

PIPES: Obama: 'My Muslim faith'

President uses pious expressions with Muslims

By Daniel Pipes -- Tuesday, September 11, 2012

ANALYSIS/OPINION:

Editor's Note: In this third of a five-part series, Middle East and Islam specialist Daniel Pipes continues his documentation of Barack Obama's close ties to the Islamic religion, focusing here on statements he made as an adult.

Several statements by Barack Obama in recent years point to his Muslim childhood.

(1) Robert Gibbs, campaign communications director for President Obama's first presidential race, asserted in January 2007: "Sen. Obama has never been a Muslim, was not raised a Muslim, and is a committed Christian who attends the United Church of Christ in Chicago." But he backtracked in March 2007, asserting that Mr. Obama "has never been a practicing Muslim." By focusing on the practice as a child, the campaign is raising a nonissue, for Muslims (like Jews) do not consider practice central to religious identity. Mr. Gibbs added, according to a paraphrase by Paul Watson of the Los Angeles Times, that "as a child, Obama had spent time in the neighborhood's Islamic center." Clearly, "the neighborhood's Islamic center" is a euphemism for a mosque. Spending time there again points to Mr. Obama's being a Muslim.

(2) He may have made faces and horsed around in Koran class, but Mr. Obama learned how to pray the salat, a form of ritual worship, in religion class. Pak Effendi, his former teacher at Besuki, his school in Jakarta, Indonesia, recalls that he would "join the other pupils for Muslim prayers." Praying the salat in and of itself made Mr. Obama a Muslim. Furthermore, he still proudly retains knowledge from that long-ago class. In March 2007, Nicholas D. Kristof of the New York Times witnessed as Mr. Obama "recalled the opening lines of the Arabic call to prayer, reciting them [to Mr. Kristof] with a first-rate accent." Mr. Obama recited not the salat itself but

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adhan constitute the Islamic declaration of faith, the shahada, the very utterance of which makes one a Muslim. The full adhan in its Sunni iteration (skipping the repetitions) goes as follows:

God is the greatest.

I testify that there is no deity but God.

I testify that Muhammad is the messenger of God.

Come to prayer.

Come to success.

God is the greatest.

There is no deity except God.

In the eyes of Muslims, reciting the adhan in class in 1970 made Mr. Obama a Muslim then — and doing so again for a journalist in 2007 once again made Mr. Obama a Muslim.

(3) In a conversation with George Stephanopoulos in September 2008, Mr. Obama spoke of “my Muslim faith,” only changing that to “my Christian faith” after Mr. Stephanopoulos interrupted and corrected him. It’s implausible that someone would blurt out “my Muslim faith” unless some basis existed for such a mistake.

(4) When addressing Muslim audiences, Mr. Obama uses specific Muslim phrases that recall his Muslim identity. He addressed audiences in Cairo (in June 2009) and Jakarta (in Nov. 2010) with “as-salamu alaykum,” a greeting that he, who went to Koran class, knows is reserved for one Muslim addressing another. In Cairo, he also deployed several other pious terms that signal to Muslims that he is one of them:

“The Holy Koran” (a term mentioned five times): an exact translation from the standard Arabic reference to the Islamic scripture, al-Qur’an al-Karim.

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"I have known Islam on three continents before coming to the region where it was first revealed": Non-Muslims do not refer to Islam as "revealed."

"The story of Isra, when Moses, Jesus and Muhammad joined in prayer": This Koranic tale of a night journey establishes the leadership of Muhammad over all other holy figures, including Jesus.

"Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, peace be upon them": a translation of the Arabic "alayhim as-salam," which pious Muslims say after mentioning the names of dead prophets other than Muhammad. (A different salutation, "sall Allahu alayhi wa-sallam," "May God honor him and grant him peace," properly follows Muhammad's name, but this phrase is hardly ever said in English.)

Mr. Obama's saying "Peace be upon them" has other implications beyond being a purely Islamic turn of phrase never employed by Arabic-speaking Jews and Christians. First, it contradicts what a self-professed Christian believes because it implies that Jesus, like Moses and Muhammad, is dead. Christian theology holds him to have been resurrected, to be living and the immortal Son of God. Second, including Muhammad in this blessing implies reverence for him, something as outlandish as a Jew talking about Jesus Christ. Third, a Christian would more naturally seek peace from Jesus than wish peace on him.

(5) Mr. Obama's overblown and inaccurate description of Islam in the United States smacks of an Islamist mentality. He drastically overestimates both the number and the role of Muslims in the United States, announcing in June 2009 that "if you actually took the number of Muslims [sic] Americans, we'd be one of the largest Muslim countries in the world." Hardly: According to one listing of Muslim populations, the United States, with about 2.5 million Muslims, ranks about 47th-largest. Three days later, he gave a bloated estimate of "nearly 7 million American Muslims in our country today" and bizarrely announced that "Islam has always been a part of America's story. ...[S]ince our founding, American Muslims have enriched the United States." Mr. Obama also announced the dubious fact in April 2009 that many Americans "have Muslims in their families or have lived in a Muslim-majority country." When referring to religious communities in the United States, Mr. Obama always gives first mention to Christians but second place varies between Jews and Muslims, most notably in his January 2009 inaugural speech: "The United States is a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus and nonbelievers." Mr. Obama so wildly overestimates the Muslim role in American life that it

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In the aggregate, these statements confirm the evidence from Mr. Obama's childhood that he was born and raised a Muslim.

Daniel Pipes (DanielPipes.org) is president of the Middle East Forum.

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Minty McMint · 5 Dec, 2012 

So he was raised a Muslim. And? He's not brought in sharia law or even attempted to. He is not calling for the persecution of non-Muslims. So what is the problem here? Christians are not the only people capable of being good. The obsession with christianity surrounding elections is stupid. What about the first amendment? Separation of church and state? Religion shouldn't be part of government at all, so candidates' religions shouldn't matter.

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"Congress shall pass no law respecting the establishment of religion,OR PROHIBITING THE FREE EXERCISE THEREOF."

There's NO WALL! Liberal propaganda!

"Cogress shall pass no law PROHIBITING THE FREE EXCERCISE THEREOF" OH,how atheists as well as ecumenical vipers and hypocrites ignore THAT part of thr first amendment.

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