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- Less adherent to Islam than previous generation
- Do not know

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## :: Islamic considerations on the USA pledge of allegiance

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All praise is due to Allah; we praise Him and we beseech Him for help and we ask for His protection and we seek refuge in Allah from the wickedness of our souls, and from the evil (and evil consequences) of our deeds;

whomsoever Allah guides, there is none who can lead him astray, and whom Allah finds in error, there is none to guide him;

and I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger.

"O you who believe! Be careful of your duty to Allah (fear Allah) with the care which is due to Him and do not die unless you are Muslims (submitting to Him)." 3:102

"O people! Be careful of your duty to your Lord (fear your Lord) Who created you from a single being and of the same created its mate; and spread from these two many men and women; and be careful of your duty to Allah by whom you demand one of another your rights and to the ties of relationship; surely Allah watches over you." 4:1

"O you who believe! Be careful of your duty to Allah (fear Allah) and speak the right word; He would correct your deeds, and forgive you your faults; and whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, he indeed achieves a mighty success." 33:70, 71

Proceeding:

The best Speech is the Speech of Allah, and the best guidance is the Guidance of the Prophet, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, and the worst affairs are those that are innovated (deviancies), every innovated affair is astray, and all that is astray is (eventually) going to the hellfire."

There are three core issues to be addressed in this treatise concerning a Muslim pledging allegiance to the republic of the USA [United States of America]: the first is the issue of pronouncing the general pledge of allegiance to the USA; the second is the issue of pledging allegiance and swearing the USA oath at the time of naturalization and citizenship; the third is the pledge of allegiance at the time of taking an oath of some office or duty or command related to government service.

Those born on USA soil or from US parents do not have to confront the second issue since they are considered citizens immediately by birth in accordance of US law, but they may be pressed and feel coerced later in life into pronouncing the general pledge of allegiance to show their patriotism, often compulsory or encouraged at schools or other public facilities and/or functions. The pledge is considered by some indispensable for the education process to inculcate national pride and patriotism in the youth and stimulate and encourage public service and military enrolment and duty. The second pledge is mandatory for naturalization, and is more problematic than the first from an Islamic perspective since it one not only pledges allegiance to the flag, the symbol of the nation, but vows military and non-military support for national and foreign policies by explicit oath. And yet due to the word "allegiance" the general pledge implies military and non-military support and thus the two pledges are basically the same. The third is explicit oath taking for e specific duty, and as we will see that can vary from task to task and job description. Our preliminary investigation will study the oaths, their historical backgrounds and implications for the faith of a Muslim.

### Our supplications

May Allah guide us to the truth and forgive us our mistakes, forgetfulness, shortcomings and faults. We supplicate Allah for ourselves and all our brother Muslims:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ سَيِّئْنَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ رَؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿286/2﴾

"O our Lord, do not take us to task and punish us if we forget or we make a mistake: and do not burden us with binding obligations of the likes of that which you placed on those that were before us, and do not make us to bear that which we do not have the strength and ability to bear. Pardon us and forgive us (our sins) and have mercy upon us you are our Protector and Supporter and give us victory over (our enemies) the disbelievers" (al-Baqara 2:286)

And we supplicate:

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿10/59﴾

"O our Lord forgive us and our brothers who have proceeded before us in faith and do not make any malice to be in our hearts for those that believe, O our Lord verily You are the most Kind most Merciful (Hashr 59/10). And we supplicate:

اللهم رب جبريل وميكائيل وإسرافيل أنت تحكم بين عبادك فيما كانوا فيه يختلفون اهدني لما اختلف فيه من الحق بإذنك إنك تهدي من تشاء إلى صراط مستقيم

O Allah, Lord of Jibreel (Gabriel) and Mekaa`eel (Michael) and Israafeel (three of the arch-angels), (Only) You judge between your slave-creatures in that which they differ. Guide me in (all) that which they differ to the truth by Your permission, (certainly) You guide whoever you will to the straight path.

Allahuma, Ameen –O Allah, accept our supplications.

