

The Trumpet Herald

Giving the trumpet a certain sound
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Pew's Shocking Find: The U.S. Has Become More Religiously Intolerant & Socially Hostile

Religion, considering its mass appeal and prevalence, plays a key role in global and domestic events. Considering the fact that sociopolitical issues are often dictated or impacted by personal faith, new findings from the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life are potentially concerning, specifically when it comes to faith in America.

The non-partisan research organization found that religious intolerance is on the rise across the globe. But — among the surprising data present within the study — Pew notes that the United States' standing at both the governmental and societal level has devolved noticeably.

The report's main emphasis is on governmental restrictions on religious beliefs and practices...

Here's how Pew describes the changes in government restriction that have unfolded at the state and local level:

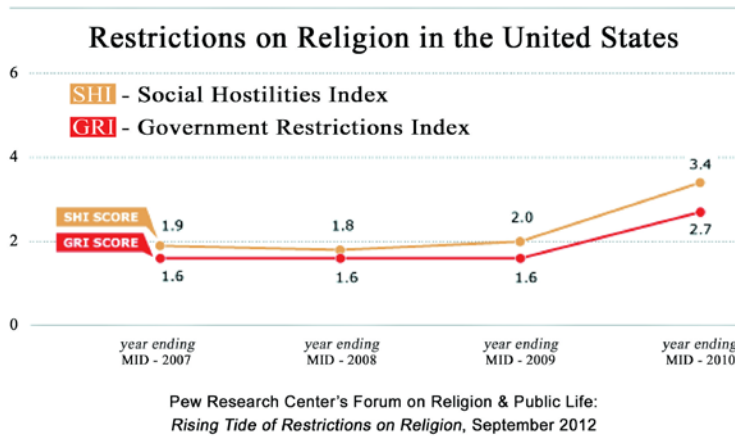
Based on the information in the sources consulted for this study, the U.S. score on the Government Restrictions Index rose from 1.6 in the year ending in mid-2009 to 2.7 in the year ending in mid-2010, moving the U.S. from the low category of restrictions to the moderate category for the first time in the four years studied. (GRI scores 2.4 or higher are categorized as moderate by this study, while scores 4.5 or higher are categorized as high.)

During the period from mid-2009 to mid-2010, a number of the sources used in the study reported an increase in the number of incidents at the state and local level in which members of some religious groups faced restrictions on their ability to practice their faith. This included incidents in which individuals were prevented from wearing certain religious attire or symbols, including beards, in some judicial settings or in prisons, penitentiaries or other correctional facilities. For instance, the U.S. Department of Justice reported that it was pursuing a lawsuit in federal court against the California Department of Corrections and

Rehabilitation and various California officials on behalf of a Sikh prison inmate who, in March 2010, had been ordered to trim his facial hair in violation of his religious beliefs. The Justice Department said the state's inmate grooming policy "imposed a substantial burden" on the man's ability to exercise his faith.

These findings are anything but positive for a nation that prides itself on being a bastion for free speech and the free exercise of any and all religious beliefs.

(September 20, 2012; www.theblaze.com)



Furthermore, it points to negative societal patterns that may need to be addressed, specifically when it comes to intolerance and religiously-rooted violence.

Inspired commentary

The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God.

Heretofore those who presented the truths of the third angel's message have often been regarded as mere alarmists. Their predictions that religious intolerance would gain control in the United States, that church and state would unite to persecute those who keep the commandments of God, have been pronounced groundless and absurd. It has been confidently declared that this land could never become other than what it has been--the defender of religious freedom. But as the question of enforcing Sunday observance is widely agitated, the event so long doubted and disbelieved is seen to be approaching, and the third message will produce an effect which it could not have had before.

(The Great Controversy, p.605, 606)

State Department officer killed in attack on US Consulate in Libya, following Egyptian protest at US embassy

URGENT: A United States envoy and three others were reportedly killed in an attack on the American embassy in Libya, unconfirmed reports say...

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton confirmed that one State Department officer had been killed in the protest at the U.S. consulate in Benghazi. She strongly condemned the attack and said she had called Libyan President Mohammed el-Megarif "to coordinate additional support to protect Americans in Libya." Clinton expressed concern that the protests might spread to other countries. She said the U.S. is working with "partner countries around the world to protect our personnel, our missions, and American citizens worldwide."

"Some have sought to justify this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet," Clinton said in a statement released by the State Department. "The United States deplores any intentional effort to denigrate the religious beliefs of others. Our commitment to religious tolerance goes back to the very beginning of our nation. But let me be clear: There is never any justification for violent acts of this kind. "

(September 12, 2012; Associated Press)

* Secretary Clinton stated *The United States deplores any intentional effort to denigrate the religious beliefs of others*. Will there be a similar viewpoint concerning the spreading of the three angel's message, particularly the third angel? What about literature that reveals the true antichrist of Bible prophecy?

Inspired commentary

Satan will work the miracles to deceive those who dwell upon the earth. Spiritualism will do its work by causing the dead to be personated. Those religious bodies who refuse to hear God's messages of warning will be under strong deception, and will unite with the civil power to persecute the saints. The Protestant churches will unite with the papal power in persecuting the commandment-keeping people of God. This is that power which constitutes the great system of persecution which will exercise spiritual tyranny over the consciences of men.

(Manuscript Releases, vol. 14, p.161, 162)