



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on June 21, 2011

NBC Apologizes After Editing “Under God” From Pledge During U.S. Open

NBC was forced to issue an apology during its coverage of the U.S. Open golf tournament on June 19th after the phrase “under God” was conspicuously omitted from the Pledge of Allegiance during an opening patriotic video segment.

The one-minute segment showed school children reciting the pledge interspersed with video of soldiers in a flag-raising ceremony. While the children could be heard repeating the words “one nation” in the pledge, before they continued the scene cut to soldiers saluting the flag. But when the children continued, the words “under God” and “indivisible” were omitted, with the kids going straight to “with liberty and justice for all.”



Almost immediately, viewers registered their displeasure for the obviously intentional omission, forcing NBC commentator Dan Hicks to follow up with an apology a few minutes later. “It was our intent to begin our coverage of this U.S. Open championship with a feature that captured the patriotism of our national championship being here in our nation’s capital for the third time,” Hicks explained. “Regrettably, a portion of the pledge of allegiance that was in that feature was edited out.” He assured viewers, however, that the omission “was not done to upset anyone and we’d like to apologize to those of you who were offended by it.”

The next day NBC issued a statement, saying that network officials were “aware of the distress this has caused many of our viewers and are taking the issue very seriously. Unfortunately, when producing the piece ... a decision was made by a small group of people to edit portions of the Pledge of Allegiance. This was a bad decision.”

Conservative and pro-family groups swooped in quickly to make sure their displeasure came through loud and clear, and to aggressively condemn the network’s decision to cut the acknowledgement of God from the pledge. As for the apology, Jordan Sekulow of the [American Center for Law and Justice](#) said it was “too little, too late,” adding, “The phrase ‘under God’ is not a throw-away line, an afterthought. It’s been a critical part of the Pledge for more than half a century — a time-honored tradition.”

Noting that NBC and the USGA, the sponsor of the U.S. Open, “spent a great deal of time and money chronicling the history and heritage of America’s most prestigious golf event,” Sekulow shamed the duo for not understanding that “America’s history and heritage must be chronicled correctly — and that includes keeping the phrase ‘under God’ in the Pledge of Allegiance.”

Similarly, Patrick Mahoney of [Christian Defense Coalition](#) said the omission was obviously “not an accident and the pathetic apology NBC offered to the public is not enough in addressing this



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controversy.... Sadly, this shows how the public mention of God is under attack in our nation.”

Perhaps the most aggressive swipe came from Dan Gainor of the [Media Research Center](#), who called the NBC gaffe an “act of religious bigotry designed to offend Christians.” Gainor charged that in its “pathetic apology” the network “did nothing but compound the offense by refusing to admit what they had done.”

Gainor promised that his group would be “sending letters to leaders of the top Christian denominations in the country, calling on them to hold NBC’s feet to the fire and demand the network fire those responsible.”



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