I ask Allah the Exalted and All-powerful to make the booklet by His grace to be of those books that help this Muslim nation to understand and practice sincerely the religion of Allah may He forever be praised and exalted.

I humbly ask Allah to bless this effort, make it bear good fruit in this life, and place it in the scale of my accepted good deeds on that Day in



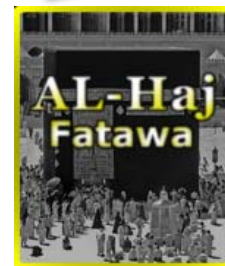
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which no one except Allah the Almighty and Exalted will rule supreme and judge – the Day that His forgiveness, mercy and justice will be sought after by all creation.

### Defining the exact issues

A pledge, upon oath (usually with the right hand), cannot be performed except on that which is deemed the utmost sacred and absolute value or identity. It is an ultimate testimony of faith, trust, loyalty, allegiance, conviction and sacrifice upon that which the testifier is placing his ultimate life and death upon. Allegiance is the primal act of identification and association with a group. Thus any pledge of allegiance by being solemn and absolute is not only within the realm of religion and faith in ultimate authority and sovereignty but of political and military identification, association and action. It defines a person: Who he is, where he stands on the most important issues, with whom does he does and will ally, what he will do as an obligation and duty, what will be his ultimate sacrifice. It can be readily be seen that the issues discussed in this treatise are of the most explosive nature because they relate to the role of religious faith and conviction in political and military action, a relationship always with very controversial and dangerous ramifications in peace and war.

We wish to answers the following questions in this treatise. What is a pledge of allegiance and it's religious, social, political, and military ramifications? Is it allowed for a Muslim to make this pledge to the USA, or another secular state wither with a Muslim majority or minority? What are the proofs and arguments upon which the decision pro or con is based? Are there any extraneous conditions when it is permissible? What are the exact limitations and conditions and ramifications of all the above? What is the conclusion, the judgment and religious verdict, to be finally reached in this issue?

### The text of the Pledge of Allegiance in historical context

The words of this pledge now read: I Pledge Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

That the US nation lived for over a century without the need of this daily pledge is indicative that it was not seen as absolutely necessity of statehood, so the question arises, in what circumstances was it established? When I say that US nation lived for over a century without the need of this pledge, this doesn't mean that oaths were not taken from officers of the state and military, but that a general oath was not seen as necessary for all citizens. The history of this pledge and its development proves that it was only developed to support the patriotism required for the wars to be fought in the name of national interests and security. The sequence is as follows

- 1) **1892:** I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty, equality, and fraternity for all.
- 2) **1892:** I pledge allegiance to my Flag and the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
- 3) **October 1892:** I pledge allegiance to my Flag and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
- 4) **1923-1924:** I pledge allegiance to 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.
- 5) **1954:** I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The first 1892 version is reportedly the original version the author of the pledge, Francis Bellamy, wrote (and is undoubtedly indebted to French revolutionary ideals), but was changed due to social political pressures from the "ground" realities that many leaders in America would not accept the idea of "equality" along with the minorities like native American Indians, Black Afro-Americans, Hispanics and women: thus the word "equality" was removed. Its addition would naturally imply their right to vote, among many other rights that would have riled predominantly white Anglo-Saxon protestant (WASP) America.

The Pledge of Allegiance was written in 1892 to honor Christopher Columbus on the October 11, 1892 Columbus Day celebration of the 400th Anniversary of the discovery of America. It was an event celebrating, at the time, an ideology of the coming a "New American Century," when America, having won its internal wars of division and expansion, the civil war and Indian wars, was celebrating its new strength and vitality and coming expansion.

We must remember two very distinctive realities in American history: the implicit or explicit policies of internal "inward" conquest and expansionism, and the implicit or explicit policies of imperial and outward conquest and expansionism. The word "indivisible" clearly is a reflection of doctrine of "Manifest Destiny" and of the victory of the local and federal troops over the Native Americans, and of the Union over the Confederacy, with any and all rebellions and succession tendencies from the Republic adequately quelled. Now all were to be within one indivisible nation, meaning no more internal revolutions or fighting since all separatists are finally and totally subdued (i.e. internal conquest and expansionism and control against native American Indians, black Afro-Americans and any other rebellious and separatist forces like the confederates). But now that there was no more western land to expand over, and all was subdued internally, expansion west over the Pacific Ocean, to Hawaii and beyond, and south over the Caribbean Ocean, was a necessary step to the leaders of America. Hispanics of the Caribbean and Central and South America, and Filipinos (Hawaiians were already annexed in 18--??) were to be the victims of policies.

