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THE ORIGINS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON'S ANTI-CLERICALISM

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Cannibals - mountebanks - charlatans - pious and whining hypocrites - necromancers - pseudo-Christians - mystery mongers. These are among the epithets which Thomas Jefferson applied to the clergy of the Protestant denominations and of the Roman Catholic Church as well. It was they who "perverted" the principles of Jesus "into an engine for enslaving mankind"; it was the Christian "priesthood" who had turned organized religion into a "mere contrivance to filch wealth and power" for themselves; they were the ones who throughout history had persecuted rational men for refusing to swallow "their impious heresies."

This attitude of Jefferson, with its sweeping condemnation of all clergymen everywhere, has been largely ignored by historians, even though, as Merrill Peterson has pointed out, Jefferson's religion has been the subject of more articles in the twentieth century than any other topic about him except politics. Most of these have been in response to a growing appreciation of Jefferson's importance in the development of religious and political freedom in America; the majority of them have sought to show that Jefferson was no atheist or infidel, not even a deist, but rather some kind of Christian.¹ Hence it is not surprising that studies of his religious ideas usually have glossed over his anti-clericalism and that none of them have given it systematic investigation. It will be the purpose of this paper to show that Jefferson's attitude toward the clergy had its origin in his campaign for the Presidency of the United States in 1800 and that it was a reaction to the slanderous attacks of Federalist clergymen on his personal character and religion.

In order to understand Jefferson's anti-clericalism, it is necessary to review his religious development. He was raised by his parents as a member of the Anglican church and his early schooling was in harmony with its doctrines. In 1760, at the age of seventeen, Jefferson enrolled as a student in the College of William and Mary. There he won the friendship of William Small, a young, competent, Scottish professor. Small, in turn, introduced Jefferson to the governor of the Virginia colony, Francis Fauquier, and to the eminent lawyer, George Wythe. These three well-educated men, each of whom was latitudinarian in his religious beliefs, had an important influence on Jefferson's intellectual development. It is likely that the governor, an admirer of Lord Bolingbroke, introduced him to the lat-

ter's *Philosophical Works*. These essays Jefferson studied carefully and systematically; many lengthy passages seemed so significant to him that he recorded them in his literary commonplace book. These selections suggest that prior to and concurrent with his careful and systematic study, he experienced a period of religious development during which he abandoned Anglican orthodoxy for a deistic attitude towards religious questions.² Well over half of his more than fifty excerpts from Bolingbroke deal with the rejection of Scripture as an authentic revelation of religious truth, with the substitution of nature and "right reason" for revelation, and with methods of historical criticism. Furthermore, Jefferson's correspondence indicates that by 1771 Christianity held little or nothing that attracted him.³

In the field of religion Jefferson is most famous for his contributions to the problem of the relationship of church and state. He provided the leadership for the attempt to disestablish the Church of England in Virginia and to achieve complete religious freedom there. For the legislative battles this involved, Jefferson made extensive preparation. His *Notes on Religion*,⁴ compiled in 1776, reveal his attitude toward the clergy and show that he had by that time developed the principle on which his attitude was based: he opposed the churchmen only when their actions or doctrines resulted in an infringement upon the civil rights of others. The ideas which Jefferson formulated were later restated and clarified in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, published in 1785.⁵

For the next fifteen years, that is, until the year of his election as President of the United States, religious topics are all but absent from Jefferson's papers and correspondence. Apparently his views had long since matured; religion no longer presented a problem to him. One letter, written in 1787 to his nephew, Peter Carr, suggests that Jefferson had begun to move toward the great admiration of Christian morality and of the character of Jesus which he frequently revealed after 1800.⁶ During these same years, he allowed the Anglican church to play nearly the same role in his life, despite his deism, as it did in lives of other Virginia gentlemen. He attended its services, supported it with his contributions, and at times even functioned as a vestryman for his parish. But he accepted as true very few of the official tenets of the Anglican faith.

