

# Religious Oppression in This Country

IN THE DEBATE over whether citizens with religious convictions should speak out on political matters, some on both sides seem to have their mouths open, their eyes shut and their minds closed.

They are missing the key point, which is whether citizens should be free to choose their religion and enjoy freedom of speech.

It is not yet an issue of whether the United States government should or should not establish an official religion, although it might come to that if religious suppressionists have their way.

"There is no place in politics, government or the public schools for deity worship or deity acknowledgment," is a declaration being voiced by those who would eradicate religious faith. It is being echoed by others under the impression that they are supporting constitutional separation of church and state.

Their eyes fail to notice that while Christians, Jews and other religions are busy fighting among themselves and with each other, atheist activities are getting set to establish un-

belief as the official religion of this country.

Through misinterpretations of our Constitution by the Supreme Court they already may have succeeded. They have virtually abolished discussions of even the existence of religious beliefs and morality from public schools and public life, while permitting teaching of atheism, evolution and humanism.

The same influences are being exerted through control of communications and entertainment media. The American Civil Liberties Union and similar organizations are not actively promoting defense of our freedoms, as they claim. They are using this pretense to suppress religion, free criminals and encourage immorality.

Eradication of religious faith is a fundamental step in the promotion of communism. Control of communications, entertainment and education go along with it. Government regulation of prices, distribution of commodities and products, and operation of essential industries also are elements of dictatorship.

History is replete with examples of tyrants establishing reigns of oppression by first convincing citizens that they were protecting their freedoms and promising the poor unprecedented prosperity.

By the time the people awaken to what is happening it is too late. The tyrants are in control. Among notable examples of our time are Hitler and the Nazis; Lenin and Stalin in Russia; Mao Tse-tung in China; and Fidel Castro in Cuba.

What happened to freedom of religion and other freedoms under those regimes? Religious people did not speak up against atheistic trends developing and they lost their freedoms, and became oppressed, impoverished people.

To paraphrase Sir Edmund Burke's oft-quoted declaration, it may be said that "The only thing needed for atheism to triumph is for believers in God to say nothing and do nothing."

Religious suppressionists know that, which is why they are telling believers to shut up and leave politics to them alone.