Thus in this context, the 1982 pledge of allegiance can be seen as part of the intense propaganda required to build and sustain support for the Spanish American War (1898) (the media's role is well-documented), the first major US imperialist and expansionist war on "foreign" soil, a war necessary for the expansion of US prestige, markets and territory (i.e. external "imperial" acquisition of naval bases, conquest and expansionism).

The 1924 change was to curtail the possibility that an immigrant, and indeed there was a huge influx of immigrants in this period after the Great War, (known later as WWII) would make the pledge but really mean in his heart his previous country of origin in Europe or elsewhere, since "my Flag and to the Republic for which it stands" was too ambiguous and allowed personal interpretations.

On the verge of WWII, Congress officially recognized the Pledge in 1941 (Flag Code -Title 36). In 1942 the flag salute was modified due to its unpleasant similarity to the Nazi flag salute. The new flag salute entailed placing a hand over one's heart instead of raised upward to the head (which was too close to the German Nazis salute).

As for the question of whether school students should be forced to say the Pledge, The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled on twice but with conflicting verdicts: The Pledge was supported as in *Minersville School District v. Gobitis* (June 3, 1940). But the court reversed itself in *West*

Virginia School Board of Education v. Barnette (June 14, 1943). Court rulings do not greatly affect general social policy it is to be noted, and the frenzy of the patriotism of WWII keep the pledge firmly imbedded in the national psyche.

The 1954 version, specifically mentioning "under God," must be seen in the context of the beginnings of the cold war and the anti-communist trials of Senator MacArthur in the 1950s and beyond: communism was equated with atheism (Lenin, Stalin and Mao saw to that), and "under God" was seen as a natural Judaic-Christian extension of the American national motto "In God We Trust" on the dollar bill. President Dwight D. Eisenhower said as he authorized this change: "In this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future; in this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war."

Certainly this was in contradiction to and deviation from set secular principles, and therefore many American civil-libertarians have from that day been objecting to the pledge on the grounds that it conflicts with the First Amendment which says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." Secularists say that the constitution must always maintain strict separation of the state from religion and religion from state (or say politics), and "under God" clearly establishes a monotheistic religion. American humanists, agnostics, atheists and polytheists, etc, for example, all cry foul.

On June 26, 2002, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ruled the Pledge of Allegiance cannot be recited in public schools because the phrase "under God" was an unconstitutional "endorsement of religion", the phrase therefore being a violation of the Constitutional separation of church and state, specifically the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

CNN from San Francisco, California noted on June 27, 2002: "Citing a concurring opinion in a Supreme Court decision, the 9th Circuit said, 'The Pledge, as currently codified, is an impermissible government endorsement of religion because it sends a message to unbelievers 'that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community, and an accompanying message to adherents that they are insiders, favored members of the political community.'" The court said the 1954 insertion of "under God" was made "to recognize a Supreme Being" and advance religion at a time "when the government was publicly inveighing against atheistic communism" -- a fact, the court said, the federal government did not dispute. The appeals court noted that when President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the act adding "under God," he said, "From this day forward, the millions of our school children will daily proclaim in every city and town, every village and rural schoolhouse, the dedication of our Nation and our people to the Almighty." The court cited recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions that said students cannot hold religious invocations because it violates the Constitution. In this case, the appeals court said, the lower court's decision to throw out the case found that "the ceremonial reference to God in the pledge does not convey endorsement of particular religious beliefs" -- a precedent the appeals court said is not supported by the recent Supreme Court decisions. "The recitation that ours is a nation 'under God' is not a mere acknowledgment that many Americans believe in a deity. Nor is it merely descriptive of the undeniable historical significance of religion in the founding of the Republic. Rather, the phrase 'one nation under God' in the context of the Pledge is normative," the court said in its decision. "To recite the Pledge is not to describe the United States; instead it is to swear allegiance to the values for which the flag stands: unity, indivisibility, liberty, justice and -- since 1954 -- monotheism." The case had been filed against the United States, Congress, California, two school districts and its officials by Michael Newdow, an atheist whose daughter attends public school in Elk Grove, California, just outside Sacramento." [1]

