reverend Norman Vincent Peale, and Bishop Fulton J. Sheen - each had his own television and radio programs.²⁴¹ Miller and Nowak note that religious interest was great among intellectuals, as well; "however, it differed markedly from the popular religious enthusiasms of the day. [Instead] intellectuals were concerned with neo-orthodox theology and existentialism. Theologians Reinhold

²³⁶ Oakley, *God's Country*, 314.

²³⁷ Oakley, *God's Country*, 315.

²³⁸ Douthat notes that "The Christian renaissance wasn't just a middlebrow affair. Taken on its own, the upsurge in church attendance could be chalked up to purely sociological factors (the return of veterans from the war, the growth of the suburbs, the consequences of the baby boom), and the popular culture's religious turn to simple trend-chasing by publishers and movie executives. But there was a shift in the intellectual climate as well, which suggests that something deeper was happening - that the experience of the 1930s and 1940s had really prompted a broader reassessment of the modern story..... After the death camps and the gulags, it was harder to credit the naïve progressive belief that the modern age represented a long march toward ever-greater enlightenment and peace, or that humanity was capable of relying for salvation on its own capacities alone. Instead, there was a sudden demand for writers who could revise the story that modernity told itself-explaining what had gone wrong, and why, and with reference to the ideas and traditions that in earlier generations intelligentsia had dismissed as irrelevant and out of date." Ross Douthat, *Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics*, 1st edn (New York: Free Press, 2012), 23.

²³⁹ Oakley, *God's Country*, 316. This is not to say that there were no serious critics of America in the fifties. The growing trend toward conformity was dissected by a number of writers, notably David Riesman in *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) and William H Whyte in *The Organization Man* (1957). In *The Power Elite* (1956) and other works, sociologist C Wright Mills protested that America was ruled by an elite group of business, political, and military rulers and that the great majority of the population was essentially powerless. Philosopher Herbert Marcuse used Freudian psychology and Marxism in his *Eros and Civilization* (1955) to criticize the whole range of political, social, and economic values and institutions in a society he viewed as quasi-totalitarian technocracy ruled by a small but powerful group of experts in business, government, and the other seats of power. In 1959, popular sociologist Vance Packard depicted the American people's obsession with class and status in *The Status Seekers*. See: Oakley, *God's Country*, 319.

²⁴⁰ Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 55.

²⁴¹ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 84. Douthat notes that: "It was an era in which religious intellectuals such as C.S. Lewis, Paul Tillich, and John Courtney Murray regularly graced the cover of *Time* magazine; in which the prolific historians Christopher Dawson and Arnold Toynbee (another *Time* cover subject) attempted sweeping syntheses of Western history from a Christian point of view; in which the work of writers like William F Buckley and Whittaker Chambers helped forge a conservative anti-Communism rooted in religious faith." Douthat, *Bad Religion*, 24.

Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, Jacques Maritain, Martin Buber, and Karl Barth had a prominence with the intellectual elite that no religious thinkers had possessed since the days of Jonathan Edwards."²⁴²

Perhaps most germane to the hypothesis under consideration in this thesis, however, are two of these major figures, namely, Graham, the evangelist who had a deep and intimate relationship with Eisenhower; and, Niebuhr, the public intellectual who reached beyond academia to influence public opinion on a vast range of issues.²⁴³

1. Graham

Given the *zeitgeist* of the era, Graham's ascendancy to the forefront of public attention was not completely surprising. Yet, any effort to profile Billy Graham must begin with a description of his modest early life in rural North Carolina to appreciate all that he ultimately accomplished. Miller and Nowak describe Graham's upbringing in Depression era poverty in the rural South:

Graham came from a background of stern, southern God-fearing evangelism. He was converted by an itinerant revivalist in the summer of 1936, the year he graduated from high school. He spent the next seven years attending three different fundamentalist colleges. In 1943 he graduated from Wheaton College outside Chicago. After a brief period as a

²⁴² Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 87. Miller and Nowak further note that a good example of the intellectual concern with religion was the symposium on "Religion and the Intellectuals" which ran in four successive issues, February through May 1950, in *Partisan Review*. See: Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 102. Herberger substantiated the prominence of clergy, observing: "The enhanced standing of churches and religion among the American people was strikingly indicated by the enhanced status of religious leaders. According to surveys conducted by Elmo Roper, Americans, in answering the question, 'Which one of these groups do you feel is doing the most good for the country at the present time?', placed religious leaders third, after government leaders and business leaders, in 1942, but first in 1947. In the former year (1942), 17.5 per cent thought religious leaders were 'doing the most good,' as against 27.7 per cent who put more trust in government leaders, and 18.7 per cent in business leaders (6.2 per cent trusted most in labor leaders and another 6.2 per cent in Congress). Five years later, however, in 1947, 32.6 per cent of the people chose religious leaders as those who were 'doing most good'; 18.8 per cent chose business leaders; 15.4 per cent, government leaders; 10.6 per cent, labor leaders; and 6.7 per cent, Congress. A similar survey, conducted by Roper in 1957, found that 46 per cent of the American people picked religious leaders as the group 'doing the most good' and most to be trusted. 'No other group - whether government, Congress, business, or labor - came anywhere near matching the prestige and pulling power of the men who [were] ministers of God.' The picture of the clergymen that Americans [had] may not have been without its ambiguous aspects, but there could be little doubt that the 'minister of God' [ranked] high, and [was] rising rapidly, in the American scale of prestige. This rise of public confidence in clergymen no doubt [reflected] the rising status of religion and the church in American social life." See: Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 51, citing Elmo Roper, "What People Are Thinking," *New York Herald Tribune*, July 3, 1947; Roper, NBC "Newsweek Documentaries," December 27, 1953; and, Roper, *The Public Pulse*, December 21, 1957.

²⁴³ Eisenhower also had a strong relationship with Dr. Edward Elson, pastor of the Washington, D.C. Presbyterian church that Eisenhower joined after his inauguration in 1953. Elson had been one of Eisenhower's Army chaplains in Europe during World War II, and had entered the Dachau concentration camp the day after its capture, an experience which haunted him for the remainder of his life. Edward L.R. Elson, *Wide Was His Parish* (Wheaton Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1986). Elson wrote later about the religious mission of Eisenhower: "it may not be too much to say that through his personal conduct and expression he has become the focal point of a moral resurgence and spiritual awakening of national proportions." Edward L. Elson, *America's Spiritual Recovery* (Westwood, NJ: Flemming H. Revell Co., 1954), 48. See also: "Oral history of Eleanor Elson Heginbotham," August 2006, The Oral History Program, Chapman Memorial Archives, The National Presbyterian Church & Center.

Baptist minister in a small Illinois town, Graham became a full-time evangelist under the auspices of the Youth for Christ organization in 1945. For the next three years, he traveled the country urging youthful delinquents to make 'decisions for Christ.' His first national fame came in the fall of 1949 when he opened what was to be a three week "Christ for Greater Los Angeles Crusade." The crusade began packing people in. By the time it closed, Graham had preached to some 350,000 persons. Until Los Angeles, he had been just another evangelist. However, after Los Angeles this changed. Billy Graham became the central voice of the revival movement [in America].....In 1950 he incorporated the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, and by the mid-fifties had an annual budget of over \$2 million, a large office building staffed with 125 secretaries plus numerous other associates and functionaries.²⁴⁴

Oakley notes that "Graham's success was made possible by his good looks, dynamic speaking style, simple message, carefully planned and promoted crusades, and his skillful use of mass communications to reach millions of people."²⁴⁵ He rapidly came to represent the face of Evangelical Christianity in America in the 1950s with his emphasis on conversion to Christ during his many revivals. He taught an optimistic, non-denominational, non-liturgical, human-centered faith, with the promise of salvation, emphasizing the individual and eschewing social activism or any altering of existing institutions.²⁴⁶ However, like other evangelists of that period, Graham also equated Christianity with Americanism and with anti-Communism, claiming that " a great sinister anti-Christian movement masterminded by Satan has declared war upon the Christian God."²⁴⁷ Ultimately, Graham preached to over two hundred million people in person in countries across the world. There were hundreds of millions more who listened on radio, film, and television.²⁴⁸

In 1951, before Eisenhower decided to run for the presidency, he was contacted by the reclusive Texas oil baron, Sid Richardson, who had first met Graham during Graham's 1951 Fort Worth crusade.²⁴⁹ Richardson shared a letter with Eisenhower from Graham outlining why he believed Eisenhower should run for president.²⁵⁰ Graham wrote: "The American people have come to a point where they want a man with honesty, integrity,

²⁴⁴ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 95–96. Details of Graham's life up to 1955 can be found in High's biography, which was condensed for *Reader's Digest*, May 1957, pp. 70-75, 213-29. See: Stanley High, *Billy Graham: The Personal Story of the Man, His Message, and His Mission* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1956).

²⁴⁵ Oakley, *God's Country*, 321.

²⁴⁶ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 99.

²⁴⁷ Peter Lewis, *The Fifties* (New York NY: J. B. Lippincott, 1978), 73–74. Graham stressed conversion that employed methods showing his awareness of global events. He had a unique ability to offer hope and a sense of cohesion to people who were growing anxious from the threat of Communism and the Cold War.

²⁴⁸ Graham's radio program, *Hour of Decision*, was disseminated through a network of over 1,200 radio stations before being converted to a television program. For a comprehensive analysis of Graham's message and the various channels he used to disseminate it, see: Grant Wacker, *America's Pastor: Billy Graham and the Shaping of a Nation* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2014), 2-31; 231-234.

²⁴⁹ Sears, Osten, and Cole, *The Soul of an American President*, 119.

²⁵⁰ Nancy Gibbs and Michael Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents: Billy Graham in the White House*, 1st edn (New York, NY: Center Street, 2008), 32.

and spiritual power. I believe the General has it. I hope you can persuade him to put his hat in the ring."²⁵¹ Subsequently, Eisenhower wrote back to Graham. He congratulated him on his successful efforts to "fight for the old-fashioned virtues of integrity, decency, and straightforwardness in public life."²⁵² Eisenhower added: "I thank the Almighty that such inspired persons as yourself are ready and willing to give full time and energy to this purpose."²⁵³ Gibbs and Duffy write that Graham continued his correspondence with Eisenhower, indicating that he would be praying for him, specifically that God would guide him in the "greatest decision" of his life, a decision on which, in Graham's words, "could well rest the destiny of the Western world."²⁵⁴ Sears and Osten note that the correspondence between Graham and Eisenhower helped to bring Eisenhower to the "conclusion that if America was to win the Cold War, it would be on spiritual terms."²⁵⁵ The religious faith that shaped America - in contrast to the atheistic Soviet Union - would be the key to victory. The difference was that faith not only [brought] hope but also [provided] a source for people to turn to in difficult times, while nothing in the Soviet system could provide anything similar."²⁵⁶ Gibbs and Duffy relate that Eisenhower wrote to Graham, saying:

In spite of the difficulties of the problems we have, I ask you this one question. If each of us in his own mind would dwell more upon those simple virtues - integrity, courage, self-confidence, and unshakeable belief in the Bible - would not some of these problems tend to simplify themselves? Would not we, after having done our very best with them, be content to leave the rest with the Almighty?²⁵⁷

Two days after Eisenhower's initial in-person meeting with Graham in 1952, Eisenhower wrote to newspaper columnist Drew Pearson expressing his view that: "The more intimately I become familiar with the desperate difficulties that abound in

²⁵¹ Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 32.

²⁵² Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 32.

²⁵³ Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 32.

²⁵⁴ Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 32–33. In the fall of 1952, Graham visited with Eisenhower at the Brown Hotel in Denver. He presented him with an inscribed Moroccan leather Bible, which Eisenhower kept by his bedside at the White House throughout the eight years of his presidency. Graham had marked up the margins and put in notes about special Scriptures and how to study them. See: Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 39.

²⁵⁵ The events described here took place before the adoption of the Johnson Amendment. In 1954, Congress approved an amendment by then Sen. Lyndon Johnson (later U.S. president, 1963–1969) to prohibit tax exempt 501(c)(3) organizations, which includes charities and churches, from engaging in any political campaign activity. To the extent Congress has revisited the ban over the years, it strengthened the ban. Most recently, in 1987 Congress amended the language to clarify that the prohibition also applies to statements opposing candidates. See: 'Charities, Churches and Politics | Internal Revenue Service', accessed January 11, 2024, <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/charities-churches-and-politics>

²⁵⁶ Sears, Osten, and Cole, *The Soul of an American President*, 120.

²⁵⁷ Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 33. Graham recalled that when he met Eisenhower for the first time in the early spring of 1952, he did not know whether Eisenhower was a Republican or a Democrat, but he told him he thought that any man who was loved and respected by so many Americans should at least offer himself as a candidate. See: Rev. Dr. Billy Graham, "Remarks at Eisenhower Centennial Church Service, Abilene, Kansas, *The Congressional Record*, October 14, 1990.

the world today, the more convinced I am that the solution must be firmly based in spiritual and moral values."²⁵⁸

Subsequently, Eisenhower won the presidential election in the fall of 1952 receiving the largest number of votes until then ever given any presidential candidate in American history.²⁵⁹ The campaign was not as much about politics as it was about Eisenhower himself. Miller noted that Eisenhower represented what Americans, with their values and culture were looking for: "a good man above politics."²⁶⁰ Maintained Miller: "In pursuing his great moral crusade, Mr. Eisenhower profited rather than lost from his not being a politician; his movement was helped by his presentation of it as something different – and higher – than politics."²⁶¹

Once elected to the presidency, Eisenhower began his preparations to take office, including consulting with Graham on the selection of Bible verses to be used at his swearing in ceremony and in preparation of his inaugural address.²⁶² In an exchange of ideas with another adviser, Harold Stassen, director of the Foreign Operations Administration, Eisenhower conveyed his intentions regarding his all-important inaugural address in terms of setting the tone for his administration:

I don't want to deliver a sermon...But I firmly believe that our government, and the first thing we must remember about it, is that it is deeply embedded in religious faith. Our forefathers said we hold that men are endowed by their Creator and unless you accept that sentence our form of government makes no sense.²⁶³

Following the delivery of that address, discussed in greater detail in the next chapter of this thesis, Eisenhower remarked to his friend and World War II correspondent, Virgil Pinkley:

God has always been with me. He had even been more strongly in my thoughts since the election. That is why I emphasized spiritual aspects of living in writing my inauguration address. Yet I didn't want to be too preachy. ...From the time I was a boy, there was embedded in me a deep and abiding faith in God and His beneficence...I read the Bible from cover to cover before I was nine - my mother gave me a gold watch for this - and have read it often since. Throughout my military life - especially before major battles - I prayed long and hard.... My lifelong faith had to be part of my inauguration address. I felt strongly that the

²⁵⁸ Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 35.

²⁵⁹ Miller, *Piety Along the Potomac*, 3. Eisenhower won 34 million votes in 1952, nearly twelve million more than the previous record, and nearly thirteen million more than in 1948. See: Miller, *Piety Along the Potomac*, 3.

²⁶⁰ Miller, *Piety Along the Potomac*, 9.

²⁶¹ Miller, *Piety Along the Potomac*, 129–30.

²⁶² Graham recommended that Eisenhower place his hand on 2 Chronicles 7:14 while taking the oath of office: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." Sears, Osten, and Cole, *The Soul of an American President*, 130.

²⁶³ Robert H. Ferrell, ed., *The Eisenhower Diaries* (New York NY: W.W. Norton & Co., 1976), 225.

nation was becoming far too secular, that God was no longer part of our daily life.²⁶⁴

During his first year in office, Eisenhower grappled with the major issues confronting the country, including having to confront the realities of the Cold War. He quickly realized the futility of doing so by force. He recorded his concerns in a diary entry in the summer of 1953, expressing his opinion that:

[Attempting] to win the Cold War by force of arms was an invitation to bankruptcy, if not national suicide. He was struck by the 'shortsightedness bordering on tragic stupidity' of people who claim to support capitalist democracy but then pursued short-term policies that would destroy it over time. Get people to think of the long term, he [believed], and Communism would not have to be destroyed by arms; it would self-destruct. But keep aiming for maximum immediate gain and 'the so-called enlightened areas of Western Europe, Britain, and the U.S. [would] actually commit suicide.' Faith, he believed, was what allowed human beings to overcome their essential selfishness, to rise to heroism, to suffer for the larger good - to function, in other words, in the ways a democracy needs its citizens to function. To Eisenhower, there was a direct spiritual line between "In God We Trust" and "E Pluribus Unum."²⁶⁵

Given the importance of faith to Eisenhower, it was not surprising that as time went on Graham continued to develop a deeper relationship with him as a trusted spiritual adviser. Their relationship endured beyond the White House years until Eisenhower's death in 1969. There are many accounts detailing the nature of their relationship and the value Eisenhower placed in Graham's counsel. In June 1953, Graham wrote to Eisenhower about the tremendous crowds he was drawing at a Dallas revival, saying: "I am only informing you of these things to indicate the great spiritual hunger there is in America. Your interest in spiritual matters has helped tremendously, and I believe there is a groundswell of religious revival that must take place if the country is to be spared."²⁶⁶ The other, perhaps more poignant, account came at the end of Eisenhower's life where Graham recalled:

President Eisenhower was in Walter Reed Hospital - the doctors did not give him much of a chance to survive - when I visited him for the last time. I was to stay twenty minutes, but it extended to thirty. He asked the doctors and nurses to leave the room.....Then [he said], 'You've told me several times how to be sure of my salvation. Would you tell me again?' I took out my New Testament,²⁶⁷ read him several passages of Scripture, and I could sense he had the assurance that he was going to go to heaven. I know that one day we're going to meet Gen. Eisenhower in heaven. Perhaps he can even see us here today and knows what we're doing. Hebrews 12:1 says that we are

²⁶⁴ Virgil Pinkley, *Eisenhower Declassified* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1979), 270.

²⁶⁵ Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 44-45.

²⁶⁶ Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 45.

²⁶⁷ Graham, *Just as I Am, infra*, 241.

surrounded by a great crowd of witnesses that have gone on before. His eternal destiny and his place in heaven were not determined by being a great president or a great general. His achievements as a man had nothing to do with his standing before God..... President Eisenhower is in heaven today because he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior and came to know Jesus as the one Friend who could bear his sins and sorrows.²⁶⁸

In his autobiography, *Just As I Am*, Graham added that he and Eisenhower clasped hands in prayer, and afterward Eisenhower told him: "Thank you. I am ready."²⁶⁹

As described in this thesis, Eisenhower, though not overtly religious prior to his presidency, became more publicly aligned with Christian values under Graham's guidance. Graham encouraged Eisenhower to embrace faith more openly, which led to the President's decision to be baptized in office, making him the first sitting president to undergo such a ceremony. Coincidentally, this marked a concurrent shift in Eisenhower's rhetoric and policies, as he increasingly emphasized the importance of faith, morality, and unity, often portraying the United States as a bastion of Christian values against the atheistic Soviet Union during the Cold War, discussed further in the next chapter of this thesis. Graham's influence permeated Eisenhower's policies and public addresses, reflecting the intertwining of religion and politics during his administration

2. Niebuhr and Evangelicalism

While characterizing Graham as an evangelist is relatively commonplace, characterizing Reinhold Niebuhr is more complicated. Niebuhr was deeply involved in many, if not most, of the important national dialogues of the 1950s and keenly aware of all the political, religious, and international debates of the era. As well as being an enormously respected theologian, he was one of the most erudite, widely read public intellectuals and commentators of that decade.²⁷⁰

Niebuhr was born in 1892 in Missouri. His father, Gustav, was an immigrant pastor in the German Evangelical Synod; his mother, Lydia, assisted her husband in his pastoral duties and managed the family home, which consisted of Reinhold and his three

²⁶⁸ Revd. B. Graham, 'Remarks at Eisenhower Centennial Church Service, Abilene, Kansas', *The Congressional Record* (1990).

²⁶⁹ Billy Graham, *Just as I Am: The autobiography of Billy Graham*, 1st edn (San Francisco, Calif.: Harper, 1997), 232–33. For a discussion of the authenticity of the New Testament, see: F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1981).

²⁷⁰ His works included: Reinhold Niebuhr, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics* (New York NY: Harper & Brothers, 1935); Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (New York NY: Scribner Book Company, 1952); Reinhold Niebuhr, *Beyond Tragedy: Essays on the Christian Interpretation of History* (New York NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937). Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Self and the Dramas of History* (New York NY: Scribners, 1955); Reinhold Niebuhr, *Pious and Secular America* (New York NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958); Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (New York NY: Scribners, 1962); Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christian Realism and Political Problems* (New York NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953); and, Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Reinhold Niebuhr Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2021).

siblings.²⁷¹ Gustav was an authoritarian father who expected his family to abide by fixed rules.²⁷² Notes Douthat: "Niebuhr was born to a German Calvinist pastor in the Middle West of 1892, [and] educated in the middling academies of his denomination before making the leap to Yale's School of Religion during World War I. ²⁷³ On the Ivy League campus, Niebuhr wrote to a friend, his lack of intellectual training or East Coast polish made him feel like a "mongrel among thoroughbreds."²⁷⁴ In retrospect, given his background, he seems to have been an unlikely figure to emerge as one of the most prominent figures in the East Coast religious establishment during the 1940s and 1950s.

Nevertheless, despite his lack of a conventional pedigree²⁷⁵ Niebuhr did succeed in becoming: "the leading thinker of the Mainline Protestant establishment in its last years of cultural supremacy, the most sophisticated interpreter of the American soul at a moment when the United States had suddenly achieved global preeminence, the conscience of a deeply religious nation reckoning with the moral perils of the nuclear age. For a generation of intellectuals and academics, his preachings and writings offered a model of highbrow Christianity and a reason to look anew at religious faith. For a generation of American policymakers wrestling with the challenges of the Cold War, he supplied a compelling vocabulary for thinking about the relationship between morality and politics in a fallen world. he became a kind of universal intellectual, claimed as an inspiration by Protestants and Catholics, liberals and neoconservatives, believers and atheists alike."²⁷⁶

These accomplishments took place after the initial years of Niebuhr's pastoral work in Detroit, and after joining the faculty at Union Theological Seminary in New York, which at the time was dominated by modernist theology.²⁷⁷ It was during this period that he experienced a profound conversion of thought which he described as follows:

²⁷¹ One of Niebuhr's brothers, H. Richard Niebuhr, also achieved distinction as a theologian, having received his B.D. and Ph.D. from Yale in 1923 and 1924, respectively. He then went on to be a professor at Yale Divinity School from 1931 until his death in 1962.

²⁷² Richard W. Fox, *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography* (New York NY: Pantheon Books, 1985), 11. Niebuhr's "fairly complete conversion" draws a parallel to the character of Don Quixote in Cervantes' classic novel *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. In the novel, Quixote tilts at windmills, mistaking them for giants, representing his misguided idealism and pursuit of chivalric fantasies. Niebuhr's use of this imagery revealed his recognition of past idealism or misguided beliefs, which he now saw as flawed or unrealistic, similar to how Don Quixote's attacks on the windmills were based on delusion. However, while Don Quixote remained entrenched in his romanticized vision of the world, Niebuhr confirmed his transformation, having evolved from his earlier idealism to a more pragmatic and critical worldview. Niebuhr's "conversion" reflected a move from naive idealism toward a more complex understanding of the world that apparently acknowledged the limitations of idealistic solutions in the face of real-world problems. Unlike Don Quixote, however, who persisted in his quixotic quests, Niebuhr suggested he learned to see the "windmills" for what they are—symbolic of ideologies or struggles no longer worth pursuing with the same conviction. See: Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote de la Mancha* (New York NY: Penguin Classics, 2018).

²⁷³ Douthat, *Bad Religion*, 26.

²⁷⁴ Fox, *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography*, 28.

²⁷⁵ Niebuhr never obtained a doctorate which was typically seen as a prerequisite to joining a seminary faculty during this era.

²⁷⁶ Douthat, *Bad Religion*, 26. Niebuhr's educational background stands in contrast with Douthat's comments.

²⁷⁷ Douthat describes the modernists' goal was to "adapt Christianity to the new scientific and historical consensus, and to maintain the relevance of faith in an intellectual climate dismissive of the authority of

...about midway in my ministry which extends roughly from the peace of Versailles [1919] to the peace of Munich [1938] measured in terms of Western history, I underwent a fairly complete conversion of thought which involved rejection of almost all the liberal theological ideals and ideas with which I ventured forth in 1915. I wrote a book [*Does Civilization Need Religion?*], my first, in 1927, which when now consulted is proved to contain almost all the theological windmills against which today I tilt my sword. These windmills must have tumbled shortly thereafter for every succeeding volume expresses a more and more explicit revolt against what is usually known as liberal culture.²⁷⁸

Niebuhr's work both inside and outside of the seminary eventually altered the academy's trajectory away from the Social Gospel²⁷⁹ associated with modernist theology to a theology which became known as neo-orthodoxy.²⁸⁰ In describing neo-orthodoxy, Douthat notes that: "It dismissed modernism's blithe cosmic optimism and instead insisted on the relevance of traditional concepts like original sin and divine judgment."²⁸¹ In the words of H. Richard Niebuhr, Reinhold's equally distinguished younger brother and Yale Divinity School professor, the modernists were guilty of believing that "a God without wrath brought men and women without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross."²⁸² According to neo-orthodox theologians, the great errors of modernity were placing too much faith in human goodness and the inevitable progress of history.²⁸³

While Reinhold Niebuhr was instrumental in shaping the opinions of many intellectuals and government leaders on an array of issues, three such issues in particular are most germane to the hypothesis under consideration in this thesis. The first is his view of the evangelical movement of the 1950s. The second is his view of Communism. The third is his view on sin. Each bear on discussions that follow in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

Regarding the evangelical movement of the 1950s,²⁸⁴ there are so many aspects to Niebuhr's thought that it is more appropriate to have him speak for himself, particularly

Scripture. To this end, they stressed ethics rather than eschatology; social reform rather than confessional debate; symbolic and allegorical interpretations of the Bible rather than more literal readings. Their great project was the Social Gospel, which urged believers to adopt an applied Christianity that would put Jesus' commandments into practice here and now, through legislation as well as conversion, law as well as grace." Douthat, *Bad Religion*, 27.

²⁷⁸ Reinhold Niebuhr, 'Ten Years That Shook My World', *The Christian Century* 56, no. 17: 13.

²⁷⁹ Niebuhr perceived fundamental contradictions between human nature and the optimism of the Social Gospel.

²⁸⁰ Niebuhr preferred the term "Prophetic Christianity." See: Douthat, *Bad Religion*, 29.

²⁸¹ Douthat, *Bad Religion*, 29.

²⁸² Helmut R. Niebuhr, *The Kingdom of God in America*, ed. Martin E. Marty, Library of Theological Ethics (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1988), 193.

²⁸³ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 87.

²⁸⁴ According to Niebuhr, the revival of religion was a part "of a rather frantic effort of the naturally optimistic American soul to preserve its optimism in an age of anxiety." See: Reinhold Niebuhr, 'Varieties of Religious Revival', *The New republic* 6 June (1955): 13–16, 13.

with regard to his perspective on Graham and his ministry. It reveals as much as about Niebuhr as it does about Graham when he writes:

It may come as a surprise to the enlightened critics of the famed evangelist, Billy Graham, that his message is, despite its obscurantist framework ('The Bible says...') or probably because of it, infinitely superior to the other popular versions of the Christian, or at least the Protestant, message. Graham has preserved something of the biblical sense of a divine judgment and mercy before which all human striving and ambitions are convicted of guilt and reduced to their proper proportions. Nevertheless, Graham, under official joint Protestant auspices, presents a simple pietistic version of the Protestant faith which grew on our frontier, and which knows nothing of the agonies about the unrighteousness of the righteous out of which the classical Reformation sprang. For according to this Pietism, Christians are not completely good and unambiguously virtuous because they have not been properly converted. They have not 'accepted Christ,' and the 'old self' has not been radically destroyed so that the 'new self' might emerge. In the old revival meetings, this miracle was performed under the accompaniment of a good deal of emotional agony. But the new evangelicalism has a blandness which befits the Eisenhower era.²⁸⁵

Niebuhr's critique of Billy Graham offered a unique perspective on the nature of evangelicalism during the 1950s. He acknowledged that despite the "obscurantist framework" of Graham's message, there was an intrinsic superiority to Graham's presentation of the Christian message, which emphasized that human striving and ambitions are ultimately subject to Divine scrutiny that serves to humble and judge individuals bringing them to a proper understanding of their place before God. While this message resonated with many, Niebuhr pointed out that the process of conversion in Graham's ministry often lacked the emotional intensity and existential struggle characteristic of earlier revival meetings.²⁸⁶ Niebuhr found irony in the presentation of such a simplistic version of Christianity as an alternative to discredited utopian illusions. He argued that while Graham's message provided solace to those in personal moral confusion or existential despair, it ultimately offered overly simplistic answers to insoluble problems of life and history.²⁸⁷

In this context, Gibbs and Duffy note that: "Eisenhower and Graham shared a critic in [Niebuhr], perhaps the most outspoken opponent of faith too easily understood and deployed. He warned against the notion of America as an innocent nation, whose blessings and prosperity were [taken] as evidence of its virtue. A patriotism hoisted into the realm of the sacred was too reassuring; this was chauvinism, not faith, and counterproductive as well if it blinded people to the kinds of problems and injustice that had given Communism its appeal in the first place."²⁸⁸

²⁸⁵ Niebuhr, *Pious and Secular America*, 20–23.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ Gibbs and Duffy, *The Preacher and the Presidents*, 46.

Niebuhr was no less critical in his observations of other contemporary media-based popularizers of religion,²⁸⁹ saying:

But let us look briefly at those forms of modern faith which have particularly caught the public eye. On the West Coast, in Los Angeles, the most popular preacher²⁹⁰ is chiefly intent to equate the freedom of religion with free enterprise; and he defines free enterprise so anachronistically that only an "old," and not a "new," Republican could possibly accept the definition. In any case, religion overwhelms the discriminant judgments upon which justice, particularly in a technical society, depends.²⁹¹

The most popular minister on the East Coast²⁹² is intent upon the identification of faith with the same type of uncritical conservative liberalism; but his chief ambition is to prove that prayer can harness divine power to human ends, particularly to the ends of business success and happiness.²⁹³

A more positive assessment of Niebuhr's view of Graham was found in an article proposed to, but never published by, the *Christian Century*:

There is more hope that Graham himself will see the weakness of a traditional evangelical perfectionism in an atomic era than that his clerical and lay sponsors, with their enthusiasm for any kind of revival, will see it. For Graham is a world traveler and a very perceptive observer of the world scene with its many collective problems. His instincts are genuine, and his sense of justice well developed. He could embody the cause of justice, particularly where it is so closely related to the love commandment as on the race issue, into his revival message. The only thing that could prevent such a development is that it is contrary to the well established 'technique' of revivalism.²⁹⁴

²⁸⁹ Niebuhr viewed them as having a naïve view of Scripture and too narrow definition of "true religion."

²⁹⁰ Niebuhr is referring to Charles E Fuller, a Baptist minister, who gained renown with his weekly Sunday radio broadcast, heard on more than 650 radio stations that aired from 1937 to 1968. Fuller also founded Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Robert H. Krapohl and Charles H. Lippy, *The Evangelicals: A Historical, Thematic, and Biographical Guide* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999).

²⁹¹ Niebuhr, *Pious and Secular America*, 20.

²⁹² Niebuhr is referring to Norman Vincent Peale, a Methodist minister and author best known for his book, *The Power of Positive Thinking*. In addition to his writing, Peale had a fifty year career in pulpit ministry (Marble Collegiate Church, New York), radio and television. See: Christopher Lane, *Surge of Piety: Norman Vincent Peale and the Remaking of American Religious Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

²⁹³ Niebuhr, *Pious and Secular America*, 20.

²⁹⁴ Niebuhr, "A Proposal for Billy Graham," article proposal to the *Christian Century*, June 20, 1956, "Speech, Article, & Book File" Box, "A Proposal for Billy Graham" Folder, Niebuhr Papers, Library of Congress.

While Niebuhr felt that Graham was an "earnest Christian" who held the "largest audience of any evangelist in history," Niebuhr maintained that Graham had not "grasped and preached a whole gospel."²⁹⁵

Niebuhr and Communism

In regard to Communism, Niebuhr was a staunch opponent. He believed that Communism was an evil religion, devoted to the establishment of a new universal order, not merely the supremacy of a race or a nation.²⁹⁶ Consequently, he argued for a firm stand against Communism, which he described as godless and atheistic. He also felt that the vast majority of those living in communist states were treated unfairly, and that Communism was ultimately an unworkable model for social and political organization. In 1954 Niebuhr wrote: "We are embattled with a foe who embodies all the evils of a demonic religion. We will probably be at sword's point with this foe for generations to come."²⁹⁷

Nevertheless, Niebuhr reasoned that Communism had to be fought in the way that the Christian West should have fought militant Islam in the high Middle Ages, insofar as the Christian Crusaders attempts to wipe out the enemy did not work. Instead, according to Niebuhr, what was needed was a patient, forceful, and selective policy of containment that put the Soviet state on the defensive.²⁹⁸ He believed that the Soviet Union would eventually self-destruct based on its own failures and internal contradictions. Consequently, the chief aim of his anti-Communist containment strategy was to heighten the pressure on an unworkable Soviet system.²⁹⁹ However, he clearly did not view his approach as pacifist in nature. In 1955 statement that summarized his conception of the Christian command of love in this context, when he stated:

Love has what might be called two dimensions: the vertical dimension of perfection, of sacrificial love; and the horizontal dimension of concern for all people, of concern for social justice and the balances by which it is maintained. The pacifistic comprehension of love seizes upon one of these two aspects. It makes an absolute of sacrificial love at the expense of social responsibility. The pacifist tends to regard the love command less as an overarching principle which confronts the Christian in all his

²⁹⁵ Letter from Niebuhr to Reverend Johannes Ringstad of the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Escanaba, Michigan, April 26, 1956, "Correspondence" Box 10, "Rh-Ri" Folder, Niebuhr Papers, Library of Congress.

²⁹⁶ Daniel F. Rice, ed., *Reinhold Niebuhr Revisited* (Grand Rapids Michigan: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 2009), 27.

²⁹⁷ Reinhold Niebuhr, 'The Perils of Complacency in Our Own Nation', *Christianity and Crisis* (1954): 1. Niebuhr was concerned about various aspects of the Cold War that could lead to confrontation. In 1956, he wrote: "we face the temptation of drawing purely pacifist and dangerous conclusions from the obvious fact that a nuclear war is unthinkable. But if we come to the conclusion that this fact means that force is under all circumstances ruled out, the Russians will only have to threaten force to persuade us to yield. We must risk war in order to protect people from tyranny, or the Russians will take advantage of us at every turn." See: Reinhold Niebuhr, 'There is No Peace', *Christianity and Crisis* XVI 20 (1956): 158.

²⁹⁸ Rice, *Reinhold Niebuhr Revisited*, 27–28.

