



Written by on March 25, 2011

## The Patriot Pastor

Over the past several decades, many who have attended a patriotic rally may have had the pleasure of seeing and hearing from an imposing six-foot, six-inch creature dressed in revolutionary garb while delivering a message about the wonder of America and the biblical beliefs of its Founders. That man is Garrett Lear, known from coast to coast as “The Patriot Pastor.” After sharing a platform with him on numerous occasions, publisher John McManus had an opportunity to interview him for our readers.



**The New American:** *Across our nation, there are some clergymen who feel that they should never mix religious and political views. You obviously reject that notion completely. Why do you feel this way?*

**Garrett Lear:** Because freedom and responsibility, patriotism and morality, liberty and independence, all go together. You can't believe in one of these attributes, or even a few of them, without believing in all. In my view, this is what it means to be an American.

**TNA:** *Have you always felt this strongly?*

**Lear:** No, like many Americans, I got caught up in what could be called the “popular culture” of the 1960s. As a young man, even though I was always on the conservative side politically, I could have been described as a hippie. I'm not proud of that part of my life, but I have to be honest about it.

**TNA:** *What started you toward what you are doing today?*

**Lear:** I was born in 1948 and raised in Lexington, Massachusetts. As a boy, I often stared in awe and admiration at the famous Minuteman statue right there at the front of the Lexington Green. It was my dream that some day I might be able to stand up for my country the way the Minutemen of 1775 did. I'm a descendant of John Tilley, one of the signers of the Mayflower Compact of 1620. And I'm also a direct descendant of Jedidiah Learned, a Minuteman whose name appeared on the Lexington Alarm list. So there is a lot of patriotism in my DNA. All of this genealogy made it possible for me to be a member of the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. I am all-American, made entirely with American parts.

**TNA:** *What schooling did you receive?*

**Lear:** After grade school in Lexington, I went to Valley Forge Military Academy. From there, my next stop was Vanderbilt University, where I majored in theater and speech, played some football, and joined the Army ROTC under scholarship. Sent to Fort Bragg in North Carolina after graduation, I received a commission. I was in the 82nd Airborne but got hurt and received a medical discharge. After that, I headed west and became an actor in Hollywood, even auditioned for the roles of Superman and Tarzan. I soon found Hollywood far too weird even for me, and I ended up going on a backpacking venture in



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Hawaii.

**TNA:** *When did you start training for the ministry?*

**Lear:** I knew from childhood that I had a calling to serve God. I returned to California in 1974 and began studying the Bible at Gospel Ministry Institute in Chula Vista. I actually became an ordained Episcopal minister, something I moved away from after I went back to Hawaii and met some Baptists and Pentecostals who influenced me greatly. After a great deal of self-study, including reading the Bible multiple times in various translations, I considered myself a Baptist New Testament Christian and remain so today. In 1980, I married Annette and we had four children (one deceased), and raised several other children.

**TNA:** *How would you describe your activity over the past several decades?*

**Lear:** Very fruitful, challenging, and busy! I have been a denominational leader, local pastor, evangelist, prison chaplain, prayer intercessor, local leader of national ministries, Bible college teacher, gospel singer, conference speaker, home-school promoter, and mentor to church, government, and business leaders across the nation. I have appeared as a guest on a long list of radio and television programs and have also been the subject of feature articles in numerous publications.

**TNA:** *Along the way, you became known as "The Patriot Pastor." Did you assume this name yourself or did someone else come up with it?*

**Lear:** You're getting a bit ahead of my story. After I started pastoring, my wife and I relocated for three years to Alaska (1984-1987), where two of my children were born. I traveled all over the state, from its northern tip at Barrow/Prudhoe Bay over to the Arctic National Wildlife Range and to many small Alaskan villages and towns. I remember being welcomed by a community of Catholic nuns/missionaries who asked me to speak to their congregation. I was glad to do so. But in 1987, I moved my family back to Hawaii, where I focused on working with teens and ministering in prisons. In 1990, we left Hawaii and settled for good in New Hampshire. It was in the "Live Free or Die" state that I started seeing the biblical basis for our country and, as a result, began studying our nation's foundational documents. Soon, I started weaving the biblical basis for Americanism into my preaching. In 1995, while leading a church in New Hampshire, I also began speaking at patriotic gatherings and accumulated the type of clothing commonly worn by men during the period leading up to the War for Independence. While sharing some of the early history of our country during a radio interview years ago, the program's host dubbed me "The Patriot Pastor" and that name stuck. I have been very pleased to use it ever since.