Early in 1794, after having served his country as its first secretary of state, Thomas Jefferson retired to the comfort of his home, Monticello. He did not personally seek further political office even though he was the logical candidate of the Republicans to oppose Federalist John Adams for the presidency in 1796. Largely through the efforts of his friend James Madison, Jefferson was very nearly

chosen chief executive. Falling three electoral votes short of Adams' total, Jefferson then became his nation's second vice-president.

During the next four years the battle lines were drawn for the next election. Jefferson and his Republicans kept in touch with each other, occasionally through personal contact, but usually by correspondence, planning their strategy for the coming campaign. And when it came Jefferson became the object of unparalleled abuse and defamation of character.⁷ The tone was set by such men as the Reverend Jedidiah Champion of Litchfield, Connecticut, who, already in 1796, closed a public prayer with the words: "O Lord: wilt Thou bestow upon the Vice President a double portion of Thy grace, for Thou knowest he needs it."⁸ The Federalists were by no means idle during the four years preceding Jefferson's elevation to the presidency. The Reverend Timothy Dwight attacked the Republicans with unmatched virulence as early as July 4, 1798:

For what end shall we be connected with men of whom this is the character and conduct? Is it that we may assume the same character and pursue the same conduct? Is it that our churches may become temples of reason, our Sabbath a decade, and our psalms of praise Mar-seilles hymns? Is it that we may change our holy worship into a dance of Jacobin phrenzy and that we may behold a strumpet personating a Goddess on the altars of JEHOVAH? Is it that we may see the Bible cast into a bonfire, the vessels of the sacramental supper borne by an ass in public procession, and our children, either wheedled or terrified, uniting in chanting mockeries against God, and hailing in the sounds of *ça ira*, the ruin of their religion and the loss of their souls? Is it that we may see our wives speciously polluted; the outcasts of delicacy and virtue, the loathing of God and man? . . . Shall ye, my breathern, become partakers of these sins? Shall we introduce them into our government, our schools, our families? Shall our sons become the disciples of Voltaire, and the dragoons of Marat; or our daughters the concubines of the Illuminati?⁹

The attacks of the clergy can be best understood in the light of religious conditions in the United States during the years preceding the election of 1800. Many Americans were indifferent to religion. Rationalism, English Deism, French skepticism and atheism had all made their inroads. According to Albert Post "the last quarter of the eighteenth century was the heyday of deism in America and all evidence points to a startling amount of irreligion and unbelief during this period. The leaders of American life were discreet sceptics in regard to the Christian religion."¹⁰ Nearly all of the denominations had suffered as a result of the American Revolution. Many congregations were broken up. Their ministers often left to serve as chaplains or officers in the army. Some fled the country as Tories. Many church buildings had been destroyed or damaged in the war and their reconstruction or repair made all but impossible by the apathy of the membership.¹¹ These conditions, observes G. A. Koch, "had left the clergy almost without exception in a hysterical condi-

tion. It was not a matter of Arminianism, Calvinism, or Catholicism, but religion itself was on trial and its very existence seriously threatened."¹²

Under such conditions the clergy were naturally highly sensitive to any additional threats to Christianity and the church. Among orthodox Christians Jefferson had gained a reputation as an enemy of religion. As he himself recognized, this was largely the result of his fervent opposition to the establishment of religion in Virginia and his championship of religious freedom.¹³ During the years in which that battle was fought he had become known, as Edmund Randolph described it, for being "an adept in the ensnaring subtleties of deism, and gave it, among the rising generation, a philosophical patronage."¹⁴ Secondly, the clergy's distrust of Jefferson was augmented by his comments on religion in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*; these were turned against him by the Federalist pamphleteers in 1800. Finally, Jefferson's residence in Paris, where he was known to have fraternized with French intellectuals, coupled with his republican politics and suspected infidelity, sealed the issue in the minds of most of the clergy. He "had come to stand as the American symbol for the discredited principles of the French Revolution. It mattered not that John Adams was of practically the same religious persuasions, for the latter was known to be conservative in everything else and had distrusted the French Revolution from the very beginning."¹⁵ The result was a series of intemperate attacks on the reputation of Thomas Jefferson that is unmatched in the history of presidential campaigns.