It has been noted that: "Legal scholars call the first clause ("Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion") the Establishment Clause, while referring to the second clause ("or prohibiting the free exercise thereof") as the Free Exercise Clause. The Free Exercise clause guarantees the people the right to freely exercise religion. When applied to the Pledge of Allegiance, the Free Exercise clause implies that the people may pledge their allegiance to the flag of the United States using many different words: "under God"; "under Jesus"; "under Allah"; "under Zeus";[2]"without God; "against God."

The current Attorney General John Ashcroft and many others politicians have pledged they will overturn this ruling in the courts to maintain the 1954 status quo. Indeed, in the context of the Bush administration neo-conservative and Christian right leaning administration, patriotism and Christian faith are key assets of the "War on Terrorism." Religious overtones in President Bush's speeches abound: early on in the war on terrorism he mentioned a "crusade" only to retract that polemic word due to Muslim sentiments; he has repeatedly said that "we are in a conflict between good and evil;" his "evil axis" statement is quoted as rhetoric having become policy; he has asked for guidance from "the loving God behind all of life and all of history;" he believes there is a "divine plan" for the world; and indeed, defeating Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and any and all terrorist "evil ones" is part of that "divine plan." Apparently the matter of religion entering the pledge specifically will be contested in courts across the country, and religion in politics generally will remain acutely controversial.

Europeans especially are wary of the mixture of religion and political rhetoric and symbolism since they suffered repeated religious wars in their history, and Europeans remember painfully that German soldiers trooped off to World War One with "Gott mit uns" (God with us) stamped on their belt buckles. [3] "French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin, asked about a U.S. weekly's cover story on Bush and God, told Le Point magazine: 'In no way can God be called on for a vote of confidence.'" [4]

The Pope, supreme ruler and spiritual guide of hundreds of millions of Catholics, also has severe reservations about the US invasion of Iraq, to say the least. "A war would be a defeat for humanity and would be neither morally nor legally justified," the Pope told Bush in a papal message delivered last week by a special envoy. "It is an unjust war." [5]

#### **Pledging allegiance and swearing the oath of USA naturalization and citizenship**

We will dispense with the historical versions and cite the words to the current oath of allegiance administered to immigrants during naturalization ceremonies, according to the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 8, Part 337: "I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God." [6]

There may be some exemptions, as to the following: "Changes to the Oath. You may take the Oath without the words "to bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law..." if you provide enough evidence that you are opposed to fighting on behalf of the United States because of your religious beliefs (this does not apply to the military sponsor). If you provide enough evidence and INS determines that you are opposed to any type of service in the Armed Forces because of your religious beliefs, you may omit the words "to perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by law" (this also does not apply to the military sponsor). If INS determines you are unable to swear the Oath using the words "on oath," you may replace these words with "and solemnly affirm."

Finally, if INS determines you are unable to use the words "so help me God" because of your religious beliefs, you may omit these words." [7]

These exceptions do not really have a significant effect on the basic oath and pledge of allegiance for a Muslim believer in One God, although they greatly reduce the burden of active duty to that oath and pledge.

We find that there are some changes but they are insignificant. In an article "New Citizen Oath Updates Arcane Language" it is mentioned: "In the current oath, immigrants swear to "renounce and abjure" allegiance to princes and potentates. In the new oath, they "solemnly, freely and without any mental reservation ... renounce ... all allegiance to any foreign state."

#### **Some Examples of USA Government Oaths of Office**

There are many and the following are only a sample of some prominent oaths to office and duty in the USA government.

