

# THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



"When ideas fail, words come in handy."  
– Anonymous



**1888**

The popular magazine Youth's Companion, published in Boston by Daniel Ford and his nephew James Upham, had the largest national circulation of its day, around 500,000 copies of each issue, when it embarked on a truly patriotic sales campaign, to vend the American flag to public schools. We gotta sell you an American flag, at least for your Principal's office!

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE  
SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

**1891**

The Reverend Francis Bellamy was forced to resign from his Boston pulpit at the Bethany Baptist church, because of his advocacy of socialist causes such as the federal government's nationalization of business enterprises. He was friends with Daniel Ford, one of the editors of the popular magazine Youth's Companion being published in Boston, and so he was hired to assist editor James Upham in his marketing work. Upham had the idea of using the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's discovery of the New World to promote sale of American flags to the public schools.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE  
SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE



## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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1892

 By this point the campaign by the popular magazine Youth's Companion had managed to sell American flags to about 26,000 schools. The publishers, Daniel Ford and his nephew James Upham, asked the Reverend Francis Bellamy to create a pledge which the magazine could sponsor, to have each child make his or her own Pledge of Allegiance directly to the flag. If the kiddies need to make a pledge, see, then there's gotta be not just one flag in the Principal's office, but a whole potfull of flags, one in every swinging classroom in the school — what a brilliant marketing strategy!

The Reverend Bellamy was chairperson of a committee of state superintendents of education in the National Education Association. As such, he prepared the program for the quadricentennial celebration in the public schools for that year's Columbus Day. He structured this public school program around a flag raising ceremony and a flag salute — for which he supplied his new “Pledge of Allegiance”: “I pledge allegiance to my Flag and [‘to’ added in October] the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” He omitted “equality” because the state superintendents of education did not believe in the equality of women or negroes.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

February: The Reverend Francis Bellamy and James Upham persuaded the National Education Association to support their magazine, the Youth's Companion, as a sponsor of observance in the national public schools of Columbus Day, along with the display of the American flag.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

June 29: The Reverend Francis Bellamy and James Upham arranged for the US Congress and President Benjamin Harrison to issue a national proclamation making a public school flag ceremony the center of the national Columbus Day celebrations. Bellamy, under the supervision of Upham, had prepared a program for this celebration, including his flag salute, the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America:

I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the Republic for which it stands – one nation indivisible – with liberty and justice for all.

(The words “my flag” would be changed to “the flag of the United States of America” in 1923/1924 by the National Flag Conference, which was dominated by the American Legion and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Bellamy disliked this change, but his protest was ignored because it was suspected that immigrant children might become confused and presume “my flag” to be a reference to the flag of their previous homeland. It is to be noted that this loyalty oath for children did not use as a resource the wording of the Declaration of Independence, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,” or of the Gettysburg address, “a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal” — the Reverend Francis Bellamy had considered putting the words “fraternity” and “equality” in the Pledge but the decision had been that such concepts were too radical and controversial for our public schools.)

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE



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September 8: The [Pledge of Allegiance](#) to the Flag, as published in Youth's Companion, was to be recited by our nation's schoolchildren while facing the flag and saluting it by the uplifting of a stiff right hand (this part of the ceremony would, for some reason, be discontinued during [World War II](#) :-).

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

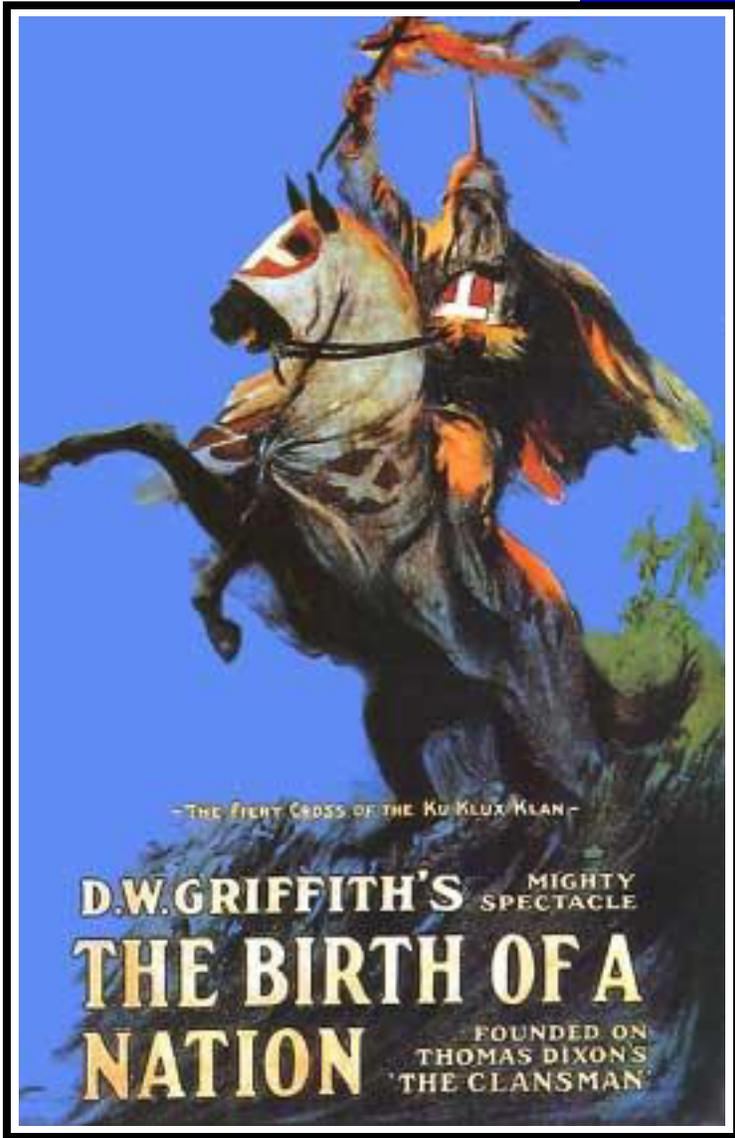
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1922