²⁹⁹ Rice, *Reinhold Niebuhr Revisited*, 28.

relations than as a neat formula to use in situations of violence. This is an inadequate, distorted view of the Christian concept of love. This partial view leads the pacifist to exalt peace over the claims of justice, when a choice between the two must be made. Nonviolence is regarded as a pure expression of love, while the struggle for justice is seen as a rough and inferior approximation of love.³⁰⁰

In essence, Niebuhr believed that the competing considerations associated with the concept of justice and the concept of peace had the same sanction in the commandment of love, namely, both were moral imperatives. However, it was justice, and not peace, that had priority, citing Isaiah 32:17: "And the effect of righteousness will be peace."³⁰¹

Niebuhr and Sin

In regard to sin, Niebuhr's views were an outgrowth of his philosophy of "Christian Realism."³⁰² Niebuhr originated Christian Realism in the 1940s and 1950s, which essentially held that the kingdom of heaven cannot be realized on earth because society is innately corrupt; and, it is innately corrupt because of pride or self-love, which Niebuhr perceived as the basis for sin.³⁰³ As *Time* magazine noted in a 1954 caption beneath a picture of Reinhold Niebuhr, "Sin is back in fashion" - not the committing of it, but the recognition of it.³⁰⁴

"Christian Realism" was intended to be an apolitical philosophy.³⁰⁵ Wrote Niebuhr: "One cannot understand the spiritual climate of our time if one does not see how catastrophically modern man's experience of contemporary history has refuted all the secular securities which had been established irrefutably in the past two

³⁰⁰ Reinhold Niebuhr, 'God Wills Both Justice and Peace', *Christianity and Crisis* XV no. 10 (1955): 77–78. In an earlier pronouncement regarding pacificism, Niebuhr stated: "A Christian faith which declares that all of these horrible ambiguities would not exist if only we loved each other, is on exactly the same level as a secular idealism that insists that we could easily escape our predicament if only we organized a world government. A Christian faith which solemnly assures men that peace can be had by 'men of goodwill' but is unavailable if we lack goodwill can drive us to as complete a despair as the despair which secular idealism is widely creating. See: 'Reinhold Niebuhr, 'Ten Fateful Years', *Christianity and Crisis* XI 1 (1951): 1.

³⁰¹ See Langdon Gilkey, *On Niebuhr: A Theological Study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 113.

³⁰² Lovin presents a comprehensive treatment of Niebuhr's philosophy of Christian Realism. See: Robin Lovin, *Reinhold Niebuhr and Christian Realism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Douthat notes that: "Even among the secular intelligentsia the idea of Christian Realism appealed to many people who had seen their utopian hopes dashed by the lived experience of fascism and (especially) Communism" See: Douthat, *Bad Religion*, 30–31.

³⁰³ Niebuhr, *Christian Realism and Political Problems*. The titles of the essays in this book give some indication of the profundity and practicality of Niebuhr's thinking: "The Presuppositions of Faith and the Empirical Method in the Achievement of Realism", "Augustine's Political Realism", "The Foreign Policy of American Conservatism and Liberalism", "Democracy, Secularism and Christianity", "Why is Communism So Evil?", "Coherence, Incoherence and Christian Faith", "Love and Law in Protestantism and Catholicism", "The Illusion of World Government", "The Christian Witness in the Social and National Order", "The Anomaly of European Socialism", "Ideology and the Scientific Method."

³⁰⁴ *Time* (1954): 63, 66.

³⁰⁵ Jon Butler, Grant Wacker, and Randall Balmer, *Religion in America: A Short History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 277.

centuries...Modern experience³⁰⁶ has refuted the conceptions of human nature held by the nineteenth century even more catastrophically than the conceptions of history. Evil seems so inextricably mixed with good."³⁰⁷ As part of his thesis on Christian realism, Niebuhr further argued that human perfectibility is not possible due to the injustices in this world that cause the individual to compromise the ideal of the kingdom of heaven on earth.³⁰⁸ The major emphasis of Christian Realism was on the sinfulness of humanity, exemplified by Union Theological Seminary head, Henry Pitney Van Dusen, who observed: "The forces of evil are always gaining ground, and must be stopped again and again."³⁰⁹ In short, there can never be a utopian society nor a heaven on earth. Rather, the adherents to Christian Realism were to follow a middle path, according to Fox, "[between the extremes of] utopianism and resignation."³¹⁰

Concludes Douthat: "As a Niebuhrian worldview [i.e., Christian Realism³¹¹] radiated outward into national politics, calling America's leaders to a sober realism, a reluctant shouldering of adult responsibilities [began to take place] in a world inevitably deformed by sin."³¹²

B. 1950s Historiography

In historiographic terms, the picture of religious fervor and harmony in 1950s America was not universally embraced. While many of those with contrary views acknowledged that people were, in fact, seeking religion, they questioned whether it was for the right

³⁰⁶ Many socialist intellectuals, Stevens points out, "had come from inherited religious backgrounds that they were either trying to lose or renovate." Once the realities of left-wing totalitarianism became apparent, their credulous former support for the Soviet Union inspired a potent sense of quasi-Christian guilt - which was often "peculiarly expressed," Stevens writes, in the "post-Edenic themes pronounced in Americans' Protestant past." Sometimes this guilt carried them all the way back to Protestantism itself, as with Whittaker Chambers, Soviet spy turn Quaker memoirist. More often, though, it inspired a general sympathy for the neo-orthodox worldview.....". Jason Stevens, *God-Fearing and Free: A Spiritual History of America's Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 90–91.

³⁰⁷ Reinhold Niebuhr, 'Varieties of Religious Revival', *New Republic* 6 June (1955): 13–16, 13–16. Niebuhr's position contrasts with Pelagianism, which holds an optimistic view of human nature and denies original sin. Pelagianism asserts that humans have the inherent ability to choose good without the need for divine grace. In contrast, Niebuhr's Christian Realism acknowledged the deep entanglement of good and evil in human history and nature. This worldview was more aligned with a realist understanding of human nature, where human beings are inherently flawed and subject to the influence of sin, thus necessitating divine grace. Niebuhr's view of history, particularly the way modern experience has "catastrophically" refuted secular conceptions of human nature, highlighted the complexity and fallibility of humans, reinforcing a perspective that contradicts Pelagian optimism. See: Ali Bonner, *The Myth of Pelagianism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018).

³⁰⁸ Niebuhr complained that Americans habitually failed to acknowledge the power of self-interest in their politics; thus, they insisted on moralizing even their wars and Imperial occupations. See: Reinhold Niebuhr, 'Editorial Notes', *Christianity and Society* Winter (1941-1942): 9.

³⁰⁹ Miller, *Piety Along the Potomac*, 146–47.

³¹⁰ Fox, *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography*.

³¹¹ Niebuhr effectively summarized his philosophy in observing: "If the democratic nations fail, their failure must be partly attributed to the faulty strategy of idealists who have too many illusions when they face realists who have too little conscience." See: Kenneth W. Thompson, 'Survival Imperiled: The Threat of Illusion and Despair', *The Virginia Quarterly Review* 55, no. 3 (1979): 408–24.

³¹² Douthat, *Bad Religion*, 30

reasons.³¹³ Oakley notes that Herberg, among others,³¹⁴ complained of the secularization and homogenization of religion.³¹⁵ Herberg, a theologian, sociologist, and professor of Judaic studies at Drew University was perhaps the most prominent commentator among those holding contrary views, evidenced by the wide readership of his comprehensive study titled *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology*.³¹⁶

Herberg acknowledged the "high and growing reput[e] of religion in the American public mind" of the 1950s.³¹⁷ He cited Williams who had observed: "Religion is given continued public and political approval... 'Godless' is a powerful epithet.... At least nominal public acceptance of religion tends to be a prerequisite to political success."³¹⁸ However, this was not always the case, asserts Herberg, noting that "there was a time when an atheist like Robert G. Ingersoll,³¹⁹ who went around the country defying God and making anti-religious speeches, could nevertheless occupy a respected and influential place in American politics."³²⁰ However, by the 1950s this was no longer the case. Noted Herberg: "That public opinion is markedly more favorable to religion today than it had been for a long time is recognized by all observers."³²¹

However, he saw something different from a simple, singular "national" revival occurring. Contrary to other theorists who saw a single, assimilating melting pot brought on by the religious revival of the 1950s, Herberg saw three melting pots: a Protestant melting pot, a Catholic melting pot, and a Jewish melting pot.³²² While each successive generation may have considered itself less and less ethnic, reflecting a greatly diminished sense of ethnic consciousness, Herberg theorized that that diminished consciousness made religion even more important (within the context of

³¹³ Catholic Archbishop Patrick O'Boyle, for example, advanced the notion that people were turning to religion "as they would to a benign sedative to soothe the minds and settle their nerves." See: *Time* magazine, April 12, 1954, 83.

³¹⁴ Herberg offered an interesting commentary on Niebuhr, saying: "Indeed, the intellectual rehabilitation of religion has become so pronounced that even observers like Reinhold Niebuhr, who are exceedingly cautious in weighing the claims of a contemporary 'revival' of religion, acknowledge the signs in this area to be quite unmistakable. 'There is evidence,' Dr. Niebuhr writes, 'that in the world of culture, there is at least a receptivity toward the message of the historic faiths which is in marked contrast to the indifference or hostility of past decades.' He himself feels that the 'increase of interest in religious problems in the academic communities of the nation, in which, for obvious reasons, the secular spirit of the age... was pronounced, 'is particularly noteworthy.' He calls attention to the fact that 'there is scarcely a college or university which has not recently either created a department of religion or substantially enlarged existing departments.' And he stresses the difference in quality and temper that distinguishes so much of current academic teaching in the field of religion from that of earlier decades." Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 53–54.

³¹⁵ Oakley, *God's Country*, 319.

³¹⁶ Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*.

³¹⁷ Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 52.

³¹⁸ Williams, *What Americans Believe and How They Worship*, 326, 336.

³¹⁹ Ingersoll, a Civil War colonel, was known as the "Great Agnostic." His anti-Christian lectures and writings were notorious. Yet, he was an influential Republican leader, having been designated to nominate James G. Blaine for the presidency at a Republican National Convention. See: Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 68, n30.

³²⁰ Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 52.

³²¹ Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 52.

³²² See: Chapter Three: "From the Land of Immigrants to the Triple Melting Pots: The Third Generation and the Religious Community," in Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 27–45.

each individual pot) to the extent that different nationalities of third generation Americans, for example, could now marry each other so long as it was within the same faith tradition, *i.e.*, religion.

One other noteworthy historiographic aspect to Herberg's thinking was his view of "faith" in the 1950s. Specifically, he believed: "The 'common faith' of American society is not merely a civic religion to celebrate the values and convictions of the American people as a corporate entity. It has its inner, personal aspects as well; or rather, side-by-side and in intimate relation with the civil religion of the American Way of Life, [where] primarily through a devitalization of the historic faiths, [there is] an inner, personal religion that [now] promises salvation to the disinherited souls of a society in crisis. This inner, personal religion [Herberg theorized] is based on the American's *faith in faith*."³²³

Herberg went on to explain:

The cult of faith takes two forms, which we might designate as introvert and extrovert. In its introvert form faith is trusted to bring mental health and peace of mind, to dissipate anxiety and guilt, and to translate the soul to the blessed land of normality and self-acceptance.... In its extrovert form faith is known as 'positive thinking.' 'Positive thinking,' is thinking that is affirmative and avoids the corrosions of negativity and skepticism. [It] is recommended as a powerful force in the world of struggle and achievement. Here again, [in the case of either the introvert cult or the extrovert cult] it is not so much faith in anything, certainly not the theocentric faith of the historic religions, that is supposed to confer this power - but just faith, *i.e.*, the psychological attitude of having faith. And here too the cult is largely the product of the inner disintegration and enfeeblement of the historic religions."³²⁴

In mid-twentieth century America not all observers viewed this revival in a positive light. Herberg was among the critics who scrutinized the quality and depth of this renewed religious fervor. According to Miller and Nowak, Herberg perceived a disconcerting superficiality in the revival, which he described as "religiousness without religion."³²⁵ Herberg's critique highlighted a significant distinction between genuine religious experience and mere religious appearance. He argued that the revival embodied a form of religiousness devoid of substantial content or meaningful spiritual commitment. This "religiousness without religion" was, in his view, more about social

³²³ Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 89.

³²⁴ Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 89–90. Graham held to a different view of faith maintaining, "Faith must have an object. We don't simply have faith; we have faith in something or someone. Faith in 'faith' is meaningless." He went on to indicate: "for the Christian there is only one object of faith: the living God. Anything less is insubstantial, unreal, or even deceptive. Our faith is in God who created this world and came down to earth in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ. We should put our faith in Christ because he alone is the Savior," referring to 1 Peter 1:21 "Through Him [you] believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God" See: Graham, *Hope for Each Day*, 287.

³²⁵ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 100–101. See also: Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic Jew*, 266–267.

belonging and the appearance of faith rather than a profound reorientation of one's life towards God. His critique can be understood in the context of broader societal trends of the time. The post-World War II era in America was marked by a search for stability and identity, with religion often serving as a means of social cohesion and moral reassurance. In this milieu, the revival may have provided a sense of community and belonging, but for Herberg, it failed to fulfill the deeper, existential needs that true religion addresses.

In a contrast with Herberg's comments, a new work by Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity: God's Answer to Evil*, explores the concept of a faith that is authentically lived out in the world. Metaxas focuses on the teachings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who believed that Christianity should not be confined to religious rituals and dogmas but should instead manifest itself through active engagement in the world by addressing issues of evil and injustice with a focus on love, service, and discipleship³²⁶ Metaxas' work is discussed further in the concluding chapter of this thesis. However, it is relevant at this point to mention that Metaxas, drawing on Bonhoeffer, advocates a renewed effort to promote a form of Christianity that is authentic and actively engaged with contemporary global challenges, and by definition, one that is not characterized as "religionless without religion."³²⁷

³²⁶ Eric Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity: God's Answer to Evil* (New York NY: Regnery Faith, 2024).

³²⁷ Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity*, 93–102.

Chapter Four: The Eisenhower Presidency and Civil Religion

A. The Presidency and Civil Religion

This chapter examines several aspects of the Eisenhower presidency from the perspective of his having governed and spoken in accord with his core belief that "our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith."³²⁹ What follows is not intended to be a comprehensive survey of the entirety his eight years as president, rather it is intended to selectively demonstrate that Eisenhower generally acted in accordance with his core belief. The areas highlighted here include examples from: i) Eisenhower's personal and public prayer life; ii) the religious aspects of Eisenhower's speeches and writings; iii) the religious dimensions of Eisenhower's opposition to Communism; and, iv) the interaction of religion and the civil rights movement during his years in office. The chapter concludes with a brief historiographical commentary on the vast amount of literature analyzing the Eisenhower presidency. However, before proceeding to these examples, mention here is made of the concept of "civil religion," which provides a constructive methodology for analyzing the Eisenhower presidency in light of his core belief on the requisite need for "a deeply felt religious faith."

Chapter Two of this thesis discussed the interaction of the Founders and the Bible.³³⁰ Witte and Nichols describe many of these Founders as being "Civic Republicans" by which they meant that the Founders were: "an eclectic group of politicians, preachers, and pamphleteers who strove to cultivate a set of common values and beliefs for the new nation."³³¹ Witte and Nichols further explained: "A key to the Civic Republicans' understanding was that religion, and particularly Christianity, was foundational for the prosperity and happiness of citizens, and the efficacy and efficiency of good government.....[consequently, Civic Republicans] urged that society needed a fund of religious values and beliefs, and a body of civic ideas and ideals, that [were] enforceable both through common law and communal suasion."³³² As early as 1749, Benjamin Franklin had articulated his own, similar concept of "Publick Religion," which taught a creed of honesty, diligence, devotion, public spiritedness, patriotism and obedience; love of God, neighbor, and self; and other ethical commonplaces taught by

³²⁸ *Holy Bible: King James Version*, Reference Bible (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2017).

³²⁹ Hunt emphasizes that: "To be effective, public rhetoric must draw on values and concerns widely shared and easily understood by its audience. A rhetoric that ignores or eschews the language of common discourse on the central problems of the day closes itself off as a matter of course from any sizable audience, limiting its own influence." Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1988, 1987), 15.

³³⁰ For a comprehensive treatment of this topic, see: Dreisbach, *Reading the Bible with the Founding Fathers*.

³³¹ Witte, John, Jr. and Nichols, Joel A., *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*, 36, citing Nathan O. Hatch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millennium in Revolutionary New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

³³² Witte, John, Jr. and Nichols, Joel A., *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*, 37.

various religious traditions at the time of the Founding.³³³ It was a combination of Franklin's "Publick Religion" and the Founders Civic Republicanism that Bellah would describe some two hundred years later as "civil religion."³³⁴

According to Bellah, civil religion in America is a set of shared beliefs, symbols, and rituals that serve to bind the nation together and provide a sense of collective identity and purpose.³³⁵ It draws on religious language and symbolism but is not tied to any specific denomination or religious tradition. Instead, civil religion in America revolves around the idea of the United States as a sacred and exceptional nation with a special destiny. In support of this philosophy, Bellah identified several themes, including: i) a belief in a transcendent destiny, *viz.*, Americans often view their nation as having a unique and divine purpose in the world, with a mission to promote freedom, justice, and democracy; ii) a veneration of sacred documents and symbols, *viz.*, the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence are seen as symbols that hold special significance; and, iii) a cultivation of moral values and principles, *viz.*, civil religion emphasizes liberty, equality, and justice, as guiding moral values and principles for the nation.³³⁶

In explaining his thesis, Bellah wrote:

While some have argued that Christianity is the national faith, and others that church and synagogue celebrate only the generalized religion of "the American Way of Life," few have realized that there actually exists alongside of and rather clearly differentiated from the churches an elaborate and well-institutionalized civil religion in America. This article argues not only that there is such a

³³³ Witte, John, Jr. and Nichols, Joel A., *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*, 37. Witte and Nichols go on to note that "Its icons were the Bible, the Declaration of Independence, the bells of liberty, and the Constitution. Its clergy were the public-spirited ministers and religiously devout politicians. Its liturgy was the proclamation of prayers, songs, sermons, and Thanksgiving Day offerings by statesmen and churchman. Its policy was government appointment of legislative and military chaplains, government sponsorship of general religious education and organization, and government enforcement of a religiously based morality through positive law." 37-38.

³³⁴ Robert N. Bellah, 'Civil Religion in America', *Daedalus* 96, no. 1 (1967): 1-21, 1-21. Bellah's article rapidly became a 'frame' for several other papers by prominent thinkers who had an interest in the same theme. His thesis received widespread attention, and many academics participated in the ensuing discussion. During the 1969 annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Boston, Bellah was honored when an entire section of the program was built around his ideas. Church historian Sidney Mead was active among those who championed Bellah's position. On the other hand, there were dissenters. Sidney Ahlstrom, church historian from Yale University, formally declared that Bellah was struggling with a dead issue. In short, reactions were varied and numerous. See: Robert S. Alley, *So Help Me God: Religion and the Presidency, Wilson to Nixon* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1972), 13.

³³⁵ Bellah posited that civil religion's most basic tenet is that the nation is not an end in itself but in all its actions stands under the higher judgment of God. By asserting a transcendent ethics and God, civil religion provides Americans with a basis for self-criticism and self-understanding of their mission in the world. See: Bellah, 'Civil Religion in America', 1-19.

³³⁶ Bellah, 'Civil Religion in America', 1.21. This concept is also known as American Exceptionalism, a belief that the United States is inherently different from and superior to other nations due to its unique historical development, political institutions, and ideals. It suggests that the United States has a special mission to promote democracy, liberty, and individual rights, both within its borders and globally. This concept is rooted in the idea that America's founding principles, such as freedom, equality, and republicanism, make it a model for other nations. See: John D. Wilsey, *American Exceptionalism and Civil Religion* (Westmont, IL, InterVarsity Press, 2015)

thing, but also that this religion - or perhaps better, this religious dimension - has its own seriousness and integrity and requires the same care and understanding that any other religion does.³³⁷

Bellah's concept of civil religion in America has been the subject of extensive scholarly discussion and debate,³³⁸ but it remains a useful framework for understanding how the United States has integrated elements of religion and patriotism into its national identity and civic life. It reflects the idea that, for many Americans, their sense of belonging to the nation is intertwined with a set of shared beliefs and symbols that go beyond traditional religious affiliations.³³⁹

Nevertheless, the implied question inherent in Bellah's philosophy is whether there exists a viable metric by which a civil religion can be identified and defined? Alley suggests there are two alternative approaches.³⁴⁰ The first is that "civil religion may be assessed as the normal expectation of a nation state [and, therefore], one can deduce that the determination of its character would be [accomplished] through a study of the national 'philosophy' of government."³⁴¹ The second is that civil religion can be assessed by, and "results from, the powerful personalities of leaders in a given time, most particularly the Presidents."³⁴² Moreover, maintains Alley: "For the United States the rise of any civil religion is directly affected in character and form by the quality of religion exemplified by the President as chief administrator."³⁴³ It is through this latter lens that the ensuing discussion seeks to illuminate how Eisenhower and his administration were instrumental in bequeathing a vital and vigorous form of civil religion to the nation premised upon his core beliefs.³⁴⁴

³³⁷ Bellah, 'Civil Religion in America', 1.

³³⁸ Marty criticizes civil religion by labeling it "religion-in-general." He suggests that it posits a "harmless little divinity who has almost nothing in common with the God of Christianity." This god is understandable and manageable, comforting, and an "American jolly good fellow." Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York NY: Meridian Books, 1957), 264. Richard Niebuhr contended that if this "social institution" has now become a civil religion, it is a bad thing. It reflects the provincialism of religion bound to state chauvinism. He suggested that the incipient national cult was no more than the corruption of the Christian faith. The civil religion's whole character is conditioned by more than 350 years of Judeo-Christian influence. See: Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, 264.

³³⁹ In a survey of more than fifty years of American civil religion scholarship, Squiers identifies fourteen principal tenets: i) Filial piety; ii) Reverence to certain sacred texts and symbols such as the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the flag; iii) The sanctity of American institutions; iv) The belief in God or a deity; v) The idea that rights are divinely given; vi) The notion that freedom comes from God through government; vii) Governmental authority comes from God or a higher transcendent authority; viii) The conviction that God can be known through the American experience; ix) God is the supreme judge; x) God is sovereign; xi) America's prosperity results from God's providence; xii) America is a "city on a hill" or a beacon of hope and righteousness; xiii) The principle of sacrificial death and rebirth; xiv) America serves a higher purpose than self-interests. See: Anthony Squiers, *The Politics of the Sacred in America: The Role of Civil Religion in Political Practice* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2018).

³⁴⁰ Alley, *So Help Me God*, 16–17.

³⁴¹ Alley, *So Help Me God*, 17.

³⁴² Alley, *So Help Me God*, 17.

³⁴³ Alley, *So Help Me God*, 24.

³⁴⁴ Pierard and Linder maintain that: "Despite its many limitations, civil religion has been the American answer to the radical pluralism encouraged by the First Amendment and by the historic stand of Baptists, Mennonites, and Quakers against any fusion of church and state. It exists in at least two varieties which may be labeled as 'prophetic' and 'priestly' civil religion. In a functional sense, the prophet stands before

B. Personal and Public Prayer Life

The first avenue of investigation is a brief examination of Eisenhower's personal and public prayer life which played a significant role in shaping the image of his presidency in the public's mind, as well as reflecting the values of the nation as he perceived them.³⁴⁵ There are numerous illustrations of the fact that prayer was central to Eisenhower's life and presidency. His personal prayer life was characterized by an apparent sense of humility and reliance on God.³⁴⁶ There is ample evidence he believed in the power of prayer to provide guidance and strength in times of difficulty.³⁴⁷ Throughout his life, he prayerfully sought solace and wisdom during moments of reflection and decision-making.³⁴⁸ As President, he frequently recognized the importance of acknowledging the nation's religious heritage and the role of faith in the lives of the American people.³⁴⁹ Consequently, he believed that prayer had a place in

the people and speaks to them the necessary (and sometimes unpleasant) words from God, but the priest stands before God and speaks on behalf of the people. The prophet focuses on judgment and repentance while the priest pronounces words of comfort, praise, and celebration. Both forms of public religion have been present in American history-with the prophetic dominating the scene from the foundation of the Republic until the mid-20th century, and the priestly prevailing through the latter half of the 20th century. In prophetic civil religion, the president seeks to conform the nation's actions to the will of the Almighty, thus countering idolatrous religious nationalism and calling the nation to repent of its corporate political sentence. In the priestly variety, however, the president's prophetic role is muted. Instead of the Deity, he tends to make the nation itself (or national goals or security), the ultimate reference point for evaluating the deeds of his country. As a high priest of the civil faith, he leads the people in affirming and celebrating the nation, and at the same time he glorifies the national culture and strokes his political flock." See: Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, 24-25.

³⁴⁵ According to a press release by the Republican National Committee shortly after his election, Eisenhower believed that, as chief executive, he was obliged to serve "not only as the political leader, but as the spiritual leader of our times." See: Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 90.

³⁴⁶ Eisenhower's brother, Milton, commented: "I think he [Eisenhower] may not like the purely ritualistic aspects of religion because they are merely an outward manifestation, whereas the true significance of religion is something that is in the mind and in the heart....Now, when you become the leader of a free world, it becomes necessary not only to find the inner satisfaction which religious understandings can bring, but also to stimulate others in a thousand ways. Well, here we come to another fact, then: ours is a religious nation.... All of our basic documents are political expressions of certain cardinal religious concepts. Thus, it is necessary, I think, in order to protect American democracy and freedom in the world, for the President of the United States to give spiritual stimulation... Most people find it best to adhere to religious conviction through some physical connection with the church and physical participation in ritualistic exercises. This being so, it is good and right for the President of the United States to go to church regularly..." Bela Kornitzer, *The Great American Heritage* (New York NY: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1955), 137.

³⁴⁷ Eisenhower's innermost thoughts seem to resonate with Spener's notion of Pietism which deemphasized doctrine in the pursuit of intellectualist orthodoxies in favor of emphasizing personal faith and moral living. Hill, *The History of Christian Thought*, 211.

³⁴⁸ In concluding his message to the Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force on the eve of the D-Day invasion of Europe in 1944, Eisenhower concluded the message saying: "And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking." See: <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/research/online-documents/d-day/order-of-the-day.pdf> Unsubstantiated accounts circulated about Eisenhower spending hours on his knees before he gave the final order for the invasion of France, which he referred to as "the most agonizing decision of his life." Eisenhower concluded from the experience: "If there were nothing else in my life to prove the existence of an almighty and merciful God, the events of the next twenty-four hours did it. This is what I found out about religion. It gives you the courage to make the decisions you must make in a crisis, and the confidence to leave the result to a higher power. Only by trust in one's self and trust in God can a man carrying responsibility find repose." Dwight D. Eisenhower, 'Prepared Statement', *Episcopal Church News* (1952); text printed in the *New York Times*, September 15, 1952, 1,16.

³⁴⁹ Fuller and Green note that with the support of his Secretary of Agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson, Eisenhower established the practice of opening each cabinet meeting with silent prayer - with an

the public sphere, as well, and he often participated in public prayer events during his presidency.

Two examples of Eisenhower's personal prayer life are offered here. First, Sears *et al.* relate a poignant and apocryphal vignette highlighting his personal prayer life that occurred early one morning in 1957:

The nation's capital was buzzing with activity...yet at the White House things were quiet as Fred Seaton, Secretary of the Interior, stepped briefly into the Oval Office. Here he encountered something at once extraordinary and commonplace, something that shocked him - but at the same time made perfect sense. He found a man kneeling in prayer beside a desk. However, this was no ordinary man. This was arguably the most powerful man in the world: the President of the United States. The secretary, embarrassed by his intrusion, quickly pardoned himself and left the room. However, as he went about his work that day, and each day following, Seaton was heartened by knowing that the President, facing a difficult and complex decision about sending troops to the Far East to deal with another potential international crisis, was on his knees.³⁵⁰

Second, Baier quotes Mamie Eisenhower, the President's wife, as having said that her husband depended a great deal on God: "I think that's what carried him through so many things."³⁵¹ In recounting the horrors of war he had been witness to,³⁵² and his desire to foster peace wherever and whenever possible, she also recalled that Eisenhower memorized and often recited the so-called "prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi": "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace: where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy..."³⁵³

Eisenhower's public prayer life was epitomized by his support for the National Prayer Breakfast, an annual event that continues to this day.³⁵⁴ Eisenhower's brother, Milton, commented that "since childhood he and his family had always prayed before each

invitation to anyone to pray vocally who wished to do so. Fuller, Edmund and Green, David E., *God in the White House: The Faiths of American Presidents* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1968), 217

³⁵⁰ Sears, Osten, and Cole, *The Soul of an American President*, 13–14. In 1957 the Eisenhower administration created the Eisenhower Doctrine whereby a country could request American economic assistance and/or aid from U.S. military forces if it was being threatened by armed aggression from another state. The doctrine was an outgrowth of the Suez Crisis of 1956. See: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/eisenhower-doctrine>

³⁵¹ Bret Baier, *Three Days in January*, trans. Catherine Whitney (William Morrow, 2017), 46.

³⁵² Commentators frequently note that during much of his military career, Eisenhower had not attended church regularly. However, it is clear that his wartime experiences had revived and strengthened his faith, evidenced by his own words to the effect that "nobody goes through six years of war without faith." In his case it was the "army chapel" approach to faith, a trans-denominational faith of that era that was propagated through the military chaplaincy corps. See: Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, 192.

³⁵³ Baier, *Three Days in January*, 46.

³⁵⁴ Bergman notes: "This practice, influenced by Billy Graham and U.S. Senator Frank Carlson, was originally called the Presidential Prayer Breakfast; [however] the event name was soon changed to the National Prayer Breakfast to include all Americans." Bergman, Jungmeyer, and Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency*, 130.

meal."³⁵⁵ Consequently, it was not out of character for Eisenhower to lead the prayer breakfast initiative which subsequently became a White House tradition. Keller and others note that given the tone of the new administration: "it is no surprise the regular prayer breakfast(s) were another religious practice instigated [during the first few weeks of] the Eisenhower administration."³⁵⁶ The initial National Prayer Breakfast was held in February, 1953, and attended by over five hundred congressmen, Supreme Court justices, cabinet members and others and keynoted by Eisenhower.³⁵⁷ In succeeding years, prayer breakfasts proved to be nearly as popular drawing average attendances in excess of four hundred participants.³⁵⁸ Keller concludes that prayer breakfasts were successful, in part, because "many members of Eisenhower's staff and cabinet were [also] thoroughly religious individuals."³⁵⁹ The practice inspired by Eisenhower subsequently spread across the nation and eventually prayer breakfasts were established in a number of cities across the United States.³⁶⁰ Eisenhower often attended and spoke at these regional gatherings, emphasizing the importance of prayer and moral values in the life of the nation. Bergman pointed to Eisenhower's address at the 1956 Annual Breakfast of the International Council for Christian Leadership as a demonstration of his strong support of these events and the corresponding opportunity to emphasize the importance of moral values:

I used the Inauguration some three years ago....to impress upon the audience...that a new Chief Executive was being inaugurated over a nation [that] was founded on a religious faith.....There has been too much of the world that believes the United States to be completely materialistic, boastful, proud and arrogant.....It is meetings such as this.....that help to dispel this very great and dangerous delusion. [Ours] is still a nation that is grounded on religious faith.....That is what we want others to think about when they think of the United States.....[that it is] trying to follow in the footsteps of the Prince of Peace, and to establish a just peace for all the world.³⁶¹

Another notable instance involved Eisenhower's strong support for a National Day of Prayer initiative.³⁶² Congress had mandated the National Day of Prayer in 1952 but did not specify a date on which it should occur. The Eisenhower administration debated the best timing and eventually settled on a date in October of each year so that it would

³⁵⁵ Doron Antrim, 'Why the President Believes in Prayer', *Parade*, December 8, 1957.

³⁵⁶ Craig L. Keller, *The Intellectuals and Eisenhower: Civil Religion, Religious Publicity, and the Search for Moral and Religious Communities* (George Washington University, 2002), 259.

³⁵⁷ Gary S. Smith, *Faith and the Presidency: From George Washington to George W. Bush* (New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2006), 232. For the entirety of the first fifteen years of the prayer breakfasts, Billy Graham offered the opening prayers, on each occasion offering participants an invitation to follow Christ. See: Graham, *Just As I Am*, 203.

³⁵⁸ Keller, *The Intellectuals and Eisenhower*, 261.

³⁵⁹ Keller, *The Intellectuals and Eisenhower*, 298.

³⁶⁰ Moore, James P., Jr., *One Nation Under God: The History of Prayer in America* (New York NY: Doubleday, 2005), 336.

³⁶¹ Bergman, Jungmeyer, and Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency*, 132.

³⁶² Bergman, Jungmeyer, and Goodpaster, *God in Eisenhower's Life, Military Career, and Presidency*, 132.

coincide with the time of the year when other related events such as Bible Week³⁶³ and Worldwide Communion Sunday, were observed.³⁶⁴ The occasion was to be used to focus on America's spiritual heritage and strength in contrast to Thanksgiving, which was set aside as a day of thankful prayer for America's material blessings.³⁶⁵ Holl notes that: "Eisenhower believed that Americans were too focused on the material blessings, especially 'bombs and machines and gadgets as the arsenal of our national and cultural strength.' What was missing in America's pride about being the most powerful nation on earth was the fact that democracies, indeed all civilizations, were founded on religious faith and values. What he had learned in World War II was that America's most potent force was spiritual."³⁶⁶ Holl concluded that Eisenhower could not have been clearer about the foundation of his "civil religion" faith: "although democracy may not be God's preferred form of human government, nonetheless, without God, democracy, as Americans knew it, was impossible."³⁶⁷ Eisenhower believed a government-sponsored National Day of Prayer could be instrumental in reinforcing the importance of faith in the underpinning the nation's values.

Jamison concludes that the more one studies Eisenhower's life and achievements, both militarily and as president, "the more obvious it becomes that he was an exceptionally devout man"³⁶⁸ who believed in prayer and who quite regularly prayed privately or publicly before making many of the major decisions which might hold the world together or blow it apart.... The part the Bible eventually played in his life was so pronounced³⁶⁹ -- and so often overlooked in the day-to-day reporting—[that it now] it seems quite appropriate it should be highlighted."³⁷⁰ Invariably, those prayers invoked religious sentiments that strongly emphasized the need for unity, moral strength, and divine guidance.³⁷¹

³⁶³ U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt commemorated the word of God by observing the first National Bible Week in 1941. Since then, every president has continued the tradition of celebrating the Holy Bible during Thanksgiving week. See: <https://nationaltoday.com/national-bible-week/#:~:text=U.S.&text=National%20Bible%20Week%20is%20the,17%20to%2023%20this%20year>.

³⁶⁴ Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 213.

³⁶⁵ Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 213.

³⁶⁶ Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 213–14.

³⁶⁷ Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 213–14.

³⁶⁸ Miller noted in this regard: "The most untouchable element of Mr. Eisenhower's "aboveness" during both his candidacy for office and during his presidency, and one of the most exasperating to some of his opponents, was his identification with the generalized religious interest that was widespread at the time. Stanley High, a one-time speechwriter for Mr. Eisenhower, wrote in *The Reader's Digest*, April 1953 that a 'revival of moral and spiritual faith in America' is what Eisenhower really wants." He believes that religion and the 'Godly virtues' account for America's beginning and its growth.... He believes that, save in a renewal of that faith and in those virtues, there is no answer for the future...The years showed that Mr. High was indeed on Mr. Eisenhower's wavelength on this point, and that a large American public was, too." See: Miller, *Piety Along the Potomac*, 18–19.

³⁶⁹ Eisenhower's commitment to Scripture is reminiscent of the fervor of the Jimmy Stewart character in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, where he delivers one of the great cinematic orations before the Senate concluding with "Great principles don't get lost once they come to light. They're right here; you just have to see them again!" Frank Capra, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, trans. James Stewart and Jean Arthur (1939).

³⁷⁰ Henry B. Jameson, *Heroes by the Dozen* (Abilene, KS: Shadinger - Wilson, 1961), xviii–xix.

