



THE INFORMER

MAKE THIS ADMINISTRATION THE MOST PRAYED FOR IN U.S. HISTORY

August 3, 2018

SESSIONS: U.S. CULTURE 'LESS HOSPITABLE TO PEOPLE OF FAITH'

Please pray for a greater awareness of the importance of religious freedom in a free society.

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. (Gal 5:1)

American culture has become "less hospitable to people of faith," Attorney General Jeff Sessions said Monday in vowing that the Justice Department would protect people's religious freedom and convictions.

Sessions spoke at a Justice Department summit on religious tolerance at a time when courts have been asked how to balance anti-discrimination laws against the First Amendment's religious freedom guarantees. He also announced the creation of a "religious liberty task force" to implement Justice Department guidance on respecting and accommodating religious beliefs, including those of department employees....

Sessions, the country's chief law enforcement officer, warned Monday of a "dangerous movement" that he said was eroding protections for religious Americans.

He asserted that "nuns were being forced to buy contraceptives" — an apparent, though not fully accurate, reference to an Obama administration health care policy meant to ensure women covered by faith-based groups' health plans have access to cost-free contraceptives. Religious groups that challenged the policy argued it violated their beliefs....

Sessions also objected to members of Congress asking judicial and executive branch nominees about their religious dogma. And he praised a Colorado baker who refused to make a cake for a same-sex couple in a case that reached the Supreme Court and ended in his favor this year. That baker, Jack Phillips, was part of a panel discussion at the Justice Department summit.

"Let's be frank: A dangerous movement, undetected by many but real, is now challenging and eroding our great tradition of religious freedom. There can be no doubt. It's no little matter. It must be confronted intellectually and politically and defeated," Sessions said. "This election, this past election,

and much that has flowed from it, gives us a rare opportunity to arrest these trends and to confront them.” ...

Sessions, a Methodist and former Republican senator from Alabama, has made protecting religious liberty a cornerstone agenda item of his Justice Department — along with defending freedom of speech on college campuses. (Excerpts from Eric Tucker's article in [Associated Press](#))

TSA DEFENDS 'QUIET SKIES' MONITORING PROGRAM

Pray for our TSA officials as they work to make our modes of transportation safe.

But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. (2 Thess 3:3)

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is defending its use of a previously secret program used to monitor potential security threats at airports and on planes.

Michael Bilello, an assistant administrator of public affairs for TSA, told *The Hill* that the “Quiet Skies” initiative does not focus on “ordinary Americans,” but instead zeroes in on a small percentage of the traveling population.

“These programs are not designed to observe the average American,” he said. “They’re designed to protect the traveling public, but they’re not targeting the average American.”

“We’re talking about a very unique passenger that warrants the attention of a federal air marshal,” he added.

The Boston Globe first reported on Sunday that the TSA implemented the “Quiet Skies” program years ago to help eliminate threats posed by “unknown or partially known terrorists.”

Through the program, undercover federal air marshals observe passengers’ behavior. This can include watching how close they stand to the boarding area, how often they use the bathroom and any behavioral tics such as sweating or twitching....

He also defended its role in keeping the skies safe.

The program is aimed at travelers who display “travel patterns that will initially flag them as somebody that should receive further analysis,” Bilello said.

“TSA then analyzes additional information available through law enforcement agencies and other databases,” he said.

“If after that completion of analysis that person is deemed a potential threat to aviation, the flight crew, passengers, they could be entered into the program and be assigned a federal air marshal for observation,” Bilello said....

TSA officials have also insisted that the program does not target people based on their race or nationality, something TSA has sometimes come under criticism for doing. (Excerpts from Brett Samuels’ article in [The Hill](#))

SENIOR IRANIAN CLERIC SAYS TEHRAN SHOULD CONSIDER TRUMP'S SIT-DOWN OFFER

Ask the Lord to help the U.S. find a way to bring a lasting peace to relations with Iran.

They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. 'Peace, peace,' they say, when there is no peace. (Jer 6:14)

Iran reacted skeptically Tuesday to U.S. President Donald Trump saying that he's willing to negotiate with his Iranian counterpart "anytime," but a former adviser to the country's supreme leader said Tehran should not reject a sit-down out of hand.

Ali Akbar Nategh Nouri, a senior cleric and member of the influential Expediency Council, said Trump's suggestion Monday that he would be willing to meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani should not be categorically rejected.

"It should be discussed in the Supreme National Security Council," said Nategh Nouri, who is also a former aide to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Nategh Nouri said "we have to contemplate" the gesture, but also cautioned "we should not rejoice over this offer and not get excited."

"Trump may take advantage of this over-excitement," he said, the state-run IRNA news agency reported. "It could be a test for us."

The comment was a rare signal that Iran may be willing to negotiate with the U.S. after a day that saw several other officials reject talks unless Trump rejoins the 2015 nuclear deal.

Trump withdrew from the landmark nuclear accord, meant to prevent Tehran from developing nuclear weapons, in May, saying it was too generous to Iran. He has vowed to ramp up sanctions until Iran radically changes its policies, including its support for the Syrian government and regional militant groups, something the country's leaders have long refused to do.

Trump has also said, however, that as renewed sanctions kick in, he expected Iran would call and offer to return to the negotiating table, and that "we're ready to make a real deal."

On Monday he said he could meet with the Iranians with "no preconditions," adding that, "if they want to meet, I'll meet anytime they want."

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told CNBC on Monday that he was onboard with the president's invitation, saying Trump "wants to meet with folks to solve problems."...

"Iran is not a member of any of the multilateral gatherings so there are no plans for any engagement with Iran," the official told reporters, according to the Reuters news agency.

Talks between senior U.S. and Iranian officials were rare even during and after the nuclear deal was reached....

Britain, along with China, Germany, France, Russia, and the European Union, are negotiating with Iran on preserving the deal.

The Iranian leadership has previously ruled out one-on-one talks with Trump, following his decision to pull the United States out of the deal under which Iran was given relief from sanctions in return for curbs on its nuclear program....

Even though Trump said there would be “no preconditions” to talks with Rouhani, he also continued to deride the 2015 nuclear accord, calling it a “waste of paper” Monday.

With the first U.S. sanctions due to come into effect next Monday, the economy in Iran has already been hit, giving rise to growing fears of prolonged economic suffering. Another round, covering other types of commerce, including oil purchases, goes into effect November 4.... (Excerpts from [The Times of Israel](#))

POWERFUL MESSAGE FROM CONGRESSMAN FORBES

Pray for our congressional leadership.

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim 2:1-4)

[Watch VIDEO](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w9nKqJm1VPE&feature=youtu.be>

In case you missed it, you can still watch this inspiring PrayUSA Sunday message by Congressman Randy Forbes, the Founder of the Congressional Prayer Caucus. He joined Pastor Will Langford, of Great Bridge Baptist Church, in a memorable time of unity and inspiration on behalf of a nation that desperately needs the grace of God.

We cannot urge you strong enough to take a few moments and listen to his passionate plea for America. He is a watchman and from his vantage point, he sees clearly the destructive impact that the anti-faith movement is having on our country. The battle lines have been drawn and we must be strategic in our plan, purposed in our wills, and above all, fervent in our prayers. ([Congressional Prayer Caucus](#))