One of the attacks of 1800 was made by Alexander Hamilton. Sensing the imminent eclipse of his political influence, the high priest of Federalism frantically wrote to Governor John Jay of New York that "*a legal and constitutional step*" ought to be taken "to prevent an atheist in religion, and a fanatic in politics from getting possession of the helm of the state."¹⁶ Less than three weeks later Jefferson wrote of such accusations to James Monroe:

As to the calumny of Atheism, I am so broken to calumnies of every kind . . . that I entirely disregard it. . . . It has been so impossible to contradict all their lies, that I have determined to contradict none; for while I should be engaged with one, they would publish twenty new ones.¹⁷

In this comment Jefferson gave expression to the attitude he was to maintain throughout the campaign. He believed, as a matter of principle, that religion had no part in politics; he therefore would rise above the level struck by his adversaries and resolutely refuse to do battle on those terms.

One of the most influential of the tracts attacking Jefferson was written by the Reverend William Linn, a Dutch Reformed minister of New York. In his pamphlet, *Serious Considerations on the Elec-*

tion of a President, Linn stated that his objection to Jefferson's promotion to the presidency was "founded singly upon his disbelief of the Holy Scriptures; or, in other words, his rejection of the Christian Religion and open profession of Deism."¹⁸ Linn expected to base his accusations primarily on what Jefferson himself had written. *The Notes on the State of Virginia* seemed to be his best source. He found that some of Jefferson's opinions in natural science, expressed in this book, were incompatible with Christianity. For example, Linn found that "what he says on the subject of the deluge is a clear proof of his disrespect for divine revelation, for he attempts to show the improbability of such a quantity of water being produced, and consequently discredits sacred history."¹⁹ Jefferson's comments on the Indian and Negro race likewise excluded him "from any department among Christians."²⁰ If Jefferson had prized the Bible, pontificated Linn, "and had been properly acquainted with its contents, he would have known the facts related in that book are the most ancient, the most authentic, the most interesting, and the most useful in the world."²¹ Jefferson's legendary comment about a dilapidated church being "good enough for him that was born in a manger" is condemned as a "contemptuous fling" from a "deadly foe" of Christianity.²² And because of Jefferson's wish for a "government in which no religious opinions were held" the Reverend Mr. Linn suspected the Republican candidate of atheism. In any case, he declared, his rejection of the Bible should eliminate Jefferson from consideration:

Public opinion ought to disqualify him. On account of his disbelief of the Holy Scriptures, and his attempts to discredit them, he ought to be rejected from the Presidency. No professed deist, be his talents and acquirements what they may, ought to be promoted to this place by suffrages of a Christian nation. The greater his talent and the more extensive his acquirements, the greater will be his power and the more extensive his influence in poisoning mankind.²³

Linn then proceeded to suggest some of the consequences that would accompany Jefferson's election. First, he wrote, "it would give us an unfavorable character with foreign nations"; second, the effects upon our citizens would be "to destroy religion, introduce immorality, and loosen all the bonds of society"; finally, he reminded his readers of "the dishonor which would be done to God, and the fear of his displeasure, if an opposer of Christianity should be preferred."²⁴

Toward the end of his tract, Linn disclaimed any support for the other candidate. "At the same time," the minister wrote in a statement which indicts him as either untruthful or incompetent, "I will say nothing against them. They [Adams and Pinckney] are, I have reason to believe, irreproachable."²⁵ Jefferson knew that Adams' religious beliefs were essentially the same as his own. One can easily imagine how the thin-skinned Virginian reacted to such manifest injustice.