³⁷¹ Eisenhower extemporized at the inaugural Dedicatory Prayer breakfast of the International Christian Leadership that: "...The very basis of our government is: 'We hold that all men are endowed by their Creator' with certain rights. When we came to that turning point in history, when we intended to establish

C. Religious Aspects of Eisenhower's Speeches and Writings

Through numerous speeches and public writings, Eisenhower further underscored his belief in the essential role of religion in the life of the country. However, given the intent of the First Amendment, it may be appropriate to briefly consider the proper role of any president in light of Constitutional constraints imposed by First Amendment jurisprudence and the contrasting manner in which Eisenhower conducted his presidency, exemplified by his speeches.³⁷² Fairbanks notes that the presidency entails four major responsibilities or customary roles: i) a legislative role; ii) a military role; iii) an administrative role; and, iv) a party leadership role.³⁷³ Since World War II, however, he argues that there has been an expansion of the traditional functions to include the advancement of justice and the promotion of social welfare. Moreover, presidents have been called upon to serve as a leader of the Free World during international crises.³⁷⁴ Nevertheless, an area of presidential responsibility not commonly noted in the literature is that of religious leadership.³⁷⁵

Fairbanks addresses this issue directly. Relying on the work of Sociologist Robin Williams,³⁷⁶ he maintains that: "all political leadership has a religious dimension [because] every functioning society needs a common religion [that can provide] the

a government for free men and a Declaration and Constitution to make it last....In one [phrase] we established that every free government is imbedded soundly in a deeply-felt religious faith or it makes no sense. Today if we recall those things and if, in that sense, we can back off from our problems and depend upon a power greater than ourselves, I believe that we begin to draw these problems into focus. As Benjamin Franklin said at one time during the course of the stormy consultation at the Constitutional Convention, because he sensed that the convention was on the point of breaking up: "Gentlemen, I suggest that we have a word of prayer." And strangely enough, after a bit of prayer the problems began to smooth out and the convention moved to the great triumph that we enjoy today--the writing of our Constitution. Today I think that prayer is just simply a necessity, because by prayer I believe we mean an effort to get in touch with the Infinite.... We are imperfect human beings. But if we can back off from [our] problems and make the effort, then there is something that ties us all together. We have begun in our grasp of that basis of understanding, which is that all free government is firmly founded in a deeply-felt religious faith. 'Remarks at the Dedicatory Prayer Breakfast of the International Christian Leadership | The American Presidency Project', accessed January 27, 2024, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-dedicatory-prayer-breakfast-the-international-christian-leadership>

³⁷² "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." *First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States* (Library of Congress) The next chapter of this thesis explores First Amendment jurisprudence in greater detail; however, it is relevant to note here that while the full meaning and effect of the First Amendment have not always been clear, at a minimum the Founders sought to preclude the government from being able to specifically dictate which doctrines and which rituals of worship would be permissible under this constitutional form of government.

³⁷³ James D. Fairbanks, 'Religious Dimensions of Presidential Leadership: The Case for Dwight David Eisenhower', *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (1982): 260–67, 260.

³⁷⁴ Fairbanks, 'Religious Dimensions of Presidential Leadership', 260.

³⁷⁵ The American tradition is that of the separation of Church and State. Consequently, Fairbanks notes the paradox of attempting to assign any religious role whatsoever to the presidency. See: Fairbanks, 'Religious Dimensions of Presidential Leadership', 260.

³⁷⁶ "Every functioning society" according to Williams, "has to an important degree a common religion. The possession of a common set of ideas, rituals, and symbols [which supply] an overarching sense of unity even in a society riddled with conflicts.....[because humans] are always likely to be intolerant of opposition to their ultimate central values." See: Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (Garden City N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1967), 51 See also: Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 51

basis of an overarching unity capable of overcoming conflicts and cleavages within society."³⁷⁷ Building on Novak's argument that "precisely because there is no specific state church to furnish the basic symbols of transcendence for American society, a "symbolic vacuum is created, which the state inexorably fills,"³⁷⁸ Fairbanks deduces that "an important component of presidential leadership, therefore, is the preservation and promotion of basic symbols of transcendence which give meaning and a sense direction to American society [which] provide the basis for its unity."³⁷⁹ From this point it is a short leap for Fairbanks to conclude that: "the best [recent] example of a president who well understood the essentially religious demands of [the] office and who was successful in carrying them out was Eisenhower," [noting that] "the former president fully recognized the religious dimensions of his office and consciously used religious symbols in his leadership [based upon his desire to] mobilize the nation into a spiritual crusade."³⁸⁰ In this regard, Eisenhower wanted to appeal to "the fellow planting a row of corn or driving a taxi," so that they would feel that they were an integral part of that spiritual crusade.³⁸¹

In summary:

The president's religious role involves more than setting a good example for the rest of the country to follow. The president must actively lead the nation in liturgies which were designed to foster the common faith of the nation; indeed, he must articulate what the common faith is and guard it from erosion. The president is not only the nation's chief administrator and chief diplomat and chief legislator; he is also its chief priest into who's care the religion of state is entrusted. The president's priestly role calls on him to be an active defender of the transcendent values underlying the American Faith.³⁸²

Consistent with this synopsis, Bellah suggested that the essential elements of America's civil religion are best observed in the context of formal presidential pronouncements, particularly inaugural addresses.³⁸³ Consequently, what follows is a discussion of various of Eisenhower's speeches which are representative of the tone and tenor of a significant portion of his public rhetoric, including, particularly, his first Inaugural Address in 1953.³⁸⁴ Viewed in chronological order, these speeches demonstrate an

³⁷⁷ Fairbanks, 'Religious Dimensions of Presidential Leadership', 260.

³⁷⁸ Michael Novak, *Choosing Our King: Powerful Symbols in Presidential Politics* (New York NY: Macmillan, 1974), 303.

³⁷⁹ Fairbanks, 'Religious Dimensions of Presidential Leadership', 261.

³⁸⁰ Fairbanks, 'Religious Dimensions of Presidential Leadership', 261.

³⁸¹ Peter Lyon, *Eisenhower: Portrait of a Hero* (Boston: Little Brown and Co, 1974), 417. Eisenhower agreed with his brother, Milton, that "a deep and abiding religious faith" was a basic feature of democracy and except for a renewal of moral and spiritual faith in America, its prospects would be greatly diminished. See: Lyon, *Eisenhower*, 417.

³⁸² Fairbanks, 'Religious Dimensions of Presidential Leadership', 261–62.

³⁸³ Bellah, 'Civil Religion in America', 1–19.

³⁸⁴ The second inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower as president of the United States was held privately on Sunday, January 20, 1957, at the White House and publicly on the following day, Monday, January 21, 1957, at the East Portico of the United States Capitol; both located in Washington, D.C. This was the

ongoing commitment to reinforce his belief that religion indisputably plays an essential role in the life of this nation.

Fuller and Green describe Eisenhower's first inauguration in 1953 remarking that:³⁸⁵ "Eisenhower added an unprecedented touch to his inaugural ceremony. In his hotel suite, between the morning church service at historic St. John's Church³⁸⁶ adjacent to Lafayette Square³⁸⁷ and the beginning of the inaugural ceremony on the steps of the Capitol Building, Eisenhower composed his own prayer, which he read before starting his formal inaugural address:

Almighty God, as we stand here at this moment, my future associates in the executive branch of our government join me in beseeching that Thou will make full and complete our dedication to the service of the people in this throng and their fellow citizens everywhere.

Give us, we pray, the power to discern clearly right from wrong, and allow all our words and actions to be governed thereby, and by the laws of this land. Especially we pray that our concern shall be for all the people regardless of station, race or calling.

May cooperation be permitted and be the mutual aim of those who under the concepts of our Constitution, hold to differing political faiths, so that all may work for the good of our beloved country and Thy glory. Amen.³⁸⁸

Not surprisingly, in the same manner that Eisenhower commenced his presidency by reading his own handwritten prayer, eight years later he concluded his presidency with his personal Farewell Address to the nation in which he urged Americans to remain strong in their faith in God, praying:

All nations, under God, will reach the goal of peace with justice. May we be ever unswerving in devotion to principle, confident but humble with power, diligent in pursuit of the nation's great goals.

To all the peoples of the world, I once more give expression to America's prayerful and continuing aspiration.

43rd inauguration and marked the commencement of the second and final four-year term of Dwight D. Eisenhower as president.

³⁸⁵ When President Eisenhower was inaugurated in January 1953, the parade of floats representing the [then] forty-eight states was headed by a "float to God" -- a church-like (but not denominational) building, bearing enlarged photographs of scenes of worship, surrounding by mottoes in Gothic script saying, "In God we trust" and Freedom of Worship." Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 88.

³⁸⁶ Every president since 1816 has attended St John's at least once during their presidency and every president since Roosevelt has attended a pre-inaugural service there on inauguration day.

³⁸⁷ Lafayette Square is an historic site in Washington, D.C., located directly opposite the White House across Pennsylvania Avenue.

³⁸⁸ Fuller, Edmund and Green, David E., *God in the White House: The Faiths of American Presidents* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1968), 217. Eisenhower did not consult any of his staff beforehand regarding the prayer, which came as a surprise to those following the event program; however, Miller and Nowak note that millions of Americans loved the simple, reassuring piety the President epitomized by offering that prayer. See: Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 89.

We pray that peoples of all faiths, all races, all nations, may have their great human needs satisfied; that those now denied opportunity shall come to enjoy it to the full; that all who yearn for freedom may experience its spiritual blessing; that those who have freedom will understand, also, its heavy responsibilities; that all who are insensitive to the needs of others will learn charity; that the scourges of poverty, disease and ignorance will be made to disappear from the earth, and that, in the goodness of time, all peoples will come to live together in a peace guaranteed by binding force of mutual respect and love.³⁸⁹

In the intervening eight years of his presidency, Eisenhower found numerous ways to express his sentiments and beliefs concerning the role religion plays. In a July 1953, Message to the National Co-Chairmen, Commission on Religious Organizations, National Conference of Christians and Jews he wrote: "The churches of America are citadels of our faith in individual freedom and human dignity. This faith is the living source of all our spiritual strength. And this strength is our matchless armor in our world-wide struggle against the forces of godless tyranny and oppression."³⁹⁰ Similarly, in an Address to the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches in August 1954, he said: "We are essentially a religious people. We are not merely religious, we are inclined, more today than ever, to see the value of religion as a practical force in our affairs."³⁹¹ In the same address he went on to note that "Faith is the mightiest force that man has at his command. It impels human beings to greatness in thought and word and deed."³⁹²

Several other indicative quotes demonstrating the continuity of Eisenhower's thought throughout his presidency include: i) his 1955 recorded remarks to the American Legion: "Without God, there could be no American form of Government, nor an American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first -- the most basic -- expression of Americanism. Thus, the Founding Fathers saw it, and thus, with God's

³⁸⁹ Ron DiCianni, *The Faith of the Presidents* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma, 2004), 148–49.

³⁹⁰ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Message to the National Co-Chairmen, Commission of Religious Organizations, National Conference on Christians and Jews*, The American Presidency Project (1953) (Public Papers of the Presidents). In a similar vein, Eisenhower, addressing the Committee on Religion in American Life, observed the importance of faithful church attendance, urging full support of religious institutions to the end that: "we may add strength and meaning to the religious virtues--charity, mercy, brotherly love, and faith in Almighty God." He further noted: "These spiritual concepts are the inspiration of the American way. It was once said, America is great because America is good--and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great. By strengthening religious institutions, the Committee on Religion in American Life is helping to keep America good. Thus it helps each of us to keep America great. I earnestly hope that during November, and throughout this and every year, each American citizen will actively support the religious institution of his own choice." Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Statement by the President Recorded for the Program of the Committee on Religion in American Life*, The American Presidency Project (1953) (Public Papers of the Presidents).

³⁹¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Address at the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Evanston, Illinois, 8/19/54*, The American Presidency Project (1954) (Public Papers of the Presidents).

³⁹² Eisenhower, *Address at the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Evanston, Illinois, 8/19/54*.

help, it will continue to be;"³⁹³ii) his 1956 address at the signing of the Declaration of Principles Eisenhower averred: "Since the day of creation, the fondest hopes of men and women have been to pass on to their children something better than they themselves enjoyed. That hope represents a spark of the Divine which is implanted in every human breast;"³⁹⁴ and, iii) his 1958 address at the United States Naval Academy: "Basic to our democratic civilization are the principles and convictions that have bound us together as a nation. Among these are personal liberty, human rights, and the dignity of man. All these have their roots in a deeply held religious faith -- in a belief in God."³⁹⁵

Eisenhower was also instrumental in successfully securing legislation to include the words "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance recited each morning in schools across the country,³⁹⁶ and issued public statements strongly endorsing the legislation in which he contended that: "From this day forward, millions of our school children will daily proclaim in every city and town, every village and rural schoolhouse, the dedication of our nation and our people to the Almighty. To anyone who truly loves America, nothing could be more inspiring than to contemplate this rededication of our youth, on each school morning, *to our country's true meaning*."³⁹⁷

³⁹³ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Remarks Recorded for the "Back-to-God" Program of the American Legion*, 2/20/55, The American Presidency Project (1955) (Public Papers of the Presidents).

³⁹⁴ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Address at the Signing of the Declaration of Principles at the Meeting of the Presidents in Panama City*, The American Presidency Project (1956) (Public Papers of the Presidents)

³⁹⁵ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Address at U.S. Naval Academy Commencement*, The American Presidency Project (1958) (Public Papers of the Presidents).

³⁹⁶ In 1954, in response to a perceived Communist threat prevalent during that era, Eisenhower encouraged Congress to add the words "under God," creating the 31-word pledge used today: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

³⁹⁷ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Statement by the President Upon Signing Bill to Include the Words "Under God" in the Pledge to the Flag*, The American Presidency Project (1954) (Public Papers of the Presidents).

D. Communism³⁹⁸

In the 1950s the country's fear of, and opposition to, Communism was closely tied to religion.³⁹⁹ In recognition and support of this linkage, Eisenhower marshalled a number of arguments in his speeches and public pronouncements against Communism that invariably insinuated religion, mirroring the rhetoric occurring in some churches across the country.⁴⁰⁰ Part of his stance against Communism was the product of his wartime experience.⁴⁰¹ Nearly eighty years after the war's end it may be difficult to appreciate

³⁹⁸ This section focuses on the basis for Eisenhower's opposition to Communism. However, note is made of John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower's Secretary of State, who was considered by many historians to be the most prominent member of his cabinet, particularly insofar as Dulles was the Eisenhower administration as far as foreign affairs were concerned. See: Alley, *So Help Me God*, 86. Eisenhower respected Dulles and trusted him implicitly. Secretary Dulles was said to "belong to the company of those whose anti-Communism was a matter of absolute principle, not of practical realism, because his own faith was so closely bound up with the ideals of American tradition....he failed to perceive the relativity of these ideals...this failure of insight was rooted in a faith which emphasized the Law at the expense of the Gospel. In 1950 Dulles opined: "As a nation, although religious, we have lost the connection between our religious faith and our practices....We can no longer generate a spiritual power which will flow throughout the world. See: Charles C. West, *Communism and the Theologians* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1958), 41,42. Once installed as Secretary of State in the Eisenhower administration, Dulles worked fervently to regenerate that spiritual power. Alley theorized that "Dulles seemed to equate western Christianity, in particular the United States, with God's will. God had given America a destiny over against atheistic Communism. At times his religious zeal on this matter was absolute. By injecting that doctrinaire note into his policies, Dulles aided in the creation of a [hostile] attitude in the nation toward all things Communist. This was transferred into many of the churches in the fifties.'" Alley, *So Help Me God*, 87.

³⁹⁹ The U.S. Office of the Historian maintains historical records which reflect the policy choices then under consideration, in particular: "National Security Council Paper NSC-68 (entitled "United States Objectives and Programs for National Security," frequently referred to as NSC-68) which was a Top-Secret report completed by the U.S. Department of State's Policy Planning Staff on April 7, 1950. The 58-page memorandum is among the most influential documents composed by the U.S. Government during the Cold War and was not declassified until 1975. Its authors argued that one of the most pressing threats confronting the United States was the "hostile design" of the Soviet Union. The authors concluded that the Soviet threat would soon be greatly augmented by the addition of nuclear weapons to the Soviet arsenal. They argued that the best course of action was to respond in kind with a massive build-up of the U.S. military and weaponry. The authors of NSC-68 rejected a renewal of U.S. isolationism.... The report also ruled out a preventive strike against the Soviet Union.....NSC-68 did not, however, rule out the prospect of negotiating with the Soviet Union.... nevertheless, the report's authors argued that such an approach would only succeed if the United States could create "political and economic conditions in the free world" sufficient to deter the Soviet Union from pursuing a military solution to the Cold War rivalry." See: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/NSC68#:~:text=National%20Security%20Council%20Paper%20NSC,Staff%20on%20April%207%2C%201950>. During the Eisenhower administration religion played a vital supporting role in shaping the "conditions" in the Free World.

⁴⁰⁰ Throughout the 1950s at the conclusion of each Mass the Catholic Church encouraged its congregations to pray openly for the conversion of Russia and the defeat of Communism. See: Kselman, Thomas A. and Avella, Steven, 'Marian Piety and the Cold War in the United states', *The Catholic Historical Review* 72, no. 3 (1986): 403–24.

⁴⁰¹ Eisenhower frequently referenced an exchange he had toward the end of the war with Georgy Zhukov, Marshall of the Red Army, who later served as Chief of the General Staff, Minister of Defense, and member of the Presidium. Their discussion revolved around the respective forms of government and civilizations each man represented. Zhukov admitted to the difficulty of promulgating Communism because it was an "appeal to the idealistic in [humans], viz., [humans] should not work for their own special rights or privileges, including freedom of worship; rather [humans] should aspire to work for the glory of the whole group, the entirety of the organism to which the person belongs, whereas, he maintained, the democratic- capitalistic system appealed to all that is materialistic and selfish in [humans]. Eisenhower recalled his immediate reaction to Zhukov was that he had a complete misunderstanding of

that one of the paramount values the Allies were fighting for at the time was freedom.⁴⁰² However, to Eisenhower and the men then engaged in the 1940s life and death fight against Axis tyranny, the concept of freedom was very real.⁴⁰³ In Eisenhower's mind, especially, freedom was a fundamental value derived directly from humans' status as children of God, not to be suborned by the forces of evil, with which he identified Communism.⁴⁰⁴

Eisenhower believed that the Soviet dictatorship of the 1950s was ruthless and insatiable in its determination to establish world domination. In a 1954 speech to the American Legion he claimed "this truth [*i.e.*, Communist desire for world domination] requires no elaboration."⁴⁰⁵ All Americans recognize it as a fact."⁴⁰⁶ He went on to describe the various ways and means Communists sought to achieve their objective, including the extensive use of propaganda, saying: "for every spokesman of freedom that we assign to the struggle for men's minds and hearts, the Communists assign scores; for every dollar we spend for informational purposes, they spend fifty in opposition; for every word we utter in the cause of liberty and *faith*,⁴⁰⁷ they utter thousands to extol their system and to degrade and defame the values of the free."⁴⁰⁸

our system of government insofar as it is not based on selfish interest, instead being firmly rooted in religion insofar as the Founding Fathers believed it was a religious concept they were endeavoring to translate into the political world. Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, 194.

⁴⁰² Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, 194.

⁴⁰³ Eisenhower expressed his view of the war in his memoirs reflecting that: "Daily as it progressed there grew within me the conviction that as never before in a war between nations the forces that stood for human good and men's rights were this time confronted by a completely evil conspiracy with which no compromise could be tolerated. Because only by utter destruction of the Axis was a decent world possible, the war became for me a crusade in the traditional sense of that often misused word." Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (New York NY: Doubleday, 1948), 157.

⁴⁰⁴ Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, 194. In a 1953 speech Eisenhower stated: "We are one nation, gifted by God with the reason and the will to govern ourselves, returning our thanks to Him by respecting His supreme creation - the free individual." See: Dwight D. Eisenhower, ed., *The Quotable Eisenhower* (Anderson, S.C.: Droke House, 1967), 85–86.

⁴⁰⁵ In a diary entry on January 6, 1953, Eisenhower commented: "Actually what is going on is that the Communists are hoping to take advantage of the confusion resulting from destruction of existing relationships and in the difficulties and uncertainties of disrupted trade, security and understandings, to further the aims of world revolution and Kremlin's domination of all people." See: DDE Diary Series, Box 3, Eisenhower Presidential Library and also:

<https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/research/subject-guides/pdf/eisenhower-religion.pdf>

⁴⁰⁶ Dwight D. Eisenhower, 'Address at the American Legion Convention', in *Public Papers of the Presidents* (1954).

⁴⁰⁷ Eisenhower believed in the didactic function of faith. In a 1952 *New York Times* article he is reported as commenting "We are children of God, each person's dignity [has] a Divine origin, our brotherhood [has] a sublime meaning only when understood to be under God's fatherhood, and our ideals of democracy and freedom must be much more than sentimental moods or romantic notions. The latter are not the tender inventions of poets, but eternal laws of the human spirit." See: *New York Times*, November 4, 1952, 23, 23.

⁴⁰⁸ Eisenhower, 'Address at the American Legion Convention' Taylor quotes Eisenhower as saying: "A man is more than an animal, he possesses a soul. If we have not that *faith*, then why should any of us admit that any other is born with equal rights? Each of us instinctively realizes, and our forefathers so stated, that an individual, because he was born, possesses certain rights. And to prove that we must go back and depend upon *faith*, and *faith* alone; and I say it is a *faith*, akin to religion, to most of us." See: Allan Taylor, ed., *What Eisenhower Thinks* (New York NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1952), 50.

Eisenhower then outlined various measures⁴⁰⁹ America was taking to overcome the threat posed by Communism, but took special care to urge his fellow countrymen to "be strong *spiritually* and intellectually so that neither fear, nor ignorance nor lack of determination" could ever defeat American ideology and values.⁴¹⁰ He concluded his remarks to the American Legion by affirming: "Nor do we despair of success. No human problem is insoluble. *In the earnest belief that these basic purposes conform to the will of the Highest of All Rulers*, the United States will continue to pursue them. In this paramount cause of this century, this nation must have the help of all its citizens. It must have their understanding, their determination, their readiness to sacrifice – and, above all, the strength and daring of their *faith*."⁴¹¹

Throughout the Cold War, which coincided with the entire period of his administration, Eisenhower forcefully argued "the United States now carried the banner of civilization against the forces of Communism that threatened to undo civilization."⁴¹² He had an acute awareness of the principles embraced by the Founding Fathers, who "wrote their religious faith into our founding documents, stamped their trust in God on the face of their coins and currency, [and] put it boldly at the base of our institutions."⁴¹³ He believed that the same faith that was imbedded in the founding documents was the basis of, and major strength in, the fight against Communism.⁴¹⁴ From Eisenhower's perspective: "Communism's collectivism, its statism, and its atheism all stemmed from the same root...denying the individual the right to practice the spiritual virtue of voluntary self-restraint."⁴¹⁵ Everything in Eisenhower's upbringing and his experience leading to the presidency brought him to conclude that faith - and the instinct to be free - were gifts from God.⁴¹⁶ Espinosa notes that "Eisenhower skillfully used many variations of that single theme, [always] implying that the United States stood

⁴⁰⁹ In a 1953 diary entry, Eisenhower wrote a detailed, personal rebuttal to Lenin's belief that capitalism contained within itself what Lenin described as three principal "contradictions" which made certain of its inadequacy as a form of government and of the inevitability of a revolution of the proletariat. Eisenhower's understanding of communist theory, reflected in his diaries, served to undergird his approach to opposing Communism. He wrote that "the free world's hope of defeating Communism did not include objecting to national aspirations [instead, believing that] we must show the wickedness of purpose in communist promises, and convince dependent peoples that their only hope of maintaining independence, once attained, is through cooperation with the free world." See: DDE Diary Series, January 6, 1953, Box 3, Eisenhower Presidential Library and also:

<https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/sites/default/files/research/subject-guides/pdf/eisenhower-religion.pdf>

⁴¹⁰ Eisenhower maintained that as long as the country recognized the "spiritual values in man" and "the dependency of free government upon these spiritual values," then whatever measures his administration pursued in opposition to Communism would make sense. See: The American Presidency Project (1954) (Public Papers of the Presidents) 22-23, 653.

⁴¹¹ Eisenhower, 'Address at the American Legion Convention' The *New York Times* editorialized on Eisenhower's assertion "if men are not creatures with a soul as well as a body, then they were no better than the field mule," observing that while acknowledging some define human welfare in terms of material wealth, it was really "the things of the spirit" such as justice, freedom, and equality that Eisenhower believed met people's creative needs. See: *New York Times*, March 24, 1950, 18.

⁴¹² Cernus, *General Eisenhower*, 89.

⁴¹³ Smith, *Faith and the Presidency*, 229.

⁴¹⁴ Morin, *Dwight D Eisenhower*, 134.

⁴¹⁵ Cernus, *General Eisenhower*, 89.

⁴¹⁶ Gastón Espinosa, *Religion and the American Presidency: George Washington to George W. Bush with Commentary and Primary Sources*, Columbia series on religion and politics (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 266.

immutably opposed to the communist system."⁴¹⁷ Chernus found that Eisenhower's approach was borne of his religiously based worldview, and not unrelated to the apocalyptic tradition to which he had been exposed as a youth in Abilene.⁴¹⁸

Whatever the impetus, Eisenhower repeatedly invoked religious language to inspire unity and resilience in facing the challenges presented by the Cold War. He called upon the American people to draw strength from their shared values and beliefs, emphasizing the importance of solidarity and moral courage. At the same time, he was a military leader who had witnessed the devastating consequences of war and was thus deeply committed to promoting peace and cooperation among nations. He advocated dialogue, diplomacy, and the pursuit of common ground, based upon the belief that all human beings are children of God and deserving of dignity and respect.⁴¹⁹

In general, Eisenhower's speeches reflected his own deeply rooted religious foundations by emphasizing the importance of faith, morality and divine guidance in governance and public life.⁴²⁰ As noted, he often spoke of the importance of religious principles in shaping individual character and societal progress. He frequently referenced biblical teachings and moral imperatives, underscoring the need for integrity, honesty, and compassion in public service.

An ever-present theme in his speeches was the notion that God played a role in the affairs of the nation. In his Farewell Address delivered on January 17, 1961, Eisenhower spoke of the "guiding hand of the Almighty" and the need for humility and reliance on God's wisdom.⁴²¹ He cautioned against the dangers of unchecked power and hubris, urging Americans to remain vigilant and faithful to their moral principles.⁴²² He had struck a similar note in his 1953 inaugural address when he emphasized the need for divine guidance, stating: "We pray that He will inspire us with

⁴¹⁷ Espinosa, *Religion and the American Presidency*, 267.

⁴¹⁸ Cernus, *General Eisenhower*, 89. During his youth in Abilene, Eisenhower was exposed to the apocalyptic tradition of the Mennonite and River Brethren communities to which his family belonged. These religious groups held beliefs that emphasized the end times, divine judgment, and the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom, which are key components of apocalyptic thought. See: Cornelius J. Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History* (Huntington, IN, Herald Press, 1993). At the time Eisenhower committed to run for the presidency, he was said to sincerely believe that the country was in need of a "spiritual renewal" and that one of the principal reasons he ultimately won was because he was intended to provide the required spiritual leadership. See: Hendon, David and Kennedy, James, 'Civil Religion', *Journal of Church and State* 39 (1997): 390–91. To lead this renewal, Eisenhower "hammered so hard on the importance of religion" that it became a major theme of his presidency. See: Paul Hutchinson, 'The President's Religious Faith', *The Christian Century* 71 (1954): 362.

⁴¹⁹ The "Chance for Peace" address Eisenhower delivered in 1953, illustrates this fusion of religious conviction and political rhetoric. In this speech, he spoke of the need for peace in a world threatened by the specter of nuclear war. He called upon the American people to embrace the virtues of humility, faith, and moral courage in pursuit of a just and lasting peace. By framing the pursuit of peace in religious terms, he appealed to the moral conscience of his audience and emphasized the spiritual dimensions of the Cold War struggle. See: <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-the-chance-for-peace-delivered-before-the-american-society-newspaper-editors>

⁴²⁰ As president and as previously noted, Eisenhower often sought guidance through prayer and reflection, viewing his role as a servant-leader tasked with upholding the values of justice, freedom, and human dignity.

⁴²¹ See: <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/president-dwight-d-eisenhowers-farewell-address>

⁴²² *Ibid.* For a further discussion of "unchecked power," see *Fn 735, infra* and Eisenhower's expression of concern over the growth of the military-industrial complex in the United States.

wisdom, courage, and a sense of justice, that He will enable us to keep the commandments of His divine will."⁴²³ This invocation of God's wisdom and guidance was consistently reflected throughout his administration and bore the hallmark of Eisenhower's core belief in the transcendent source of moral authority.

E. Civil Rights

One of Dwight Eisenhower's most notable actions reflecting his religious principles was his support for civil rights. Despite facing resistance from some quarters, Eisenhower remained steadfast in his belief that all Americans should be treated equally under the law. In his speeches, he often appealed to the nation's conscience, urging Americans to embrace racial equality as a moral imperative. His decision to enforce desegregation in schools and support the Civil Rights Act of 1957, both as described hereinbelow, exemplified his commitment to justice and equality.

Prior to the 1950s, the United States was a country that tolerated racial segregation.⁴²⁴ Consequently, some historians have criticized Eisenhower for not having done more to advance civil rights during his administration in comparison with the presidents who succeeded him, *i.e.*, John F Kennedy (1961-1983) and Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969).⁴²⁵ However, a better comparison of Eisenhower's civil rights accomplishments might be made with his immediate predecessors, *i.e.*, Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933-1945) and Harry S. Truman (1945-1953), neither of whom accomplished anything substantive to advance civil rights in the twenty years before Eisenhower took office. Unlike his predecessors, once in office Eisenhower acted out of both a sense of Constitutional responsibility and a personal conviction to begin to address civil rights inequities.⁴²⁶ During the first year of his administration in 1953, Eisenhower informed

⁴²³ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Inaugural Address*, January 20, 1953. The American Presidency Project. See: <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/inaugural-address-3>.

⁴²⁴ Segregation rested on the doctrine of "separate but equal" facilities for blacks and whites, which had been tacitly endorsed through legislation and in various judicial opinions following the Supreme Court's decision in *Plessy vs. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896). The discriminatory principle of "separate but equal" as applied to public transportation, schools, restaurants and public accommodations persisted into the mid-twentieth century.

⁴²⁵ During this eight-year span (1961-1969) three major pieces of legislation were enacted: i) The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352), banned labor discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Proposed by Kennedy in 1963 and passed by Johnson, it also ended racial segregation in public facilities, public education and in federally funded programs; ii) Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-110) banned specific prejudicial voting practices (such as literacy tests); and, more generally, banned any policies that could potentially have a racially disproportionate effect. In addition to enforcement rights, the act required that states with histories of discrimination receive approval from the federal government before any changes to their voting practices; and, iii) The Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-284) (also known as the Fair Housing Act) banned discrimination in housing.

⁴²⁶ Holl relates that: "Perhaps the best-known incident reflecting Eisenhower sense of fair play, sportsmanship, and respect for people of all races and creeds [which started in the early part of his life in Abilene] involved a black football player. Blacks did not constitute a large segment of Abilene's population - according to the 1890 census, they made up about 4% of the county's population. In a game with neighboring Chapman, the opposing team showed up with a black center. No one on the Abilene team was willing to play opposite the black athlete. What happened next is lost in myth; some accounts claim Eisenhower lectured the team and threatened to return home and not play again that season if Abilene did not take the field. Eisenhower's own account played down the dramatic confrontation with his team and the racist implications of the incident. There was no speech to the team, Eisenhower insisted. Because no one else would play against the Chapman lineman, Eisenhower played center that day, although he never played the position before. All accounts agree that he did shake hands with the black

South Carolina Governor Byrnes; "I feel that my oath of office, as well as my own convictions, require me to eliminate discrimination within the definite areas of Federal responsibility."⁴²⁷

Early in his first administration, Eisenhower announced that he proposed "to use whatever authority exists in the office of the President to end segregation in the District of Columbia, including the Federal Government, and any segregation in the Armed Forces."⁴²⁸ He took several steps to make good on this commitment, including the immediate hiring of minority staff for key positions in his administration. He did this principally because he felt that if he were to pursue Congressional action on civil rights, the executive branch of the government over which he had control must first reform its own hiring practices.⁴²⁹ Maxwell M. Rabb, for example, a Massachusetts attorney, was appointed secretary to the Eisenhower cabinet and liaison with the African American community.⁴³⁰ A similarly prominent example was the appointment of J. Ernest Wilkins as Assistant Secretary of Labor, who, when he attended a cabinet meeting in place of the Secretary of Labor, became the first African American in history to attend and participate in a Cabinet meeting.⁴³¹ Subsequently, more than two dozen African Americans were appointed to various positions in the administration, including Lois Lippman, a secretary, who became the first African American person to serve in the White House in a capacity other than janitor or messenger.⁴³²

Amid the growing push for civil rights in the 1950s, there were four major events that occurred during the eight years of the Eisenhower presidency.⁴³³ The first was the Supreme Court's landmark decision in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education*.⁴³⁴

athlete both before and after the game." Eisenhower did not feature the story in his memoir *At Ease*, but referring to the incident after the war in 1946, he observed that after the game the rest of the team was somewhat ashamed of themselves. Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 45–46.

⁴²⁷ DDE Diary Series July 24, 1953, Box 9, Eisenhower Presidential Library. Even before his election, Eisenhower was reported as having told his Attorney General, Herbert Brownell, that his "first order of business" would be to end racial discrimination wherever there was existing Federal authority to do so, i.e., wherever Eisenhower was empowered to act solely by Executive Order. David A. Nichols, *A Matter of Justice: Eisenhower and the Beginning of the Civil Rights Revolution* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007), 24.

⁴²⁸ Nichols, *A Matter of Justice*, 23, quoting Eisenhower, February 2, 1953.

⁴²⁹ Michael S. Mayer, "The Eisenhower Administration and the Desegregation of Washington, D.C." *Journal of Policy History* (Fall, 1991): 26.

⁴³⁰ Sherman Adams, Eisenhower's chief of staff, recorded that the President sought Rabb's advice and assistance in achieving meaningful progress in civil rights, not empty gestures in the form of legislative proposals that were unlikely to succeed in Congress. Sherman Adams, *First-Hand Report: The Story of the Eisenhower Administration* (New York NY: Harper & Brothers, 1961), 333.

⁴³¹ Michael R. Belknap, ed., *Civil Rights, The White House, and the Justice Department, 1945-1968*, vol. 4 (New York NY: Garland, 1991), 117, 124.

⁴³² Nichols, *A Matter of Justice*, 25.

⁴³³ In the 1950s (and later in the 1960s) the civil rights movement in America drew much of its inspiration from Scripture, not dissimilar from the Founders use of Scripture during the American fight for Independence.

⁴³⁴ *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). *Brown* was the cornerstone of the civil rights movement during Eisenhower's tenure. The unanimous ruling declared segregation in public schools unconstitutional, overturning the "separate but equal" doctrine established by *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896. Eisenhower's commitment to upholding the rule of law led him to enforce desegregation of public schools, albeit cautiously, through executive action and federal intervention when necessary. He was responsible for appointing Earl Warren to the position of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the

Brown overturned *Plessy* which had encouraged constitutionally sanctioned racial separation for over sixty years, including school segregation.⁴³⁵ The second was the enforcement of the integration of the Little Rock High School in 1957. The decision to integrate schools mandated by *Brown* sparked intense opposition from white supremacists and segregationists. Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus initially resisted the integration, deploying the National Guard to prevent several Black students, known as the "Little Rock Nine," from entering the school.⁴³⁶ President Dwight D. Eisenhower eventually intervened, federalizing the National Guard and sending troops to escort the Black students into the school, ensuring their safety and enforcing the Supreme Court's ruling.⁴³⁷ This event underscored the deep divisions over racial segregation, and highlighted the Federal government's role in enforcing civil rights laws, as well as Eisenhower's commitment to equality.⁴³⁸ The third major event involved Eisenhower's efforts in securing passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1957.⁴³⁹ The law marked the first significant civil rights legislation since Reconstruction.⁴⁴⁰ The act aimed to ensure African Americans' right to vote by prohibiting voter intimidation and poll taxes, which had long disenfranchised minority communities in the South. Though modest in scope, the act represented a crucial first step in addressing racial inequality and expanding political participation. The fourth major event was the Civil Rights Act of 1960.⁴⁴¹ It built upon the foundation laid by the 1957 act. This legislation aimed to strengthen voting rights protections by authorizing federal supervision of elections and providing penalties for obstructing voter registration. While facing strong opposition from Southern Democrats, the act represented a significant achievement in advancing civil rights and combating systemic discrimination in electoral processes. These two pieces of civil rights legislation provided a strong foundation for subsequent advancements in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

Eisenhower's faith played a prominent role in shaping his attitudes and policies on civil rights matters. It impelled him to support measures protecting the voting rights of African Americans. He recognized the moral imperative of desegregating schools, understanding that racial discrimination contradicted Christian principles. His religious beliefs, previously discussed herein, emphasized the dignity and worth of every individual, regardless of race or ethnicity. His commitment to justice and equality

United States; and, it was Warren who subsequently wrote the Court's majority opinion in *Brown*. Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower*, 190–91.