**TNA:** *Can you summarize the message you share with so many?*

**Lear:** I like to say: "We will have no other king but King Jesus!" And then I add: "Someone has stolen my country and I want her back! The thieves have been actively carrying out an agenda that is remaking my country into a liberal, leftist, globalist, communist, socialist, fascist, new age, atheist, anarchist, baby killing, pornographic, sex confused, drug demented, covenant breaking, and completely un-American something else. None of this is what America is supposed to be, and all of it is completely contrary to the spiritual and political foundations that led to the creation of our nation and what should always be known as *American exceptionalism*. Because of such a splendid beginning, our United States became the envy of the world, and even that is changing."

**TNA:** *I'm sure you have some special heroes. Can you tell us who some are?*

**Lear:** I am especially fond of the memory of Lexington Pastor Jonas Clark, who preached to the



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Minutemen on the Lexington Green as the British forces approached at daybreak on April 19, 1775. Most of those Minutemen were members of Pastor Clark's church, including Captain (Deacon) John Parker, who told his men: "Do not fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a fight, let it begin here." This stirring statement is engraved on a monument at the Lexington Green. Also, I have a very high regard for the Black (Robed) Regiment, the name given to numerous patriotic and heroic pastors by England's Prime Minister Waldo and King George III. I'm working with other pastors to reorganize, reconstitute, and reinvigorate this Black Regiment today. Those pastors back then truly were heroes, and there's a need for today's pastors to stand up to our federal government the way they spoke out about British oppression in the 1700s.

**TNA:** *The official view given about the battle at Lexington holds that no one knows who fired the first shot that started the conflict. But you've become a serious student of our nation's founding documents and the history of that period. You hold a different view about that incident. What have you found?*

**Lear:** The Minutemen strongly believed in the doctrine of interposition, meaning that they would place themselves before oppressors while not resorting to armed resistance unless they were attacked. They were also under oath to refrain from initiating any shooting. After refusing the British commander's order to lay down their arms, something else they were under oath not to do, they sought an answer from the British Regulars as to why they had come out from Boston. At that moment, one of the Redcoats fired a shot that started the battle and, before it ended there on the Lexington Green, eight Minutemen lay dead. Another interesting historical point about that period is that the first "Tea Party" occurred in Lexington years before the more celebrated Boston Tea Party of 1773. Some of the Lexington colonists responded to the hated tea tax by throwing some tea into a fire.

**TNA:** *Do you work with other organizations?*

**Lear:** Yes. I was recently named the official chaplain of the national organization known as "The Oath Keepers." In 2007, I received the "Founding Fathers Award" from the National Heritage Center for Constitutional Studies. After years of participation in pro-life events in New Hampshire, I was named recipient of the Father O'Connor Life Service Award at the 2010 event organized by Catholics who oppose abortion. I am also a member of The John Birch Society, National Rifle Association, New Hampshire Coalition of Gun Owners, Christian Homeschoolers of New Hampshire, Patriotic Pastors of the USA, and numerous other groups. I am willing to speak before any legitimate patriotic organization that stands for the original intent of our nation's Founders and the Constitution they gave us. Let me also highly recommend The New American magazine that I consider the very best publication in our nation.

**TNA:** *How are you able to accomplish all that you do without the kind of government and foundation support that others receive?*

**Lear:** I am blessed by good people who hear the message I bring and then provide freewill offerings and donations. Obviously, when I travel great distances, my expenses have to be covered. But I don't worry about this because everything I need always gets taken care of.... The Lord provides.

**TNA:** *How does one contact you to arrange for you to participate in some worthy event?*

**Lear:** I can be reached by telephone at 603-522-9115 or via the Internet at - patriotpastor@thepatriotpastor.org.



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