Were the Founders Afraid of Religion?
by Stephen Cakouros

Humanists and Marxists would like us to think that men such as James Madison, an Episcopalian, were deeply suspicious of religion. They do not admit to the fact that America's founders were not distrustful of Christianity; they were wary of the papacy, especially since the Ohio Valley had been ceded to French Catholics. **The founders knew that France stood for religious and political persecution.**

We must not forget that a number of the founders were descended from French Protestants, also called Huguenots who had been severely persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church. George Washington had an ancestor who was a Huguenot, as did at least five American presidents: John Adams, John Quincy Adams, John Tyler, James Garfield, and Theodore Roosevelt. A Huguenot refugee named Apollos de Revoire settled in Boston, and his son Paul Revere's midnight ride is part of American folklore. Uppermost in the minds of the founders was the threat of French Catholicism.

These words of the fourth president of Princeton, Samuel Davies [1723-61], would have been known to George Washington who fought in the French and Indian War. "Need I remind you what barbarities and depredations a mongrel race of Indian savages and French Papists have perpetrated on our frontiers? . . . And will these violences cease without a vigorous and timely resistance from us? Can Indian revenge and thirst for blood be glutted? Or can French ambition and avarice be satisfied? No, we have no method left but to repel force with force, and give them blood to drink, in their turn who have drunk ours." The founders would have known of the eloquence of Davies and more importantly they would have held to the same opinion that France stood for the Papacy which stood for religious oppression.

On our very own shores [1562ff] Spanish Roman Catholics slaughtered a number of French Huguenots (Calvinist Protestants) who tried to escape religious persecution by coming to America. They settled near to what is now St. Augustine, Florida. The tireless inquisition caught up with them, and they were massacred. What took place in Florida was known to the founders of America who were not afraid of religion; however, they were fearful of the papacy. It is the habit of humanists and Marxists to take some isolated remark which disparages religion made by Jefferson, the only president ever proclaimed by his enemies to be an atheist, and to pretend that something he said when he had drunk too much wine was representative the thinking of all the founders. This is dishonest. (Read more about Jefferson's misconstrued statement in the **ACLU and Roger Williams** paper under Archives – History)

Three members of the Continental Congress - Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and Elias Boudinot were Huguenots. This explains why some were afraid of the papacy. Who among the founders could forget the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre [8/24/1572] in which upwards of one hundred thousand Huguenots were murdered at the behest of a Jesuit priest. The shifty priest convinced Charles IX, the French king, that if he dispatched soldiers against unsuspecting Protestant villagers it could serve as penance. The founders also would have known that after the news of the slaughter reached the Vatican that Pope Gregory XIII commanded that church bells be rung

in praise of the barbarous acts done in the name of Jesus, and that a special coin was struck in commemoration of the event. Events of this nature would have been important to those who called for the separation of church and state. They would have been familiar with *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* [1563] which details the short but murderous reign of Bloody Mary, daughter to Henry VIII and successor to Edward VI. The Catholic queen burned over 300 Protestants. Among them were four bishops. The founders were not afraid of religion; they were afraid of the kind of religion that does not fit well with democracy. That cannot be said of Christianity since the Christian religion in keeping with democracy depends on individual expression.