

## National Pledges Undermine Scrutiny, Freedom, and Free Thinking

The Church of Reality discourages its members from participating in national pledges and any state sponsored public pledges of loyalty to the nation-state. Individual members may of course choose to participate if they want to because the Church of Reality's position does not take precedence over individual choice. We do however advise against it for a variety of reasons and we urge our members to consider these reasons when faced with participating in state sponsored acts of national loyalty.

Realists are a free people. We are citizens of the human race. We the people form nation-states for the purpose of creating organization in society so as to serve the interests of the people. Our position is that the nation-state is always subservient and the people are always dominant. A nation-state that requires patriotic acts such as the reciting of a pledge is asserting a position that the state is dominant over the people. That position is incompatible with our Sacred {In:Principle of Freedom}, one of our core religious beliefs.

State led acts of patriotism, even when voluntary, undermine our culture, our principles, our way of life. It asserts that the nation state is a super being that has dominion over its people. When the state sponsors public displays of loyalty to itself, it forces through group coercion, a method used to instill cult-like behavior, the individual, to either comply or to be perceived by others that the individual is intentionally not participating. This causes the individual to be subject to group ridicule as people form opinions as to why the individual refuses to participate. This is an invasion of the individual's {In:principle of privacy 'Right to Privacy} in that others might perceived this person as an enemy of the State.

We therefore encourage all Realists to refuse state sponsored patriotic acts, whether seemingly voluntary or coerced, on the basis of religious freedom as a statement that Realists believe in the dominance of the people over the nation-state. We believe that it would be more appropriate for public servants to recite a pledge to the people, to affirm at the start of every work day that they have the wisdom to better serve the people.