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## HANG 'EM ALL -- COMPLETELY!

by **Frank R. Zindler**

All over our country - in the north as well as the south - the battle cry is "Hang Ten!" Ten Commandments, that is. Clergymen, judges, governors, and legislatures have echoed the call. The states are beginning to command by fiat of law that the primitive taboos recorded in the Hebrew bible be displayed on courthouse lawns, in judicial chambers, in halls of legislative assemblies, and in public schools.

Everywhere the claim is made that America was founded on the Ten Commandments - or at least that its system of law and justice is based on that biblical code. Not even the Chief Justice of the United States seems to realize that our governmental system represents a reaction to the principles inherent in that code - in some cases a mighty rejection of that code.

The First Amendment of the US Constitution, for example, is an eloquent repudiation of the First Commandment's prohibition of religious freedom. It is also a repudiation of the Third Commandment's prohibition of freedom of speech.

The Thirteenth Amendment repudiates the institution of slavery which is so cozily assumed by the Fourth and Tenth Protestant Commandments.

Consider: what could be more American than the principle that every person is to be held accountable for his or her crimes only? Could anything be more un-American than the Second Commandment's warning that "I Yahweh, thy God, am a jealous god, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation..."? Not even the Common Law would have hung a man because his grandfather had stolen a horse! The Second Commandment (conveniently not enumerated in Catholic epitomes of the "Decalogue") also prohibits the making of "any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth." That would rule out all representational art - including dollar bills that bear the likeness of George Washington! What could be more American than Greenbacks? Yet Chief Justice William Rehnquist seems still to cling to his 1980 opinion that "The secular application of the Ten Commandments is clearly seen in its adoption as the fundamental legal code of Western Civilization and the

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Common Law of the United States." [Stone v Graham, 449 US 39.101 S. Ct. 192.66 L.Ed. 2d 199 (1980)]

The hanging of the Ten Commandments is fraught with problems never considered by the pandering politicians who so eagerly rush to collect the votes of their most superstitious constituents. For example, there is never any discussion as to which of the three sets of Ten Commandments the Bible claims to be "it" should be used. Nor is there any discussion as to which epitome of any one of these sets should be used: Jewish, Protestant, or Catholic. It is blithely assumed that all theists should be happy with their "Hang-Ten" efforts. Yet it is hard to imagine "idolatrous Catholics" being happy with a public monument displaying a Protestant commandment prohibiting their cultic peculiarities. Nor does it seem that Jews could be happy with plaques writing out the whole word "God" - regardless of which set or version is engraved upon the plaque. Orthodox Jews, be it remembered, have a taboo against "uttering" the name of their deity. The prohibition in Leviticus 24:16 ("Whoever utters the Name of the Lord shall be put to death") is taken very seriously. Not only do they not write out fully their god's proper name - Yahweh - they avoid it wherever possible. Just as with Protestant and Catholic versions of the Ten Commandments, the Jewish English versions substitute the word "Lord" for the heap-big-medicine name "Yahweh." In fact, the Orthodox go to the absurd extreme of writing "G-d" for "God" - which Christians fearlessly spell out in its capitalized entirety. Certainly it will shock the sensibilities of Jewish constituents to see public displays that spell "God" with a vowel.

In addition to the problems of which set of commandments to display and whose epitomized versions to enumerate, there is a further problem never considered by the politicians: What are the commandments supposed to mean, and whose interpretations are to be granted state backing? Is the commandment that prohibits "bearing false witness" against one's neighbor a rule for behavior in a court of law, or is it a prohibition of lying or gossiping? Are the prohibitions against "coveting" injunctions against envy, or are they (as some anthropologists claim) a ban against use of the "evil eye"? Is "Thou shalt not kill" a universal ban on killing - of flies and flamingoes as well as fetuses or Fascists - or is it a prohibition of murder? What is murder?

### **A Modest Proposal**

Considering the above-mentioned problems, it seems to me the only solution to the problem of hanging commandments is this: hang them all! Hang all three sets in full text - don't hang just the epitomes. Make sure they are the best English translations possible, rendering the Hebrew Tetragrammaton YHWH as "Yahweh," not the namby-pamby "Lord" of nearly all current translations. (Political correctness would make it advisable for a Spanish-language version be mounted also, wherever Hispanic votes are a force to be reckoned with.) Then, so the probable meaning of the texts can be inferred, mount other biblical verses that seem to clarify Yahweh's intentions on the three occasions when he asked Moses to report the "Big Ten." We should mount all the commandments in adjacent chapters in Exodus and Deuteronomy so the full context can be understood by the average school child or visitor to a courthouse.

