**THE CULTURE WAR**

**Why Everything Is Being Politicized**

John Horvat II, *Return to Order*

There is a new phase in the old Culture War. It has been long coming. The violence at Charlottesville USA might well be the opening volley.

For decades, the two sides have been slogging it out by debating the moral issues eroded by the sexual revolution of the sixties. Neither side has won.

The cultural left has made advances (often through the courts) in the field of marriage destruction and gender blending. The cultural right has doggedly fought for life and family issues.

**Inside the Classical Liberal Framework**

The old phase of this war was defined by a set of rules inside the framework of the classical liberal order. It is based on an individualism centred on the pursuit of material happiness without restraint. In this arrangement, God and His moral law were relegated to the private sphere.

Both sides of the debate are represented by this order. Liberals on the left tend to favour a model of technological advancement that rejects a moral order since it restricts progress. Conservatives inside this liberal model desire to maintain some private remnants of Christian order as a framework for combating the chaos of misdirected progress.

Moral conservatives have long fought a stubborn and slow rearguard action inside the context of this liberal order. Unfortunately, some disregarded the sage advice of Jesuit Fr. Bernard Dempsey, who commented that “Only a very foolish General accepts battle on terrain of his adversary’s choice.”

However, inside this liberal framework, many Americans did manage to find some meaning and identity in their private lives. They did this by clinging to what little remains of family, church, and other social structures of Christian order. Meanwhile, the cultural left has lived off the social capital of Christian order, while slowly pushing a corrupting agenda ever further toward complete unrestraint. This symbiotic arrangement formed a precarious consensus that not even the disruptive sixties managed to destroy completely.

**Attacking the Tiniest Vestiges of Christian Order**

And that is why the new phase is so dangerous. This new phase has broken loose from the consensus of the classical liberal order. It no longer follows the logic of the old phase which maintained some semblance of organization inside society.

This new phase no longer respects logic, identity or even money. It makes the “right” of self-gratification the only absolute right even when such behaviour is self-destructive. A kind of cultural suicide is taking hold in which many liberals no longer care if the structures of society are destroyed. The old order must come down even in its least manifestations.

Thus, the vestiges of a Christian order, to which countless Americans still cling, torment the new revolutionaries. They cannot tolerate the smallest reminder of anything Christian. All that represents Western civilization is a target.

That is why the crosses must come down. The Christmas (or holiday) trees must be deprived of Christ, and the Ten Commandments must be removed from government buildings. That’s why the national anthem must no longer be respected at football games and transgender bathroom tyranny imposed in schools.

**Everything Can Be Politicized and Polarized**

The new battlefield has changed because the clash is no longer about specific issues that can be addressed through rational debate. Rather, the Christian order itself is the target. And because it is deemed offensive, it must be irrationally discarded wherever it is found.

In this context anything that retains vestiges of Christian order is being politicized and polarized – whether it be symbols, sports, wedding cakes or restaurants. Moreover, the new liberal offensive is only too willing to unjustly attribute to Christian order any bad thing of the remote past as a means to eliminate the memory of a moral law.

That is why the mainstream media are no longer mainstream anymore. They do not report on the facts but rather the new politically correct narratives that replace deconstructed ones.

Thus, any cultural issue can dominate the fake news cycle and become the platform for revolution. In this sense, the statue removal controversy is not about statues. The bathroom wars have nothing to do with bathrooms. And dare one say the unspeakable, global warming has nothing to do with the climate anymore. These are all mere props used in this new phase of the old cultural war against all things Western and Christian.

**The Crumbling of Liberal Democracy**

Charlottesville shocked America because the nation saw the liberal consensus come apart. The chaotic event sent a signal that the foundations of America’s liberal democracy are crumbling. A spirit of anarchy is taking hold. The early harbingers of this spirit were found in Ferguson, Dallas and Baltimore. Outbursts of violence like Charlottesville now threaten the very idea of a nation and a unified people.

This new phase of the Culture War challenges the cultural right to continue and intensify the fight. It is not the time for Christians to pull out of the fray as might be suggested by some “Benedict Option.” This only turns the vestiges of Christian order into yet smaller vestiges. Further, the cultural right must not make the mistake of fighting on the same anarchical battlefield dominated by the left.

Rather, the vitriol levied against the tiny vestiges of Christian order is only a confirmation of just how powerful this order is. To be effective, the principles of this Christian order must be fully embraced in their powerful totality. Indeed, come what may, now is the time to peacefully proclaim the Faith in all its fullness in the public square.