

Faith in God Is a Virulent Infection, Columnist Claims

Belief in God is a “virus,” and evangelical Christianity is one of the more “virulent infections,” a British Conservative peer and columnist for *The Times* of London has claimed.

In an attack on faith schools, Matt Ridley said that “rationalists” want to “protect” children from religion.

And the peer, a supporter of the British Humanist Association, said, “secular, free thinking” should be adopted to “combat the rise of radical Islam and radical Christianity.”

His comments in *The Times* came as a report was released on the “Trojan Horse” Islamic plot in some Birmingham schools.

Ridley claimed that the report’s revelations were not surprising given that faith schools are supported by the state in the U.K. He said “religious practice” should be taken “out of school altogether.”

However, he noted: “I know such a view is considered intolerant, even bigoted.”

Discussing “faith communities,” he said: “Anglicanism is a mild and attenuated form of the faith virus and may even act as a vaccine against more virulent infections, but Christianity is becoming more evangelical in response to its global competition with Islam.”

“Mild Anglicanism should make common cause with humanists in defense of tolerance,” Ridley added.

He concluded that unlike Francis Crick, the Nobel-winning co-discoverer of DNA, who in the 1960s “foresaw the end of religion and started a competition for what to do with the college chapels in Cambridge,” today’s atheists take a

different approach.

Ridley explained, "Rationalists no longer expect to get rid of religion altogether by explaining life and matter: They aim only to tame it instead and to protect children from it."