⁴³⁵ Holl notes that up until this time "southern political, economic, social and religious culture [including segregation] was regarded not only as fully respectable and legal by most southern whites, but also as thoroughly American and morally sanctified in the eyes of God." See: Holl, *The Religious Journey of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 231.

⁴³⁶ Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower*, 363–68.

⁴³⁷ Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower*, 363–68.

⁴³⁸ There is an interesting correlation with Lincoln in this context. Jaffa provides an in-depth, philosophical analysis of Lincoln's contention that the basis of democracy is that all men are created equal; and, like Eisenhower, argued that this is the product of the fundamental truth our rights come from our Creator God. Harry V. Jaffa, *Crisis of the House Divided: An Interpretation of the Issues in the Lincoln- Douglas Debates*, 50th Anniversary Edition (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

⁴³⁹ Public Law 85-315 (United States), enacted September 9, 1957.

⁴⁴⁰ The Reconstruction era (1861 to 1900) was a period during which the United States dealt with issues of how to integrate millions of freed African Americans into social, political, and labor systems.

⁴⁴¹ Public Law 86-449 (United States), enacted May 6, 1960.

compelled him to support the landmark legislative initiatives that became the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960, respectively. While those acts were narrow in scope compared to later civil rights legislation, they represented significant steps towards advancing racial equality in America. His faith provided a moral compass, guiding him to support policies that promoted equality and justice for Americans of every race and creed.⁴⁴² The Constitution provided him with the principles of freedom and justice by which he challenged the nation to live up to its ideals and to overcome the evils of discrimination. In doing so, he articulated a moral vision of America as a land of opportunity and equality for all citizens.

F. Historiography

In the immediate aftermath of Eisenhower's two terms in office, many historians held a less than favorable view of his presidency. He was often portrayed by reputable historians as a distinguished general and wartime leader but a lackluster, lethargic president, even aloof at many times.⁴⁴³ The perception they advanced was that of a do-nothing president.⁴⁴⁴ Birzer notes that: "Before the 1980s few Americans considered Eisenhower an activist president....[in fact] those on the left saw [him] as seemingly stressing personal relaxation over solutions."⁴⁴⁵ More to the point, the perception of a lax attitude resulted in Eisenhower being viewed as having delayed taking actions urgently required to deal with the most pressing issues of the decade. Instead, he was believed to have handed them off to succeeding administrations to resolve.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴² It is beyond the scope of this thesis to perform a detailed analysis of the entirety of the American civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s; however, like Eisenhower's foundational belief system the American civil rights movement also drew much of its inspiration from Scripture, not dissimilar from the Founders use of Scripture during the American cause for Independence. In the case of the civil rights movement, the fourth chapter of the Book of Acts provides an example. Peter and John were preaching in the name of Jesus at the temple in Jerusalem to the consternation of the Jewish religious authorities. They were continuing to promote the ideas of Jesus who had already been tried and convicted as heretic. Consequently, they were viewed as undermining the Mosaic Law. When the religious authorities insisted, they discontinue speaking, Peter and John responded by indicating they were obeying a higher authority: "Whether it is right in God's eyes to obey you rather than God, judge for yourselves. But we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). Their response was a cornerstone of the civil rights movement which held that civil disobedience in matters of conscience is acceptable. See, generally: Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (Nashville TN: Abingdon Press, 1949); Paul Harvey, *Howard Thurman and the Disinherited: A Religious Biography* (Grand Rapids Mich.: Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 2020); and, Peter Eisenstadt, *Against the Hounds of Hell: A Life of Howard Thurman* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2021).

⁴⁴³ Diggins was among those who depicted Eisenhower as: "a decent but simple man...who enjoyed bridge and golf more than the challenges of government and the exercise of presidential power." John P. Diggins, *The Proud Decades: America in War and Peace, 1941-1960* (New York NY: Norton, 1988), 128.

⁴⁴⁴ In discussing the historiographic aspects of the Eisenhower administration, it is useful to keep in mind, as Hunter notes, that: "both [historians from] the left and the right attempt to construct historical myths through selective interpretation for their respective goals..." James D. Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York NY: Basic Books, 1991), 55. Regarding the do-nothing label, in addition to his other accomplishments already noted in thesis, Eisenhower expanded social security, decreased the military budget, ended the war in Korea, prevented war in the Middle East and China, built the interstate highway system, built the St. Lawrence Seaway and numerous dams, and as discussed, passed two civil rights bills.

⁴⁴⁵ Bradley J. Birzer, 'Visionary Statesman? On Eisenhower Historiography', *The Imaginative Conservative*, October 31, 2012, 4.

⁴⁴⁶ As noted earlier in this thesis (See: Chapter Two), a year after Eisenhower left office, Arthur Schlesinger Sr.'s poll of opinions of American presidents ranked Eisenhower twentieth among his peers,

Conversely, those on the right perceived Eisenhower's "hands off" approach as being a "laissez-faire" approach to government which was ultimately responsible for unprecedented prosperity in the post-war period.⁴⁴⁷

As time passed, however, historians of the caliber of Evan Thomas began to regard Eisenhower as the "Underestimated Man."⁴⁴⁸ Thomas built upon the work of Greenstein (1982), a Princeton professor and the first major academic to produce substantive revisionist scholarship on Eisenhower.⁴⁴⁹ Subsequently, numerous other prominent biographers reached similar conclusions.⁴⁵⁰ Eisenhower eventually came to be regarded as a president who had stood firmly against the expansionist ambitions of the Soviet Union throughout the decade of the 1950s. He had endeavored throughout his administration to peacefully initiate the process of securing equal rights for all Americans.⁴⁵¹ Moreover, he had found his own way to consistently articulate his faith in a way that resonated with the majority of Americans, which greatly aided in his being held in high esteem throughout the entire eight years of his administration and contributed to popular support for his legislative initiatives that might not have otherwise developed.⁴⁵² Despite the relatively low position Eisenhower occupied in the minds of historians in the years immediately following his presidency, perceptions changed markedly in the ensuing years. As recently as 2021, the well-regarded C-Span.org poll of Presidential Historians ranked Eisenhower fifth among all U.S. presidents, behind only Lincoln, Washington, and both Roosevelt's.⁴⁵³ This was the

near the bottom third of those who preceded him. Sears, Osten, and Cole, *The Soul of an American President*, 17.

⁴⁴⁷ Birzer, 'Visionary Statesman? On Eisenhower Historiography', 4. Birzer goes on to note that Eisenhower sought to temper, but not lessen, the government's role in the economy. He endeavored to make government a "tool of all the people and not, as he saw it, just of the organized special interests." Birzer, 'Visionary Statesman? On Eisenhower Historiography', 6.

⁴⁴⁸ Evan Thomas, *Ike's Bluff: President Eisenhower's Secret Battle to Save the World*, 1st edn (New York, NY: Little Brown, 2012), 394.

⁴⁴⁹ Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1994).

⁴⁵⁰ This group includes such notables as Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President*; Jean Edward Smith, *Eisenhower: In War and Peace*; Paul Johnson, *Eisenhower: A Life*; and, Evan Thomas, *Ike's Bluff: President Eisenhower's Secret Battle to Save the World*.

⁴⁵¹ Despite Ambrose's favorable revisionist impression of Eisenhower, he nevertheless maintained that Eisenhower was "no leader at all" on civil rights issues. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier and President* (New York: Touchstone, 1991), 542. However, this contention is rebutted by Nichols more in-depth work in demonstrating that during his presidency, Eisenhower disaggregated the District of Columbia (including its schools), completed the segregation of the Armed Forces, appointed progressive federal judges at all levels (including Earl Warren and four other Supreme Court justices), proposed and secured passage of the first civil rights legislation in over 80 years, and took steps to enforce the Supreme Court's school disaggregation decision in *Brown v. The Board of Education*, most dramatically by his military intervention in Little Rock. Nichols, *A Matter of Justice*, 1. Eisenhower's leadership played a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of the civil rights movement and laying the foundation for the civil rights legislation secured by subsequent administrations that achieved a more inclusive society.

⁴⁵² See N. 425 *ante*, for a listing of Eisenhower's major legislative initiatives.

⁴⁵³ C-Span.org, 'Presidential Historians Survey 2021: Historians Survey Results / Overall Results', <https://www.c-span.org/presidentsurvey2021/?page=overall>

most dramatic ascent in presidential rankings ever accomplished by any American president.⁴⁵⁴

A partial explanation for the new-found respect for Eisenhower lies in the novel methodology Greenstein employed in his research. As the title of his work implied, Greenstein performed an in-depth examination of the long-term effects of Eisenhower's leadership style that essentially refuted the perception of him as a disengaged and reluctant president, instead showing him to be an extremely perceptive, fully engaged political strategist and leader who parlayed his wartime experiences as a successful commanding general by shrewdly delegating responsibilities to highly qualified, knowledgeable subordinates. In essence, in his role as chief executive he replicated his successful management style he had previously demonstrated as Supreme Allied Commander.⁴⁵⁵ Greenstein's research revealed that political convictions, *viz.*, core convictions about war and peace, international community, and broad domestic policy, rather than being of no interest to Eisenhower actually consumed him.⁴⁵⁶ Consequently, Greenstein concluded that Eisenhower's clear beliefs,⁴⁵⁷ including his emphasis on faith and the policy prescriptions emanating from them, became powerful influences that served to shape the governance process throughout the entirety of his administration, particularly insofar as they allowed Eisenhower to: i) better establish realistically achievable priorities, ii) effectively communicate his public stance; and, iii) be more efficient in the delegation of specific tasks to his cabinet and others in the Executive branch by providing them with decisive, unambiguous guidance.⁴⁵⁸

The major themes emphasized in this chapter, including: i) the awareness of a civil religion integral to the Eisenhower administration, ii) the role of public and private prayer; iii) the significance religious themes in numerous speeches and public writings, iv) articulating the seminal faith-based foundation for opposition to Communism; and, v) the belief in the God-given equality of every individual all insinuate historiographic issues and aid in supporting a need for a ressourcement of Eisenhower's belief that our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith.

Bellah distilled the Eisenhower administration as affirming that civil power stood under the sovereignty of God, thereby inferring that the nation is required to judge its actions

⁴⁵⁴ Eisenhower's presidency is now generally remembered for its focus on peace, stability, and the economic prosperity of the post-World War II era; and, his approach to governance is remembered by a call for moral leadership and ethical responsibility.

⁴⁵⁵ Greenstein, *The Hidden-hand Presidency*, 5–9. A recent work published in June, 2024 comprehensively details Eisenhower's organizational genius in preparing for the D-Day Invasion, including his ability to evaluate and dismiss infective subordinates, replacing them with highly competent individuals, which sheds credible light on later assertions with regard to Eisenhower's organizational skills during his presidency. See: Michel Paradis, *The Light of the Battle: Eisenhower, D-Day, and the Birth of the American Superpower* (Boston, MA: Mariner Books, 2024).

⁴⁵⁶ Greenstein, *The Hidden-hand Presidency*, 46.

⁴⁵⁷ Griffith's scholarly article was among the first of the revisionists to analyze new data collected on the Eisenhower's history, ideas, and actions and conclude that Eisenhower was a charismatic, intelligent, and competent governor with a coherent vision. He was a man with a sense of duty, honor and very strong organizational skills. Robert Griffith, 'Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Corporate Commonwealth', *American Historical Review* 87 (1982): 87–122 at 122.

⁴⁵⁸ Greenstein, *The Hidden-hand Presidency*, 45–47.

in light of divine righteousness.⁴⁵⁹ His contribution to a *ressourcement* lies in his groundbreaking analysis of America's civil religion, which was on display throughout the 1950s, which he described as the country's attempt to bring its own life under a higher ideal and thereby, *inter alia*, "make illegitimate any form of political absolutism."⁴⁶⁰

With regard to those historians and commentators who caricatured the Eisenhower era as marked by spiritual shallowness,⁴⁶¹ this begs the question of how one defines the meaning of shallow in the context of an individual's spirituality, inasmuch as spirituality, at the very least, is a personal and subjective function. There can be no doubt, however, that later historians have demonstrated that that spirituality - of whatever nature it may have been - played a prominent role in Eisenhower's opposition to Communism and helped to galvanize public support for his position.

Gustafson also contradicts the claims of false piety on the President's part which were made by earlier historians noting that the genuineness and effectiveness of Eisenhower's "religious promotion activities was that, within a few months after taking the oath of office, his policies made him the most religious president in our history."⁴⁶² On this point, there can be no better spokesperson than Eisenhower himself. In a program broadcast from the White House on February 7, 1954, Eisenhower said the following:

AS A FORMER SOLDIER, I am delighted that our veterans are sponsoring a movement to increase our awareness of God in our daily lives.

In battle, they learned a great truth--that there are no atheists in the foxholes. They know that in time of test and trial, we instinctively turn to God for new courage and peace of mind.

All the history of America bears witness to this truth.

Out of faith in God, and through faith in themselves as His children, our forefathers designed and built this Republic.

We remember from school days that, aboard a tiny ship of destiny called the Mayflower, self-government on our continent was first conceived by the Pilgrim Fathers. Their immortal compact began with the words, "In the name of God, Amen."

We remember the picture of the Father of our Country, on his knees at Valley Forge seeking divine guidance in the cold gloom of a bitter winter. Thus Washington gained strength to lead to

⁴⁵⁹ Richey, Russell E. and Jones, Donald G., ed., *American Civil Religion* (New York NY: Harper & Row, 1974), 164.

⁴⁶⁰ Robert N. Bellah, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World* (New York NY: HarperCollins, 1970), 172. Bellah's reply to those who in a historiographic context criticized civil religion was that it is inevitable since "every group has a religious dimension," i.e., to say that civil religion should not exist is to say that the *civitas*, the civil order itself, should not exist. One cannot exist without the other. Every group inevitably creates its own idealizing symbols and rituals which provide the requisite societal cohesion. See: Richey, Russell E. and Jones, Donald G., *American Civil Religion*, 166.

⁴⁶¹ Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, 3–4.

⁴⁶² Merlin Gustafson, 'The Religion of a President', *Christian Century*, April 30, 1969, 609–13, 610–13.

independence a nation dedicated to the belief that each of us is divinely endowed with indestructible rights.

We remember, too, that three-fourths of a century later, on the battle-torn field of Gettysburg, and in the silence of many a wartime night, Abraham Lincoln recognized that only under God could this Nation win a new birth of freedom.

And we remember that, only a decade ago, aboard the transport Dorchester, four chaplains of four faiths together willingly sacrificed their lives so that four others might live.⁴⁶³

In the three centuries that separate the Pilgrims of the Mayflower from the chaplains of the Dorchester, America's freedom, her courage, her strength, and her progress have had their foundation in faith.

Today as then, there is need for positive acts of renewed recognition that faith is our surest strength, our greatest resource. This "Back to God" movement [of which I speak today] is such a positive act.

As we take part in it, I hope that we shall prize this thought: Whatever our individual church, whatever our personal creed, our common faith in God is a common bond among us. In our fundamental faith, we are all one. Together we thank the Power that has made and preserved us a nation. By the millions, we speak prayers, we sing hymns--and no matter what their words may be, their spirit is the same--"In God is our trust."⁴⁶⁴

Eisenhower's remarks reflect his historical insights during moments of danger and vulnerability and the corresponding inclination to turn to a higher power for support. He articulated a vision of faith that unites rather than divides, emphasizing a "common faith in God" as a bond among Americans of diverse backgrounds and beliefs, and suggests that America's historical achievements and future potential are grounded in collective faith.

⁴⁶³ During the Korean War in the early 1950s, Chinese and North Korean forces captured American military personnel as prisoners of war. Unlike America's previous wars, the POW camps sought to control the minds of U.S. prisoners. In response, President Eisenhower authorized the creation of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Armed Forces of the United States which concludes with Article VI *I will never forget that I am an American, fighting for freedom, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America.* See: United States Presidential Executive Order 10631: Code of Conduct for Members of the Armed Forces of the United States.

⁴⁶⁴ <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-broadcast-part-the-american-legion-back-god-program>

"We have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us."⁴⁶⁵

Abraham Lincoln

Chapter Five. The Supreme Court and Privatization of Religion in America

A. The Supreme Court

In pursuit of a ressourcement of Eisenhower's belief that our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith, this thesis has traced the lineage of American political thought from its Biblical and religious origins during the Founding era through to the embodiment of those ideals in the Eisenhower administration. However, following the election of a new administration in 1960 a different worldview and accompanying *zeitgeist* came into ascendancy, which was echoed in the evolving First Amendment jurisprudence espoused by the Supreme Court of the United States. Despite the 1950s having been marked as a period of significant religious influence during which the Judeo-Christian ethos played a dominant role in societal norms and governmental affairs, subsequent decades witnessed Court decisions which introduced totally novel tests and standards governing the separation of church and state that inevitably reoriented religious attitudes in the country away from animating principles which were the hallmark of the Eisenhower era.

As previously explicated in this thesis, religious atmosphere of the 1950s was predominantly influenced by Christianity, particularly Protestantism. The aftermath of World War II saw a resurgence of religious fervor as many Americans, with Eisenhower's unstinting encouragement, turned to faith amidst the uncertainties of the Cold War era. Churches played a central role in communities,⁴⁶⁶ shaping moral values, social norms, and even political discourse. Religious symbolism and rhetoric were often intertwined with patriotism, which took on the patina of "civil religion," with phrases like "under God" being added to the Pledge of Allegiance, reflecting the close association between religion and national identity.⁴⁶⁷ However, the 1960s and beyond

⁴⁶⁵ Abraham Lincoln, 'Proclamation 97: Appointing a Day of National Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer', <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/proclamation-97-appointing-day-national-humiliation-fasting-and-prayer>.

⁴⁶⁶ The Johnson Amendment, named for then-Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, presents an interesting contrast to the prevailing atmosphere of the decade. It is a provision in the U.S. tax code, adopted in 1954, that prohibits 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, which includes all tax-exempt churches, from endorsing or opposing political candidates. See: Paragraph (3) of subsection (c) within section 501 of Title 26 (Internal Revenue Code) of the U.S. Code (U.S.C.).

⁴⁶⁷ See Note 383, *supra*, for further discussion of the inclusion of "under God" into the Pledge of Allegiance.

witnessed a series of landmark Supreme Court decisions which created entirely new norms governing the separation of church and state, significantly impacting the religious landscape and mindset of the country; and, by implication, impacting the belief that our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith.⁴⁶⁸ The pervasive Judeo-Christian ethos that had characterized the 1950s was supplanted by a legal framework which emphasized the secular nature of government institutions and challenged assumptions of any form of symbiotic relationship between Christianity and American identity. The focus on the removal of religious activities from public schools detailed below and from other government-sponsored institutions has led in the present era to a secularized public sphere.⁴⁶⁹ While some viewed this as a necessary safeguard for religious freedom and minority rights,⁴⁷⁰ others lament the perceived erosion of traditional values and the marginalization of religious expression as mandated by various Supreme Court cases.⁴⁷¹ This chapter briefly examines the key legal rulings that led to these changes specifically within the context of school prayer cases,⁴⁷² as well as briefly re-visit the original understanding of the separation of church and state envisioned by the Founders. The next chapter considers certain aspects of the inherent contradiction in the Supreme Court's thrust toward secularism contrasted with the biblical precepts which historically inspired our most fundamental concepts of law. The final chapter builds on these insights to consider the prospect of any form of "cultural irredentism."

1. Post-World War II Rulings Prior to 1960

- *Everson v. Board of Education of the Township of Ewing* (1947)⁴⁷³

⁴⁶⁸ Beginning in the 1960s through the turn of the century, the Supreme Court's First Amendment rulings both articulated powerful existing norms and created new interpretations that effectively expanded or redefined norms governing the separation of church and state. In this regard, there were numerous dynamics which contributed to these changes; however, this thesis seeks to view these changes through the prism of the relevant Supreme Court jurisprudence. See: Peter Charles Hoffer, William James Hull Hoffer, and N.E. H. Hoffer, *The Supreme Court: An Essential History* (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 2018).

⁴⁶⁹ In a dissenting opinion in *Engel v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421 (1962) Justice Stewart wrote of his belief that to restrict all religious exercises in the public schools and public square could be viewed as "the establishment of a religion of secularism, or at least, as government support of beliefs of those who think that religious exercises should be conducted only in private." p. 445-446.

⁴⁷⁰ Witte and Nichols note that several Founders believed that disestablishment of religion was ultimately the best way to ensure that all the essential rights and liberties of religion were protected, insofar as it kept government from coercively prescribing forms of religious belief, doctrine and practice at the cost of the principles of liberty of conscience and freedom of exercise. Witte, John, Jr. and Nichols, Joel A., *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*, 154.

⁴⁷¹ See, e.g., David Barton. *The Myth of Separation: What is the correct relationship between Church and State?* 6th edn. (Aledo, Texas: WallBuilder Press, 1992); Barry Adamson. *Freedom of Religion, the First Amendment, and the Supreme Court: How the Court Flunked History* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, Inc., 2008); and John Eidsmoe. *Christianity and the Constitution: The Faith of Our Founding Fathers* (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Book House Company, Inc., 1987).

⁴⁷² Prior chapters of this thesis have examined the connection between the Bible and the system of education in early America. This chapter describes the disconnection of Biblical education through the prism of a series Supreme Court school prayer cases during the period 1947 through 2000.

⁴⁷³ *Everson v. Board of Education of the Township of Ewing*, 330 U.S. 1 (1947). Witte and Nichols observe that from the 1940s to the present, numerous critics of *Everson* have complained that the Supreme Court's incorporation of the religion clauses into the due process clause was counter to the text and the intent of both the First and Fourteenth Amendments and that it represents a blatant Federal

Everson centered on the constitutionality of a New Jersey law reimbursing parents for the cost of transporting their children to both public and private schools, including parochial ones. The appellant challenged the law arguing that it violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, which prohibits the government from establishing or favoring any religion.

The Court upheld the New Jersey law, reasoning that the reimbursement of transportation expenses did not constitute government support for religious institutions. However, Justice Black, writing for the majority, seized the opportunity to expound upon the doctrine of the separation of church and state.⁴⁷⁴ He wrote that the Establishment Clause erects a "wall of separation between church and state," affirming the government's neutrality in religious matters and safeguarding individual freedom of conscience. *Everson* did not deal specifically with school prayer; however, it had significant implications on the issue of school prayer, as set out below. Prior to the ruling, prayer and religious activities were commonly integrated into public school settings.⁴⁷⁵ However, the Court's interpretation of the Establishment Clause in *Everson* established a foundational precedent that was relied upon in virtually all First Amendment cases decided after the conclusion of the Eisenhower administration, which led to a series of decisions that restricted religious practices in public institutions, most especially public schools.

- *Zorach v. Clauson* (1952)

Zorach revolved around the constitutionality of a New York state law allowing students to leave public schools for religious instruction during school hours. The appellant argued that the state law violated the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, which prohibits the government from establishing or favoring any religion. In what would prove to be the last favorable ruling for the involvement of religious activity in, or associated in any way with, public schools, Justice Douglas wrote for the Court:

We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being. We guarantee the freedom to worship as one chooses. We make room for as wide a variety of beliefs and creeds as the spiritual needs of man deem necessary. We sponsor an attitude on the part of government that shows no partiality to any one group and that lets each flourish

judicial usurpation of the state's legislative prerogatives. This criticism is easier to press, they note, with the First Amendment, which quite clearly and deliberately singled out Congress for a special prohibition, and did not touch the states. Witte, John, Jr. and Nichols, Joel A., *Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment*, 115.

⁴⁷⁴ The phrase "separation of church and state" does not appear in the First Amendment. According to the official records of the Constitutional Convention, no Framer ever mentioned that phrase throughout any of the official proceedings. Significantly, the phrase appears to have come from a private letter written by President Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury, Connecticut Baptists on January 1, 1802, thirteen years after the First Amendment was written. Barton, *America's Godly Heritage*, 28–29.

⁴⁷⁵ Two notable decisions in this regard are *People v. Ruggles*, 8 Johns 545 (1811) where the Court observed that "Whatever strikes at Christianity tends manifestly to the dissolution of civil government." at 547; and, *Vidal v. Girard's Executors*, 43 U.S. 126 (1844) where the Court observed "Why may not the Bible, and especially the New Testament....be read and taught as a divine revelation in the school – its general precepts expounded.... and its glorious principles of morality inculcated?....Where can the purest principles of morality be learned so clearly or so perfectly as from the New Testament?" at 205-206.

according to the zeal of its adherents and the appeal of its dogma. When the state encourages religious instruction or cooperates with religious authorities by adjusting the schedule of public events to sectarian needs, it follows the best of our traditions. For it then respects the religious nature of our people and accommodates the public service to their spiritual needs. To hold that it may not would be to find in the Constitution a requirement that government show a callous indifference to religious groups. That would be preferring those who believe in no religion over those who do believe.⁴⁷⁶

The Court's decision presumably reflected its recognition of the importance of religious education and its role in shaping the moral and ethical values of that era.⁴⁷⁷ While upholding the separation of church and state announced in the *Everson* decision, the Court acknowledged that religious instruction could complement secular education by providing students with a broader understanding of moral and ethical principles.

2. Post-World War II Rulings Subsequent to 1960

- *Engel v. Vitale* (1962)⁴⁷⁸

Engel is the seminal case that delineated the contours of the relationship between religion and public institutions, particularly public education. *Engle* involved the recitation of an intentionally benign state-composed prayer in public schools, which had been approved by the New York State Board of Regents:

Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee,
and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers,
and our country.

The Supreme Court declared the recitation of the state-sponsored prayer in public schools unconstitutional. *Engle* thus marked a defining, and to many a shocking, moment in the evolution of First Amendment jurisprudence, setting off a firestorm of debate in some ways unresolved to this day. It established for the first time that the Establishment Clause not only prohibited government from establishing an official state

⁴⁷⁶ *Zorach*, 343 U.S. at 312-314

⁴⁷⁷ Contemporary Americans frequently fail to recognize the importance which the Founders attached to the role of religion in the structure of the government they created. There is a corresponding failure to recognize the Founders' belief that the role of religion would be as important in contemporary America as it was in the Founders' era. In 1787, the Northwest Ordinance was passed (and later ratified by the U.S. Congress in 1789), which emphasized the need to teach religion and morality in the schools. See: Article 3: "Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." de Huszar, George B., Littlefield, Henry W., and Littlefield, Arthur W., ed., *Basic American Documents* (Ames, Iowa: Littlefield, Adams & Co, 1953), 66. Skousen notes that formal education in this context was to include among its responsibilities the teaching of three important subjects; i) 'Religion' which he defined as a "fundamental system of beliefs concerning man's origin and relationship to the cosmic universe as well as his relationship with his fellowmen;" ii) 'Morality' which he described as "a standard of behavior distinguishing right from wrong;" and, iii) 'Knowledge' which he defined as "an intellectual awareness and understanding of established facts relating to any field of human experience or inquiry (i.e., history, geography, science, etc.);" W. C. Skousen, *The 5000 Year Leap* (Malta, ID: National Center for Constitutional Studies, 1981), 76.

⁴⁷⁸ *Engle v. Vitale*, 370 U.S. 421 (1962).

religion but also prohibited government actions that endorse or promote religion or any religious worldview in any way.⁴⁷⁹

- *Abington Township School District v. Schempp* (1963)⁴⁸⁰

Abington was a challenge to the constitutionality of state-mandated Bible reading in public schools. The Pennsylvania Legislature had enacted a law requiring public schools to begin each day with the recitation of ten verses from the Bible and the Lord's Prayer. In a consolidated ruling with *Murray v. Curlett*,⁴⁸¹ the Court invalidated the Pennsylvania law mandating Bible reading in public schools, which had been an ongoing practice for nearly one hundred seventy-five years before the Court abruptly determined that the practice was no longer Constitutional.

The significance of the Court's ruling in *Abington* reverberated far beyond the specific issue of Bible reading in public schools. In the realm of education, *Abington* established a precedent that public schools must refrain from promoting any particular religious worldview. This principle found expression in numerous subsequent cases, some of which are described below.⁴⁸²

- *Stone v. Graham* (1980)⁴⁸³

Stone represented another milestone in the ongoing debates over the separation of church and state in public education. The Kentucky Legislature passed a law mandating the display of a copy of the Ten Commandments in every public-school classroom.⁴⁸⁴ Without any regard for the Judeo-Christian principles inherent in the Ten Commandments and their significance in the minds of the Framers of the Constitution which the Court was charged with interpreting, the Supreme Court held the Kentucky statute was unconstitutional. Writing for the Court, Justice Brennan emphasized that the Establishment Clause "means at least this: neither the state nor the Federal Government can...pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over

⁴⁷⁹ The ruling in *Engle* ignited a broader national dialogue about the role of religion in public life and the proper boundaries between church and state. It prompted new debates about the implications of government-sanctioned religious practices and heralded the shift toward the preservation of secular governance as a cornerstone of American democracy.

⁴⁸⁰ *Abington Township School District v. Schempp*, 374 U.S. 203 (1963).

⁴⁸¹ *Murray v. Curlett* 374 U.S. 203 (1963) *Murray* also challenged the practice of mandatory Bible reading in public schools. The Court held that such practices violated the Establishment Clause, which prohibits the government from establishing or promoting religion. In the aftermath of the decision, school districts discontinued the practice of mandatory Bible reading. The decision marked a permanent shift in Supreme Court jurisprudence toward a secularism and paved the way for future rulings regarding religious expression in public schools. Critics of the Court's decision argued that it undermined the country's Judeo-Christian heritage and deprived students of valuable moral and ethical teachings found in the Bible.

⁴⁸² Like *Murray* described below, *Abington* sparked a national debate about the proper role of religion in public life and the boundaries between church and state.

⁴⁸³ *Stone v. Graham*, 449 U.S. 39 (1980).

⁴⁸⁴ In a challenge to *Stone v. Graham*, on June 19, 2024, as this thesis is being submitted to Middlesex University and London School of Theology where it is being supervised, the Governor of Louisiana signed new legislation requiring the Ten Commandments to be displayed in all public classrooms in the the state of Louisiana. See: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2024/06/19/louisiana-ten-commandments-schools/>

another."⁴⁸⁵ The Court determined that the law lacked a secular legislative purpose and amounted to an impermissible advancement of religion by the state.⁴⁸⁶ It clarified its position that government actions must have a secular purpose and must not have the primary effect of advancing religion.⁴⁸⁷

- *Wallace v. Jaffree* (1985)⁴⁸⁸

Wallace addressed the boundaries of religious expression in the public sphere, particularly in the context of public education. The Alabama legislature had enacted a law authorizing a one-minute period of silence for meditation or voluntary prayer in public schools, which the Supreme Court found to be a fundamental violation of the Establishment Clause. The Court delved into the legislative history of the Alabama statute determined that it demonstrated a religious purpose, thus rendering it unconstitutional.

The Court reiterated its position that government actions must have a secular purpose and must not have the primary effect of advancing religion or endorsing religious activities in public schools. The ruling in this case further solidified the Supreme Court's position that the Establishment Clause prohibits any government sponsorship or any endorsement of religious activities in public schools.

- *Edwards v. Aguillard* (1987)⁴⁸⁹

Edwards was yet another landmark case. It addressed the constitutionality of a Louisiana law mandating the teaching of creationism alongside evolution in public school science classrooms. The Court held that it was unconstitutional, finding that the Louisiana law lacked a legitimate secular purpose. The Court further determined that the law was enacted with the intent of advancing the religious viewpoint of creationism, thereby violating the Establishment Clause.

Edwards contributed to, and further broadened, the evolving jurisprudence surrounding the Establishment Clause reinforcing the irreversible trend away from a century and a half of religious involvement in public school curriculum.

- *Lee v. Weisman* (1992)⁴⁹⁰

Lee addressed the constitutionality of prayer at public school graduation ceremonies. The prayers were non-denominational, but the appellant argued that their inclusion

⁴⁸⁵ *Stone* at 44.

⁴⁸⁶ For a scholarly discussion of the difficulty of applying a legal standard to distinguish the religious and secular motivations of Ten Commandments displays, see: Susanna Dokupil, 'Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness: "Sham" Secular Purposes in Ten Commandments Displays', *Harv. J.L. Pub. Policy* 28 (2005): 609.

⁴⁸⁷ In *McCreary County v. American Civil Liberties Union of Kentucky*, 545 U.S. 844 (2005), the Court held that the display of the Ten Commandments in public courthouses violated the Establishment Clause. In his dissenting opinion, Justice Scalia acknowledged a common understanding of the Ten Commandments, saying: "The frequency of Ten Commandments displays testifies to the popular understanding that the Ten Commandments are a foundation of the rule of law, and a symbol that religion played, and continues to play, in our system of government."

⁴⁸⁸ *Wallace v. Jaffree*, 472 U.S. 38 (1985).

⁴⁸⁹ *Edwards v. Aguillard*, 482 U.S. 578 (1987).

⁴⁹⁰ *Lee v. Weisman*, 505 U.S. 577 (1992).

violated the prohibition against the government endorsing or promoting religion. The Court ruled in favor of the appellant, holding that the inclusion of clergy-led prayers at public school graduation ceremonies constituted an unconstitutional endorsement of religion.

- *Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe* (2000)⁴⁹¹

The *Santa Fe* case addressed the constitutionality of student-led prayer at public school football games. The controversy in *Santa Fe* arose from a longstanding tradition in the Santa Fe Independent School District in Texas, where a student-elected chaplain would deliver a prayer over the public address system before football games. The prayers were predominantly Christian in nature. The Court held that the school district's policy of permitting student-led prayers at football games was unconstitutional. Writing for the majority, Justice Stevens emphasized that such religious activities conveyed a message of official endorsement of religion.

As noted by Witte and Nichols, the unmistakable result of all of these cases and their progeny is that: "religion is not to be permitted in the public schools during instructional time or at school sponsored events, except as an object of study in an approved course.....[Court mandated] separation of church and state must be maintained in the public schools to protect against religious coercion or endorsement by government." This result would have been antithetical to what had been observed throughout the entirety of prior American history, including the Eisenhower administration. Several years after he had left the presidency and before the Supreme Court developed the line of cases discussed above, in an extemporaneous response to a question posed to him during a church assembly in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, Eisenhower remarked:

It would be a very wise man, I think, [who] would avoid religious questions in facing [an] audience made up mostly of theologians. But I... have some [questions] that bother me from time to time. One of them relates to this matter of giving our children any education of a religious character in public schools...

Is it possible to give our children the kind of basic religious education or feeling that... we believe they should have without bringing religion directly into the curriculum? For example, certainly we don't object to reading the Declaration of Independence; yet in the very first paragraph, in the very preamble of this document... we find first nature and nature's God called upon to confirm... the rectitude of the decisions that our forbearers took. And immediately thereafter, they point out the very theory [that] our whole political system is based upon...[humans being] endowed [with] their equal rights by their Creator, spelled with a capital "C"...