The Ku Klux Klan, which had adopted a “one hundred percent Americanism” theme along with a ceremony of reciting the [Pledge of Allegiance](#) before the national flag, became a political power in the state of Oregon and sponsored legislation requiring all [Catholic](#) children to attend public schools (the US Supreme Court would later overturn this law).

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE



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When in this year New York state was invaded by the [gypsy moth](#), the Ku Klux Klan did diddly squat nothing — they didn't even march, let alone burn a cross. Go figure.



### 1923

The [Pledge of Allegiance](#) to the Flag of the United States of America that had been created by the Reverend Francis Bellamy was revised during this year and the following one by the National Flag Conference, which was dominated by the American Legion and the Daughters of the American Revolution.

I pledge allegiance to ~~my flag~~ [the flag of the United States of America](#) and to the Republic for which it stands – one nation indivisible – with liberty and justice for all.

Bellamy disliked this change, but his protest was ignored because it was suspected that immigrant children might become confused and presume “my flag” to be a reference to the flag of their previous homeland.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

### 1931

June 14, Flag Day: Francis Bellamy commented, shortly before his death, that he had written the [Pledge of Allegiance](#) “out of my own love of the flag and for all the lofty Americanism it represented.”

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE



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**1943**

Flag Day: The US Supreme Court, in *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*, declared a law requiring schoolchildren to salute the flag and recite the [Pledge of Allegiance](#) to be unconstitutional. Justice Robert H. Jackson spoke for the court:

If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

**1950**

The constitution of the American Legion included a goal, “To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism.” One of its major standing committees was the “Americanism Commission,” which had, as one of its subcommittees, the “Counter Subversive Activities Committee.” Nothing was more important, to these people of this mentation, than loyalty. Over the years the Legion worked closely with the NEA and with the US Office of Education to insist on “one hundred percent” Americanism in public school courses in American history, civics, geography, and English. The [Pledge of Allegiance](#) to the Flag was a part of this Americanism campaign and, at this point, the Legion adopted this loyalty oath as an official part of its own ritual.

UNAMERICANISM

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE





## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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1954

At the Anniversary dinner of the [War Resisters League](#) the speaker was Richard Gregg.

At the urging of the Knights of Columbus, the phrase “Under God” was added to the [Pledge of Allegiance](#) to the Flag by the US Congress in Washington DC. As President Dwight David Eisenhower signed the law, he commented that “From this day forward, the millions of our schoolchildren will daily proclaim ... the dedication of our nation and our people to the Almighty.” (This is the same Eisenhower who on December 23, 1952 had averred liberally that although some sort of deeply held religious belief was of the utmost importance to our nation, “I don’t care what it is.”) Francis Bellamy’s granddaughter Barbara Bellamy Wright, knowing that her grandfather had discontinued attending public worship during his retirement in Florida, tried to inform the American public that he would have disapproved of this alteration. It was pointed out that this change watered down the meaning of the word “indivisible,” which referred to the US Civil War and its outcome. The word had pointed to “the One Nation which the Civil War was fought to prove. To make that One Nation idea clear, we must specify that it is indivisible, as [Webster](#) and Lincoln used to repeat in their great speeches.” The South had been wrong in attempting to break apart this nation, and we had righteously punished it for this transgression, but there were still “Secesh” types in the South who continued to need to have their noses rubbed into the error of their ways.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE



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“It’s all now you see. Yesterday won’t be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago.”

– Remark by character “Garin Stevens”  
in William Faulkner’s INTRUDER IN THE DUST





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Prepared: June 10, 2013

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, upon someone's request we have pulled it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (depicted above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of data modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.



## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology - but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary "writerly" process which you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

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