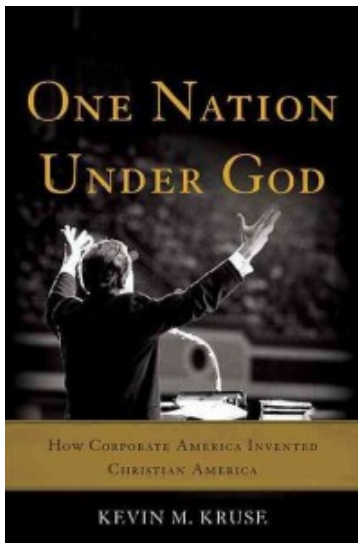


# The delusion of a secular state; Oneness of corporate America with Christian America



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er God by Kevin M.  
Kruse\_Book Cover

**[A review of the book review reviewed by Kim-Philips-Fein in the Democracy Journal on Kevin M Kruse's book: 'One Nation Under God- How Corporate America Invented Christian America']**

Perhaps, "the great" American's greatness is much expressed in its deceptive camouflage of secularity over religiosity underneath. Though not much discerned, it had always carried a sustained effort to become a religious state, not in the meaning religion pervasive in everywhere but religion an essence of many manipulative tools. This effort has now taken a ruthless turn to be more desperate and to seem more transparent, largely for the greater benefit of corporate America.

For America, the so called "founding principles" - the guide toward developing a nation entailing a divide between religion and state - only succeeded to strengthen an organized rise of a religious movement that again hardly followed any biblical guidelines. This rise, dubbed as the "great spiritual mobilization", saw its prominence in the 1950s under the leadership of an American congregational minister James Fifiel. Irony is Fifiel always seemed to have much interest in market than in the Cross. Complex!

While libertarian Christians found it difficult to relate Fifiel's newly invented opposition to social gospels - Christianity's noble goals to create a better and egalitarian social order with the creation of noble virtues through proper religious practice - two of the most influential groups (conservative anti-welfare-state-politicians and large corporations) found it very lucrative. They fervently embraced the idea with lavish patronage. Thus, the claim that the church be separated from the governance making sure the state is necessarily a secular entity faced the strongest blow in the face of the movement. Fifiel reasoned that the newly framed political position taken by the clergymen would do a great deal in saving America and "its sacredness toward individualism" from the reforms in post-war new deal which he called "the disintegration of the nation's spiritual foundation." His declaration that the only compatible political position for Christianity was Laissez-faire, the policy to

put minimum interference upon the market, made a huge appeal to giant corporations like the Gulf Oil, General Motors, Chrysler and many more.

Fifield with his moral majority went so far in satisfying their financiers. He preached that money and profits could be considered as the cornerstones of moral vision of Christianity! No wonder, Fifield was then called the “thirteenth apostle of big business and St. Paul of the prosperous!” But he was not alone. His somewhat retarded vision soon inspired a great many religious sympathizers who saw that the marriage between the United States and Christianity as the resurrection of the fundamentals upon which the nation and the national pride were established.

Fifield was soon joined by cold warriors like Billy Graham who eventually became Eisenhower’s “spiritual advisor”. Billy vehemently opposed Marshall Plan and the ideals of welfare state. This was more than predictable given one of his strongest financial supporters was oilman Sid Richardson. Paradoxically, Dwight de Eisenhower was so impressed by that fusion of state, religion and dominance of elite one-percent that he declared his bid for presidency as a “great crusade for freedom”. After winning the crusade, Eisenhower gave a famous speech for the freedom foundation at Waldworf-Astoria where he asserted that their “form of government has no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith”. More than any other president ever, Eisenhower did everything he could to transform America into a “secular Christian state!”



During Eisenhower’s tenure, Americans saw their dollars printed with the pledge of allegiance rewritten with an explicit reference to god: “In god we trust.” Once considered a merely religious ritual “prayer breakfast”, an annual event where influential speakers were invited to address the contemporary problem of Christianity and to persuade people to become Christians, found its way to the White house as the National Prayer Breakfast. Children in the public schools, at the same time, were prescribed to sing prayers as a state-mandated program.

Supreme Court now declared such prayers as unconstitutional as it violated the clear separation between religion and state practices. Many U.S citizens who profoundly believed that United States is a Christian state were deeply surprised and saddened by the rule. The newspaper received a deluge of complaints and letters against the Supreme Court judge who ruled out such prayer culture.

Darkness went further, and insanity came to guide it more. The successors of Eisenhower, although they were not as aggressive in approach as him, never fell behind in their attempt to portray United States as very much a religious state. Throughout its history United States can never be said to really have attempted to alienate itself fully from the course of a Christian state. The pride it takes in as a secular state is actually a remnant preservation of individualism to secure the interest of giant corporate business. But it comes in the disguise of its euphemistic promise toward attaining social and economic liberty. Now, whatever the residue of secularity it adores seems to further evaporate with the recent rhetoric from presidential candidates. Thanks to republican primary frontrunners, secularism has never been such threatened by religious uprising in election manifesto than now.