Of course, very large walls will be needed for this civic purpose. If monuments are to be erected, care will have to be taken lest they take on the appearance of the Berlin Wall, since thoroughness perforce will make commandment hangers want to stretch their displays as far as necessary.

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Let us now consider what all should be displayed upon The Great Wall Of America.

### Three Sets of Ten

The standard set of Ten Commandments usually cited by Catholics and Protestants alike is to be found in Deuteronomy 5:6-21. If the full text were mounted - not just the differing epitomes - readers could puzzle out the numbers on their own, so neither Catholic nor Protestant would feel the sting of any governmental discrimination. (Atheists, of course, are never considered important in such deliberations.) The Deuteronomy Ten would read as follows, making the corrections to the text as indicated above:

Deut. 5:6 I am Yahweh thy god, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

5:7 Thou shalt have none other gods before me.

5:8 Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth:

5:9 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I Yahweh, thy god am a jealous god, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,

5:10 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

5:11 Thou shalt not take the name of Yahweh thy god in vain: for Yahweh will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

5:12 Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as Yahweh thy god hath commanded thee.

5:13 Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work:

5:14 But the seventh day is the Sabbath of Yahweh thy god: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy male slave, nor thy female slave, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy male slave and thy female slave may rest as well as thou.

5:15 And remember that thou wast a slave in the land of Egypt, and that Yahweh thy god brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore Yahweh thy god commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.

5:16 Honour thy father and thy mother, as Yahweh thy god hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which Yahweh thy god giveth thee.

5:17 Thou shalt not kill.

5:18 Neither shalt thou commit adultery.

5:19 Neither shalt thou steal.

5:20 Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

5:21 Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou cast an evil eye upon thy neighbour's house, his field, or his male slave, or his female slave, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbour's.

5:22 These words Yahweh spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me [Moshe].

I am sure readers will agree that the above corrected translation is much more interesting than the usual listings of the Ten Taboos commonly used in Sunday schools. The uncivilized and primitive - as well as petty - nature of these admonitions is much more obvious when the name of a minor Near Eastern deity

is used instead of the grandiose and abstract "the Lord." Then too, the implicit toleration of slavery in this code is more obvious when "servant" is replaced by "slave" - more accurately representing the meaning of the Hebrew text. Finally, replacing the wishy-washy word "covet" with "cast an evil eye" underscores the abysmal ignorance and superstition of the author of this code. One can easily imagine him sporting a garlic necklace and mounting a rabbit's foot on the end of his paddle.

Right beside the Deuteronomy code, we would want to mount the full text of the commandments listed in Exodus chapter 20. We do not need to print the full text of that set here, since in all but several details it is identical to the Deuteronomic text. Nevertheless, the differences are important and must be pointed out. In both sets, Jews are forbidden to work their slaves on the Sabbath. However, the rationale for this oddly humane prohibition is different in Deuteronomy and Exodus. Whereas in Deuteronomy the rationale is that the Jews themselves had once been slaves in Egypt - and should therefore be sympathetic to the condition of their own slaves - the rationale in Exodus is much more primitive:

Exodus 20:11 For in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Yahweh blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Posting the Exodus 20 set of commandments in full text would have the beneficial effect of showing attentive readers that the god they worship is not infinitely powerful: he gets tired too. Readers might start to wonder what might happen to the world if Yahweh is prone to napping while resting. If he's sleeping on the days worshipers are in church praying to him...

The other difference is that "coveting" is mentioned twice in the Exodus commandments instead of once as in Deuteronomy, and the order of what is not to be "desired" or "coveted" is reversed. Exodus forbids evil-eyeing the neighbor's house before forbidding the evil-eyeing of his wife. This order makes it a bit more clear that wives are merely chattels - movable property. Yahweh certainly would never allow them to vote or drive an automobile without a chaperone.