While Linn's pamphlet was most convincing to those who would not have voted for Jefferson anyway, his partisans felt it necessary to spring to his defense. DeWitt Clinton penned *A Vindication of Thomas Jefferson against the Charges Contained in a Pamphlet Entitled, "Serious Considerations, etc."* and "Marcus Brutus" countered with *Serious Facts Opposed to "Serious Considerations"; or, The Voice of Warning to Religious Republicans*.²⁶ The effectiveness of Linn's propaganda is also indicated by the fact that Dr. John Mitchell Mason, another New York clergyman, considered it worth reworking and developing. In his *Voice of Warning to Christians*, he repeated Linn's charges and used the same arguments. "I dread the election of Mr. Jefferson," he wrote, "because I believe him to be a confirmed infidel."²⁷ Mason's was not the last word. The war of the pamphleteers continued unabated through the summer and fall months up to the election day.

Henry Randall has indicated the extensiveness of the clerical enmity against Jefferson by stating that "it is probable that in more than half the pulpits in New England he was publicly . . . stigmatized in 'sermons' preached on Sunday, as an 'atheist' or 'French infidel,' and the people were exhorted as they feared God or valued their own safety and religious freedom, to vote against so impious a wretch."²⁸ One of the most extreme charges, clearly an echo of Timothy Dwight's oration of 1798, was printed in a Massachusetts newspaper:

Should the infidel Jefferson be elected to the Presidency, *the seal of death* is that moment set on our holy religion, our churches will be prostrated, and some infamous prostitute, under the title of the Goddess of Reason, will preside in the Sanctuaries now devoted to the worship of the Most High.²⁹

It is possible that the contents of some of the Federalist attacks gave Jefferson genuine concern for the preservation of religious liberty. Established churches still existed and Jefferson was most jealous of the freedom of religion which prevailed in Virginia and which was written into the Constitution of the United States. He must have been highly sensitive to the charges published by William Smith of South Carolina:

The act for establishing religious freedom in Virginia (the necessity for which is not very obvious) has been extolled by Mr. Jefferson's panegyrists. I ask them, what good effects has it produced? Does religion flourish in Virginia more than it did, or more than in the Eastern States? Is public worship better attended? Are ministers of the gospel better supported than in the Eastern States? That act, which is nearly all preamble, setting forth a series of principles, some of which are proved by late experience in France to be very questionable, has, in my opinion, an immediate tendency to produce a total disregard to public worship, an absolute indifference to all religion whatever.³⁰

Undoubtedly Smith was sincere in his belief that the religious indifference of the time was the product of disestablishment. There must have been many Americans who shared this oversimplification and who still thought favorably of state churches. It is not surprising, therefore, that Jefferson expressed the fear in a famous letter to Dr. Benjamin Rush that recent events "had given to the clergy a very favorable hope of obtaining an establishment of a particular form of Christianity through the United States."⁸¹

Immediately following the expression of his fear of re-establishment to Dr. Rush, Jefferson affirmed his faith in "the returning good sense of our country." The proponents of state churches "believe that any portion of power confided to me, will be exerted in opposition to their schemes. And they believe rightly: for I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."⁸² Taken as they stand, these words are one of Jefferson's most noble and immortal pronouncements and they epitomize an important facet of his great character. But when his words are understood in the light of their context, they constitute first of all a bitter declaration of war on the clergy whose intemperate attacks had repeatedly struck at the core of his sensitive nature. Jefferson was to harbor resentment against them until his death.

Jefferson's sensitivity to the slander he had to endure is revealed by a letter to Uriah Gregory, written at a time when some of the worst attacks were yet to come:

From the moment that a portion of my fellow-citizens looked towards me, with a view to one of their highest offices, the floodgates of calumny have been opened upon me; not where I am personally known, where their slanders would be instantly judged and suppressed, from a general sense of falsehood; but in the remote parts of the Union, where the means of detection are not at hand, and the trouble of an inquiry is greater than would suit the hearers to undertake. I know that I might have filled the courts of the United States with actions for these slanders, and have ruined, perhaps, many persons who are not innocent. But this would be no equivalent to the loss of character. I leave them, therefore, to the reproof of their own consciences. If these do not condemn them, there will yet come a day when the false witness will meet a Judge who has not slept over his slanders.⁸³

Jefferson's correspondence likewise reveals that, as a consequence of the calumny, the great Virginian opened the floodgates of his own bitterness against the clergy. Prior to 1799, Jefferson's relations with clergymen seem to have been on a live and let live basis. Personally he did not share their beliefs and he openly opposed them only on the basis of their interference with civil rights. But even this opposition, strong though it was, had been impersonal; unfavorable references to the clergy simply are not to be found in his correspondence before this time. But in 1800 Jefferson began to give vent to his resentment by frequent references to "priests" in his private let-

ters. His statements reveal an animosity which matched that which the Federalist churchmen held for him.