And I think even when you go to the Constitution, while I believe there is no direct mention made to the deity, in the document itself

⁴⁹¹ *Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe*, 530 U.S. 290 (2000).

when you go to section 7, when they were affixing their signatures and they said 'and in the year....this year of our Lord, 1787!'....

When we just take these two documents... we have to say this: our civilization, our form of government is the political expression of some deeply felt religious faith. And I believe if we can accept... what they themselves told us, we can find a very fine textbook for bringing a lot of moral instruction into our schools.

But suppose for a moment we just dropped the whole thought of a deity and Jesus Christ, but studied the secular history about him, and more than that the things that have come about in our civilization because of his life. I do not mean anything... that takes theology into account... [for example] we date our time in this era because he was born. Our whole... code of morals, ethics, [and] the things we teach our children [all] came about because of his life. The theory of equality of men came about through Judeo-Christian ethic...

If we suggest [these things] as the basis for keeping [in] our schools the... kind of instruction that will bring our young ones up in a moral atmosphere and in which they [can] recognize the appearance, the existence of an overlord, a God.... I think that there is no supreme court in the world [that] by taking those documents and the secular history of this whole civilization that has been so influenced so greatly by the light of Christ... could say 'this is illegal.'

Now if I'm wrong, some of you people are going to have to get out your books and write me long letters because I don't think I am.... At any rate, I just simply say that I think there is no need for us to limit Americans to raise our children like we were in a communist school denying the existence of any God.⁴⁹²

The foregoing remarks reflecting Eisenhower's view that American political and moral foundations are deeply influenced by religious ideas, particularly those stemming from the Judeo-Christian tradition, are emblematic of the complex relationship between religion, morality, and public education in the United States. In his post-presidential years, as evidenced by these remarks, Eisenhower sought to address the specific question of how to provide moral education to children in public schools without violating the constitutional separation of church and state. He acknowledged the difficulty of incorporating religious instruction directly into public school curricula due to the potential for legal challenges, nevertheless he appears to have believed that moral and ethical lessons derived from religious principles could be successfully taught in a way which would not explicitly invoke theology. His reference to the Declaration of Independence, for example,

⁴⁹² Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Remarks to the Presbytery of Carlisle, Pennsylvania*, trans. Elsie Gillson (Gettysburg: Gettysburg Presbyterian Church Archives, Fall, 1963).

and its mention of a "Creator" as an illustration of how religiously grounded ideas (such as natural rights) were embedded in America's founding documents yet could be presented in a contemporary context that would transcend specific religious dogma. He implied that public schools could teach values like equality, freedom, and morality as part of secular history without directly promoting religious beliefs. He further argued that concepts like the equality of all men and moral codes in Western civilization arose because of the influence of Christianity, questioning whether those values could ever be fully separated from their religious origins in education.

Eisenhower went on to express his concern about a rising secularism which he perceived as being overly restrictive when dealing with the issue of inclusion of religiously influenced moral education in public schools. His reference to communist schools, which he associated with the denial of God, was an indication that he perceived the exclusion of religious or moral education as a dangerous path which could potentially undermine the ethical development of children and, by extension, American society. Implicit in his remarks was a belief that there was a middle ground between overtly religious instruction and entirely secular education, one in which students could be exposed to the moral and ethical fruits of religious traditions without engaging in doctrinal teaching. As for potential legal challenges to the idea of incorporating religion-influenced morality into public schools, he expressed confidence that the Supreme Court would not find such an approach in violation of the Constitution if it were grounded in historical fact and focused on secular aspects of religious influence. Finally, his remarks underscored his fundamental belief that American civilization itself was a political expression of religious faith, particularly the Judeo-Christian ethic. He saw this as an essential part of America's identity, and expressed concern for removing all traces of religious influence from public life, including education, which could erode the moral foundation upon which the nation was built.

As discussed in the next section, Eisenhower's remarks, grounded as they were in one hundred fifty years of American history, misestimated the ability of American courts to gradually, if not irreversibly, reduce or remove the influence of Christianity from the public schools.

B. The Privatization of Religion in America

By the standards of earlier Supreme Court cases, earlier separation of church and state jurisprudence, and Constitutional history, generally, the First Amendment Establishment Clause rulings set out above were neither consistent with, nor representative of, the long-accepted norms of interpretation prevailing prior to 1962. It may be safely inferred that the implied privatization of religion mandated by decisions rendered since that time would have been antithetical to earlier Supreme Court jurists,

whose writings survive as a form of living rebuttal to the line of cases summarized above.

Justice Joseph Story served on the court nearly thirty-five years in the early part of the nineteenth century.⁴⁹³ He is regarded by some as a "Father of American Jurisprudence,"⁴⁹⁴ having written the eponymous Story's *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States*.⁴⁹⁵ In it he observed:

Indeed, in a republic, there would seem to be a peculiar propriety in viewing the Christian religion, as the great basis, on which it must rest for its support and permanence, if it be, what it has ever been deemed by its truest friends to be, the religion of liberty.⁴⁹⁶

In other writings, Story opined on the role of Christianity in the origin of America:

One of the beautiful boasts of our municipal jurisprudence is, that Christianity is part of the Common Law, from which it seeks the sanction of its rights, and by which it endeavors to regulate doctrines...There never has been a period in which the Common Law did not recognize Christianity as lying at the heart of its foundations.⁴⁹⁷

A contemporary of Story's, Justice John McLean,⁴⁹⁸ wrote:

For many years, my hope for the perpetuity of our institutions has rested upon Bible morality and the general dissemination of Christian principles....that a free government can have no other than a moral basis; and it requires a high degree of intelligence and virtue in the people to maintain it....Our mission of freedom is not carried out by force, by canon [church] law, or any other

⁴⁹³ Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States (1811-1845) and Dane Professor of Law at Harvard University.

⁴⁹⁴ Stephen A. Flick, ed., *The Supreme Court Declares America a Christian Nation* (Clinton, TN: Christian Heritage Fellowship, Inc., 2019), 10.

⁴⁹⁵ Joseph Story, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States*, I, II and III (Boston: Hillard, Gray, and Company, 1833).

⁴⁹⁶ Story, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States*, III:724-725.

⁴⁹⁷ Story, Joseph and Story, William Wetmore, *Life and Letters of Joseph Story* (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1851), 2:8.

⁴⁹⁸ Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States (1829-1861). In 1856 and 1860 McLean was a candidate for the Republican presidential nomination, but lost both times, in 1860 to Abraham Lincoln.

law except the moral law and those Christian principles which are found in the Scriptures.⁴⁹⁹

The apogee of this line of thought is expressed in another landmark case, *Church of the Holy Trinity v. United States*.⁵⁰⁰ The Court's opinion was written by Justice Brewer.⁵⁰¹ The case addressed the interpretation of a federal statute, specifically whether it prohibited the importation of foreign clergy under contract to perform pastoral work, in the instant case an Episcopal priest coming from England. The case had important implications for both the understanding of religious freedom and the interpretation of immigration laws in the United States. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Church of the Holy Trinity, holding that the statute should not be interpreted to apply to the hiring of a minister by a religious organization. That legal ruling was resolved within the first half of the court's opinion. However, in the remainder of the opinion Justice Brewer took the opportunity to assert on the court's behalf that this nation is a Christian nation.⁵⁰² Following a lengthy eight-page recitation of historical precedents, Justice Brewer wrote:

[all of them have] one meaning; they affirm and reaffirm this is a religious nation....[these historical precedents] speak the voice of the entire people....[citing *The People v. Ruggles*⁵⁰³] that great commentator on American law, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York, said: 'The people of this state, in common with the people of this country, profess the general doctrines of Christianity, as the rule of their faith and practice ... We are a Christian people, and the morality of the country is deeply engrafted upon Christianity'....These [historical antecedents], and many other matters which might be noticed, add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that this is a Christian nation.⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁹ Benjamin Morris, *Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States: Developed in the Official and Historical Annals of the Republic* (Philadelphia: George W. Childs, 1864), 639.

⁵⁰⁰ *Church of the Holy Trinity v. United States*, 143 U.S. 457 (1892).

⁵⁰¹ Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States (1890-1910). Brewer published a book in 1905 expanding on the reasoning set forth in the Court's opinion describing America as a Christian nation. David A. Brewer, *The United States a Christian Nation* (Philadelphia: The John C Winston Company, 1905).

⁵⁰² This decision appears to have been generally consistent with the prevailing cultural and legal climate in the late 18th and early 19th centuries when the Supreme Court would likely have upheld broader interpretations of religious freedom, emphasizing the protection of individual conscience and the autonomy of religious institutions.

⁵⁰³ *The People v. Ruggles* 8 Johns. R. 290 (N.Y. 1811).

⁵⁰⁴ *Church of the Holy Trinity*, 143 U.S. at 470-471.

A more contemporary example of these sentiments is found in remarks by former Chief Justice Warren⁵⁰⁵ at a 1954 prayer breakfast convened by the International Council for Christian Leadership, in which Warren said:

I believe no one can read the history of our country without realizing that the Good Book and the spirit of the Savior have from the beginning been our guiding geniuses... Whether we look to the first Charter of Virginia... Or to the Charter of New England... Or to the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut.. The same objective is present: a Christian land governed by Christian principles... I believe the entire Bill of Rights came into being because of the knowledge of our Forefathers had of the Bible and their belief in it: freedom of belief, of expression, of assembly, of petition, the dignity of the individual, the sanctity of the home, equal justice under the law, and the reservation of powers to the people... I like to believe we are living today in the spirit of a Christian religion. I like also to believe that as long as we do, no great harm can come to our country.⁵⁰⁶

However, rather than the country remaining on the aspirational trajectory encouraged by Eisenhower or articulated by Warren, as evidenced by their remarks set out above, the nation veered sharply in the direction of the more recent First Amendment cases decided during the period between 1962 and 2000, effectively mandating the privatization of religion. By compartmentalizing faith, the court created a secular-sacred divide, perhaps rendering it significantly more challenging to maintain a coherent worldview within the framework of our Constitutional system⁵⁰⁷ that incorporates, or at the very least allows for the expression of, religious beliefs. The historic influence of Christian values in shaping societal norms and standards has been either downgraded or disregarded in favor of a more rigid secular approach.

Pearcey discusses the resulting concept of "privatization of religion" flowing from these cases as a phenomenon in contemporary society where religious beliefs and practices are relegated to the realm of personal preference and subjective experience, rather than recognized as foundational to all aspects of life, including public discourse, education, politics, and culture.⁵⁰⁸ She concludes that privatization has led to a fragmentation of

⁵⁰⁵ Governor of California (1943-1953) and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States (1953-1969).

⁵⁰⁶ "Religion: Breakfast in Washington," *Time Magazine*, Monday, February 15, 1954.

⁵⁰⁷ Miller describes the concept of "worldview" in this context observing: "All human expressions point beyond themselves to the characteristic worldview (*Weltanschauung*) of the epoch or culture to which they belong. This underlying impulse or spirit makes the culture a whole and determines the shape of all thought and evaluation within it. We grasp the documentary meaning of human objectifications by seeing them as unconscious expressions of a worldview. Even theoretical philosophy is but a channel through which the spirit of the age finds expression." Eugene F. Miller, 'Positivism, Historicism, and Political Inquiry', *American Political Science review* 66, no. 3 (1972): 796–817.

⁵⁰⁸ Nancy R. Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 2004), 295-324. For a discussion of a Biblical view of how one should think about

truth, where religious beliefs are considered separate from objective reality and relegated to the realm of individual opinion.⁵⁰⁹ Correspondingly, the separation of religious belief from public life has significant implications for how people approach morality, ethics, and social issues, some of these implications being described in the concluding chapter of this thesis.⁵¹⁰ The ongoing, Court endorsed (and in many instance, mandated) marginalization of religious perspectives in public discourse and policymaking, has led to a nearly complete secularization of society in the public square where religious voices are discounted, if not severely curtailed.⁵¹¹ For purposes of this thesis, however, in pursuit of investigating Eisenhower's hypothesis on the need for a deeply felt religious faith, it is sufficient to identify the complexity of acting on a religious faith in a society premised upon a two-tier reality as described by Pearcey.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Pearcey and other prominent contemporary commentators discussed below advocate a more holistic approach which recognizes the importance of religious beliefs in shaping individuals and societies resonates with the critical themes emphasized during the Eisenhower administration.⁵¹² Her argument that in the context of contemporary society a coherent worldview should encompass religious beliefs alongside other forms of knowledge and understanding warrants further consideration when weighed against the insights of earlier generations of scholars who studied foundational issues integral to the separation of church and state and their intrinsic importance to the continuity of society envisioned by the American Founders.⁵¹³ For these purposes this thesis turns to Jasper Adams⁵¹⁴ for a further investigation into the value of embracing America's Judeo-Christian heritage.

C. Historiography

The arc of the discussion in this chapter has been relatively wide, swinging from twentieth century Supreme Court rulings in First Amendment – Establishment Clause cases to Pearcey's thesis on the captivity of Christianity within a two-tiered reality. As

knowing and thinking, See: Lesslie Newbigin, *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt, and Certainty in Christian Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1995).

⁵⁰⁹ Pearcey notes "the Marxist believe human behavior is ultimately shaped by economic circumstances; the Freudian attributes everything to repressed sexual instincts; the behavioral psychologist regards humans as stimulus-response mechanisms. But the Bible teaches that the overriding factor in the choices we make is our ultimate belief or religious commitment. Our lives are shaped by the 'god' we worship - whether God of the Bible or some substitute deity." Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 23.

⁵¹⁰ Pearcey's philosophy shares some common ground with Justice Brewer's view of the Constitution, particularly in their recognition of the importance of religious beliefs and institutions in shaping societal values. Both perspectives emphasize the integration of religious principles into various aspects of life, rejecting the notion of a strict separation between the sacred and secular realms.

⁵¹¹ Wolters maintains we are by nature rational and responsible beings who need a creed to live by, "some map by which to chart our course." The post 1960s court decisions irretrievably altered those maps. Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview* (Grand Rapids Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), 4.

⁵¹² Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 351–78.

⁵¹³ Braque's scholarship takes Pearcey's thought further by comprehensively examining what humanity becomes when it is divorced from teleological and Providentially ordered creation. He suggests that humanity becomes a project, a self-creation, which ultimately yields negative consequences in the form of the its own self destruction. Remi Braque, *The Kingdom of Man: Genesis and Failure of the Modern Man* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018).

⁵¹⁴ Jasper Adams (1793-1841) See: Footnote 535, *Infra.* for a brief biographical sketch of Jasper Adams.

part of the argument advanced in this thesis, further historiographic analysis will aid in better understanding the relevance of, and relation of, these two seemingly disparate themes, which begins with the struggle to define "the prudential and Constitutional role of religion in public life which has persisted since the inception of the Republic."⁵¹⁵ That said, however, the evidence discussed above arguably demonstrates that Americans never intended to discontinue all public expressions and acknowledgements of traditional religion when they opted for disestablishment of state supported churches.

In a historiographic context, numerous works chronicle the arguments back and forth regarding separation of church and state and the implications arising therefrom. Among the foremost is Hamburger's *Separation of Church and State*.⁵¹⁶ Hamburger traces the great debate from Roger Williams,⁵¹⁷ founder and first governor of Rhode Island, through Jefferson⁵¹⁸ and Madison⁵¹⁹ and on to contemporary commentators. Hamburger cites Howe,⁵²⁰ for example, to show that the First Amendment was understood in the eighteenth century to protect religion and churches from the state, rather than the later fabricated⁵²¹ Jeffersonian interpretation of protecting the state from the churches. Another historian, E.R. Norman, maintains "the separation of church and state in the federal Constitution of the United States was not originally intended to disconnect Christianity and public life; it was a device to prevent the supremacy of one sect over another."⁵²² As noted earlier, the phrase "separation of church and state" does not appear in the First Amendment. According to the official records of the Constitutional Convention, no Framer ever mentioned that phrase throughout any of the official proceedings. Significantly, the phrase appears to have come from a private letter written by President Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury, Connecticut Baptists on

⁵¹⁵ Daniel L. Dreisbach, ed., *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic: Jasper Adams and the Church-State Debate* (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1996), 151. Dreisbach notes that Jasper Adams wrote the following to former President James Madison: "If it suits the much respected patriot & statesman to whom this [sermon] is sent, to write the author a few lines expressive of his opinion of the validity of the argument herein contained, it will be received as a distinguished favor." Responded Madison, "Whilst I thus frankly express my view of the subject presented in your sermon, I must do you the justice to observe, that you have very ably maintained yours. I must admit, moreover, that it may not be easy, in every possible case, to trace the line of separation, between the rights of Religion & the Civil authority, with such distinctness, as to avoid collisions & doubts on unessential points. The tendency to a usurpation on one side, or the other, or to a corrupting coalition or alliance between them, will be best guarded against by an entire abstinence of the Government from interference, in any way whatever, beyond the necessity of preserving public order, & protecting each sect against trespass on its legal rights by others." Dreisbach, *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic*, 120–21.

⁵¹⁶ Philip Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State*, 1st edn (Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press, 2004).

⁵¹⁷ Roger Williams (c. 1603 – March 1683) was an English-born New England Puritan minister, theologian, and author who founded Providence Plantations, which became the Colony of Rhode Island and later the State of Rhode Island.

⁵¹⁸ On this issue, see: Saul K. Padover, ed., *The Complete Jefferson* (Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1969), 946–49.

⁵¹⁹ On this issue, see: Saul K. Padover, ed., *The Complete Madison* (New York NY: Harper and Brothers, 1953), 299–306.

⁵²⁰ Mark D. Howe, *The Garden and the Wilderness: Religion and Government in American Constitutional History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 16.

⁵²¹ See: *Everson v. Board of Education*, 330 U.S. 1 (1947), cited above.

⁵²² E. R. Norman, *The Conscience of the State in North America* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 4.

January 1, 1802, thirteen years after the First Amendment was written.⁵²³ Nevertheless, notes Hamburger, in the latter part of the twentieth and the early twenty-first centuries the phrase has become part of American culture and Constitutional thought: "Although some have rejected the phrase as ahistorical, most judges, lawyers academics, journalists, and other Americans – even those who reject its implications – now repeatedly talk about religious liberty and especially that of the First Amendment in terms of a separation of church and state."⁵²⁴ This view represents a rejection of the interpretation of historical writings dominant during the first one hundred and fifty years of the country's existence.

The subtitle of historian Robert Cord's work, *Historical Fact and Current Fiction*, is apropos to this point.⁵²⁵ The historical understanding of the First Amendment summarized by Cord was that:

as written [it] expresses two distinct constraints on the federal state's involvement in religion - one concerns religious establishments and the other the individual's free exercise of religion.... the two religious prohibitions were designed to establish a separation of Church and the national state. This separation was to be ensured by denying to Congress the constitutional authority to pass legislation providing for the formal and legal union of any single church, religion, or sect with the Federal Government. Thus, the preferred status of one church, religion, or sect - elevating it to an exclusive governmental position of power and favor over all other churches or religious denominations - would be prevented. In addition, this concept of separation of Church and the national state would constitutionally prohibit Congress from interfering with any individual's religious convictions. Consequently, the separation of Church and the national state envisioned by the adopters of the First Amendment would leave the matter of religious establishments or disestablishment to the wisdom of the several states.⁵²⁶

Like other historians of the era, Cooley did not consider that the Establishment Clause ever mandated absolute separation of church and state.⁵²⁷ Citing many activities through which the government was aiding religion, Cooley saw no historical basis suggesting any violation of any Constitutional principle so long as the government

⁵²³ Barton, *America's Godly Heritage*, 28–29.

⁵²⁴ Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State*, 9.

⁵²⁵ Robert L. Cord, *Separation of Church and State: Historical Fact and Current Fiction* (Grand Rapids Mich.: Baker Book House Company, 1988).

⁵²⁶ Cord, *Separation of Church and State*, 5.

⁵²⁷ Thomas M. Cooley, *Constitutional Limitations* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1868).

treated all religions equally.⁵²⁸ The twentieth century Court rulings artificially layered onto the First Amendment would have been antithetical to historical precedents embraced by prior generations.

In contrast to the foregoing analysis, Feldman is representative of the revisionist trend that has prevailed in recent years.⁵²⁹ He proceeds from a hypothesis premised on a belief that the relation between religion and the American government is ever-changing due to the ever-increasing population diversity within the country which inevitably, in his judgement, compels the nation to redraw the lines in the church-state divide. Feldman proceeds from the premise that: "no question divides Americans more fundamentally than that of the relation between religion and government. For many, moral values derived from religion are the lodestar of political judgment."⁵³⁰ However, his work essentially falls into the mold of, and concurs with, earlier scholars, such as Kramnick and Moore, to the effect that the Framers gave the nation a "Godless Constitution" with a strong separation of church and state.⁵³¹ Feldman bases his argument on what he characterizes as the obvious flaws in American history which needed to be corrected such as slavery and the exclusion of women's rights, and theorizes that: "we look backward in order to move ahead [because] our constitutional, democratic, and republican form of government is at its core an experiment in nation building....In our history we can see the results of the experiment, in order to understand them, judge them, and then make the next *adjustment or change* [emphasis added]."⁵³² This view perceives the law as malleable in the judgment of those entrusted with administration our laws simply as the circumstances warrant, almost an *ad hoc* approach, so long as one can find a suitable rationale for doing so. Opines Feldman: "what we do and who we are can be shaped and molded....the tools we need to make it happen, tough, are honesty about the past and vision of what we seek to achieve in the future."⁵³³ Expressed thusly, it would be difficult to align these sentiments with earlier historians and commentators, who either ostensibly advocated, or took note of, more predictable rule of law outcomes. Feldman concludes that the Framers never actually succeeded in resolving the church-state problem; rather, that task was left to their successors, presumably including himself.⁵³⁴

The paradigm shift in the role that religion has played, and should play, according to Supreme Court dictates supported by shifting historiography exemplified by Feldman, Kramnick, Moore, and others sets the stage for the concluding chapters of this thesis in

⁵²⁸ This view was long recognized as "nonpreferentialism" in Establishment Clause analysis. *Ibid.*

⁵²⁹ Noah Feldman, *Divided by God: America's Church State Problem - and What We should Do About It*. (New York NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005). Feldman is chosen as representative of the revisionist movement because in addition to authoring various works on First Amendment – Establishment Clause issues, he clerked for the Supreme Court of the United States and had a significant role in drafting recent opinions in this area.

⁵³⁰ Feldman, *Divided by God*. Feldman is among a small minority of scholars who maintain that the nation was not founded by Christians, believing instead that most Founders were deists who believed in a creator but were not traditional Christians.

⁵³¹ See: Kramnick, Isaac and Moore, R. Laurence, *The Godless Constitution: The Case Against Religious Correctness* (New York NY: Norton, 1996).

⁵³² Feldman, *Divided by God*, 9.

⁵³³ Feldman, *Divided by God*, 17.

⁵³⁴ Feldman, *Divided by God*, 251.

its quest to complete a ressourcement of Eisenhower's dictum that "our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded on a deeply felt faith," as well as a need for, and a potential approach to, a "cultural irredentism" to ensure the American form of government can endure in the spirit of Eisenhower's core belief.

Chapter Six: Jasper Adams and Deuteronomy

A. Jasper Adams and the Separation of Church and State

Jasper Adams is arguably the foremost expositor on the actual meaning of separation and state; and, consequently, more germane to the inquiry under consideration here, to recovering an originalist understanding of the Founders' vision of the interaction of these two spheres in maintaining societal cohesion within the framework of the American Constitutional system.⁵³⁶ McClellan describes Adams as "a sage observer of American politics and society, a scholar of philosophy, theology, history, and law who was endowed with great powers of thought."⁵³⁷ While serving as the president of the College of Charleston, Adams delivered a sermon in 1833 before the South Carolina Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, a printed version of which was later published as a pamphlet entitled *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*.⁵³⁸ Dreisbach notes that the "tract was widely circulated among scores of leading intellectuals and statesmen of the day,"⁵³⁹ including James Madison,⁵⁴⁰ John Quincy Adams,⁵⁴¹ Andrew Jackson,⁵⁴² Martin Van Buren,⁵⁴³ John Marshall,⁵⁴⁴ Roger B. Taney,⁵⁴⁵ Joseph Story, James Kent,⁵⁴⁶ Jon C. Calhoun,⁵⁴⁷ Henry Clay,⁵⁴⁸ Robert Y.

⁵³⁵ Cal Thomas, 'Fifty Years of Politics and Politicians', <https://www.firstthings.com/media/fifty-years-on-politics-and-politicians>.

⁵³⁶ Jasper Adams (1793-1841). "Adams, a graduate of Brown University (1815), was an eminent educator and moral philosopher. He held faculty appointments at Brown and the United States Military Academy and was also an ordained minister in the Protestant Episcopal Church. He served as president of the College of Charleston (1825-1826 and 1828-1836) and was an acquaintance of many of the nation's leading intellectuals of the era." See: Dreisbach, *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic*, 2.

⁵³⁷ James McClellan, *Joseph Story and the America Constitution: A Study in Political and Legal Thought* (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1971), 136.

⁵³⁸ Rev. J. Adams, *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States: Sermon, Preached before the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church* (Charleston: A.E. Miller, 1833)

⁵³⁹ Dreisbach, *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic*, 2.

⁵⁴⁰ U.S. President (1809-1817).

⁵⁴¹ U.S. President (1809-1829).

⁵⁴² U.S. President (1829-1837).

⁵⁴³ U.S. President (1837-1841).

⁵⁴⁴ Chief Justice of the United States (1801-1835).

⁵⁴⁵ Chief Justice of the United States (1836-1864).

⁵⁴⁶ Chief Justice of the New York Supreme Court (1804-1814) and first professor of law Columbia College/

⁵⁴⁷ Vice President of the United States (1825-1832).

⁵⁴⁸ United States Secretary of State (1825-1829).

Hayne,⁵⁴⁹ Richard M. Johnson,⁵⁵⁰ and Daniel Webster,⁵⁵¹ many of whom corresponded directly with Adams regarding his tract after having reviewed it.⁵⁵²

Dreisbach characterizes Adams as "a devout Christian whose principal interest was to preserve the traditional influence of Christian morality in American public life", who held that government could not endure without "the indispensable support of religious principle."⁵⁵³ In his tract, Adams advanced several arguments which generated supporting commentary from many, but not all, of the luminaries who read his work. Adams' first argument was premised on his belief that no state, either ancient or modern, has ever prospered unless it was built on a religious foundation.⁵⁵⁴ Said Adams:

The object of Government is to enforce among individuals the observance of the moral law, and States are prosperous in proportion as this object is attained. But the only effective sanction of this law is to be found in religion. Hence, a Government, which neglects the care of religion, is guilty of the folly of promulgating laws unaccompanied with any adequate sanction, of requiring the community to obey without presenting to their minds the motives that generally induce to a prompt and cheerful obedience. Under these circumstances, the only resource left to public authorities is mere physical force...⁵⁵⁵

Adams' second argument centered around the fact that both the states and the national government have always felt it was required of them to respect the peculiar institutions of Christianity even though there is no requirement to do so in the Constitution. Adams observes that the logic for doing so is derived from a similar rationale which underlies the Declaration of Independence, writing that:

It has sometimes been concluded, that Christianity cannot have any direct connexion with the Constitution of the United States, on the ground, that the instrument contains no express declaration to this effect. But the error of such a conclusion becomes manifest, when we reflect, that the case is the same with regard to

⁵⁴⁹ Governor of South Carolina (1832-1834).

⁵⁵⁰ Vice President of the United States (1837-1841).

⁵⁵¹ United States Secretary of State (1841-1843 and 1850-1852).

⁵⁵² Adams eventually distributed the tract to over two hundred prominent Americans. The list of recipients is actually appended to the second edition of *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*, which includes, quite remarkably, written commentary from former President James Madison, Chief Justice Marshall and Justice Story, among other dignitaries.

⁵⁵³ Dreisbach, *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic*, 14. Driesbach notes that Adams "cited with approval the famous lines from George Washington's Farewell Address, given 19 September 1796." *ob. cit.* at 14, wherein Washington remarked "Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports...And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." See: Fitzpatrick, *The Writings of George Washington*, vol. 35, 214-238.

⁵⁵⁴ Adams, *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*, 55.

⁵⁵⁵ Adams, *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*, 55.

several other truths, which are notwithstanding, fundamental to our constitutional system. The Declaration of Independence says, that "governments are instituted among men, to secure the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," and that "whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government." These principles lie at the foundation of the Constitution of the United States. No principles known to the Constitution are more fundamental than these. But the instrument contains no declaration to this effect; these principles are nowhere mentioned in it; and the references to them are equally slight and indirect with those which are made to the Christian religion. The same may be said, of the great republican truth, that political sovereignty resides in the people of the United States. If then, anyone may rightfully conclude, that Christianity has no connexion with the Constitution of the United States, because this is nowhere expressly declared in the instrument, he ought, in reason, to be equally convinced, that the same Constitution is not built upon and does not recognize the sovereignty of the people, and the great republican truths above quoted from the Declaration of Independence. This argument receives additional strength, when we consider that the Constitution of the United States was formed directly for political, and not for religious objects. The truth is, they are all equally fundamental, though neither of them is expressly mentioned in the Constitution.

Besides, the Constitution of the United States contemplates, and is fitted for such a state of society as Christianity alone can form. It contemplates the state of society in which strict integrity, simplicity and purity of manners, wide diffusion of knowledge, well disciplined passions, and wise moderation, are the general characteristics of the people. These virtues, in our nation, are the offspring of Christianity, and without continued general belief of its doctrines, and practice of its precepts, they will gradually decline and eventually perish.⁵⁵⁶

Adams' observations begin by acknowledging that some might argue that since the Constitution contains no explicit reference to Christianity, there is no direct connection between the two. However, he refuted this by pointing out that there are other fundamental truths essential to the Constitution, such as those expressed in the Declaration of Independence, which are not explicitly stated in the Constitution either. For example, the principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and the concept of the sovereignty of the people, are crucial to American governance but were not expressly written into the Constitution. He argued that these principles are "equally fundamental" even though they are not directly mentioned in the text of the Constitution.

⁵⁵⁶ Adams, *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*, 14.

He emphasized that the Constitution was created for political purposes, not religious ones, but made clear his understanding that it assumes a societal framework of certain virtues—integrity, simplicity, moral discipline, and moderation—which are rooted in Christianity. He implied that without the moral foundation that Christianity provides, these virtues, which support the functioning of a free and just society, would eventually erode. His argument positioned Christianity not as a direct legal or constitutional authority but as an indirect and cultural foundation that shapes the values and societal behaviors necessary for the Constitution to function as intended. Ultimately, Adams suggested that the Constitution presupposed a morally virtuous citizenry; and, in his view, that moral framework stems from Christian teachings, which he deemed to be essential for the long-term preservation of the nation's constitutional order.

The most eminent jurist of the Founding era, Chief Justice John Marshall,⁵⁵⁷ upon reading Adams tract, opined:

No person, I believe, questions the importance of religion to the happiness of man even during his existence in this world. It has at all times employed his most serious meditation, & had a decided influence on his conduct. The American population is entirely Christian, & with us, Christianity & religion are identified. It would be strange, indeed, if with such a people, our institutions did not presuppose Christianity, & did not often referred to it, & exhibit relations with it. Legislation on the subject is admitted to required great delicacy, because freedom [sic] of conscience & respect for our religion both claim our most serious regard. You have allowed their full influence to both.⁵⁵⁸

Adams' third argument proceeded from his extensive review of history and his corresponding understanding of the details of colonial charters where religion was intended to be the cornerstone of the political and social structures they erected.⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁷ It is difficult to overstate the prominent role Marshall played in shaping the role of the Supreme Court during the Founding era and, subsequently, the form of government under which the nation operates to this day. The Framers of the Constitution did not initially assume that the Court had any more authority than either of the other two branches of government in terms of interpreting the Constitution. However, Marshall authored a watershed decision in *Marbury v. Madison*, 5 U.S. 137 (1803) which established once and for all that the Court was, and is, the final authority on constitutional questions. Some have criticized the ruling as "the despotism of an oligarchy" of nine judges; however, the principle has withstood over two hundred thirty five years of Supreme Court jurisprudence Joseph P. Dailey, *The Last Democrats: How America Fought and Lost the War Against Judicial Supremacy* (Philadelphia: Self published, 2014), 7.

⁵⁵⁸ Letter from John Marshall to Jasper Adams, 9 May 1833, Adams' Notes to *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*, 4. Such approbation was not universal, however. As Dreisbach notes, no less prominent a figure than James Madison in his correspondence with Adams appeared "unmoved by the claim that only religion provided a sound basis for morality and good government." Dreisbach, *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic*, 20.

⁵⁵⁹ Adams tract details his exhaustive examination of the religious character of early colonial charters and constitutions. See: Adams, *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*, 8-9, and 29-30, n. A.

Adams' fourth and concluding argument was based upon the idea that Christianity was a fundamental component of the common law. In this regard, Adams was squarely aligned with Justice Story. He reviewed the available constitutional, statutory and case law, as well as the published commentary which, he concluded, unequivocally demonstrated that in absorbing the common law of England, American jurisprudence incorporated the tenants of Christianity unique to English common law.⁵⁶⁰

Overall, Adams contended that if religion was denied "the sustaining aid of the civil Constitutions and law of the country," then religion's influence in the community would be destroyed.⁵⁶¹ Consequently, he held that the First Amendment was never meant to silence religion or restrict its influence in society, rather he understood the Amendment to have been intended to create an environment in which religion could flourish and inform the public ethic.⁵⁶²

Dreisbach summarizes Adams thusly:

American history, Adams argued, confirmed that religion - and especially Christianity - was the central pillar of social order and stability. He believed that if a nation and its people were to prosper, civil government must conform to basic Christian precepts and maintain a public and influential role for religion as the foundation of all civil, legal, and political institutions. He disavowed, however, the Old World pattern of formal, exclusive ecclesiastical establishment. He similarly rejected the invitation to create a secular political order. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, he concluded, created an environment in which religion could flourish and inform public values, It merely prescribed legal preference for one religious sect over all others.⁵⁶³

As noted, Adams was vocal in asserting that Christian principles should underpin the nation's civil framework. His arguments were premised on his belief that religion had historically been a stabilizing force, promoting moral behavior and social cohesion. At the same time, he clearly distinguished between the beneficial influence of religion on society and the dangers of a formal, exclusive ecclesiastical establishment. In this

⁵⁶⁰ Adams, *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*, 40-57, nn. F-G. For a discussion of a contrarian view, See: Hamburger, *Separation of Church and State*.

⁵⁶¹ Adams, *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*, 17.

⁵⁶² Dreisbach, *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic*, 16.

⁵⁶³ Dreisbach, *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic*, 1. The Christian religion in general, Adams believed, sustained civil institutions and was essential to social order and good government. "See: Dreisbach, *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic*, 4. To be sure, Adams was not unopposed in his views, especially by his contemporary Thomas Cooper, president of the College of South Carolina and friend of Thomas Jefferson, who was an unabashed critic of orthodox Christianity and contemptuous of clergy, and Presbyterian clergy in particular. See: Dumas Mallone, *The Public Life of Thomas Cooper* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1926), 302, 332. Interestingly, in 1831 Cooper faced a motion in the state legislature to remove him from the college presidency based upon charges that he had "interfered with the religious opinions of his students, taught them doctrines highly offensive to parents and guardians, and had sneered at the observance of the Sabbath, public prayers, and certain sects." He was ultimately forced to resign. Mallone, *The Public Life of Thomas Cooper*, 356.

sense, he held a nuanced view embracing neither the Old World model of formal religious establishment nor the idea of a completely secular political order. He believed that a completely secular approach would strip society of the moral foundation provided by religious principles, potentially leading to moral decay and social instability. Consequently, his understanding of the First Amendment, as reflected in the foregoing quotation, is an expression of his appreciation for the Founders having created an environment where religion could flourish without granting legal preference to any specific religious sect, both principles being cornerstones of the American approach to church-state relations.

