

Reigniting the Crusades is probably a bad idea

By Brad Reed Tuesday Aug 17, 2010 4:00pm

[Christopher Preble over at the Cato Institute](#) aptly notes that starting a war against all Muslims might not, in fact, be in our national interest:

This strategy, exploiting still-raw emotion and implicitly demonizing Muslims, threatens to trade short-term political gain for medium-term political harm to the party. And it most certainly will translate into long-term harm for the country at large.

Opposing the construction of a mosque near the Ground Zero site plays into al Qaeda's narrative that the United States is engaged in a war with Islam, that bin Laden and his tiny band of followers represent something more than a pitiful group of murderers and thugs, and that all American Muslims are an incipient Fifth Column that must be either converted to Christianity or driven out of the country, else they will undermine American society from within. [...]

[W]ho within the GOP will affirm the party's position that declaring a war on Islam does not advance our nation's security?

Indeed, from a sane person's point of view the desire to declare more than a billion people around the world to be your sworn enemies seems to be somewhat unwise. There is a perfectly rational counterpoint to this, however: If we let the Muslims build their mosques, they will giggle at the size of our pathetic white penises. [Sam Harris](#) logically outlines this view in a Daily Beast column:

The erection of a mosque upon the ashes of this atrocity will also be viewed by many millions of Muslims as a victory—and as a sign that the liberal values of the West are synonymous with decadence and cowardice.

Y'hear that, America? They're gonna erect something big and long right in the middle of your bosom. Are you gonna stand fer that?

Similar noises have been grunted by one of our fiercest holy crusaders, the [Radical Cleric Newt al-Ginrichinedad](#):

There should be no mosque near Ground Zero in New York so long as there are no churches or synagogues in Saudi Arabia. The time for double standards that allow Islamists to behave aggressively toward us while they demand our weakness and submission is over.

That's right! Newt's sick and tired of submissively bending over for the Muslims! He at least demands that the Saudis give us a reach around first!

Ahem. If I may be (semi)serious for a moment:

If millions of Muslims around the world are actually anticipating a mosque being built in the same neighborhood as a Lower Manhattan strip club so that they can laugh and call us girly-men, then they really need to get lives. I mean guys, seriously. I don't sit fixated to my television waiting to see a report of a new McDonald's getting built near Mecca. There are better uses of my time.

But see, this is the beauty of living in a free society. We can't stop Muslims from building mosques and impugning our manhood*. But at the same time, we can't stop stupid wingnuts from [burning the Koran](#), nor can we stop cartoonists from [drawing Mohammad](#). Everyone can offend everyone else, but no one can stop another person from being offensive.

And this brings me to my final point: Some folks need to relax about this stuff. The construction of a single building does not mean the nationwide implementation of Sharia Law. History teaches us that bad things tend to happen when one ethnic group or nationality decides that another ethnic group or nationality is a monolithic, insidious horde hellbent on weakening its traditions and national character from within through both overt and covert means. Furthermore, such attitudes can give rise to unintended consequences, especially when a country decides to invade another country to simply give it "a 2-by-4 across the side of the head," even if that particular country had done nothing to attack the invading country.

As I said in the title of my post, reigniting the Crusades is probably not a very good idea.

*And yeah, I know that's not what the mosque builders are actually doing but let me play wingnut's advocate.