The earliest known anti-clerical remarks Jefferson made were commonly injected into paragraphs dealing with topics other than religion or the clergy. For example, on January 18, 1800, he informed Dr. Joseph Priestley that the latter had "sinned against church and king, and can therefore never be forgiven."⁸⁴ Nine days later, in another letter to the same friend, he remarked that "the Gothic idea that we are . . . to recur to the annals of our ancestors for what is most perfect in government, in religion, and in learning, is worthy of those bigots in religion and government, by whom it has been recommended, and whose purposes it would answer."⁸⁵ His angriest statement of 1800 is found in his letter to Dr. Rush, dated September 23, 1800:

I have a view of the subject [Christianity] which ought to displease neither the rational Christian nor Deists, and would reconcile many to a character they have too hastily rejected. I do not know that it would reconcile the *genus irritabile vatum* who are all in arms against me. Their hostility is on too interesting ground to be softened.⁸⁶

In other words, even if the "irritable tribe of priests" knew what his religious beliefs actually were, they would still oppose him because of the personal or material interest they had in withholding the presidency from the champion of religious liberty.

A month after he was finally elected to the presidency on the thirty-sixth ballot by the House of Representatives, he penned a series of letters which gave further expression to his injured feelings. The first, written on March 21 and addressed to Dr. Priestley, breathes a sigh of relief that the electioneering and its abusive attacks are now in the past:

What an effort, my dear Sir, of bigotry in politics and religion have we gone through! The barbarians really flattered themselves they should be able to bring back the times of Vandalism, when ignorance put everything into the hands of power and priestcraft. . . . This was the real ground of all attacks on you. Those who live by mystery and *charlatanerie*, fearing you would render them useless by simplifying the Christian philosophy,—the most sublime and benevolent, but most perverted system that ever shone on man,—endeavored to crush your well-earned and well-deserved fame.⁸⁷

Two days later he further described what he believed to be the influence and attitude of the clergy on politics and learning:

The Eastern States will be the last to come over, on account of the dominion of the clergy, who had got a smell of union between Church and State, and began to indulge in reverie which can never be realized in the present state of science. . . . The Christian religion, when divested of the rags in which they have enveloped it, and brought to the original purity and simplicity of its benevolent institutor, is a religion of all others most friendly to liberty, science, and the freest expansion of the human mind.⁸⁸

On March 29, writing to Elbridge Gerry, Jefferson indicated that, in his opinion, the church would be better off if it had no clergy at all:

The mild and simple principles of the Christian philosophy would produce too much calm, too much regularity of good, to extract from its disciples a support from a numerous priesthood, were they not to sophisticate it, ramify it, split it into hairs, and twist its texts till they cover the divine morality of its author with mysteries, and require a priesthood to explain them. The Quakers seem to have discovered this. They have no priests, therefore, no schism. They judge of the text by the dictates of common sense and common morality.³⁹

One of Jefferson's most unkind remarks came almost a year after he had declared eternal hostility against the ecclesiastics. In a communication to his attorney-general, Levi Lincoln, he commented on the kind of press he had been receiving in the New England Federalist newspapers:

The *Palladium* is undertood to be *clerical*, & from the clergy I expect no mercy. They crucified their Savior, who preached that their kingdom was not of this world; and all who practice on that precept must expect the extreme of their wrath. The laws of the present day withhold their hands from blood; but lies and slander still remain to them.⁴⁰

The significance of these anti-clerical attacks is seen by the fact that during the twenty month period from January, 1800, to August, 1801, Jefferson wrote more letters with religious content than during his entire life prior to that time, and that every one of those letters, without exception, contains criticisms of the clergy, either directly or by innuendo. Few, if any, of the opinions he expressed in this correspondence were based on principles of recent origin; the evidence suggests he had held them from fifteen to thirty-five years.⁴¹ It is apparent that the anti-clericalism for which Jefferson is famous stems, not so much from rational conclusions or principles of religious liberty, but from a strongly emotional reaction to the fulminations of Federalist clerics, most of whom were honestly but mistakenly concerned about the status religion would have under a Republican administration.

