

Liberal Fanaticism at Ground Zero, A game of deception

Contributed by Charles Jacobs, The Jewish Advocate
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By Charles Jacobs The controversy over the proposed mosque at the WTC site has become ground zero for American liberal fanaticism. New York City's powerful elites have histrionically made support of the mosque into a litmus test of how truly tolerant Americans are: If you question the wisdom of building the mosque near the WTC site, or if you raise concerns about its leaders, you must be a bigot. And liberal fundamentalism is intolerant of dissent. The enlightened elites who now dominate our politics and culture seem to believe that most Americans are ignorant and intolerant bigots who cannot be trusted to do the right thing on their own, and therefore must be coerced. Think ObamaCare, think civilian trial in New York City for the 9/11 mastermind and now the outrageous project to build a mosque at Ground Zero.

Most opponents of the Ground Zero mosque, including 61 percent of New York State residents, don't have a problem with mosque-building — the state is home to 242 registered mosques and Islamic groups. Rather, they are legitimately uncomfortable about the symbolism and insensitivity manifested in its proposed location. Those who've looked at the organization building the mosque, the Cordoba Initiative, are also concerned about the mysterious sources of its \$100 million budget, as well as the controversial words and connections of its imam, Feisal Rauf.

Dissenters point to Rauf's claim that United States policies (support for Israel, no doubt) were an accessory to the 9/11 crime. They're concerned about the imam's motives — hinted at in the title of his recent book, "A Call to Prayer from the World Trade Center Rubble: Islamic Proselytism in the Heart of America Post-9/11." Proselytism or Dawa is a major goal of Islamist ideologues. Is this mosque to be a "bridge" between communities or a beachhead for Dawa?

Yet our liberal elites will countenance none of these reasonable arguments, because they undermine the liberals' blind faith in a simplistic world view wherein all cultures seek universal values that are compatible with liberal democracy, and any concerns about the motives and beliefs of the proverbial "other" must naturally be a consequence of bigotry or intolerance.

Enter, of course, the Jews. There are few contemporary subjects on which Jews so vehemently divide as the issue of Islamic extremism and its danger to the Jewish community. As we've seen in Boston, it is mostly liberal Jews who have been the most zealous in promoting the "hear no evil" posture while accusing those who resist it of bigotry. For many Jews on the left, the question of Jewish-Muslim relations — is there a real danger here or is it all a big misunderstanding to be solved by dialogue? — has become the shibboleth of our time, signaling what sort of Jew one is, an enlightened or a bigoted one.

And so Mayor Michael Bloomberg, the man who speculated that the Times Square bomber might have been a right-winger who didn't like ObamaCare, now preaches to New York's unenlightened that as long as Imam Rauf says he's working for healing and peace, anyone who opposes him is un-American. Think Joe McCarthy.

Bloomberg is not alone. Here in Boston some rabbis never miss a chance to speak out in support of the local Muslim American Society mosque, despite its documented role as a source of anti-Semitism in New England. And in upstate New York, New York City-based Rabbi Brad Hirschfield continues to shill for the purportedly moderate Muslim leader Muzzamil Hassan — even after Hassan was charged with beheading his wife because she had the temerity to file for divorce. Facts be damned: For many leftist Jews, the dream of Muslim-Jewish harmony must not be disturbed by reality.

Yet one mainstream Jewish leader is bucking politically correct dogma. Abe Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League has courageously come out against building the mosque at Ground Zero. Foxman insists that while the First Amendment precludes government interference in mosque-building, private citizens have right and reason to oppose a WTC location. Foxman recounted Pope John Paul II's decision to abandon the construction of a convent at Auschwitz as insensitive to Jews whose communities were slaughtered there. Foxman called on Imam Rauf to show similar sensitivity to the victims of the deadliest attack on the territory of modern America.

This was a brave thing to do, for a man whose donors are rich and liberal. And he paid the price. Torrents of invective, with anti-Israel demonization thrown-in for good measure, were unleashed by the Jewish left against Foxman and the ADL. Abe is betraying his heritage, his Jewishness. Deviate from the party line, Abe and you'll face a leftist intolerance so vicious that it verges on intellectual terrorism.

Recently, it seems that liberal money is having some effect. Abe seems to be withdrawing from the battle, citing a city commission's decision to allow the project to go forward as reason enough to move on. But this is surely not over. We should support Abe Foxman and his decision to come out against what amounts to a desecration and a monument to stupidity.

What we are witnessing is a great game of deception. Islamists exploit our laws and values of freedom and tolerance while projecting false moderation to lure and enlist our ruling delusional elites. They do it to facilitate the promotion of Islam and Sharia law. Our liberal overlords then ignore the will of the majority of Americans as they coerce us to join their fantasy-induced suicidal mission. Think Kool-Aid. Think Jonestown.

Charles Jacobs, president of Americans for Peace and Tolerance, continues his discussion of how Jewish leaders should treat Boston's Muslim American Society – and each other – on his blog at www.peaceandtolerance.org.