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Sommario/riassunto	As early as the sixteenth century the liberal democratic state has been forced to confront the question of religion in politics. The result has been a tense and uncomfortable balancing act. Today, in the public square of liberal democracy, a number of religious confessions and beliefs compete for attention. In the American experience, some sense of religious pluralism and relative social harmony has been maintained. However, for this relationship to prevail, a tension must continue to exist that balances the political and social pursuits of self-interest with meeting the objectives of the