It seems that Jefferson never forgave the churchmen. In fact, he reserved his most vituperative expressions until more than another decade had passed. In 1810, two years after he had left the White House, he displayed his prejudices in a paragraph which groups together all the preachers of the whole New Testament era. It is typical of many others that were to follow:

But a short time elapsed after the death of the great reformer of the Jewish religion, before his principles were departed from by those who professed to be his special servants, and perverted into an engine for enslaving mankind, and aggrandizing their oppressors in Church and State: that the purest system of morals ever before preached to man has been adulterated and sophisticated by artificial constructions, into a mere contrivance to filch wealth and power to themselves: that rational men, not being able to swallow their impious heresies, in order to force them down their throats, they raise the hue and cry of infidelity, while them-

selves are the greatest obstacles to the advancement of the real doctrine of Jesus, and do, in fact, constitute the real Anti-Christ⁴²

At various times during the next ten years, Jefferson labeled the clergy "cannibals" and "mountebanks," "pseudo-Christians" and "pseudo-priests," and classed them with soothsayers and necromancers; he declared them to be "hostile to liberty," to "have not one real principle of religion in their hearts"; he compared them to bawds for whom "religion becomes . . . a refuge from the despair of their loathsome vices," and described the vicinity of Monticello as a "Sodom and Gomorrah of parsons."⁴³ As late as 1822 at the age of seventy-nine he still referred to "false-shepherds" and repeated the "*genus irritabile vatum*" first voiced in 1800.⁴⁴ In general, he attributed the attacks of the clergy on him to "their resentments against the act of Virginia for establishing religious freedom"; and in the same paragraph he stated "that there would never have been an infidel if there had never been a priest."⁴⁵ One of Jefferson's most bitter letters is a monument of self-deception:

You judge truly that I am not afraid of the priests. They have tried upon me all their various batteries, of pious whining, hypocritical canting, lying & slandering, without being able to give me one moment of pain. I have contemplated their order from the Magi of the East to the Saints of the West, and I have found no difference of character, bit of more or less caution, in proportion to their information or ignorance of those on whom their interested duperies were to be paid off. Their sway in New England is indeed formidable. No mind beyond mediocrity dare there to develop itself. If it does, they excite against it the public opinion which they command, & by little, but incessant and teasing persecutions, drive it from among them.⁴⁶

He continued on for several more pages in diatribe against the Presbyterians and the New England clergy, decrying their missionary efforts in the West and South.

An examination of all the letters with religious content that Jefferson wrote between the election of 1800 and his death in 1826 suggests a correlation between them and the attacks of the clergy. Before 1799, that is, before much had been written against him, the number of published letters he wrote which have significance for his religious development total no more than ten. In contrast, he produced over a hundred similar letters after that date and many of these have religion as their primary content. It has been shown that there is a direct connection between the persecution by the churchmen and the cluster of letters written in 1800 and 1801. These attacks caused him to think more about his religious beliefs than had been his habit. It is possible that their stimulation led him to begin the preparation of his famous collection of extracts from the four gospels which he later called *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth*.⁴⁷

Another group of letters of major importance were written dur-

ing the years 1813 to 1816. These were in part stimulated by the resumption of his correspondence with John Adams, whose religious opinions were so similar to his own. But the first letter in this series, written to the son of Dr. Benjamin Rush shortly after the latter's death, was motivated by a fear that a private document entitled *Syllabus of an Estimate of the Doctrine of Jesus, compared with those of others*, which he had prepared and sent to his late friend in 1803, would fall into the hands of his clerical enemies.⁴⁸ His anti-clericalism was blown into flames during this period by the obscurantism of the attacks on his character evoked by the proposal to sell (at a financial loss) his great collection of books to the government to become the Library of Congress.