### **Ten More To Hang**

It seems almost certain that the lawmakers and judges who are clamoring to have the Ten Commandments hung on public walls do not know that there are three different versions printed in their bibles. Still more certain is that they do not know how bizarre the third set is, nor that it arguably is the oldest (most authentic?) version of the Decalogue. It is found in the thirty-fourth chapter of Exodus:

Exod 34:1 and Yahweh said unto Moses, hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest.

34:2 And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount.

34:3 And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount.

34:4 And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto Mount Sinai, as Yahweh had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.

34:5 And Yahweh descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and

proclaimed the name Yahweh.

34:6 And Yahweh passed by before him, and proclaimed, Yahweh, Yahweh El, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 34:7 keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

34:8 And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

34:9 And he said, if now I have found grace in thy sight, my Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiff-necked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.

34:10 And he said, behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of Yahweh: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee.

34:11 Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.

### **Ten Cultic Commandments**

#### *The First Commandment*

34:12 Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:

34:13 But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:

#### *The Second Commandment*

34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for Yahweh, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous god:

34:15 Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice;

34:16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.

#### *The Third Commandment*

34:17 Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.

#### *The Fourth Commandment*

34:18 The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt.

#### *The Fifth Commandment*

34:19 Every first birth of the womb is mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, whether ox or sheep, that is male.

34:20 But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem him not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty.

#### *The Sixth Commandment*

34:21 Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.

#### *The Seventh Commandment*

34:22 And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the years end.

34:23 Thrice in the year shall all your menchildren appear before Lord Yahweh, the god of Israel.

34:24 For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before Yahweh thy god thrice in the year.

*The Eighth Commandment*

34:25 Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the Passover be left unto the morning.

*The Ninth Commandment*

34:26 The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of Yahweh thy god.

*The Tenth Commandment*

Thou shalt not see the a kid in his mothers milk.

To make clear the context and to make people understand that the above commandments (which I have taken the liberty of numbering as one through ten) are really the Big Ten, not just some other commandments Yahweh fancied to add, several of the verses following them should be mounted also:

34:27 And Yahweh said unto Moses, write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.

34:28 And he was there with Yahweh forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

34:29 And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.

34:30 And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him.

34:31 And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them.

34:32 And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that Yahweh had spoken with him in Mount Sinai.

If this third set of the Big Ten were displayed, the cultic origins of the so-called moral code would be a bit more obvious. What moral quality is a Gentile going to perceive in abstaining from Goat Stroganoff? It would make it clear that the Decalogue is really just a "Jewish thing," replete with animal sacrifice, special festivals, and opportunities for priests to parasitize the people. (Who do you think ends up eating all those firstfruits and first-borns?) It also should underscore the religious intolerance behind the Ten Commandments, thus highlighting the un-American nature of the code.



Readers of the third set might also be astute enough to note that although Yahweh is represented as promising to write the Decalogue on stone tablets provided by Moses, in the end it is Moses who is indicated as having done the writing - even though nowhere in the text does it indicate he took with him a chisel. It merely says, "And Yahweh said unto Moses, write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel." For all anyone might suppose, Moses was taking dictation with pen and papyrus!

The implication of animal sacrifice in the Ten Commandments should appall any right-thinking American - even if he or she isn't an animal-rights activist. Furthermore, reading about 'redeeming' "All the firstborn of thy sons," thoughtful readers might conclude that human sacrifice was originally required. They would, of course, be correct in this inference.

In Leviticus - the book in which Yahweh's taboo manufacturing goes into overdrive - we are commanded (verses 28-29): "Nothing which a man devotes to Yahweh irredeemably from his own property, whether man or beast or ancestral land, may be sold or redeemed. Everything so devoted is most holy to Yahweh. No human being thus devoted may be redeemed, but he shall be put to death." We must suppose that humans thus sacrificed were not eaten by the priests as were the oxen and sheep. But who knows what the Levite appetite may have been like in those barbarous times?

Jews and Christians alike often make a big deal out of the story in Genesis 22 about Yahweh commanding Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac but then, just as Abraham is about to perform the holy deed, stopping the slaughter with the explanation "This was just a test." Hustlers for holiness never mention the more primitive case of Jephthah's daughter - a case where Yahweh receives the life of an innocent girl, completely in accordance with the Leviticus quotation just cited.