More to the point, however, as part of Adams' central thesis set out above, he was advocating that in adopting English common law, the American people had made Christianity part of their fundamental law.⁵⁶⁴ Further evidence of this sequitur is reflected, for example, in the crucial role Deuteronomy played in providing a basis for the Founders' ideals on how to frame suitably supportive laws for the Constitutional republic they were initiating, as discussed below.

B. Deuteronomy⁵⁶⁵

The arguments in favor of a strict separation of church and state discussed in the previous sections of this thesis risk a rupture of the historic connection between the political principles outlined in the Book of Deuteronomy⁵⁶⁶ and the basic framework of

⁵⁶⁴ Adams, *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Government in the United States*, 40–57. Thomas Jefferson notoriously argued that Christianity should not be considered as part of the common law. See: Paul L. Ford, ed., *The Works of Thomas Jefferson*, vol. 1 (New York NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), 1:453–64. Dreisbach notes that: "Jefferson's rejection of the virtually undisputed connection between Christianity and the common law confirmed to his detractors that he was an infidel, contemptuous of established judicial, legal, and religious authority that uniformly recognized the Christian basis of common law." Dreisbach, *Religion and Politics in the Early Republic*, 13.

⁵⁶⁵ Levinson notes that "Deuteronomy is cast as a valedictory address by Moses, addressing the Israelites forty years after their escape from slavery in Egypt, as he is about to die, and just as they are about to enter the promised land of Canaan. It consists of a series of speeches in which Moses reminisces about their collective past and enjoins them to obey the covenantal law (Torah) which was given to the nation at Mount Sinai. In literary terms, the core of Deuteronomy is found in the legal corpus of chapters 12–26, which contain a blend of religious, political, civil, and criminal law. The legislation is embedded in a literary frame, in which chapters 1–11 recall the events of the Exodus, including the revelation at Sinai and the proclamation of the Ten Commandments. Following the legal corpus, Deuteronomy continues with ceremonies to ratify the covenant and to enforce obedience to it (26:16–28; 68); the commissioning of Joshua as the successor of Moses with emphasis upon the legislation of Deuteronomy has a covenant equal in importance to that of the Ten Commandments (29:1–32:52); and finally, a poetic blessing of the twelve tribes of Israel as a form of last will and testament by Moses, along with a prose account of the death of Moses (33:1–34:12)." Berlin, Adele and Brettler, Bernard M., ed., *The Jewish Study Bible* (Oxford University Press, 2003), 356–450.

⁵⁶⁶ Sacks characterizes Deuteronomy as follows: "With the book of Deuteronomy, the entire biblical project becomes lucid and reaches its culmination. Deuteronomy is the last act of the Jewish people's drama before becoming a nation in its homeland, and it forms the context of all that follows. It is the deepest and most remarkable statement of what Judaism is all about, and it is no less relevant today than it was then. If anything, it is more so. Among other things, the book tells us what Judaism is not. It is not a drama about the salvation of the soul and the rescue of humanity from the lingering effects of Original Sin.... The very tone and texture of Deuteronomy is directed not at blind obedience but at the contrary: it is a sustained attempt to help the people understand why it is that God wants them to behave in the way He does, not for His sake, but for theirs. Deuteronomy [therefore], roots Jewish law less in the arbitrary will of the Creator than in the concrete history of the nation and its collective memory of what it felt like

American constitutional government. The preservation of these principles, it is argued here, is essential to the maintenance of American constitutional government, lest, in their absence, it devolves into something neither originally intended nor capable of sustaining itself. In the context of recognizing the significance of Deuteronomy in American political history, it should be noted that initially the concepts in Deuteronomy influenced English common law and only later American civil law, then through various means described in this thesis, which ultimately reflected the integration of biblical principles into both legal systems. Several broad, fundamental categories discussed below are subsumed under this rubric, including: i) the moral and ethical teachings exemplified by the Ten Commandments, ii) the cultivation and preservation of fairness in judicial proceedings, iii) the establishment and protection of property rights; and, iv) the enforcement of faithful fulfillment of oaths and contracts. As each of these categories is discussed, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks' stricture should be borne in mind that: "Society is to be based on justice, meaning more than procedural justice...[it should be also be based upon] what we would call equity or fairness. Nor should society be based on abstract principles alone. Instead, it should be grounded in a collective memory and active recall...[because] individual piety is unsustainable without collective moral responsibility."⁵⁶⁷ Concludes Sacks: "Hence the programme of Deuteronomy is about the creation of *a good society based on collective responsibility*, or, as the opening phrase of the Preamble to the United States Constitution puts it, forming a group of people, *i.e.*, of "We, the people,"⁵⁶⁸ under the sovereignty of God...[because] the good society is the essential precondition of spiritual individuals, "since man, as is well known, is by nature social."⁵⁶⁹

While earlier chapters of this thesis readily acknowledge that Founders drew upon various intellectual traditions to inform their political thought; nevertheless, it is maintained that the Bible, while not the sole source of influence,⁵⁷⁰ was however among the more prevalent resources from which they drew. Other prominent sources previously noted include (i) British constitutionalism and the common law, exemplified by the writings of the preeminent jurist William Blackstone;⁵⁷¹ (ii) the influence of Enlightenment philosophers such as Locke and Montesquieu; and, (iii) the precepts of

to be slaves, without rights, without rest, without dignity, and without hope." Jonathan Sacks, *Covenant & Conversation: Deuteronomy: Renewal of the Sinai Covenant* (Jerusalem: Toby Press Ltd, 2019), 1–2.

⁵⁶⁷ Sacks, *Covenant & Conversation: Deuteronomy*, 3.

⁵⁶⁸ The entirety of the Preamble reads as follows: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." See: <https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/about-educational-outreach/activity-resources/us#:~:text=%22We%20the%20People%20of%20the,for%20the%20United%20States%20of>

⁵⁶⁹ Sacks, *Covenant & Conversation: Deuteronomy*, 2. In this regard, Sacks cites: Miamon, Moshe Ben, *The Guide to the Perplexed: A New Translation* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2024).

⁵⁷⁰ Berman notes that: "Since the American Revolution, various religious and political figures have claimed a role for the Bible in establishing the American experiment in republican rule, underscored by the popular influence of religious traditions on understanding American law." Harold J. Berman, 'Religion and the Law: The First Amendment in Historical Perspective', *Emory Law Journal* 35 (1986): 777, 788–89.

⁵⁷¹ Sir William Blackstone (1723–1780), jurist, justice and Tory politician noted for writing *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, a treatise on the law of England published by Clarendon Press, Oxford between 1765 and 1769.

classical and civic republicanism propounded by, among others, Cicero.⁵⁷² In concert with these other strands, however, Levinson demonstrates that the Bible, and Deuteronomy in particular, were extremely impactful on the Founders' thinking insofar as "the legal corpus of Deuteronomy provided a utopian model for the organization of the state,⁵⁷³ one that enshrined separation of powers and their systematic subordination to a public legal text, the Torah;⁵⁷⁴ and, one that delineated their jurisdiction while also ensuring their autonomy." Notes Levinson: "This legislation established an independent judiciary while bringing even the monarch under the full authority of the law. Deuteronomy's implicit model for a political constitution was unprecedented in legal history. Two of its cornerstones are fundamental to the modern idea of constitutional government: (i) the clear division of political powers into separate spheres of authority; and (ii) the subordination of each branch to the authority of the law,⁵⁷⁵ both concepts being grounded in an independent judiciary." ⁵⁷⁶ Consequently, Levinson observes, Deuteronomy's "draft" Constitution provided an important corrective to the more recently accepted accounts of constitutional history referenced above.⁵⁷⁷ Tigay, too, attributes special significance to Deuteronomy explaining: "Now that Moses had finished expounding the teaching, which he had [to this point] imparted orally, he now writes it down and arranges for its regular public reading so that the people may be reminded regularly of its contents and future generations may learn it."⁵⁷⁸ The writing of the Teaching was part of the process that eventually led to the creation of Sacred Scripture which is the heart of Judaism. The public reading of the Teaching is part of the 'democratic' character of biblical religion, which addresses its Teaching and demands to all its adherents, with few distinctions between priests and laity, and calls for universal education of the citizenry in law and religion."⁵⁷⁹ With Deuteronomy in mind, no less a figure than John Adams, the second president of the United States,

⁵⁷² See:, generally: Daniel Dreisbach, 'The Bible and the American Founders', *Broadcast Talks* 3, no. 3 (2018): 1–16, 9.

⁵⁷³ This legislation was so utopian in its own time that it seems never to have been implemented; instead, idealism rapidly yielded to political pragmatism. Bernard M. Levinson, 'The First Constitution: Rethinking the Origins of Rule of Law and Separation of Powers in Light of Deuteronomy', *Cardozo Law Review* 27, no. 4 (2006): 1853–88, 1853.

⁵⁷⁴ In Judaism, the law of God as revealed to Moses and recorded in the first five books of the Hebrew scriptures (the Pentateuch). See: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Torah>

⁵⁷⁵ In contemporary terms, this concept is recognized as the "rule of law."

⁵⁷⁶ Levinson, 'The First Constitution', 1857.

⁵⁷⁷ Levinson, 'The First Constitution', 1859.

⁵⁷⁸ Notes Prager: "America's non-Jewish Founders were rooted in the Hebrew Bible. They regarded the Jews as the Chosen People and founded America on biblical, especially Torah, principles: ethical monotheism and liberty, to name two. An example of the first is the central importance of the Ten Commandments in American history. An example of the second is the single inscription on the Liberty Bell: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof" (Leviticus 25:10).....To this day, in a practice that started hundreds of years after Moses lived, the complete Torah is read through in its entirety over the course of each year during the Sabbath morning service. A Jew who regularly attends weekday services, as well as Sabbath services, will never go longer than three days without hearing verses from the Torah. If, throughout their history, Americans had heard sections of the U.S. Constitution read aloud each week, this practice would have greatly helped preserve the American people as one people with shared ideals. The Torah's great lesson: teach the nation's Founding texts to every generation or you will cease to be in nation." Dennis Prager, *The Rational Bible: Deuteronomy: God, Blessings and Curses*, trans. Telushkin, Joseph, Editor (Washington, D.C: Regnery Faith, 2022), 429, 466.

⁵⁷⁹ Jeffrey Tigay, *The JPS Commentary: Deuteronomy* (Jewish Publication Society, 2003).

opined in an 1809 letter that: "that the Hebrews have done more to civilize Men than any other Nation."⁵⁸⁰ If I were an Atheist and believed in blind eternal Fate, I should Still believe that Fate had ordained the Jews to be the most essential Instrument for civilizing the Nations."⁵⁸¹

To be understood properly, however, Deuteronomy needs to be placed into context. While it articulates a complex political philosophy, at its core it was intended to be a corrective that provided instructions for a transition from tribal governance to a more centralized approach, most vividly portrayed during the reign of King Josiah.⁵⁸² Levinson employs the term "cultus," to describe the previously prevailing system of religious beliefs and rituals that Josiah sought to replace with Deuteronomy's injunctions, noting that: " the legal corpus of Deuteronomy, which [was] intimately connected with the comprehensive transformation of Judean society and religion, had two primary goals: (i) to stipulate that sacrifice [was] legitimate only at the central sanctuary in Jerusalem; and, (ii), conversely, the abolition of multiple local altars and sanctuaries throughout Judah as illegitimate."⁵⁸³ However, "the impact of these reforms extended beyond cultic matters to include other areas of public life like justice and the political structure of the state."⁵⁸⁴ As is made clear in 2 Kings 22 and 23, Josiah established Jerusalem as the exclusive site for the worship of Yahweh. This, in turn, paved the way for the centralization of the judicial system proposed in Deuteronomy, which underlay the restructuring of Jewish political and religious institutions.⁵⁸⁵

Dreisbach has poignantly described the Founders affinity for the books of Moses, generally, saying: "There would have been many Americans who saw their own situation as analogous to that of the children of Israel. After all, they too had fled a tyrant. The children of Israel fled from Pharaoh; [the Founding generation] fled from

⁵⁸⁰ The Reformation significantly altered the European perspective on the Hebrew Bible. Readers started to perceive the five books of Moses as more than just sources of political wisdom; they viewed them as a political Constitution. The Hebrew Bible was no longer seen as an obsolete law overshadowed by the new covenant; instead, it was increasingly regarded as a set of political laws given by God to the Israelites as their civil leader. Moses was reinterpreted not as a mere lawgiver in the Greek sense but as the founder of a divine polity. This shift had profound implications: if God had designed a Commonwealth, political science had to be fundamentally rethought. Previously, political guidance came from ancient philosophers or historical experience, but now it had to be sought in the perfect Constitution crafted by the all-knowing God. The central goal of political science became to approximate the *republica Hebraeorum* (republic of the Hebrews), comparing it to both ancient and modern constitutions to identify their shortcomings. Nevertheless, a significant challenge persisted: how to understand the political Constitution outlined in the Hebrew Bible. The text was known for its fragmentary, imprecise, and sometimes contradictory details. Where could one find clarity? This question was addressed by Christian Hebraists, who argued that understanding the Hebrew Bible required consulting the full range of rabbinic sources now available to the Christian West. They recommended turning to the Talmud, midrash, targums, and medieval law codes, despite these texts being authored by those seen as having fallen from God's grace. See: Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic*, 16–17.

⁵⁸¹ Letter from John Adams to François Adriaan Van der Kemp, 16 February 1809. See: <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/99-02-02-5302>

⁵⁸² See: Bernard M. Levinson, 'The Hermeneutics of Tradition in Deuteronomy: A Reply to J.G. McConville', *J. Biblical Literature* 119 (2000): 269.

⁵⁸³ Bernard M. Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 23–52.

⁵⁸⁴ Levinson, 'The First Constitution', 1872.

⁵⁸⁵ For a more detailed explication of the transition, see: Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic*, 26–31

George III. Like the children of Israel, they had crossed the Red Sea, known [in their case] as the Atlantic Ocean. They too had encountered forbidding territory in the [form of the] rocky coast of New England. They too had met their Philistines, their Moabites, those native peoples they encountered in the New World. And thus, they saw in the books of Moses and as recorded in Scripture a story, a narrative that was analogous they believed to their own, [which aids in] understanding why they were drawn, in particular, to the book of Deuteronomy."⁵⁸⁶

It is in this context that Sacks raises certain threshold issues: "How can you have freedom without chaos? How can you have law-governed liberty? How can you create structures of cooperation in a world of conflicting human wills?"⁵⁸⁷ Sacks responds to his own questions by observing: "Then, and still today, there are three ways to get people to do what we want them to do. The first is to pay them to do so – the market economy. The second is to force them to do so – the world of power and the state. In both of these, individuals remain individuals in pursuit of their own private interests and desires. But there is a third way: to get individuals to come together in a pledge, a bond of mutual fidelity and collective responsibility....there is no longer the pursuit of self-interest...it is a world in which we agree to merge our identity into something larger than us, which defines who we are and which obligates us to a set of undertakings by which we freely choose to be bound. This is the world of the covenant [of the Constitution]."⁵⁸⁸ More specifically, there are several generally recognized categories that encompass most forms of government. These include totalitarianism,⁵⁸⁹ monarchy,⁵⁹⁰ oligarchy,⁵⁹¹ anarchy or revolution,⁵⁹² and democracy.⁵⁹³ In addition, there are republics and constitutional republics. Unlike the former types of government, however, in republics and constitutional republics sovereign power is exercised by representatives elected by the people. The parliamentary system would be an example of a "weak" form of republic; whereas a constitutional republic would be an example of a "strong" form of republic because the elected representatives are not sovereign but instead subject to a higher sovereign law, *viz.*, a written constitution. This is essentially

⁵⁸⁶ Dreisbach, 'The Bible and the American Founders', 2.

⁵⁸⁷ Sacks, *Covenant & Conversation: Deuteronomy*, 5. See also: Jonathan Sacks, *Morality: Restoring the common good in divided times* (New York: Basic Books, 2020).

⁵⁸⁸ Sacks, *Covenant & Conversation: Deuteronomy*, 5.

⁵⁸⁹ A highly centralized form of government that does not tolerate individualism or differences of opinion.

⁵⁹⁰ A government headed by a king, queen, or emirate.

⁵⁹¹ A government in which power resides in the hands of a small elite group.

⁵⁹² A government without laws, where supreme power is with each individual, who does whatever one wishes or has the power to do.

⁵⁹³ A government in which the sovereign power lies with the people, who exercise the lawmaking power through direct majority votes rather than through elected representatives. The Founders were skeptical of democracies. John Adams warned that: "Democracy never last long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide." See: Charles F. Adams, ed., *The Works of John Adams*, IV (Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1851), 484. Fisher Ames, a framer of the Bill of Rights, observed that: "A democracy is a volcano which conceals the fiery materials of its own destruction. These will produce an eruption and carry desolation in their way." See: Fisher Ames, ed., *The Works of Fisher Ames: Compiled by a Number of His Friends* (Boston: T.B.Wait & Co., 1809), 24.

the form of a representative constitutional republic described in Deuteronomy 1:13⁵⁹⁴ and 1:15⁵⁹⁵ and again, in Deuteronomy 16:18,⁵⁹⁶ each of which informed the thinking of the Founders in framing the constitutional republic embodied in the American Constitution,⁵⁹⁷ which John Adams described as "a government of laws not of men."⁵⁹⁸

For purposes of this discussion, a distinction is made between the "moral law," meaning God's declarations of the types of behavior that are morally acceptable,⁵⁹⁹ and the "social compact law," meaning the laws governing society that are below the level of the moral laws.⁶⁰⁰ Blackstone opined that government may establish social compact laws only in areas where God's moral laws are not transgressed, a tenet subscribed to by the Founders.⁶⁰¹ This distinction becomes germane in considering the Ten Commandments appearing in Exodus 20 and, again, in Deuteronomy 5. John Witherspoon, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, exemplified this sentiment, saying: "The Ten Commandments are the sum of the moral law."⁶⁰² William Penn, the settlor of Pennsylvania, directed that all civil magistrates should draw upon the Ten Commandments, or moral law in the exercise of their duties.⁶⁰³ John Locke, the third most cited political authority in the Founding era,⁶⁰⁴ affirmed:

The law of nature [i.e., the moral laws] stands as an eternal rule to all men, legislators as well as others. The rules that they [legislators] make for other men's actions must...be conformable to the law of nature, i.e., to the will of God.⁶⁰⁵ Human laws must be made according to the general laws of nature and without contradiction to any positive law of Scripture, otherwise they are ill made.⁶⁰⁶

In a similar vein, John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States, declared:

⁵⁹⁴ "Choose some wise, understanding and respected men from each of your tribes, and I will set them over you."

⁵⁹⁵ "So I took the leading men of your tribes, wise and respected men, and appointed them to have authority over you – as commanders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens and as tribal officials."

⁵⁹⁶ "Appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes in every town the Lord your God is giving you, and they shall judge the people fairly."

⁵⁹⁷ Article IV, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution requires that: "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government."

⁵⁹⁸ Adams, *The Works of John Adams*, 106.

⁵⁹⁹ See, for example, the prohibition against rape in Deuteronomy 22:25-27.

⁶⁰⁰ See, for example, municipal ordinances that maintain an orderly environment for daily life.

⁶⁰¹ "To instance in the case of murder: this is expressly forbidden by the Divine....If any human law should allow or enjoin us to commit it, we are bound to transgress that human law....But with regard to matters that are....not commanded or forbidden by those superior laws....the legislature has scope and opportunity to interpose." Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 42–43.

⁶⁰² John Witherspoon, *The Works of the Rev. John Witherspoon*, Vol. II (Philadelphia: William W. Woodward, 1802), 485.

⁶⁰³ William Penn, *The Select Works of William Penn* (London: James Phillips, 1782), 258.

⁶⁰⁴ See: Donald S. Lutz, *The Origins of American Constitutionalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 142.

⁶⁰⁵ John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (London: A. Millar, 1764), 316.

⁶⁰⁶ Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, 316.

The law given on Sinai was a civil and municipal as well as a moral and religious code; it contained many statutes....of universal application – laws essential to the existence of men in society, and most of which have been enacted by every nation which ever professed any code of laws.⁶⁰⁷

In the Founders' view, these ordinances of God appear to be essential to the existence of men and women in society; however, contemporary critics object to displaying the Ten Commandments on spurious grounds described in the cases cited above. It is for these reasons that cases like *Stone v. Graham* (1980) and its progeny, cited above, appear to be discordant with the Founders' views. More recently, however, the Court has developed a sympathetic rationale for continued displays emphasizing proof of the historical significance of the Ten Commandments as articulated in Chief Justice Rehnquist's majority opinion in *Van Orden v. Perry* (2005), which affirmed a display of the Ten Commandments at the Texas State Capitol:

We need only look within our own Courtroom. Since 1935, Moses has stood, holding two tablets that reveal portions of the Ten Commandments written in Hebrew, among other lawgivers in the south frieze. Representations of the Ten Commandments adorn the metal gates lining the north and south sides of the Courtroom as well as the doors leading into the Courtroom. Moses also sits on the exterior east facade of the building holding the Ten Commandments tablets. Similar acknowledgments can be seen throughout a visitor's tour of the Nation's Capital. For example, a large statue of Moses holding the Ten Commandments, alongside a statue of the Apostle Paul, has overlooked the rotunda of the Library of Congress' Jefferson Building since 1897. And the Jefferson Building's Great Reading room contains a sculpture of a woman beside the Ten Commandments with a quote above her from the Old Testament (Micah 6:8).⁶⁰⁸ A medallion with two tablets depicting the Ten Commandments decorates the floor of the National Archives. Inside the Department of Justice, a statute entitled "The Spirit of Law" has two tablets representing the Ten Commandments lying at its feet. In front of the Ronald Reagan Building is another sculpture that includes a depiction of the Ten Commandments. So, too, a 24-foot tall sculpture, depicting, among other things, the Ten Commandments and a cross, stands outside the federal courthouse that houses both the Court of Appeals and the District

⁶⁰⁷ John Q. Adams, *Letters of John Quincy Adams to His Son, on the Bible and Its Teachings* (Auburn, NY: James M. Alden, 1850), 61, 70-71.

⁶⁰⁸ "He has shown you, O Mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (NIV).

Court for the District of Columbia. Moses is also prominently featured in the chamber of the United States House of Representatives.⁶⁰⁹

Inferentially, the Court appears to be acknowledging that Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 have helped shape the moral laws of the United States; and, therefore, been inseparable from American legal culture. In this regard, the Ten Commandments not only informed the basis of the moral laws in America but were also a direct influence on its civil statutory laws, which, in turn, has had an ameliorating effect of helping to create a civilized society.

While there are legal analogs for virtually each of the Ten Commandments in America's laws, mention is made here of a few, among the many, to illustrate how portions of the Deuteronomic code were incorporated into Constitutional, civil and criminal statutes:

-The Third Commandment (Deuteronomy 5:11), enjoins its adherents to honor God's name. Laws predicated upon this commandment were grouped into two categories: (i) those prohibiting swearing and profanity; and, (ii) those prohibiting blasphemy,⁶¹⁰ which Noah Webster affirmed were derived from this Commandment:

When in obedience to the Third Commandment of the Decalogue you would avoid profane swearing, you are to remember that this alone is not a full compliance with the prohibition which comprehends all irreverent words or actions and whatever tends to cast contempt on the Supreme Being or on His Word and ordinances [i.e., blasphemy].⁶¹¹

- The Fourth Commandment to honor the Sabbath (Deuteronomy 5:12-14) found expression in all the American colony which enacted laws to honor the Sabbath. The U.S. Constitution likewise honors the Christian Sabbath in Article I, Section 7, Paragraph 2 wherein it states that the president has ten days to sign a law, "Sundays excepted." A 1967 Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision reinforced this ideal holding that:

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work. [citing Deuteronomy 5:12-14]. This Divine pronouncement became part

⁶⁰⁹ 545 U.S. 677.

⁶¹⁰ See, for example, *Colonial Origins of the American Constitution*, 316, describing "Articles, Laws and Orders, Divine, Politic and Martial for the Colony of Virginia." (1610-1611).

⁶¹¹ Noah Webster, *Letters to a Young Gentlemen Commencing His Education* (New Haven, Conn.: Howe & Spalding, 1823), 8.

of the Common Law inherited by the thirteen American colonies and by the sovereign states of the American union.⁶¹²

- The Sixth Commandment, *i.e.*, do not murder, has innumerable connections to American law that span the centuries, acknowledging the Decalogue as the source of American criminal murder laws. A Kentucky appeals court ruling summarizes:

Following the promulgation of Moses at Mt. Sinai has required of each and every one of its citizens that 'Thou shalt not murder' [Deuteronomy 5:17]. If that law is violated, the one guilty of it has no right to demand more than a fair trial, and if, as a result thereof, the severest punishment for the crime is visited upon him, he has no one to blame but himself.⁶¹³

- The Eighth Commandment, *viz.*, do not steal, was strongly enforced through colonial laws which carried over after the adoption of the Constitution. Innumerable court cases cite the Eighth Commandment, including this California Supreme Court decision:

Thou shalt not steal applies with equal force and propriety to the industrialist of a complex civilization as to the simple herdsman of ancient Israel.⁶¹⁴

Other examples of Deuteronomy's influence abound. The oath taking process in America has followed the same format for time immemorial: (i) raising the right hand, (ii) saying "So help me God," (iii) placing a hand on the Bible; and, (iv) in some instances kissing the Bible after the oath. This practice is taken from Deuteronomy 10:20, "You shall swear by His name." Indeed, there are five different instances in the U.S. Constitution that address oaths to be taken by public officials, the Framers having believed that the taking of an oath by a public official was an inherently religious activity. Observed John Quincy Adams:

The Constitution has provided that all the public functionaries of the Union, not only the general [federal] but of all the state governments, should be under oath or affirmation for its support. The homage of religious faith was thus superadded to all the obligations of temporal law to give it strength.⁶¹⁵

⁶¹² *Bertera's Hopewell Foodland, Inc. v. Masters*, 236 A2d 197, 200-201 (Pa 1967).

⁶¹³ *Young v. Commonwealth*, 245 Ky 570 (Ky. Ct. App. 1932).

⁶¹⁴ *Hollywood Motion Picture Equipment Co. v. Furer*, 105 P2d 299 (Cal.1940).

⁶¹⁵ John Q. Adams, *The Jubilee of the Constitution: A Discourse Delivered at the Request of the New York Historical Society in the City of New York, the 30th of April, 1839, Being the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Inauguration of George Washington as President of the United States* (New York NY: Samuel Coleman, 1839), 162.

Even the concept of taxation finds roots in Deuteronomy: "You shall surely tithe all the produce from what you sow, which comes out of the field every year."⁶¹⁶

Deuteronomy also set out specific procedures to be used in court proceedings which have been carried over in their essential attributes to American jurisprudence, the objective of each being to promote justice. Chapter 19, verses 15 through 18 require that:

A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed. If a malicious witness rises up against a man to accuse him of wrongdoing, then both men who have the dispute shall stand up before the Lord, before the priests and the judges who will be in office in those days. The judges shall investigate thoroughly.

Laws in America designed to assist the poor also find their source in Deuteronomy:

When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow, in order that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not go over it again, it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow.⁶¹⁷

No less a figure than Benjamin Franklin was very concerned with helping the poor through welfare laws, and noted the bad fruits that resulted when the biblical methods of caring for the poor were not followed, *viz.*, a further increase in poverty, ungratefulness, laziness, higher taxes with no resulting benefits, among other manifestations of such neglect.⁶¹⁸

Even periods of national mourning are derived from the Bible. The biblical model of having thirty days of mourning for the passage of a national leader was adopted by the Founders and continues to this day. Deuteronomy 34:8 records the mourning period for Moses when he had completed the task assigned him by God:

So the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the thirty days of weeping and mourning for Moses came to an end.

⁶¹⁶ Deuteronomy 14:22.

⁶¹⁷ Deuteronomy 24:19-21.

⁶¹⁸ Benjamin Franklin, *The Life and Essays of Benjamin Franklin* (London: John M'Gowen, 1838), 328.

It was on this basis that, when George Washington died, Congress directed a thirty day period of national mourning, just as it had been for Moses.⁶¹⁹

The foregoing treatment of Deuteronomy was intended to be neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. Rather it was intended to be suggestive of the fact that the Bible, and Deuteronomy in particular, provided a great deal of insight for the Founders into issues as diverse as social contract theory, limited government, separation of powers, representative government, moral laws and principles, the rule of law, due process, and public education.⁶²⁰ It is also indicative of the fact that the Founders never contemplated or envisioned the need for a two-tiered reality along the lines described by Percy earlier in this chapter. In like manner, Jasper Adams stands on firm ground in his various arguments supporting the importance and value of Judeo-Christian influences in American political culture. Consequently, the prevailing inference that should not be overlooked in any discussion of this sort is that the Ten Commandments, in particular, are not merely dictates of some legal obligations; rather they are life-giving promises that if obeyed would bring prosperity and God's blessing upon those who obey His word. These sentiments appear not to have been lost on the Founders who quite intentionally and openly endorsed the Ten Commandments, *inter alia*, to the civil laws of the new nation in the recognition of, and hope for, God's blessing where there would be obeisance with these divine strictures.

Sacks neatly summarizes in observing that: "What we have in Deuteronomy is a political theory of immense power and depth that was not confined to the biblical period alone...various societies [at various times] have emphasized the responsibilities, individual and collective, of each member of society, and not the overarching responsibility of the head of state or of the government....Thus, the political philosophy of Deuteronomy has direct and immediate relevance to the issues faced by the contemporary West."⁶²¹

C. Historiography

The preceding chapter of this thesis traces the historiography of the separation of church and state. Nevertheless, mention is made here of James Madison's exposition on religious freedom entitled "Memorial and Remonstrance,"⁶²² for the sole purpose of summarizing his contrasting contention as explicated by Dreisbach, *et al.*, "[Madison] stated that religious belief is a matter of conscience, it cannot be externally coerced or forced by law or violence.....[because] God has given humans free will to accept or reject Him; only a voluntary submission to Christ is pleasing to God. A state religion

⁶¹⁹ *The Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States* (Washington: Gales and Seaton, 1851). Sixth Congress, 208, December 23, 1799.

⁶²⁰ Deuteronomy 31:9-13 emphasizes the importance of education and knowledge in governance, wherein Moses instructs the Israelites to read and study the law so that they can teach it to their children and ensure future generations are knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities.

⁶²¹ Sacks, *Covenant & Conversation: Deuteronomy*, 15-16. Sacks at p.16 confirms Nelson's thesis "that the roots of modern politics are indeed biblical rather than Greek - the philosophy that prevailed during the Renaissance." See: Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic*.

⁶²² Daniel L. Dreisbach, Mark d. Hall, and Jeffry H. Morrison, eds, *The Founders on God and Government* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004), 99, 106.

violates this divine freedom and perverts true faith. [According to Madison] the best means for converting the population to Christianity is the free preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the witness and example of ordinary Christians and reliance on the Holy Spirit to convict people of their sins and accept God's forgiveness and redemption through Christ; not the 'unhallowed perversion of the of the means of salvation' in an official religion's coercion and persecution."⁶²³

Nelson presents a separate and interesting historiographic issue when he argues that the relationship between church and state necessarily insinuate the issue of religious toleration (discussed further in the concluding chapter of this thesis).⁶²⁴ He argues that the traditional view has been that the rise of toleration depended on the advancement of secularization, both historically and theoretically.⁶²⁵ It had been believed that only after religion had lost its dominant influence in Europe could theorists consider extensive protection for nonconformist religious beliefs and practices. It was assumed that toleration depended on, and arose from, the belief that church and state should remain fundamentally separate, without interfering with each other's authority. However, Nelson contends that these beliefs are largely incorrect. He argues that the pursuit of toleration was driven primarily by strong religious convictions rather than by the absence of religion, and it emerged from the Erastian⁶²⁶ effort to unify church and state, not from the desire to keep them separate.⁶²⁷

⁶²³ Dreisbach, Hall, and Morrison, *The Founders on God and Government*, 99–100.

⁶²⁴ Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic*, 4.

⁶²⁵ Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic*, 4.

⁶²⁶ The doctrine that the state should have supremacy over the Church in ecclesiastical matters (wrongly attributed to Erastus). See: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Erastianism>

⁶²⁷ Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic*, 4.

"We make men without chests and expect from them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honor and are shocked to find traitors in our midst."⁶²⁸

C.S. Lewis

"We have become a nation that has a tale of two histories. One that has a deep, rich spiritual heritage that speaks of a Godly purpose and destiny that was born in the heart of this nation as it was founded; and another that is progressively seeking to distance itself from that, trying to pretend it does not exist."

Brad Cummings⁶²⁹

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

A. The Ressourcement

As set forth in the Introduction to this thesis,⁶³⁰ in support of a ressourcement of Dwight D. Eisenhower's belief that "our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith" it has not been the intention of this thesis, as the title might otherwise suggest, to give a complete account of the role of faith⁶³¹ in this country, or even a compendium of American ecclesiastical or theological history (which would properly be distinct works in themselves), but rather to show how the spirit of Christianity is inextricably intertwined with the foundational elements of America's national existence; and, how it affected the country's civil and political history and gave shape and structure to its institutions - to exhibit the historical relations it has had to the state and the inspiration it has given to the actors in the course of American independence, and the support it continued to provide to civil institutions of the American people, as well as its general influence upon their fortunes and their destiny. A consideration of Eisenhower's aphorism provided a valuable passageway for exploring these different dimensions from which various observations and conclusions can be offered. As part of this concluding chapter, reference is also made to a "cultural irredentism" which may be a natural corollary to recovering Eisenhower's conception of the requisite religious underpinnings of a durable, ongoing governance structure within the American context.

1. The Role of Character⁶³²

This thesis has explored not only Eisenhower's public and military achievements but, as well, his personal journey towards building character. The strength and influence of

⁶²⁸ C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York City, New York: Harper One, 2009).

⁶²⁹ Barton, *The Founders' Bible*, v..

⁶³⁰ See: Note 28.

⁶³¹ See both Footnote 324, *supra*. and Section 2 of this Chapter, *infra*., for nuanced interpretations of "faith."

⁶³² On the subject of character, in 1954 Eisenhower wrote to his childhood friend Sweet Hazlitt regarding the qualities of a great man, which he said were: "vision, integrity, courage, understanding, the power of articulation, and a profundity of character." To this list, he added: "decisiveness (the ability to take command, decide, and act) and luck. He concluded that in his opinion the qualities of goodness in a man include a broad sympathy for the human condition, that is, an awareness of human weakness and shortcomings and a willingness to be forgiving of them, a sense of responsibility toward others, a genuine

religious beliefs on his leadership style and his conduct seem indisputable.⁶³³ They represent the ethical framework within which he rose to the position of Supreme Allied Commander and eventually to President of the United States. It is unsurprising, therefore, that his religious convictions also found expression in his policy decisions.⁶³⁴ His religious character informed his approach to governance, emphasizing principles of justice, honesty, stewardship prudently employed in serving the common good and upholding moral values in public life. As has been demonstrated, Eisenhower often emphasized the role of faith in American life and promoted programs that reflected his moral values. Notably, he oversaw the adoption of "In God We Trust"⁶³⁵ as the national motto, a legislative initiative that vividly underscored his view of America's spiritual heritage being integral to its national identity. It is argued here that Eisenhower was an example of what Metaxas describes as "muscular faith."⁶³⁶

Eisenhower also possessed a sense of humility that was a visible extension of his early religious training and homelife in Abilene. In an earlier note in this thesis, Eisenhower was quoted as telling *Time Magazine* that: "It was part of the privilege into which I was born that my home was a religious home. My father and mother believed that 'the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.' The Bible was a daily and vital influence in their lives. They tried their best to instill its truths and its faith into their six sons."⁶³⁷ It was that training which instilled in him a sense of duty and discipline, as well as a deep

modesty combined with a justified self-confidence, a sense of humor, and most of all a love of life and of people." Dwight D. Eisenhower, Letter to Swede Hazlett (1954) (Eisenhower Library).