##### **a) The President of the USA**

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the constitution of the United States." [8]

##### **b) U.S. Federal and Military Oath of Office**

" I,,,,,, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God." [9]

##### **c) OATH OF OFFICE - Police Officer**

In the USA the following is a typical oath of office:

M,m,m,m,m,m,

Note that in England and its affiliates like Australia the oath includes the mention of the Queen (or King) as in the following example:

I.....DO SWEAR - THAT - I WILL WELL AND TRULY SERVE - OUR SOVEREIGN LADY THE QUEEN - AS A POLICE OFFICER WITHOUT FAVOUR OR AFFECTION - MALICE OR ILL-WILL - UNTIL I AM LEGALLY DISCHARGED - THAT I WILL SEE AND CAUSE - HER MAJESTY'S PEACE TO BE KEPT AND PRESERVED - AND THAT - I WILL PREVENT TO THE BEST OF MY POWER - ALL OFFENCES AGAINST THAT PEACE - AND THAT - WHILE I

CONTINUE TO BE A POLICE OFFICER - I WILL - TO THE BEST OF MY SKILL AND KNOWLEDGE - DISCHARGE ALL THE DUTIES THEREOF - FAITHFULLY - ACCORDING TO LAW. SO HELP ME GOD.

For those who do not believe in any Faith or such, they can take the Affirmation where the use of a Bible is not required and there is no mention of "SO HELP ME GOD" at the end.[10]

#### **Explanation of the Muslim testimony of faith, which contains an ultimate pledge of allegiance to Allah and His Messenger and Prophet.**

The shahadah (testimony of faith) of a Muslim is actually shahadatain (two testimonies), which he or she must openly state and declare: "ashhadu alla ilaha illa-l-lah wa ashhadu anna muhammada-r-rasulu-l-lah." The meaning is: "I bear witness that there is no god or deity or being worthy of worship except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Messenger." These two short sentences are the creed of Islam, upon which all Muslims agree, and upon which the entire edifice of Islam depends. Consequent faith and practice determines whether one remains a Muslim and a Mu`min (believer).

The first sentence of this testimony {"ashhadu al-la ilaha illa-l-lah" "I bear witness that there is no god or deity or being worthy of worship except Allah} contains the ruknaan (two "pillars") of the testimony: a negation and an affirmation. The negation is of the godhead or deification of any and all beings other than Allah, meaning that none is worthy of any form of worship, and that all such worship directed to these nonexistent gods is false, void, wrong, without value or reality. The affirmation is that Allah alone is the only God, the only true Deity, the one and only one worthy and due all sincere worship. Only this sincere worship is right and has truth, reality, and lasting value.

The words "tauheed" (Islamic monotheism), "shahadah" (testimony of faith), "Islam" (the religion of submitting to Allah and following the Messenger) and "Iman" (faith, belief), and "ibadat-l-Allah wadahu" (worship of Allah exclusively), and "Ikhlas" (sincerity) all give this same basic meaning and convey the same fundamental concept.

The second sentence {"wa ashhadu anna muhammada-r-rasulu-l-lah" "and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Messenger."} contains one rukn (pillar) that is an affirmation that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

This second sentence necessitates that Allah sent Muhammad, peace be upon him, with a Message to deliver to mankind. This Message is the entire religion of Islam encompassing all of the information and orders from Allah which the Messenger Muhammad, peace be upon him, has informed us about and enacted upon as an example and an emissary to convey the Message that Allah entrusted him with. Although not explicate, this statement also entails that no other person or entity will be considered as a Messenger of Allah, to be followed religiously as a prophet, lawgiver, perfect example, and absolute leader, to be obeyed in all matters as an ultimate authority.

The first sentence of the shahadah, with its negation and affirmation, is sometimes called (tauheed al-'ubuudeyah) the tauheed of worshipping Allah, when viewed from the perspective of the worshipers. It is called (tauheed al-uluhiyah) the tauheed of Allah's divinity and "godhead" when viewed from the perspective Allah's right to be worshiped; thus to worship other than Allah in degradation of Allah amounts to nullifying this tauheed. This is called Shirk, the antithesis and opposite of tauheed.

