



From the

Declaration in Defense of Science and Secularism



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We are deeply concerned about the ability of the United States to confront the many challenges it faces, both at home and abroad. Our concern has been compounded by the failure exhibited by far too many Americans, including influential decision makers, to understand the nature of scientific inquiry and the integrity of empirical research. This disdain for science is aggravated by the excessive influence of religious doctrine on our public policies...

It is vital that the public be exposed to the scientific perspective, and this presupposes the separation of church and state and public policies that are based on secular principles, not religious doctrine...

We cannot hope to convince those in other countries of the dangers of religious fundamentalism when religious fundamentalists influence our policies at home; we cannot hope to convince others that it is wrong to compel women to veil themselves when we deliberately draw a veil over scientific knowledge; we cannot hope to convince others of the follies of sectarianism when we give preferential treatment to religious institutions and practices. A mindset fixed in the Middle Ages cannot possibly hope to meet the challenges of our times...

Science transcends borders and provides the most reliable basis for finding solutions to our problems. We maintain that secular, not religious, principles must govern our public policy. This is not an antireligious viewpoint; it is a scientific viewpoint. To find common ground, we must reason together, and we can do so only if we are willing to put personal religious beliefs aside when we craft public policy.

For these reasons, we call upon political leaders of all parties

- ☞ to protect and promote scientific inquiry ...
- ☞ to base public policy insofar as possible on empirical evidence instead of religious faith ...
- ☞ to provide an impartial and reliable source of scientific analysis to assist Congress ...
- ☞ to maintain a strict separation between church and state and, in particular, not to permit legislation or executive action to be influenced by religious beliefs.



Endorsed by the following (partial list)

Baruj Benacerraf—*Nobel Laureate (Physiology and Medicine)*
 Paul Boyer—*Nobel Laureate (Chemistry)*
 Steven Weinberg—*Nobel Laureate (Physics)*
 Arthur Caplan—*Chair, Dept. of Medical Ethics, U. of Pennsylvania*
 Daniel C. Dennett—*Prof. of Philosophy, Tufts U.*
 Ann Druyan—*President, Carl Sagan Foundation, Ithaca, NY*
 Martin Gardner—*author and editor*
 Adolf Grünbaum—*Prof. of Phil. of Science, U. of Pittsburgh*
 David Helfand—*Prof. of Astronomy, Columbia U.*
 Gerald Holton—*Prof. of Physics, Harvard U.*

Donald C. Johanson—*Dir., Institute of Human Origins, Arizona State U.*
 Lawrence Krauss—*Prof. of Physics and Astron., Case Western Reserve U.*
 Paul Kurtz—*Prof., SUNY, Chairman, Center for Inquiry/Transnational*
 Jere H. Lipps—*Prof., Museum of Paleontology, UC-Berkeley*
 Elizabeth Loftus—*Dist. Prof. of Psychology and Social Behavior, UC-Irvine*
 Steven Pinker—*author and Prof. of Psychology, Harvard U.*
 Peter Singer—*Prof. of Philosophy, Princeton U.*
 Victor Stenger—*Prof. Emer., Physics and Astronomy, U. of Hawaii*
 Lionel Tiger—*Prof. of Anthropology, Rutgers U.*
 Edward O. Wilson—*Prof. Emer. of Entomology, Harvard U.*

*Institutions given for identification only.

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P.O. Box 741, Amherst, N.Y. 14226-0741

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