The story of Jephthah's daughter is recorded in the eleventh chapter of Judges, beginning with verse 29:

Then the spirit of Yahweh came upon Jephthah and he passed through Gilead and Manaseh... Jephthah made this vow to Yahweh: 'If thou wilt deliver the Ammonites into my hands, then the first creature that comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return from them in peace shall be given to Yahweh; I will offer that as a whole-offering.' So Jephthah crossed over to attack the Ammonites, and Yahweh delivered them into his hands... But when Jephthah came to his house in Mizpah, who should come out to meet him with tambourines and dances but his daughter, and she his only child... When he saw her he rent his clothes and said, 'Alas, my daughter, you have broken my heart... I have made a vow to Yahweh and I cannot go back.' She replied, 'Father, you have made a vow to Yahweh; do to me what you have solemnly vowed, since Yahweh has avenged you on the Ammonites, your enemies. But,

father, grant me this one favor. For two months let me be, that I may roam the hills with my companions and mourn that I must die a virgin.' ... At the end of two months she came back to her father, and he fulfilled the vow he had made; she died a virgin. [New English Bible, modified]

### **For Further Clarification**

Readers will agree that mounting all the texts and stories quoted above would greatly improve citizens' understanding of the Thirty Commandments, some ten of which politicians want to hang. Too easily, one might suppose that all the commandments are to be interpreted in some absolute manner. If one has only the epitome "Thou shalt not kill," for instance, it is easy to suppose that killing is prohibited. To clarify just what the Sixth Protestant Commandment actually means, we should also hang on the wall some other commandments of Yahweh that serve to limit such sweeping understandings.

We have already cited the commandment of human sacrifice in Lev. 28-29. That certainly should be mounted on the wall right beside the first and second Sixth Commandments. Right after that, we should mount Exodus 22:18: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," and 22:19 "Whosoever lieth with a beast, shall surely be put to death."

Further clarification (although perhaps not edification) of the limits placed by Yahweh's biographers on the killing commandment can be had from other verses in Exodus, from chapters between the first and second sets of Ten Commandments to be found in that book.

### **Thou Shalt Kill**

Exodus 22:20 He that sacrificeth unto any god save unto Yahweh only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

Exodus 21:15 And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.

Exodus 21: 17 And he that curseth his father or his mother, shall surely be put to death.

Exodus 21: 20-21 And if a man smite his slave or his slavegirl with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished: Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished, for he is his money. (This one may take a bit of puzzling out on its own, and perhaps it should be mounted beside one of the commandments that presupposes slavery.)

Exodus 22:2 If a burglar is caught in the act and is fatally injured, it is not murder; but if he breaks in after sunrise and is fatally injured, then it is murder. [NEB, modified]

There is another commandment which, although in purport it is a killing commandment, perhaps should be mounted beside the Yahweh's Name commandment. It is found in Leviticus 24:13-16: Yahweh spoke to Moses and said, Take the man who blasphemed out of the camp. Everyone who heard him shall put a hand on his head, and then all the community shall stone him to death. You shall say to the Israelites: When any man whatever blasphemes his God, he shall accept responsibility for his sin. Whoever utters the Name Yahweh shall be put to death: all the community shall stone him; alien or native, if he utters the Name, he shall be put to death. [New English Bible, modified]

Another lovely commandment which all capital punishment advocates will be gratified to see published on public walls is found in Leviticus 24:17: "And he

that killeth any man, shall surely be put to death." The "Family Values" people also will be pleased to see the tough-love commandment in Deuteronomy 21:18-21: "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place: And they shall say unto the Elders of his city, This our son is stubborn, and rebellious, he will not obey our voice: he is a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die." Just in case readers of public walls should want to rush right out and start obeying all these killing commandments, it is necessary that they be aware of a curious restriction Yahweh is alleged to have placed on such sacred slaughter. Right after the kill-your-drunken-son commandment, in Deuteronomy 24:22-23 we read:

And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day: for he that is hanged, is accursed of God; that thy land be not defiled, which Yahweh thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Alas, the Good Book gives no hint as to what "inheritance" modern followers of this commandment may expect to receive, nor in which governmental agency to apply for the righteousness reward. Deeper understanding of the anti-killing commandment would also be gained by sundry verses in Deuteronomy, such as the following:

When a man takes a wife and after having intercourse with her turns against her and brings trumped-up charges against her, giving her a bad name and saying, 'I took this woman and slept with her and did not find proof of virginity in her', then the girl's father and mother shall take the proof of her virginity to the elders of the town, at the town gate. The girl's father shall say to the elders, 'I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, and he has turned against her. He has trumped up a charge and said, "I have not found proofs of virginity in your daughter." Here are the proofs.' They shall then spread the garment before the elders of the town. The elders shall take the man and punish him: they shall fine him a hundred pieces of silver because he has given a bad name to a virgin of Israel, and hand them to the girl's father. She shall be his wife: he is not free to divorce her all his life long. If on the other hand, the accusation is true and no proof of the girl's virginity is found, then they shall bring her out to the door of her father's house and the men of her town shall stone her to death. [New English Bible]

Just where, exactly, one is to find the town gates of Brooklyn or Miami Beach is unclear - as is the question of how the stoning is to be carried out if the non-virgin's father's "house" happens to be an apartment at the Waldorf. But no one ever claimed that the life of the Bible-believer would be easy.

All Christians would agree that Yahweh would have been out of his mind if his anti-killing commandment had been in any way intended to outlaw war. To understand the deadly dimensions of biblical warfare, a brutal passage from Deuteronomy 20:11-18 should be scribed upon the school-room walls:

When you advance on a city to attack it, make an offer of peace. ... If it does not make peace with you but offers battle, you shall besiege it, and Yahweh

your God will deliver it into your hands. You shall put all its males to the sword, but you may take the women, the dependants, and the cattle for yourselves, and plunder everything else in the city. You may enjoy the use of the spoil of your enemies which Yahweh your God gives you. That is what you shall do to cities at a great distance, as opposed to those which belong to nations near at hand. In the cities of these nations whose land Yahweh your God is giving you as a patrimony, you shall not leave any creature alive. You shall annihilate them - Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites - as Yahweh your God commanded you, so that they may not teach you to imitate all the abominable things that they have done for their gods and so cause you to sin against Yahweh your God. [New English Bible, modified]

Finally, since Right-to-Single-Celled-Lifers (otherwise known as Compulsory Pregnancy People) seem not to be very well versed in the holy book they think they are defending, a passage showing that abortion is not murder - rather an offence on the level of a parking ticket - should be engraved upon school-room walls (perhaps in the restrooms). It is found in Exodus 21: 22:

When, in the course of a brawl, a man knocks against a pregnant woman so that she has a miscarriage but suffers no further hurt, then the offender must pay whatever fine the woman's husband demands after assessment.

To be sure, the passage refers to accidental abortion. But considering that in the entire Judaeo-Christian bible there is not a single mention - let alone prohibition - of intentional abortion, and considering the fact that the Bible does decree death for such seemingly trivial offenses as pronouncing the name 'Yahweh' or for working on the seventh day of the week, it should be obvious that intentional abortion was too trivial to merit mention by the Lord of Hosts.

Space does not permit listing all the other biblical passages that should be mounted for the purpose of clarifying the Ten-Times-Three Commandments. There are many that would need to be cited to explain the institution of slavery, the sacred inferiority of women, and the biblically abominable practice of homosexuality. Even the question of killing could be better understood if several dozen more passages were mounted - despite the considerable attention I have given to the problem in citing the passages presented above. Nevertheless, we may hope that the public walls on which the commandments are to be mounted have more space available than does this journal.

If "the" Ten Commandments are to be hung upon the public walls of America, not just epitomes should be hung. Jews, Catholics, and Protestants epitomize differently. Hanging only one type of epitome would discriminate against the other two. Complete texts of the Commandments should be hung to avoid discriminating against any major "Faith-Based Organization." But hanging just one of the three available sets of ten would also leave one open to charges of discrimination. So all three sets of commandments the Bible claims to be the Ten should be displayed. Finally, since these admonitions are so difficult for modern minds to understand or interpret, other commandments such as those quoted in this article should be hung beside the Big Ten.

My advice to the legislators and judges who are rushing to "Hang Ten!" is that they should not be faint-hearted in their efforts by hanging only epitomes of the commandments. I say, hang 'em all - completely!