The second section is sometimes called (tauheed al-iteba'a) the tauheed of following the Messenger Muhammad, peace be upon him; thus to follow other than the Messenger of Allah in degradation of him amounts to nullifying this type of tauheed, and in effect the proceeding tauheed also, again amounting to shirk, since to obey the Messenger is to obey Allah, and to reject, deny, degrade, and disobey the Messenger is to reject, deny, degrade, and disobey Allah.

Together these two sentences contain a pledge of absolute allegiance to perform the following for the rest of a Muslims life:

- 1) to strictly refrain from the worship of all other objects of worship except Allah;
- 2) to worship Allah sincerely;

3) to take Muhammad as Allah's Messenger, following him in his Sunnah (way) and his Shari'ah (law), while following and obeying no other as ultimate authority and an absolute leader except him.

Those who declare the shahadah but refrain and disdain from worshipping Allah and actually practicing the Sunnah (way) and the (shari'ah) law which the Messenger Muhammad, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, brought from Allah Most Exalted, have upon certain conditions effectively nullified their testimony and reneged on their witness and become traitors to their pledge of allegiance, which eventually leads them to being declared a kaafr (disbeliever), a murtid (renegade retractor and apostate) by the knowledgeable Islamic authorities of creed and law. Some statements and acts can be seen to outwardly nullify that testimony.

A mere pronunciation of the shahadah is enough for one to become a Muslim with all the consequent rights and responsibilities, but repeated pronunciation is not enough for one to remain in the fold of Islam if one's words and deeds disqualify and nullify the truthfulness and sincerity of that testimony. Essentially one who repeatedly fails in living up to that which he declares falls into a certain degree of fitnah (temptation and trial leading to sin), kufr (disbelief) and of nifaaq (hypocrisy), until eventually he becomes a munaafiq al-khaalis (complete hypocrite), a kaththaab (complete liar) and a kaafr (disbeliever). A clear distinction must be drawn between those who fail to live up to their testimony to the point of shirk (associating others with Allah as Lord or God or in any form of worship), kufr (disbelief) and riddah (apostasy), and those who lapse and fall into sins which, although punishable by the Shari'ah (Islamic law) and in a sense a lesser form of nifaaq, shirk and kufr, cannot legally be considered and declared as those who are mushrik, kaafr or murtad (those who fall into the absolute or the greater shirk, kufr, or riddah).

#### **Islamic objections to the Pledge of Allegiance pertain to the following concepts:**

Absolutely and entirely renouncing and abjuring any allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty;  
Support and defense of the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic;  
Bearing arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law;  
Performing noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law;  
Performing work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law;  
Declaring on oath, all of the above, taking this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God.

These objections are raised because there is a basic conflict between a Muslim pledging allegiance to Allah and Allah's Messenger Muhammad ibn Abdullah -peace and blessings of Allah be upon him- as the final prophet of Allah to mankind, and between pledging allegiance to any entity, secular or religious, that does not recognize the supreme authority of Allah and Allah's Messenger -peace and blessings of Allah be upon him- in all affairs that guide and govern man's existence: religious, political, economic and social.

Thus the Muslims objections as above to the pledge to the USA are based on two aspects essential in their testimony of faith and religion: absolute obedience (ta'ah) and support and defense (nusrah). These are the two bases of the principle of walaa' and baraa' (avowal of allegiance and disavowal). For a Muslim obedience (ta'ah) and support and defense (nusrah) can and should only be to Allah and Allah's prophet -peace and blessings of Allah be upon him- absolutely, and then to the legitimate followers as leaders and rulers of the Muslims as Khulafa' (plural of Caliph or Khaleefa: vicegerent, follower), conditionally upon their own obedience to and maintenance and support and defense of Islamic laws and principles. A Muslim by primal essential faith and testimony categorically swears allegiance to Allah as the Supreme and Sole Sovereignty, Lawgiver, Ruler, King and Judge of the universe, in this life in all affairs, and in the hereafter on the Day of Judgment. . Muhammad prophet of Allah -peace and blessings of Allah be upon him- by direct revelation brought the universal message and law from Allah the Creator and Sovereign of the universe for man's guidance and salvation. The legitimacy of any any temporarily leader of the Muslims is measured by his adherence to the Book of Allah and the Way (Sunnah) of the prophet Muhammad, peace and blessing of Allah be upon him: he must conform to Islamic laws and his legitimacy is dependant on his obedience to and maintenance and support and defense of Islamic laws and principles.