The last major cluster of letters, probably the most significant group of all from the point of view of Jefferson's religious beliefs, was written between 1820 and 1823. They coincide roughly with the abuse he was then receiving from the clergy for his stand on religious matters at the projected University of Virginia. Jefferson had sought the services of Dr. Thomas Cooper, whose well-known religious and philosophical opinions were anathema to the orthodox ministers of Virginia. These letters contain frequent references to the Presbyterians, whom he described as "the most numerous of our present sects and the most ambitious, the most intolerant and tyrannical of all our sects. . . . Their present aim is ascendancy only, their next exclusive possession and establishment."⁴⁹

In conclusion, Jefferson's correspondence reveals that clerical attacks, beginning with the campaign for the presidency in 1800 and continuing through to the last years of his life, were responsible for his hatred of the "priesthood" and that their slanders stimulated him to write the many important letters on religion which he penned after his election. It is possible that, had he not endured the slanderous insults of 1800, he would never have engaged in the lively religious discussions to be found in his letters to such correspondents as Joseph Priestley, Benjamin Rush, John Adams, William Short, and Thomas Cooper. These letters constitute the bulk of his writing on religion.

1. Merrill D. Peterson, *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 303. For a selective list of some of these writings see bibliography, p. 499 and *passim*.

2. Thomas Jefferson, *The Literary Bible of Thomas Jefferson: His commonplace Book of Philosophers and Poets*, edited with an introduction by Gilbert Chinard (Baltimore: The Johns Hop-

kins Press, and Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1928), pp. 40ff.

3. TJ to Robert Skipwith, Monticello, Aug. 3, 1771, in Thomas Jefferson, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, edited by Julian P. Boyd (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1950 —), I, 75-81. Hereafter references to this edition will be cited as Boyd.