⁶³³ The title of Professor Greenstein's work, *The Hidden Hand Presidency*, is suggestive of how Eisenhower's religious beliefs informed his views on power and responsibility. His presidency was marked by what Greenstein described as the "hidden hand" approach, *i.e.*, subtly influencing events without overt displays of power, which aligned with Eisenhower's religious view that true strength lies in humility and service rather than in seeking personal recognition. See: Greenstein, *The Hidden-hand Presidency*.

⁶³⁴ In 1955, the Republican National Committee went so far as stating that Eisenhower "in every sense of the word, is not only the political leader of our nation, but the spiritual leader of our times." Kenneth L. Woodward, *Getting Religion: Faith, Culture, and Politics from the Age of Eisenhower to the Ascent of Trump* (New York NY: Convergent Books, 2016), 45.

⁶³⁵ <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/112th-congress/house-report/47/1>

⁶³⁶ Metaxas advances a Biblical idea of a "muscular faith" that expresses itself in all spheres of life in contradistinction to a dead and "religious" faith that is merely theological and ecclesiastical. Writes Metaxas by way of example: "Dietrich Bonhoeffer sought to awaken the church of his day to action, but as we know, they did not heed God's voice through him and invited the judgment they couldn't have dreamt would come. So the question for us now is whether we in the American church will heed the prophetic warnings of Bonhoeffer for our own time and avert the unfathomable horrors of our own silence and inaction." Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity*, viii. For a contrarian perspective in the United Kingdom, see Kenny Farquharson writing for *The Times* in London: "Whoever Leads Scotland Next, it Can't be Kate Forbes." <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/whoever-leads-scotland-next-it-cant-be-kate-forbes-0mbfchc9x>

⁶³⁷ See: Footnote 111, *supra*. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For through wisdom your days will be many, and years will be added to your life. If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you; if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer." Proverbs 9:10-12 (NIV) Prager presents an interesting discussion of the meaning and import of these verses. See: Dennis Prager Interview at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnyUCx5KyIE>. In May, 1964, the author of this thesis met and spoke with former President Eisenhower during which Eisenhower paraphrased Psalm 90:12 on the matter of wisdom, which says "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." Psalm 90:12 (NIV).

sense of moral responsibility.⁶³⁸ These foundational elements remain crucial to understanding and appreciating how his faith influenced not merely his personal virtues but also informed his pragmatic approach to leadership. The humility that was hallmark of his personality was grounded in his life-long recognition of a higher power (and its implication for how he chose to live his life), and his corresponding understanding of a duty to serve others. It informed his unique leadership style, characterized by a willingness to listen, learn, and collaborate – a departure from the ego-driven leadership often associated with positions of power.⁶³⁹ His ability to restrain that ego, often placing public welfare above personal recognition, was a reflection of his spiritual convictions. In the same vein, his belief in the power of prayer, for example, proved pivotal in fostering a national sense of unity and shared purpose. The picture that emerges of Eisenhower, thus, is not simply of a strategic and effective leader but rather of a man whose character was firmly rooted in the deeply held spiritual convictions that drove his effectiveness. Consequently, the legacy of Eisenhower's presidency is not merely an historical account of his policies and politics but also a study in character development shaped by biblically based beliefs and standards that enabled him to successfully navigate the complexities of human existence at war and in peace, at home and abroad.

Eisenhower's life exemplified the transformative power of religious convictions which not only shaped his character but also proved instrumental in shaping the society around him. In the pursuit of peace, domestic prosperity, and national security he consistently demonstrated the importance of ethical leadership and a commitment to moral imperatives.⁶⁴⁰ His attitude toward civil rights and social justice, in particular, were informed by his belief in the inherent dignity of every individual, as well as a moral clarity and willingness to confront injustice. Stott's classic text, *Basic*

⁶³⁸ Sandoz describes the Founders conviction in the "centrality of education - broadly conceived as in antiquity as character formation - to the success of free government. "It is not much knowing but deep knowing harmonized by devotion truth and justice that makes the difference.....the spirit of the Founding displays significant kinship with ancient and medieval principle that is in part of the purpose of political order to conduce to *habitual virtue*, to lay foundations for a life lived according to justice and truth, i.e., the inculcation of rudimentary righteousness through the imposed legal and institutional order of society. Only on such a foundation of habit can highest public and personal good be pursued and preserved..... political order is conceived as harmonizing with the 'laws of nature and nature's God' in America as it comes from the hands of the Founders, if it is rightly remembered today." See: Sandoz, *Republicanism, Religion and the Soul of America*, 101.

⁶³⁹ Brooks' work presents a profile of contemporary attitudes contrasted with those of the Eisenhower era. His research suggests that America has seen a broad shift from a culture of humility to a culture of what he refers to as the "Big Me," from a culture that encouraged people to think humbly of themselves to a culture that now encourages people to see themselves as the center of the universe. Brooks cites a number of surveys to support this contention, including one which showed a dramatic drop in the percentage of incoming college freshman who indicated they were strongly motivated to develop a meaningful philosophy of life, i.e. from more than eighty percent to less than forty percent. Brooks concludes that this self-centeredness has been accompanied by a certain self-indulgence from society as a whole, an unwillingness to be critical, but instead focus on supporting self-esteem, perhaps at the loss of character. David Brooks, *The Road to Character* (New York NY: Random House, 2015), 3–15.

⁶⁴⁰ Brooks work emphasized Eisenhower's belief that a leader must exhibit strength, not only of arms but of character. He viewed his role as leader as akin to being a shepherd, guiding his flock through the perils of the Cold War era with patience and wisdom rather than fear. This approach reflected a deeply religious perspective that values each human life and the moral responsibility of leaders to protect and guide their people. Brooks, *The Road to Character*, 49–73.

Christianity, reminds us that we are to be "salt and light."⁶⁴¹ Eisenhower was both, and in being so did much to put the "world to rights" in his own time.

Perhaps a question that may be fairly raised at this point is: So, what? What difference does Eisenhower's character make, either in the context of his presidency or in relation to twenty-first century geopolitics? Did his character not simply reflect the culture of its own day? Should the needs of that time and place not be viewed separately and remain distinct from contemporary affairs? The answer offered in this thesis is quite simply, "No."⁶⁴² The Book of Hosea offers a prescient insight in this context, saying: "And it shall be like people, like priest; I will punish them for their ways and repay them for their deeds."⁶⁴³ This verse implies that the people cannot rise higher than the authorities who lead them. Therefore, leaders of good moral character are required to avoid the potential negative consequences implied in this verse. The portrait of Eisenhower presented here serves as a memorial of good leadership and to the enduring importance of character in leadership. In the current era of morally challenged, hyper partisan politics bereft of long-term thinking,⁶⁴⁴ Eisenhower's legacy as a man of sincere faith offers a unique and inspired model. His blend of moral realism, humility, duty, and courage provide exemplars of highly beneficial criteria for selecting virtuous leaders who can emulate Eisenhower and, in so doing, potentially have an inspired, positive impact on society.

2. Deriving a Meaning of Faith in the Context of Eisenhower's Dictum

The preceding section on character illustrates useful insights and perspective on the meaning of faith in the context of this thesis. The attributes ascribed to Eisenhower include: i) belief in a higher power, *i.e.*, God; ii) recognition of the dignity of the individual; iii) an abiding belief in Judeo-Christian morality and principles; iv) selflessness and self-control; and v) humility. However, those attributes need to be supported by a "faith" that is strong enough to make individuals actually adhere to and practice those principles in order for society to function well.⁶⁴⁵ In the same way that

⁶⁴¹ Writes Stott: "For Jesus Christ described his followers as both 'the salt of the earth' and 'the light of the world' (Matthew 5:13,14). The use of salt before the invention of refrigeration was largely negative - to prevent decay in fish or meat. So Christians should stop society from deteriorating, by helping to preserve moral standards, influence public opinion, and secure just legislation. As the light of the world, Christians are to let their light shine. They have found in Jesus Christ the secret of peace and love, of personal relationships, of changing people for the better; they must share their secret with others. The best contribution anyone can make to putting the world to rights is to live a Christian life, build a Christian home, and radiate the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ." John Stott, *Basic Christianity* (Nottingham, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 2008), 113.

⁶⁴² In matters of character, Noah Webster, known as the "father of American scholarship and education" and author of the eponymous Webster's dictionary, referring to Exodus 18:21 stated: "in selecting men for office, let principle be your guide. Regard not the particular sect [party] of the candidate-look to his character..... It is alleged by men of loose principles or defective views of the subject that religion and morality are not necessary or important qualifications for political stations. But the Scriptures teach a different doctrine. They direct that rulers should be men 'who rule in the fear of God, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness.'" Barton, *The Founders' Bible*, 81.

⁶⁴³ Hosea. 4:9 (ESV).

⁶⁴⁴ See results of Pew Research Poll regarding hyper partisan politics at <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/24/us/politics/partisanship-republicans-democrats-pew-research.html>

⁶⁴⁵ In a parallel fashion, Metaxas warns of "religion masquerading as Christianity and cites Bonhoeffer's distinction in *The Cost of Discipleship* between 'cheap grace' and 'costly grace.' Cheap grace being understood as a superficial, 'easy-believism' approach to Christianity where one can claim the benefits of

Stott has observed that "Christianity is not just about what we *believe*; it's also about how we *behave*," faith in the context of this thesis needs to be deeply felt to the extent that it is not just belief but is an actionable concept.⁶⁴⁶ Consequently, Eisenhower's use of the term "faith" may not have necessarily conformed to any strict theological interpretation of the term. That said, insights into his understanding are best captured in his own words. Paramount among those was his constant emphasis on the critical nature of spiritual matters to the nation's overall well-being, as reflected in his speeches and public remarks. Even prior to assuming the presidency he had declared:

Insistence upon individual freedom springs from unshakeable conviction in the dignity of man, a belief – a religious belief – that through the possession of a soul he [or she] is endowed with certain rights that are his [or hers] not by the sufferance of others, but by reason His very existence.⁶⁴⁷

Again, in 1952, at the dedication ceremony for the Eisenhower Museum, he described his unshakeable belief that faith was the 'real fire' that drove the Founders, saying:

Faith in a Provident God whose hand supported and guided them; faith in themselves as children of God, endowed with purposes beyond the mere struggle for survival; faith in their country and its principles that proclaimed man's right to freedom and justice, rights derived from his divine origin. Today, the nation they built stands as the world's mightiest temporal power, with its position still rooted in faith and spiritual values.⁶⁴⁸

Less than a month later, in a speech given in Boston, Eisenhower polemicized on the function of faith as it instructs that "we are all children of God and that each person's dignity has a divine origin, that our brotherhood has a sublime meaning only when understood to be under God's fatherhood, and that the ideals of our democracy and of our freedom must be much more than sentimental moods or romantic notions."⁶⁴⁹

Eisenhower reiterated these same themes in a 1954 address to the World Christian Endeavor Convention when he averred that a 'spiritual base' necessarily underlay all free government.⁶⁵⁰ Consequently, it is unsurprising that his administration's policies would reflect his belief in 'the spiritual values in man' and 'the dependency of free government upon those spiritual values.'⁶⁵¹

Most significantly, he insisted that the Founders:

grace without truly committing to following Christ. Bonhoeffer criticizes this concept as it cheapens the value of grace and fails to recognize the demands of discipleship. Costly grace, by comparison, is the grace of God that demands everything from the believer. It is grace that requires repentance, obedience, and a commitment to following Christ. Costly grace calls believers to respond with a life of dedication, sacrifice, and service. See: Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity*, 5.

⁶⁴⁶ Stott, *Basic Christianity*, xiii.

⁶⁴⁷ Kornitzer, *The Great American Heritage*, 143. *New York Times*, May 20, 1947, 22.

⁶⁴⁸ *New York Times*, June 5, 1952, 16.

⁶⁴⁹ *New York Times*, November 4, 1952, 23.

⁶⁵⁰ Eisenhower, *Public Papers*, 1954::22-23, 653.

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*

had referred to the Creator [in the Declaration of Independence] in order to make their revolutionary experiment make sense: it was because all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights: that men could dare to be free.⁶⁵²

Given the concern with the spread of Communism during his administration, Eisenhower's remarks about faith and atheism were integral to his personal worldview and his governance strategy.⁶⁵³ Throughout his administration he repeatedly returned to mention of the global contest "between a civilization that is firmly based in a religious faith, and [a civilization that is firmly based in] atheism and materialism."⁶⁵⁴ At the Christian Endeavor Convention cited above, he referred to the contest between America and the Soviet Union as "the great conflict that is going on in the world today." Pierard and Lindner comment that: "In this, one side upheld the freedom and dignity of humanity and thereby recognized its spiritual character; the other lived by the materialistic dialectic and denied all of the values [imbedded in the Founding]."⁶⁵⁵ Eisenhower eloquently concluded:

Only a great moral crusade, determined that men shall rise above this conception of materialism, rise above it and live as people who attempt to express in some faint and feeble way their conceptions of what the Almighty would have us do – that is the force that will win through to victory. Then the world will have prosperity and peace.⁶⁵⁶

Eisenhower's understanding of faith encompassed a profound belief in divine guidance, a belief in human dignity, and a belief in the moral foundations of American democracy. It also assumed a sufficient commitment to the extent of the necessary self-sacrifice and selflessness requisite to supporting and protecting our form of government from its adversaries. It was a multidimensional concept that integrated spiritual, personal, and national elements, each reinforcing the other.⁶⁵⁷ For Eisenhower, faith was not merely a personal virtue but a collective strength, essential to the nation's identity and success. The relevance of his conception of faith to a renaissance is that it underscores the crucial nature of faith-based spiritual and moral values in shaping the destiny of both individuals and nations, particularly those purportedly embracing democratic principles and ideals.

⁶⁵² *New York Times*, September 15, 1952, 1.

⁶⁵³ Woodward writes that "It is hard to remember now how deeply the Cold War between the world's two superpowers contoured the culture and politics of the 1950s.....it was a fierce competition between two ideologies, two very different ways of organizing society, two military powers circling each other like scorpions in a bottle. Above all, political leaders on both sides understood that they represented two radically different belief systems, one officially atheist and the other manifestly religious. And all Americans knew which side God was on." Woodward, *Getting Religion*, 44.

⁶⁵⁴ Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, 198.

⁶⁵⁵ Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, 198.

⁶⁵⁶ Eisenhower, *Public Papers*, 1954:1067, 654-55,

⁶⁵⁷ Woodward concurs, observing that: In many ways, Eisenhower epitomized the 1950s fusion of faith, culture and politics." See: Woodward, *Getting Religion*, 45.

3. Our Form of Government

In his dictum, Eisenhower used the term "our form of government," by which he chiefly meant a "republic." Madison offered a concise definition of "republic" when he wrote:

We may define a Republic to be.... a government which derives all its powers directly or indirectly from the great body of the people, and is administered by persons holding their offices during pleasure for a limited period, or during good behavior. It is essential to such a government that it be derived from the great body of the society, not from an inconsiderable portion or a favored class of it; otherwise a handful of tyrannical nobles, exercising their oppressions by a delegation of their powers, might aspire to the rank of republicans and claim for their government the honorable title of republic.⁶⁵⁸

Madison distinguished a Republic from democracy by saying: "democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contentions; have ever been found incompatible with personal security for the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths."⁶⁵⁹ Moreover, he explained: "in a democracy the people meet and exercise the government in person; [whereas] in a republic they assemble and administer it by their representatives and agents. A democracy, consequently, must be confined to a small spot. A republic may be extended over a large region."⁶⁶⁰

While these definitions are essential to developing a general understanding of the American form of government, it is argued here that there is another aspect to the term that is germane to Eisenhower's use of the phrase "our form of government."⁶⁶¹ Eisenhower undoubtedly believed in America and what it was designed to accomplish; nevertheless, he held certain biblically based convictions about government that were accompanied by clear limitations on what it should or should not do.⁶⁶² His deep knowledge of the Old Testament made him aware of admonitions such as those

⁶⁵⁸ James Madison, *Federalist Papers* (1788) (39), 241.

⁶⁵⁹ James Madison, *Federalist Papers* (1788) (10), 81. Further to this point, Nelson comments in regard to democracy that: "Following Aristotle and other classical authors, seventeenth century political theorists acknowledged the existence of several correct constitutional forms - monarchy, aristocracy, and polity, later called 'republicanism' - which they distinguished from degenerate forms: tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy." See: Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic*, 5.

⁶⁶⁰ James Madison, *Federalist Papers* (1788) (14), 100.

⁶⁶¹ Skousen notes that "today the average American uses the term 'democracy' to describe America's traditional Constitutional republic. But technically speaking, it is not. The Founders had hoped that their decedents would maintain a clear distinction between a democracy and a republic." See: Skousen, *The 5000 Year Leap*, 155. The United States Army Training Manual No. 2000-25, published in 1928, contained an extensive section on the distinction between a democracy and a republic in response to growing concern over the appropriation of the term 'democracy' for 'socialism' when the later term became repugnant after the 1921 violence associated with 'socialism' in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

⁶⁶² Hitchcock writes that "Eisenhower recast domestic politics by strengthening a national consensus about the place of government in the lives of American citizens.....Eisenhower, the least partisan president of modern times, sought to swing back the pendulum from the bold, all-encompassing activism of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal." Hitchcock, *The Age of Eisenhower*, xvii.

contained in the Scriptural account of the Tower of Babel,⁶⁶³ where one finds an unambiguous warning against attempting to create a doomed-to-fail international, "one world" government. While the Tower of Babel was about a universal language, it was also fraught with powerful meaning warning against the imposition of universal government. The inherent problem being that "one world" government is too far removed, too remote, from the most fundamental, basic levels of Creation order.⁶⁶⁴ This is the notion of "subsidiarity." According to Follesdal, "the 'principle of subsidiarity' regulates authority within a political order, directing that powers or tasks should rest with the lower-level sub-units of that order unless allocating them to a higher-level central unit would ensure higher comparative efficiency or effectiveness in achieving them."⁶⁶⁵ The Roman Catholic tradition of subsidiarity - presented in the 1891 encyclical of Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, and developed in Pius XI's 1931 encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* - rests on a particular conception of the person and on a conception of a natural social order.⁶⁶⁶ Complementing this is John XXIII's conception of the state which holds that the state must comply with natural and divine law to serve the common interest.⁶⁶⁷ These views would not have been antithetical to Eisenhower.

The argument that Eisenhower was inclined towards the doctrine of subsidiarity rests on his understanding of America as a Republic and his biblically based worldview.⁶⁶⁸ The term "our form of government," was not merely a reference to the political structure of the United States but encompassed a broader philosophical framework that underpinned his vision of governance. Central to Eisenhower's perspective was an incorporation of Madison's fundamental tenet that emphasized governance derived from the consent of, and representation of, the people in a manner designed to foster

⁶⁶³ *Genesis* 11:1-9.

⁶⁶⁴ *Genesis* begins with the Creator creating human beings in His image, male and female, telling them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. And thus, marriage and family become the most basic unit of civilization, of society. See: *Genesis* 1:11.

⁶⁶⁵ Andreas Follesdal, 'Subsidiarity', *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 6, no. 2 (1998): 231–59, 239.

⁶⁶⁶ Follesdal maintains that *Rerum Novarum* had a dual aim: both to protest capitalistic exploitation of the poor and to protect the Catholic Church against socialism. The Church allows and requires state intervention in the social field, hitherto exclusively a domain for the Church. At the same time, the state is prohibited from absorbing the individual and the family. The latter theme continues in *Quadragesimo Anno*, opposing fascism by stressing the limits on legitimate state interference and downplaying the state's duties of intervention. See: Follesdal, 'Subsidiarity', 251.

⁶⁶⁷ John XXIII. 1961/1981. *Mater et Magistra*. in *The Papal Encyclicals 1958-1981* (Raleigh, N.C.: McGrath; originally issued 1961).

⁶⁶⁸ For an explanation of a starkly contrary philosophic idea, See: Larry P. Arnn, 'The Politics of Freedom', *Imprimis* 52, no. 11 (2023): 1–7, 4. Arnn maintains that "the older philosophic idea, the idea that informs the Constitution, was well described by Aristotle.... It is the idea that humans are fallen creatures, and yet partake of the Divine. Human passions are strong and can lead us astray, but we are also capable of reason. We are born with knowledge of the good and the capacity to make choices or judgments for good or ill. We feel the pressures of our needs, of pains and pleasures, yet something outside these pressures in the human soul – some call it conscience - asks if our intentions or actions are right or wrong. The new philosophic idea rejected the older idea of unchanging human nature and even nature in general. If something does not seem good and you still want to do it, you should do it and call it good. If something causes you pain, it can be fixed. Working hard enough, we can do anything and everything. There are no natural limits or boundaries. The new philosophic idea becomes especially dangerous when combined with technology. It gives humans the ability to get things done, even if it requires overcoming nature. Think of the power to manipulate our thoughts and actions wielded today by large technology companies known as Big Tech." For a related discussion on tacit knowledge, See: Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (Magnolia, MA: Peter Smith Publisher Inc, 1983).

stability and protect individual rights.⁶⁶⁹ Eisenhower's policies and programs bespoke a belief in the importance of distributing authority to lower-level subunits of governance, which emphasized the dignity and autonomy of individuals and smaller communities within the social order.⁶⁷⁰ In contemporary terms, Eisenhower was not a proponent of "big government," and worked assiduously to curb the sprawl of government power in the years after World War II and throughout his administration.

Eisenhower's subsidiarity philosophy and disdain for big government mirrored his understanding of human nature and social organization. More specifically, he recognized that Communist-style centralized control could stifle initiative, diminish accountability, and breed inefficiency. By fostering a culture of civic engagement, Eisenhower believed that subsidiarity could promote self-governance, cultivate a sense of responsibility among citizens, and foster solidarity within communities, which was the very essence of the "form of government" he envisioned in his oft-repeated dictum.⁶⁷¹ Subsidiarity provided a means for ensuring that government intervention was limited to areas where local efforts proved insufficient or where a higher-level authority could genuinely enhance efficiency and effectiveness. By embracing subsidiarity, however, Eisenhower sought to preserve the integrity of the Republic, foster community self-determination, and uphold the dignity and autonomy of individuals within society, individuals made in the image of God.⁶⁷²

4. Making Sense of Societal Cohesion

The foregoing discussion of "our form of government" and the role of "faith" in our form of government (as originally imagined by the Founders) lends itself to not only understanding the essential elements of social cohesion during the Founding period but also to an understanding of how to maintain social cohesion over time. As a threshold matter, it is obvious that all forms of government – whatever form they may be – desire stability and social cohesion. However, the predicate for social cohesion in one form of government does not necessarily apply to another form of government. An extreme example would be an authoritarian regime that rules by force (devoid of any Judeo-Christian morality) versus a healthy democracy animated by Judeo-Christian ideals. As noted above, the thrust of Eisenhower's presidency was to reinvigorate a spiritual awareness in the nation in a manner that would serve to unify the country around a shared Judeo-Christian-based "public philosophy" – a public philosophy that was

⁶⁶⁹ Woodward maintains that the 1950s marked an era when religion, as encouraged by Eisenhower, was firmly embedded in the national culture; however, under this umbrella millions of Americans continued to identify with particular denominational traditions, "living out their lives in communities boundaried by particular beliefs and behaviors that gave them a powerful sense of place." Woodward, *Getting Religion*, 53.

⁶⁷⁰ Subsidiarity dictates that decision-making should be devolved to the most local level capable of addressing issues effectively, thus ensuring responsiveness to the diverse needs and circumstances of communities. See: Paolo G. 38-79 Carozza, 'Subsidiarity as a Structural Principle of International Human Rights Law', *American Journal of International Law* 97, no. 1 (2003): 38–79, 38–79.

⁶⁷¹ "In retrospect," writes Woodward, "Eisenhower's appeals to religion were part of his effort to build a national consensus against the threat of Communism - in China and Korea, as well as the Soviet Union and its 'captive nations' in Eastern Europe. To be American was to believe in God was the message." Woodward, *Getting Religion*, 45.

⁶⁷² See: Genesis 1:27 (NIV) "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

grateful for its heritage (*i.e.*, "appreciated" ⁶⁷³ its heritage), and a public philosophy that was strong enough to resist the spreading tide of Communist domination. Stated differently, because Eisenhower believed deeply in "our form of government," he felt impelled to do whatever was possible and appropriate to encourage "faith," because he recognized that our form of government was dependent upon it.

Several years before his election to the presidency, Eisenhower began speaking about his belief that "a democracy cannot exist without a religious base"⁶⁷⁴ Again after his ascendancy to the presidency, he reiterated that "without God, there could be no American form of government, nor an American way of life."⁶⁷⁵ This thesis refers to similar, equally fervent, expressions of the need for, and the efficaciousness of, strong faith commitments by the citizenry offered by Eisenhower throughout his presidency.⁶⁷⁶ Today, by comparison, commentators like Pageau and Peterson express the view that America has an identity problem. *i.e.*, in the absence of a firm identity it is adrift in chaos and longing....it has no foundation underfoot, nothing to strive toward, prone....to decomposition and strife.⁶⁷⁷ These statements beg the questions: If there is

⁶⁷³ "Appreciate" in this context is intended to mean "to understand and to recognize the full worth of" that heritage. Pageau and Peterson highlight the necessity of inculcating gratitude for our heritage, saying: "Those who reject gratitude for the past in favor of a resentful judgment; those who arrogantly deem themselves morally superior to their parents, merely in consequence of the fortunate time and place of their birth - it is those who will develop the slave-like habits of the people lost in the desert, and who will render themselves defenseless in the face of the blandishments of tyrants. The destruction and replacement of the past - that ever-present revolutionary ideal - destroys the memory of the commonality of error and sin we share with our [Forefathers] and delivers those foolish enough to risk it into the jaws of an authoritarian dragon. For such reasons it is necessary to recover, preserve, embody, and understand our collective past." See: Pageau, Jonathan and Peterson, Jordan, *Identity: Individual and the State versus the Subsidiary Hierarchy of Heaven* (London, 2023), 22.

⁶⁷⁴ Kornitzer, *The Great American Heritage*, 143. *New York Times*, December 4, 1946, 28.

⁶⁷⁵ Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, 197. Skousen concurs: "without religion, the government of a free people cannot be maintained." He further notes that religion and the American institutions of freedom were intentionally combined as a support for the whole Constitutional framework, noting that: "The sanctity of civil rights and property rights, as well as the obligations of citizens to support the Constitution in protecting their unalienable rights, were all based on religious precepts." See: Skousen, *The 5000 Year Leap*, 92.

⁶⁷⁶ During the height of the American Civil War, Benjamin Morris wrote: "The permanence of any empire must rest in the *ideas* of the people. If then there be no such ideas, no great enduring principle of spiritual life, there can be no perpetuity of national existence. If there be no grand, sublime, and imperishable *thought*, filling the soul of a people with its fire and fashioning their progress after its pattern, there can be no sense in which they may escape the inevitable mutations of the world, or avoid the fate of so many that have gone before. The most powerful empires of the past have perished because they were wanting in principle strong enough and spiritual enough to resist the self-destructive energies of human nature. (author's emphasis) Morris, *Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States*, 24. Solzhenitsyn highlights the dangerous role of ideology in justifying evil actions, asserting that individuals often seek a rationale for their deeds, even when those deeds are harmful or immoral. Ideology provides the necessary framework for evil-doing, allowing perpetrators to convince themselves that their actions are justified and to steadfastly pursue their destructive goals. Said Solzhenitsyn: "To do evil, a human being must first of all believe that what he's doing is good... Ideology - that is what gives evil-doing its long-sought justification and gives the evildoer the necessary steadfastness and determination." Consequently, it is incumbent on the individual to critically examine the ideologies we encounter and to recognize how they can shape perceptions of right and wrong; and, to question the narratives that lead to harmful outcomes. Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn and Edward E. Ericson, *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918-1956: An experiment in literary investigation* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2007).

⁶⁷⁷ Pageau, Jonathan and Peterson, Jordan, *Identity*, 1.

no longer any religious identification or nexus does the Republic, as understood by Eisenhower, continue to exist? Or, if the country no longer believes in its own motto, "In God We Trust," or its own Pledge of Allegiance premised upon the phrase "under God," can there be an American form of government consistent with Founders' (and Eisenhower's) assumptions?

The line of argument advanced throughout this thesis is that at its Founding, America essentially subscribed a set of values attributable to a biblical worldview. More specifically, that biblical worldview was one that embraced Judeo-Christian moral principles.⁶⁷⁸ Those principles served as the connective sinew of societal cohesion for the first century and a half of the country's existence. As Berman alluded, for centuries the prevailing notion held that American law was intrinsically tied to religious and moral principles, serving as a reflection of an objective justice or the ultimate purpose of life.⁶⁷⁹ This belief system underpinned the American legal framework,⁶⁸⁰ guiding lawmakers and shaping societal norms well into the mid-twentieth century.⁶⁸¹ However, no longer is law perceived as a manifestation of divine or moral imperatives; instead, it is increasingly viewed through a political or instrumental lens.⁶⁸² Given the

⁶⁷⁸ Prager's Rational Bible series summarizes Judeo-Christian principles as follows: i) there is one God; ii) there are objective moral truths; iii) because there are objective moral truths, good and evil are the same for all people; iv) God – not man nor government – is the source of our rights; v) humans are created in the image of God; therefore, each human life is precious; vi) the world is based on a divine order; vii) man is possessed of a sinful nature; therefore it is morally dangerous to be led by our emotions; viii) the Ten Commandments represent the core of Judeo-Christian values; and, ix) humans have free will; behavior is constrained neither by biology nor environment. See: Dennis Prager, *The Rational Bible: Genesis: God, Creation, and Destruction*, ed. Joseph Telushkin (Washington DC: Regnery Faith, 2019); Dennis Prager, *The Rational Bible: Numbers: God and Man in the Wilderness* (Washington DC: Regnery Faith, 2024); Dennis Prager, *The Rational Bible: Exodus: God, Slavery and Freedom* (Washington DC: Regnery Faith, 2018).

⁶⁷⁹ Harold J. Berman, 'The Crisis of Legal Education in America', *Boston College Law Review* 26, no. 2 (1985): 347–52, 349

⁶⁸⁰ In his book, *The Unwritten Constitution*, Professor Amar makes the interesting observation that one cannot fully understand the United States Constitution without viewing it in the context of common law as the common law was understood at that time. See: Akhil R. Amar, *America's Unwritten Constitution: The Precedents and Principles We Live By* (New York NY: Basic Books, 2012). Professor Cook in a law review article on common law states: "In his Commentaries on the Laws of England, Blackstone articulated a thoroughly Christian jurisprudence. Blackstone identified God as the source of law: '[m]an, considered as a creature, must necessarily be subject to the laws of his creator, for he is entirely a dependent being.... This will of his maker is called the law of nature. This law of nature being coeval with mankind and dictated by God himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe in all countries, and at all times; no human laws are of any validity, if contrary to this; and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their authority, mediately or immediately, from this original.'" See: Douglas H. Cook, 'Sir William Blackstone: A Life and Legacy Set Apart for God's Work', *Regent University Law Review* 13 (2000-2001): 169–77, 175.

⁶⁸¹ For a discussion of how law has been transformed through the "weaponization" of law, See: Orde F. Kittrie, *Lawfare: Law as a Weapon of War* (New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2016).

⁶⁸² See: Berman, 'The Crisis of Legal Education in America.' Central to this shift is the ascendancy of pragmatism, which prioritizes practical consequences over abstract principles. In this pragmatic paradigm, the primary concern becomes what is expedient for the community rather than adherence to moral absolutes. Law is no longer seen as a reflection of objective truth but as a tool wielded by lawmakers to achieve their preferred societal goals. Consequently, the moral theory that law is grounded in anything that is biblically based has waned in influence (if not totally disappeared), supplanted by a more utilitarian approach focused on outcomes rather than moral imperatives or ethical principles. In a Constitutional context, James Madison warned of continually creating new ways of prosecuting government officials for treason, writing: "New-fangled and artificial treasons have been the great engines by which violent

cultural shift and changing worldview exemplified by the train of Supreme Court First Amendment decisions described in this thesis, a case can actually be made that perhaps the country no longer does exist in the same form.⁶⁸³ The Court has effectively ensured that as a matter of public policy America does not consciously subscribe to, or adhere to, or even acknowledge, a Biblical worldview, instead favoring increasingly strong judicial protections for a secular perspective and secular morality.⁶⁸⁴

In essence, the past sixty years have witnessed a form of cultural antinomianism in America.⁶⁸⁵ Perhaps this should not be totally unexpected.⁶⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the

factions, the natural offspring of free government, have usually wreaked their alternate malignity on each other." See: James Madison, *Federalist Papers* (1788) (43).

⁶⁸³ See: Wilton H. Strickland, *Unlawful Government: Preserving America in a Post-Constitutional Age* (Conshohocken, PA: Infinity Publishing, 2006). Benjamin Morris citing Alexander Hamilton noted: The following fell from the lips of Mr. Hamilton on his resignation of the office of Secretary of the Treasury, in 1795. Holding his hand on a small book containing a copy of the Federal Constitution, he said, 'Now, mark my words! So long as we are a young and virtuous people, this instrument will bind us together in mutual interest, mutual welfare, and mutual happiness; but when we become old and corrupt it will bind us no longer.' " See: Morris, *Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States*, 320.

⁶⁸⁴ Justice White's dissenting opinions in these cases underscored his stance against what he perceived as the ever-increasing secularization wrought by the Court's majority decisions, and White's commitment to preserving religious expression within the bounds of the Constitution. See: *Stone v. Graham*, 449 U.S. 39 (1980), *Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. 668 (1984), and *County of Allegheny v. American Civil Liberties Union*, 492 U.S. 573 (1989). One of the interesting paradoxes that the Supreme Court has failed to resolve is the fact that its First Amendment jurisprudence rests on a letter from Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury Baptists, dated January 1, 1802) which famously called for a "wall of separation" between church and state. However, the Founders, and Jefferson in particular, wrote approvingly of religious meetings in tax supported buildings, i.e., there was no objection to the propriety of using public buildings for religious purposes. Indeed, it was to be encouraged, the only question was with respect to the facilities being made equally available to all denominations. See: Skousen, *The 5000 Year Leap*, 91. Jefferson himself wrote that: "In our village of Charlottesville, there is a good degree of religion, with a small spice of only of fanaticism. We have four sects, but without either church or meeting house. The courthouse is the common temple, one Sunday of the month to each. Here, Episcopalian and Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist, meet together, join in hymning their Maker, listen with attention and devotion to each other's preachers, and all mix in society with perfect harmony." Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, trans. Albert E. Bergh (A Public Domain Book, 2011), 15:404.

⁶⁸⁵ There are numerous possible causes for cultural antinomianism, but one interesting, non-theological explanation is offered by Sowell, who observes that most people fall into two idealized "visions" of human nature, what Sowell refers to as constrained (also known as the Tragic vision which is associated with being conservative) and the unconstrained (also known as the Utopian vision which is associated with being liberal). These visions are typically intuitive for the person who holds them and anathema to the person of opposing vision. From his characterization of each vision Sowell explains how the assumptions undergirding each vision invariably lead to different assumptions by the Tragic and the Utopian on essential issues like freedom, equality, justice, and power. See: Thomas Sowell, *A Conflict of Visions: Ideological Origins of Political Struggles* (New York NY: Basic Books, 2007).