In summary the basic conflict between the declaration of faith and testimony that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad, peace be upon him, is the Messenger of Allah, and the declaration and pledge of Allegiance of the USA is irreconcilable.

[1] <http://www.cnn.com/2002/LAW/06/26/pledge.allegiance/>

[2] The author cites that many death threats have been directed to the plaintiff in his article: The Pledge of Allegiance, the Courts, and Death Threats, by Jeffery Jay Lowder, <http://www.secweb.org/asset.asp?AssetID=215>

[3] Bush: Mix of God and War Grates on Many Europeans, By Tom Heneghan PARIS (Reuters),,,,,

[4] IBID. The articles referred to was Newsweek's March 10 2003 issue "Bush and God" which noted "At Opryland in Nashville—the old "Buckle of the Bible Belt"—Bush told religious broadcasters that "the terrorists hate the fact that ... we can worship Almighty God the way we see fit," and that the United States was called to bring God's gift of liberty to "every human being in the world." In his view, the chances of success were better than good. (After all, at the National Prayer Breakfast a few days before, he'd declared that "behind all of life and all history there is a dedication and purpose, set by the hand of a just and faithful God." It notes also: "As he prepared to run, in 1999, Bush assembled leading pastors at the governor's mansion for a "laying-on of hands," and told them he'd been "called" to seek higher office." And also: "There is a fatalistic element," said David Frum, the author and former Bush speechwriter. "You do your best and accept that everything is in God's hands." The result is unflappability. "If you are confident that there is a God that rules the world," said Frum, "you do your best, and things will work out." But what some see as solidity, others view as a flammable mix of stubbornness and arrogance. "No one's allowed to second-guess, even when you should," said another former staffer.... The language of good and evil—central to the war on terrorism—came about naturally, said Frum. From the first, he said, the president used the term "evildoers" to describe the terrorists because some commentators were wondering aloud whether the United States in some way deserved the attack visited upon it on September 11, 2001. "He wanted to cut that off right away," said Frum, "and make it clear that he saw absolutely no moral equivalence. So he reached right into the Psalms for that word." He continued to stress the idea. Osama bin Laden and his cohorts were "evil." In November 2001, in an interview with NEWSWEEK, he first declared—blurted out, actually—that Saddam Hussein in Iraq was "evil," too."

[5] "George W. Bush: War criminal?" By CHB Staff, March 10, 2003, 05:42

[6] See: (PROFILE (COUNTRY:United States; ISOCOUNTRY3:USA; UNTOP:021; APGROUP:NorthAmerica;) By The Associated Press Associated Press Published 09/03/2003 0903AP-OATH-GLANCE; <http://www.startribune.com/viewers/story.php?story=4077571>

[7] [See: The Military Member's Guide to Citizenship Application; <http://usmilitary.about.com/library/mlinfo/citizenship/blcitizen-8.htm>]

[8] <http://www.presidential-inaugural.com/oath%20of%20office.html>

[9] <http://www.cnet.com/~suntzu75/oath.htm>

[10] [http://www.policensw.com/info/misc\\_qun/oath.html](http://www.policensw.com/info/misc_qun/oath.html)

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**Readers' Feedback**

<b>The Pledge in schools.</b>
Tomasz   November 10, 2008, 3:33 am
As-Salamu 'Alaykum: In school when the pledge was recited, I did not stand and did not place hand on chest. I did not even recite. None made a row over it. It is a choice as school is concerned. But to become a citizen, it is required. The problem we, muslims, have with the pledge is that it is American foreign policy that is against us. They do not say it is against Islam, but they are quick to equate any muslim with a gripe to Al-Qaida or call him a Taliban. This is what the ordinary person can see. With regard to saying the pledge in order to become a citizen, I equate it with joining a gang. "We're your family now." That says it all.

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