4. Boyd, I, 544-588.

5. This development is described in Bernhard Fabian, "*Jefferson's Notes on Virginia: The Genesis of Query [xvii], The different religions received into that State?*" *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, XII (January, 1955), 126-131.
6. TJ to Peter Carr, Paris, Aug. 10, 1787, Boyd, XII 14-18.
7. For an excellent analysis of the smear aspects of this campaign see Charles O. Lerche, Jr., "Jefferson and the Election of 1800: A Case Study in the Political Smear," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, V (October, 1948), 467-491.
8. Quoted in Edwin T. Martin, *Thomas Jefferson: Scientist* (New York: Henry Schuman, 1952), p. 238.
9. Timothy Dwight, *The Duty of Americans, at the Present Crisis, Illustrated in a Discourse Preached on the Fourth of July, 1789 . . . at the Request of the Citizens of New Haven*, quoted in Charles A. Beard, *Economic Origins of Jeffersonian Democracy* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915), pp. 365-366.
10. Albert Post, *Popular Freethought in America, 1825-1850* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), p. 17.
11. J. Franklin Jameson, *The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1956), pp. 83-100.
12. G. Adolf Koch, *Republican Religion: The American Revolution and the Cult of Reason* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1933), p. 269.
13. TJ to Mrs. S. Harrison Smith, Monticello, Aug. 6, 1816, in Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, edited by Andrew A. Lipscomb and Albert E. Bergh (Washington D. C.: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1904), XV, 60. Hereafter references to this edition will be cited as LB.
14. [Edmund Randolph], "Edmund Randolph's Essay on the Revolutionary History of Virginia (1774-1782)," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XLII (April, 1935), 123.
15. Koch, *Republican Religion*, p. 269.
16. Alexander Hamilton to Gov. John Jay, New York, May 7, 1800, in Alexander Hamilton, *The Works of Alexander Hamilton*, edited by Henry Cabot Lodge (Federal edition; New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), X, 372.
17. TJ to James Monroe, Eppington, May 26, 1800, in Thomas Jefferson, *The Works of Thomas Jefferson* edited by Paul L. Ford (Federal edition; New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1905), IX, 136. Hereafter references to this edition will be cited as Ford.
18. William Linn, *Serious Considerations on the Election of a President: Addressed to the Citizens of the United States* (New York: Printed and sold by John Farmer, 1800), p. 4.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-13.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-28.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
26. These and other pamphlets written by both sides are listed in Richard N. Johnston, *A Contribution to a Bibliography of Thomas Jefferson*, LB, XX, 27.
27. [John M. Mason], *The Voice of Warning to Christians on the Ensuing Election of a President of the United States* (New York: Printed and Sold by G. F. Hopkins, 1800), p. 8.
28. Henry S. Randall, *The Life of Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Derby and Jackson, 1858), II, 567.
29. Quoted in Nathan Schachner, *Thomas Jefferson: A Biography* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951), II, 641.
30. Quoted in Randall, *Jefferson*, II, 569 n. Evidently this tract, not identified by Randall, is William Loughton Smith, *The Pretensions of Thomas Jefferson to the Presidency Examined: and the Charges against John Adams Refuted* (Philadelphia, 1796). See Johnston, *Bibliography*, LB, XX, 26.
31. TJ to Benjamin Rush, Monticello, Sept. 23, 1800, LB, X, 175. See also TJ to Elbridge Gerry, Philadelphia, Jan. 26, 1799, LB, X, 74; TJ to Jeremiah Moor, Monticello, Aug. 14, 1800, Ford, IX, 143; TJ to Moses Robinson, Washington, Mar. 23, 1801, LB, X, 236-237.
32. TJ to Benjamin Rush, Monticello, Sept. 23, 1800, LB, X, 175.
33. TJ to Uriah McGregor, Monticello, Aug. 13, 1800, LB, X, 170.
34. TJ to Joseph Priestley, Philadelphia, Jan. 18, 1800, LB, X, 139.
35. TJ to Joseph Priestley, Philadelphia, Jan. 27, 1800, LB, X, 148.
36. TJ to Benjamin Rush, Monticello, Sept. 23, 1800, LB, X, 174.
37. TJ to Joseph Priestley, Washington, Mar. 21, 1801, LB, X, 228.
38. TJ to Moses Robinson, Washington, Mar. 23, 1801, LB, X, 236-237.
39. TJ to Elbridge Gerry, Washington, Mar. 29, 1801, LB, X, 254.
40. TJ to Levi Lincoln, Monticello, Aug. 26, 1801, Ford, IX, 290.
41. Cf. Jefferson's comments on the clergy in his *Notes on Religion*, prepared in 1776. Boyd, I, 552.

42. TJ to Samuel Kercheval, Monticello, Jan. 19, 1810, LB, XII, 345-346.
43. TJ to the Reverend Charles Clay, Monticello, Jan. 29, 1815, LB, XIV, 233; TJ to F. A. Van der Kamp, 1816, quoted in Thomas Jefferson, *Thomas Jefferson on Democracy*, edited by Saul K. Padover (New York: New American Library, 1953), p. 118; TJ to the Reverend Jared Sparks, Monticello, Nov. 4, 1820, LB, XV, 288; TJ to Horatio G. Spafford, Monticello, Mar. 17, 1814, LB, XIV, 119; TJ to Benjamin Waterhouse, Monticello, Oct. 13, 1815, Ford, XI, 491.
44. TJ to Benjamin Waterhouse, Monticello, June 26, 1822, LB, XV, 384.
45. TJ to Mrs. S. Harrison Smith, Monticello, Aug. 6, 1816, LB, XV, 60.
46. TJ to Horatio G. Spafford, Monticello, Jan. 10, 1816, Ford, XI, 507.
47. According to Henry Wilder Foote, this project was begun in 1804. See his introduction to *Thomas Jefferson, the Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1951), p. 18-19.
48. TJ to Richard Rush, Monticello, May 31, 1813, Ford, XI, 291.
49. TJ to William Short, Monticello, Oct. 19, 1822, quoted in Schachner, *Jefferson*, II, 984.