⁶⁸⁶ If one reads Plato's *Republic*, he offers an intriguing critique on democracies. It provides a systematic examination of political and social structures, touching on their moral and ethical dimensions. In his critique of democracy, Plato makes the point that over time the concepts of "equality and freedom" become altered. Initially, democracies treat all citizens equally before the law and lift economic restrictions, thereby promoting free enterprise. However, over time the poor of other nations – with different dispositions dominating their souls - migrate to the democracy, which eventually leads to the democracy's destruction. as the meaning of "equal" morphs into a paradigm where the "inferior" dominate their "betters" and injustice ensues. Plato predicted that all subordinates would demand liberation from their oppressors, with all pleasure being considered equal and each individual free to indulge them. However, once everything is the same, there exists no legitimate grounds for authority or standards for determining what is "better" or "worse." Ultimately, this unfettered freedom and equality erupt into chaos

potential perils resulting from this trend away from the religious mindset of the Eisenhower era toward reliance solely on reason and secularism should not be ignored in terms of their impact on societal cohesion where there has been "a radical rupture from religious belief" essentially consistent with Marxian theory.⁶⁸⁷

Renn's work describes the "transition" the country has undergone during the past sixty years to a completely secularized society.⁶⁸⁸ He does this by identifying three different periods:⁶⁸⁹ i) the Positive World (Pre-1994); ii) the Neutral World (1994-2014); and, iii) the Negative World (2014-Present).⁶⁹⁰ In the Positive World, society had a mostly positive view of Christianity.⁶⁹¹ In the Neutral World, society had a neutral stance toward Christianity.⁶⁹² In the Negative World society has come to hold a negative view of Christianity. Asserts Renn: "Being known as a Christian in this third stage is a social negative, particularly in the elite domains of society. Christian morality is expressly repudiated and seen as a threat to the public good and the new public moral order. Subscribing to Christian moral views or violating the secular moral order brings negative consequences."⁶⁹³ However, Renn's work is more than an exercise in cultural taxonomy. While providing a high-level view of societal trends, he also describes their accompanying ideological frameworks, most especially the secular morality which has

and the limited democratic state has no basis for control. The government becomes increasingly ineffective, as it endeavours to cater to the whims of the masses, as politicians vainly attempt to appeal to the lowest common denominator, *i.e.*, the base appetites of the people. As a consequence of the ever-evolving chaos, the people are increasingly inconvenienced by their own self-indulgence. Sheldon, *The Political Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson*, 16–24.

⁶⁸⁷ See: Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students* (New York NY: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 1987), 196. Since the 1960s, movements such as the civil rights movement, second-wave feminism, LGBTQ+ rights movements, and the counterculture of the 1960s challenged traditional norms of morality, gender, family, and authority, many of which had been rooted in religious belief. Marxist movements and intellectuals often supported or paralleled these movements by offering critiques of traditional structures, including religion, as forms of oppression or tools of class control. For example, the Frankfurt School of critical theory, which drew on Marxist ideas, played a significant role in critiquing capitalist culture, traditional family structures, and the role of religion in legitimizing social hierarchies.

⁶⁸⁸ What Renn describes as the "story of American secularization." Aaron M. Renn, 'The Three Worlds of Evangelicalism', *First Things* no. 2 (2022): 25–31, 26.

⁶⁸⁹ Renn notes that "the dating of these transitions is, of necessity, impressionistic," and, therefore, could shift a few years in any direction. Renn, 'The Three Worlds of Evangelicalism', 26.

⁶⁹⁰ Renn, 'The Three Worlds of Evangelicalism', 26.

⁶⁹¹ Renn's general view is that for most of American history, being Christian (especially Protestant) was regarded as a social benefit. As previously noted, church attendance peaked in the 1950s, and the ruling class was Christian, in name if not always in practice. Aaron M. Renn, *Life in the Negative World: Confronting Challenges in the Anti-Christian Culture* (Grand Rapids Mich.: Zondervan, 2024), 6–17.

⁶⁹² Renn notes that the hallmark of the neutral period was an effort by Christians at appeasement and cultural engagement, as opposed to the more strident culture war strategy of the earlier period that was characterized by a highly combative stance toward the emerging secular culture. Renn, 'The Three Worlds of Evangelicalism', 26.

⁶⁹³ Renn, 'The Three Worlds of Evangelicalism', 26.

unofficially replaced the Judeo-Christian morality⁶⁹⁴ in the Negative World.⁶⁹⁵ The combination of the Negative World ethos and secular morality⁶⁹⁶ has unfettered all three branches of American government to rationalize the establishment of a penumbra of "rights" hitherto unimagined during first one hundred-fifty years of the country's existence.⁶⁹⁷ Regardless of the nomenclature used to describe the transition to the new secular and social order, Renn's conclusion is that it can never coexist with an actual biblically based worldview because Christianity rejects all the fundamental premises of this new secular order.⁶⁹⁸

Renn's other insight is that many contemporary Christians do not have the requisite deeply felt, self-sacrificing, selfless type of faith Eisenhower espoused, as described earlier in this concluding chapter.⁶⁹⁹ Instead, he sees many self-identified Christians attempting to secure acceptance into contemporary society by bringing their historical doctrines into alignment with the world's evolving standards.⁷⁰⁰ Renn notes that this pull toward compromise in an effort to be culturally accepted creates a fertile environment for the continued abandonment of a biblically based worldview which

⁶⁹⁴ Notes Renn: "Previously, Christian moral norms provided ethical standards for behavior in society even by non-Christians. The decline of the status of Christianity and its moral systems has removed the social bulwarks against the emergence of leaders lacking in character. Once the moral frameworks that previously governed society are removed, those who are horrified by leaders of bad character no longer have access to standards by which they can make critiques that will be socially viewed as objective, valid, and rooted in eternal truths. In essence, traditional Christian standards of public morality for leaders no longer apply in today's world." Renn, *Life in the Negative World*, 9–10.

⁶⁹⁵ See: Renn, *Life in the Negative World*, xiii–xviii.

⁶⁹⁶ The Book of Daniel 3:4-6 (NIV) contains an apocryphal story: "Then the herald loudly proclaimed, 'Nations and peoples of every language, this is what you are commanded to do: As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipe and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.'" Various dimensions of the new secular morality may be analogized to the golden idol of these verses; and, various dictates of contemporary government may be analogized to the dictates of Nebuchadnezzar. The question this raises is what do those who hold orthodox Christian beliefs do? In his circumstances, Daniel put his trust in God and faith in the Scriptures. See: Book of Daniel.

⁶⁹⁷ At another time and in another context, Benjamin Morris made an observation that seems apt to the circumstance described above: "A class of men without conscience, and reckless of moral restraint, have gained ascendancy in public favor, and assume from their prominent position to mold and direct the public sentiment of the nation. The general influence upon public morals has been like a wind in the desert, - poisonous, withering, and destructive." Morris, *Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States*, 16.

⁶⁹⁸ Renn, *Life in the Negative World*, 8–9.

⁶⁹⁹ See also Metaxas' discussion of the "characteristics of 'mere religion,'" where Metaxas asserts this "trend has manifested itself most notably when people attempt to pull the great mysteries of God downward into something manageable. Jesus declared the He was 'the Way, the truth, and the Life,' but it is our human instinct to make this more manageable. We might say, for example, if you assent to these watered-down doctrines, you are in the club." Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity*, 76.

⁷⁰⁰ Renn, *Life in the Negative World*, 34–36. Graham references 1 *Corinthians* 3:19: "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God," to make the point that some wrongly contend that the way for the church to make the world a better place is to become like it. Notes Graham: "whenever the church does this, it ends up compromising its spiritual authority and losing its influence. Instead of changing the world, the world changes it." See: Billy Graham, *Hope for Each Day* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 193.

undercuts the traditional foundation for societal cohesion and sets the stage for the need for a cultural - or more specifically a religious - irredentism, as discussed *infra*.⁷⁰¹

However before considering the concept of irredentism in whatever form it may take, reference is made to the issue of "tolerance."⁷⁰² Tolerance in American democracy can: i) verge into cultural relativism where all viewpoints are considered equally valid regardless of their implications thereby hindering critical debate and the establishment of shared values requisite to a cohesive society; ii) marginalize dissenting voices due to the pressure to conform to a tolerant, politically correct discourse that can stifle genuine disagreement and debate; or, iii) lead to moral indifference by accepting all perspectives and behaviors without critical evaluation whereupon society fails to uphold essential ethical standards and values. Further to this issue, in 1965 Frankfurt School Marxist⁷⁰³ Herbert Marcuse wrote an essay titled *Repressive Tolerance*.⁷⁰⁴ In it, Marcuse distinguished between two specific kinds of tolerance. First, there is what he called "bad" or "false" tolerance. This is the sort of tolerance that most individuals would ascribe to be "true" or "actual" tolerance, the type of tolerance which historically undergirded liberal democracy. Second, there is what Marcuse identified as "liberating tolerance," which he defined as "intolerance against movements from the Right and toleration for movements from the Left. As Kimball notes of Marcuse's distinction: "This new dispensation is 'I disapprove of what you say, therefore you may not say it.'"⁷⁰⁵

⁷⁰¹ Colson asserts that: "The church's singular failure in recent decades has been the failure to see Christianity as a life system, or worldview, that governs every area of human existence. This failure has been crippling, most especially in efforts to have a redemptive effect on the surrounding culture. At its most fundamental level, the so-called culture war is essentially a clash of belief systems.....As agents of God's common grace, we are called to help sustain His creation and to uphold the created institutions of family and society." See: Colson, Charles and Pearcey, Nancy, *How Now Shall We Live?* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1999), xii.

⁷⁰² In 1835 Alexis de Tocqueville authored *Democracy in America*, which is widely regarded as a seminal study of political philosophy and a landmark commentary on American democracy. In his classic work, Tocqueville noted that the freedom that he witnessed in America was not the mere absence of controls, rather it was the contrapositive. It was self-control and selflessness borne of a combination of individual sovereignty and moral responsibility. In Tocqueville's own words: "Thus, while the law permits Americans to do what they please, religion prevents them from conceiving, and forbids them to commit, what is rash or unjust." See: Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America: The Henry Reeve Text as Revised by Francis Bowen Now Further Corrected and Edited with Introduction, Editorial Notes, and Bibliographies by Phillips Bradley*, with a New Introduction by Daniel Boorstin (New York NY: Vintage Books Edition, 1990), 635. However, by the mid-twentieth century after the Eisenhower era, popular television commentator Bishop Fulton J Sheen was to observe that: "America, it is said, is now suffering from intolerance - it is not. It is suffering from tolerance. Tolerance of right and wrong, truth and error, virtue and evil, Christ and chaos. Our country is not nearly so overrun with the bigoted as it is overrun with the broadminded." Fulton J. Sheen, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/650569-america-it-is-said-is-suffering-from-intolerance-it>.

⁷⁰³ *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848 promised, as one program" the "abolition of private property;" the "abolition of the family;" a "radical rupture" with religious belief; and "the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions." See: Marx, Karl and Engels, Friedrich, *The Communist Manifesto*, A Penguin Classics Hardcover (London: Penguin Classics; Reprint Edition, 2015).

⁷⁰⁴ See: Rodney Fopp, 'Repressive Tolerance: Herbert Marcuse's Exercise in Social Epistemology', *Social Epistemology* 24, no. 2 (2010): 105–22.

⁷⁰⁵ Roger Kimball, 'Shall We Defend Our Common History?' *Imprimis* 48, no. 2 (2019): 1–13, 12.

Consequently- and to the extent that "liberating tolerance" governs contemporary discourse - as a predicate to undertaking any form of irredentism, it is imperative to be aware of, and to have strategies to overcome, the imposition of "liberating tolerance," bearing in mind that Marcuse's disciples aim to counteract what they see as reactionary forces which threaten their vision of social progress. Insofar as religious irredentism may align with conservative ideologies aiming to reclaim and reassert traditional religious values and morality, the framework of "liberating tolerance" will remain an impediment to their propagation and influence, conjuring a sort of social existentialism which needs to be overcome through an intelligent design for that specific purpose.

B. Cultural Irredentism

It may seem incongruous at this point to introduce the concept of neuroscience into this thesis; however, a recent work by a prominent neuroscientist may further elaborate on a possible explanation why - from a scientific perspective - Eisenhower placed emphasis on the need for a shared, deeply felt faith. Ranganath traces the development of the frontal cortex in humans and its function at various stages of life.⁷⁰⁶ Memories, what Ranganath calls "episodes," are things that individuals and societies build on. The frontal cortex, which is associated with these episodic memories, aids in being able to focus on specific tasks and goals in different ways at varying stages of life. It is most developed in late adolescence and early adulthood. However, in older members of society it declines when they typically no longer need to create new episodic memories in order to know how to live; instead, it is used to preserve and to pass along to younger generations the elders' memories, more specifically, knowledge of the culture and knowledge of the world, which are otherwise known as the "semantic memories."⁷⁰⁷ In indigenous cultures this is the recognized and venerated role of the elders. They are not disregarded as irrelevant men or women of diminished capacity.⁷⁰⁸ They are respected for the knowledge they are able to transmit. Ranganath concludes that this principle of semantic memory works to preserve and maintain the ecology of the system.⁷⁰⁹ There are various examples described in this thesis through which Eisenhower may be viewed as having engaged in transmitting a fundamentally crucially important type of knowledge designed to maintain the unique ecology of the system we identify as the American form of government.⁷¹⁰ Colson approaches this issue of transmitting

⁷⁰⁶ Charan Ranganath, *Why We Remember: Unlocking memory's power to hold on to what matters* (New York: Doubleday, 2024).

⁷⁰⁷ As the author of this thesis approaches his eightieth year, he feels a sense of self-identification with this construct.

⁷⁰⁸ As Pageau and Peterson note: "We cannot have respect for ourselves, security, or hope for the future while denigrating the past, because those who dwelled in the past are no different in essence from those who live now and you will live later. That does not mean that we have no responsibility to redress the sins of those who came before us: deviations once made and then followed require course correction, but that atonement and repair should be in a spirit of humility, rather than pride." Pageau, Jonathan and Peterson, Jordan, *Identity*, 23.

⁷⁰⁹ Ranganath, *Why We Remember*.

⁷¹⁰ In this same vein, Sacks observes that: "Deuteronomy, in particular, tells us that freedom requires engagement by each of us; it cannot be delegated away or outsourced to governments alone. It tells us that we need to preserve our collective memories if we are to safeguard our identity and keep faith with the past for the sake of the future and for generations not yet born. It is a brilliant, beautiful fusion of high religious sentiment and detailed social legislation that has never been surpassed. It was and remains a political classic, reminding us of the fundamental truth that we are in danger of forgetting: that a free

knowledge from a religious perspective, *i.e.*, a biblical perspective, asserting that while we, as individuals, need prayer, Bible study and worship, if we focus exclusively on these disciplines and in the process ignore our responsibility to redeem the surrounding culture then our faith will remain privatized and marginalized and society will continue to decline in the absence of that knowledge.⁷¹¹ Writes Colson: "Turning our backs on the culture is betrayal of our biblical mandate and our heritage because it denies God's sovereignty over all of life."⁷¹²

Colson's observations raise the issue of whether there is a need for, or a benefit to, a cultural - or more specifically a religious - irredentism in the contemporary context. Religious irredentism, as the term is used here, is intended to mean a movement to reclaim and reintegrate aspects of society perceived as having been lost or estranged. The concept originates from a belief that society, or at least certain spheres in society, have deviated from foundational religious values and principles. This deviation has gradually manifested itself in the form of extreme secularism, moral relativism, and the continued erosion of traditional religious norms, especially in the years following the Eisenhower era of 'civil religion.' The basis for encouraging religious irredentism in the context of this thesis is a recognition of vital, foundational role religious values and principles play(ed) in maintaining our form of government, as identified by Eisenhower.

In this regard, Richard Niebuhr offers a particularly useful Christian-centric framework for understanding and evaluating this need.⁷¹³ Niebuhr identifies five paradigms of the relationship between Christ (and hence, Christianity) and culture, which Renn summarizes as follows: "Though shaped by the Christianity of the 1950s America, Niebuhr timeless models for relating Christianity and culture are: Christ against culture,⁷¹⁴ Christ of culture,⁷¹⁵ Christ above culture,⁷¹⁶ Christ and culture in paradox,⁷¹⁷ and Christ transforming culture."⁷¹⁸ Each paradigm highlights different ways in which individuals and religious communities can interact with and influence their cultural

society is a moral achievement, and without active citizenship exercised for the common good, we will lose that freedom which is God's greatest gift to us." Sacks, *Covenant & Conversation: Deuteronomy*, 16.

⁷¹¹ Colson, Charles and Pearcey, Nancy, *How Now Shall We Live?*, x.

⁷¹² Colson, Charles and Pearcey, Nancy, *How Now Shall We Live?*, x. Stott reminds us that "Christianity is not just about what we *believe*; it's also about how we *behave*.... Our intellectual belief may be beyond criticism; but we have to put our beliefs into practice by taking our place as loyal members of the church and responsible citizens in the community." See: Stott, *Basic Christianity*, xiii.

⁷¹³ Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*. *N.B.* Niebuhr's work was first published in 1951. However, the edition cited in this thesis is the 1975 Harper and Row edition, the 1951 edition being out of print.

⁷¹⁴ This paradigm emphasizes the fundamental opposition between Christian values and prevailing cultural norms, underscoring the belief that the secularization of society represents moral and spiritual crises that necessitate a countercultural response. See: Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 45–82.

⁷¹⁵ This paradigm seeks to harmonize Christian teachings with cultural values, often leading to compromises. See: Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 83–115.

⁷¹⁶ This paradigm sees culture as fundamentally good but in need of completion by Christian revelation. See: Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 116–48.

⁷¹⁷ This paradigm recognizes the tension between the fallen nature of the world and the transformative potential of Christian influence. See: Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 149–89.

⁷¹⁸ Renn, *Life in the Negative World*, 29.

contexts. Particularly relevant to this thesis is the Christ transforming culture paradigm, which provides a constructive vision for religious irredentism.⁷¹⁹

Both Renn and Metaxas have suggestions on how to go about the Christ transforming culture paradigm. Renn argues for intellectual excellence in all walks of life, informed by Christian beliefs and values.⁷²⁰ Implied in his argument is Renn's belief that for various reasons Christians currently lack the ability to hold leadership positions in critical institutions. Consequently, to have any hope of maintaining, or, more properly, regaining status in society - and to proselytize the ruling class - excellence is a fundamental prerequisite to securing these positions.⁷²¹ However, excellence, Renn believes, can only be achieved by Christians of sincere faith who are willing to demand it of themselves in all areas of daily life. Metaxas, on the other hand, advocates a more aggressive approach to irredentism. He believes the church in America is failing because it has failed to recognize or acknowledge what he perceives as the "evilness of evil."⁷²² To this end, he asserts that: "If you do not recognize the genuine reality of what you are facing, you will certainly not risk everything fighting it. Why would you?"⁷²³ Metaxas' position is diametrically opposed to the idea that the church should

⁷¹⁹ See, generally: Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 190–229. Niebuhr references Augustine and the conversion of culture in this regard, saying: "According to Augustine's interpretation, the regeneration of human society through the replacement of pagan by Trinitarian principles is the theme of that Christian movement which Athanasius and Ambrose began and which Augustine brought to a great climax in his *City of God*. These men achieved the sound theory for the renewal of human cultural existence that Roman Caesars and thinkers had essayed in vain because their first principles were fatally self-contradictory." 206. The question suggested by this is whether there are self-contradictory principles embedded into current secular moral and cultural values to lead to the same destructive ends as in the case of the Roman empire.

⁷²⁰ Renn, *Life in the Negative World*, 63–78.

⁷²¹ McFarlane offers an insightful perspective on attaining excellence in terms of our knowledge of God, writing: "We have knowledge of God because God chooses to make that possible. It is God who reveals God. What we do is seek to understand this revelation, which is safeguarded for us in Scripture. Scripture for this reason, always takes primacy. This is a fundamental and absolute technique – always put Scripture first. This technique, in turn, takes on a life of its own once we make it a habit. It is an automatic response, one that offers us the flexibility to respond to any question or problem: *What does Scripture have to say on this matter?* Of course, to be able to answer with any quality, we must be, on the other hand, familiar enough with Scripture that we can speak it out, and on the other hand, so indwelt by Scripture ourselves that our ongoing responses draw us stage by stage more closely into its world and orbit." See: Graham McFarlane, *A Model for Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020), 241.

⁷²² Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity*, 41. Metaxas, who is a Bonhoeffer scholar, has noted that: "Human beings will always find new ways to fool themselves in new 'religious' ways, and God in His mercy will always send His prophets to help them to see how they have again fooled themselves. Bonhoeffer was one of those prophets. He saw that in the four hundred years since Luther, so much emphasis had been put on being saved by faith and not by works that the idea of living out one's faith via works had been lost. As a result, the German church in the early 1930s had become flabby and essentially useless. When the evil of the Nazis came into culture, the church was not up to the job of heroically standing against it. The people didn't have the faith necessary and therefore could not summon the will. And if we do not have the will to fight, we persuade ourselves that perhaps the prudent thing to do is make peace with our foes on the best terms possible. See: Eric Metaxas, *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2020), and Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity*, 39.

⁷²³ Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity*, 41. Metaxas' comment is evocative of Martin Niemöller's prophetic poem: "First they came for the Communists and I did not speak out - because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the Socialists and I did not speak out - because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out - because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews and I did not speak out - because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me - and

remain confined within its own "theological" or "religious" sphere, believing instead that this is the "perfect opposite of what real faith asks – which is to take our faith out of the merely religious sphere and into the world in which we live." ⁷²⁴

The position of this thesis set out below borrows in varying degrees from both Renn and Metaxas. It strives to encourage excellence in each step outlined below, while seeking to be bold enough to find ways in which to take faith beyond the private sphere when it is for the good of societal cohesion and thoroughgoing revitalization of shared, traditional Judeo-Christian moral and spiritual values. These steps advocated in this thesis should be undertaken in the spirit of aiding in, and supporting, a restoration of Eisenhower's guiding vision for the country.⁷²⁵

1. Cultural Analysis: Undertake an analysis: i) to enable a deeper understanding of the specific areas where cultural estrangement has occurred, including analyzing societal trends, institutions, and practices that have deviated from religious norms; and, ii) to identify priority areas for engagement and involvement.

2. Community: Design, build and actualize cohesive and committed intellectual communities characterized by high degrees of excellence that can successfully invigorate an irredentist movement, strengthened by refining and honing their apologetical skills and abilities for external engagement.

3. Engagement: Open communication with adjacent cultural groups by engaging in well-prepared, well-considered dialogues and creating alliances predicated on the positive contributions of religious values to societal well-being and cohesion.

4. Advocacy: Work collaboratively with like-minded organizations on influencing public policy to reflect religious, faith-based values through active, thoughtfully designed participation in the political process, including lobbying, for the ultimate purpose of promoting legislation that aligns with Judeo-Christian morals and values.

5. Education: Recognize that high quality education is the most effective manner of preserving and promoting culture and passing on our spiritual heritage.⁷²⁶ Strive for re-orientation of curricula that supports that spiritual heritage.

6. Media and Technology: Leverage media and technology to disseminate faith-based, biblically oriented messages emphasizing Judeo-Christian values. This necessitates employing content that resonates with contemporary audiences and creatively utilizes digital platforms to reach a wider audience.

there was no one left to speak for me." See: Matthew D. Hockenos, *Then They Came for Me: The Pastor Who Defied the Nazis* (New York NY: Basic Books, 2018), 3.

⁷²⁴ Metaxas, *Religionless Christianity*, 41–42.

⁷²⁵ A reader of this thesis who has reached this point is asked to again consider the discussion of Graham and Niebuhr in Chapter Three of this thesis, and the relevance of that discussion to contemporary circumstances, *i.e.*, the need to identify and encourage 21st century individuals of the caliber of Niebuhr, the towering intellectual who engaged the intelligentsia, and Graham, the kind, thoughtful and charismatic evangelist who touched millions of lives, whose combined efforts aided in changing the cultural climate of their era, as examples of applied faith.

⁷²⁶ "That is how cherished things of one generation become the cherished things of the next." See: Aryeh Spero, *Push Back: Reclaiming the American Judeo-Christian Spirit* (Mobile: Evergreen Press, 2012), 7.

7. Interfaith Cooperation: Coordinate with other faith traditions that share similar values. Use interfaith cooperation to amplify the impact of irredentist efforts and create a broader coalition for cultural transformation.

A modern "civil religion," if it is to be effective and inclusive, must balance the appeal of the past with the realities of the present, fostering a sense of national identity that is both rooted in Judeo-Christian traditions yet open to progress and change. As Hill rightly cautions, "the task of theology today, as in every age, is to restate the Christian message in terms that contemporary people can understand."⁷²⁷ It is the conviction of this thesis that Eisenhower, for his part and in his time, was an exemplary model of the ability to successfully integrate religious values into mid-twentieth century political and cultural contexts.⁷²⁸ His leadership approach provided tangible proof that religious principles, properly understood and conveyed, could coexist with contemporary culture and enhance societal cohesion.⁷²⁹

C. Historiography

This thesis has touched on two different strands of historiography: i) historiography with regard to Eisenhower; and, ii) historiography with respect to America as a Christian nation.

As demonstrated, the historiography of the Eisenhower presidency has undergone various interpretations, evaluations, and reevaluations over time, reflecting shifts in historical perspectives, political ideologies, and scholarly methodologies. The initial assessments of his presidency were mixed. Critics highlighted his cautious approach to domestic issues, such as civil rights,⁷³⁰ and perceived his leadership style as

⁷²⁷ Hill, *The History of Christian Thought*, 263. Hill comments that: "Someone watching the theological scene at the close of the 19th century could have never guessed what was going to come next. Science and biblical criticism seemed to have wiped out traditional, metaphysical Christianity; the only options left were unthinking fundamentalism and a weak liberalism. But the 20th century saw an extraordinary resurgence of interest in classical theology of the kind pioneered by the church fathers and perfected by the medieval theologians. The unique horrors of the 20th century and the collapse of society's faith in reason and progress that had marked the earlier modern period meant that the rational theology of the preceding two centuries no longer seemed relevant. At the same time, the waning of Christianity in Europe and its rapid growth in other parts of the world meant theology took on a far more international, and varied, nature." Hill's point being the need to restate the Christian message suited to the time and place in which it is being heard. See: Hill, *The History of Christian Thought*, 263.

⁷²⁸ There are echoes of Graham in Eisenhower's proclamations of faith. In one of his devotionals Graham cites 2 Corinthians 5:20 (NKJV) "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us." Graham notes that an ambassador "is not free to set his or her own policies or to develop his or her own message, but must carry out the will of the government he or she represents.....In the same way, we are called to live under the authority of Christ and the Scriptures.....[being] called not to do our will, but Christ's. See: Graham, *Hope for Each Day*, 146.

⁷²⁹ The argument advanced in this thesis is not intended to suggest the implementation of any kind of theocracy. It is, however, intended to suggest that there should be a concerted effort to uphold righteousness consistent with Judeo-Christian principles. Anecdotally, in the current environment, however, religion seems to be considered an affront to secularism, insofar as secular society, at the very least, seeks not to be bound by any form of biblical morality. Hiraoka provides an in-depth discussion of the concept of theocracy, which is of critical importance in considering the relationship between religion and politics. See: Kotaro Hiraoka, 'The Bible and Political Philosophy in Modern Jewish Thought: Martin Buber's TheoTheocracy and Its Reception in an Israeli Context', *Journal of the Interdisciplinary Study of Monotheistic Religions* 6 (2010): 53–66.

⁷³⁰ Nichols, *A Matter of Justice*.

detached.⁷³¹ However, in the late twentieth century, revisionist historians reevaluated Eisenhower's presidency, challenging the prevailing narratives. They argued that his strategic pragmatism, acumen, and emphasis on consensus-building, including particularly his faith initiatives, were far more significant than previously acknowledged.⁷³² Most recently, Eisenhower won new-found praise in the context of his farewell address,⁷³³ which warned of the dangers inherent in the "military-industrial complex." This speech is now seen as a prescient critique of unchecked military expansion and a reflection of Eisenhower's keen intuition regarding the potentially toxic interplay among military power, economic interests, and democratic governance. However, in the context of this thesis the historiographic constant during the Eisenhower era clearly was his faith. Note Pierard and Linder: "He gave homage to the Deity in his inaugural addresses, proclaimed the annual day of prayer, expressed his public theology before religious and secular groups alike, and worshiped regularly, both in his home church and with other congregations. He linked spiritual renewal and national renewal and spurred his fellow citizens to higher moral and spiritual achievements. [Because of his unwavering efforts] the Judeo-Christian consensus was expanded and intensified, and the great majority of Americans were brought under its benevolent wing."⁷³⁴

As for criticisms of Eisenhower for the things he may have failed to achieve during his administration, Jaffa's insight on Abraham Lincoln provides the type of balanced response applicable to similar criticisms of Eisenhower: "Lincoln, in pursuit of his ideals, was ever mindful of the constraints of popular politics, for Lincoln realized that the task of statesmanship was "to know what is good or right, to know how much of that goal is attainable, and to act to secure that much good but not to abandon the attainable good [by] grasping for more."⁷³⁵

On the issue of the historiography of America as a Christian nation, it continues to be debated, perhaps as a reflection of America's current discordant cultural discourse. Nevertheless, the early historiography of America was invariably presented from a Providential perspective, emphasizing the religious motivations and beliefs of the nation's Founders.⁷³⁶ This view held that America's development was inherently tied to its Christian character.⁷³⁷ However, the mid-twentieth century brought a shift toward a more secular interpretation of American history. Historians such as Miller⁷³⁸ and

⁷³¹ Merriman Smith, *Meet Mister Eisenhower* (New York NY: Harper & Brothers, 1955).

⁷³² Greenstein, *The Hidden-hand Presidency*. Revisionist historians also highlighted Eisenhower's role in managing Cold War tensions, emphasizing his efforts to avoid direct military confrontation with the Soviet Union, instead pursuing policies of "containment" and "massive retaliation" as a way of maintaining a balance of power. See: J. Gaddis., 'Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War' (2005).

⁷³³ See: <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/president-dwight-d-eisenhowers-farewell-address>

⁷³⁴ Pierard and Linder, *Civil Religion and the Presidency*, 205.

⁷³⁵ Jaffa, *Crisis of the House Divided*.

⁷³⁶ Historian George Bancroft was representative of this interpretation. See: George Bancroft, *History of the United States of America (Classic Reprint)* (London: Forgotten Books, 2010).

⁷³⁷ See: Dreisbach, Hall, and Morrison, *The Founders on God and Government*; and, Mark D. Hall, *Did America Have a Christian Founding?* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 2019).

⁷³⁸ See: Perry Miller, *The Life of the Mind: From the Revolution to the Civil War* (Boston: Mariner Books, 1970).

Hofstadter⁷³⁹ emphasized Enlightenment influences on the Founding Fathers, arguing that their primary concerns were political and philosophical rather than explicitly religious.

Emblematic of these historiographic tensions is a recent article by current United States Senator Josh Hawley, which serves as concise statement on the status of the matter.⁷⁴⁰ Writes Hawley: "America as a Christian nation – that's a heretical notion by today's lights. We are a secular country, the experts have insisted - *demand*ed - for decades. But that was never true. The Founders read the Roman historians, yes. Some were influenced by Enlightenment philosophies. But the Bible has been the main source of our national ideals. From the age of the New England Puritans to the Great Awakening that prepared the ground for the Revolution, Scripture has molded our common life from the first. Consider: Our ideal of the individual has Christian roots. So too does our constitutionalism. Our great traditions of progressive reform were animated by an ardent Christian spirit – as was conservative resistance to their excesses. Even in our most bitter conflicts, Christian culture has been America's common ground."⁷⁴¹ This thesis argues that Hawley's summation is the one that is overwhelmingly supported by a preponderance of the historical research.

D. Epilogue

What may be gleaned from this ressourcement?⁷⁴² The towering figure of Dwight D. Eisenhower stood on a solid foundation of character and faith. He gave the full measure of himself in war and in peace, in all humility, and in selfless service to others. His conduct should be normative for those entrusted with high office, not aberrant. However, the traditional consuetude of virtue that had been the hallmark of Eisenhower and the Founders has now been eclipsed by the increasingly toxic, polarized, and contentious nature of contemporary political discourse resting as it does on a secular foundation. In consequence thereof, now more than ever, Eisenhower's virtue system should be embraced; not shunned.⁷⁴³ Any ressourcement of Eisenhower and his dictum should inevitably conclude that for the preservation of the Republic it is incumbent on the current generation to raise up an Eisenhower-like figure capable of breathing new life into his conviction that our form of government makes no sense unless it is founded

⁷³⁹ See: Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition* (New York NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949)

⁷⁴⁰ Josh Hawley, 'Our Christian Nation', *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* no. 340 (2024): 1–8.

⁷⁴¹ Hawley, 'Our Christian Nation', 2.

⁷⁴² Perhaps a point to consider beyond what is expressed in this thesis, without any horatory pretensions intended, is that the lessons of this ressourcement should not be lost, lest a nation become the modern-day depiction of the biblical admonition in Psalm 14:2-3 (*NIV*): "The Lord looks down from heaven on the human race to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one," in which event a nation will potentially consign itself to endure unbidden and irreparable consequences.

⁷⁴³ Eisenhower's extensive knowledge of Scripture described *supra* includes his familiarity with the Christian virtues of: i) faith (Ephesians 1:11-23); ii) hope (Psalm 71); iii) love (1 John 3:11-20); iv) wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:18-31); v) justice (Isaiah 61); vi) courage (Daniel 3:1-30); vii) moderation (Ecclesiastes 2:1-11); viii) integrity (1 Samuel 24); and, ix) perseverance (Philippians 3:7-16)

in a deeply felt religious faith. The consequence of not doing so was vocalized by the great American statesman, Daniel Webster (1782-1852).⁷⁴⁴

If we and our posterity shall be true to the Christian religion - if we and they shall live always in the fear of God and shall respect his commandments - if we and they shall maintain just moral sentiments, and such conscientious convictions of duty as shall control the heart and life - we may have the highest hopes of the future fortunes of our country; and if we maintain those institutions of government, and that political union exceeding all praise as much as it exceeds all former examples of political association, we may be sure of one thing, that, while our country furnishes materials for the thousand masters of historical part, it will be no topic for a Gibbon - it will have no decline and fall. It will go on prospering and to prosper. But if we and our posterity neglect religious instruction and authority, violate the rules of eternal justice, trifle with the injunctions of morality, and recklessly destroy the political Constitution which holds us together, no man [or woman] can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us that shall bury all our glory in profound obscurity. If that catastrophe shall happen, let it have no history! Let the horrible narrative never be written! Let its fate be like that of the lost books of Livy, which no human shall ever read, or the missing Pleiad, of which no man [or woman] can know more than that it is lost, and lost forever.⁷⁴⁵

⁷⁴⁴ Congressman and Secretary of State under three different Presidents. See: Robert V. Remini, *Daniel Webster: The Man and His Time* (New York NY: W.W. Norton & Co, 1997), and Joel R. Paul, *Indivisible: Daniel Webster and the Birth of American Nationalism* (New York NY: Riverhead Books, 2022).

⁷⁴⁵ Daniel Webster, *An Address Delivered Before the New York Historical Society* (New York, NY: Press of the New York Historical Society, 1852), 8.

Appendix A

Declaration of Independence⁷⁴⁶

In Congress, July 4, 1776

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America, When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

⁷⁴⁶ This text is a transcription of the Stone Engraving of the parchment Declaration of Independence (the document on display in the Rotunda at the National Archives Museum.) The spelling and punctuation reflects the original. See: <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to

render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and

to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

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