

FEDERAL COURT BANS PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE URGED

The decision by the 9th circuit court of appeals to declare the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional was addressed today by Catholic League president William Donohue:

“In my first book on the ACLU (*The Politics of the ACLU*), I mentioned that the founder of the organization, Roger Baldwin, had said in his later years that ‘the record will show a lot of foolish statements and motions by somebody or other connected with the ACLU, like, for instance, taking ‘In God We Trust’ off coins or postage or denying Congress its chaplains.’ How right he was.

“But today the record shows that one of the most foolish statements in the annals of civil-libertarian fanaticism has been rendered by a federal appeals court in California. It has ruled that the dreaded words ‘under God’ make the Pledge unconstitutional. According to this logic, we simply can’t have such an expression of free speech in this country and remain free. Students can wear T-shirts with obscenities on them, and they can practice simulated sex on stage in a school play, but they can’t say the Pledge. That’s pushing the envelope too far.

“It makes no sense to debate this issue. The establishment clause, written by James Madison, was written to prohibit government from encroaching on religion. It was not written to obliterate every religious vestige of our cultural traditions simply because some are hostile to our heritage.

“Instead of debate, we need civil disobedience. We need teachers all over the nation to lead their students in the Pledge (respecting the right of dissenters not to

participate). But before doing so, the teachers need to contact both the police and the media: it is vitally important that everyone watch on television the teachers being taken away in handcuffs for saying the Pledge of Allegiance. This will expose who the real authoritarians are and thus set the stage for a reversal of this madness."