



Written by [James Heiser](#) on September 2, 2009

Obama Celebrates End of Ramadan, Praises Islam

At a time when Americans may have gotten used to the White House referring to Easter-related celebrations as merely one kind of "Springtime tradition," President Obama has found a religion he apparently cannot praise highly enough: Islam.

[According to an Associated Press report,](#)

President Barack Obama on Tuesday praised American Muslims for enriching the nation's culture at a dinner to celebrate the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

"The contribution of Muslims to the United States are too long to catalog because Muslims are so interwoven into the fabric of our communities and our country," Obama said at the iftar, the dinner that breaks the holiday's daily fast.

The president joined Cabinet secretaries, members of the diplomatic corps and lawmakers to pay tribute to what he called "a great religion and its commitment to justice and progress."



At a time when some adherents of Islam are busy upholding a 1,300-year tradition of waging war against Christianity and when even in America a young woman who converts to Christianity — [Rifqa Bary](#) — claims to fear martyrdom at the hands of her Moslem parents, Obama's tribute to Islam's "commitment to justice and progress" makes for a pretty jarring contrast with suicide bombers, *sharia* (Islamic law), and on-going allegations of [coerced conversions](#).

Just as strange as Obama's reference to Islam's "greatness" and "commitment to justice and progress" is his assertion: "The contribution of Muslims to the United States are too long to catalog because Muslims are so interwoven into the fabric of our communities and our country." In June, [Obama's comment](#) that the United States could be considered "one of the largest Muslim countries in the world" was briefly the focus of international attention because it was patently absurd. Now Americans are to believe in the seemingly overwhelming, "interwoven" influence of Islam on America's history.

It is apparently difficult even to count number of Muslims in America — [estimates range from one to seven million](#) — but by any estimate the number of Muslims in America was quite small until the last generation. [One estimate](#) which placed the purported number of Muslims at 2.8 million in 2001 observed that "a more realistic number, supported by statistically significant survey data comparable to what has been used to calculate the sizes of other religious groups, is less than two million Muslims in the United States, or about 0.5% of the total population."

Consider, then, a modest comparison: at present, there are 4.5 million Americans of Norwegian descent (three million of whom claim "Norwegian" as their sole, or primary, ancestry. Organized Norwegian



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immigration began in 1825, thus offering nearly two centuries of actually being “interwoven” with the history of this nation. And the primary religious identification of of this immigrant group is Lutheran — which claims roughly 8 million adherents in the United States and counts 24 adherents among the members of Congress, including four senators. Does anyone really expect to see Obama observing Reformation Day on October 31, or calling the Norwegian ambassador to the White House for lutefisk and lefsa on Christmas day?

According to the AP report, at the White House dinner marking the end of Ramadan,

Obama also noted the contributions of Muhammad Ali, who was not in attendance, though the president borrowed a quote from famous boxer, explaining religion. "A few years ago," Obama said, "he explained this view — and this is part of why he’s The Greatest — saying, ‘Rivers, ponds, lakes and streams — they all have different names, but they all contain water. Just as religions do — they all contain truths.’"

Such shallow Universalism is self-negating the moment one looks at the fundamental, and mutually irreconcilable, tenets of the major religions; for example, Christianity is founded on the belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God whose suffering and death made atonement for sin; Islam denies this element of that belief, and insists that Jesus was merely a prophet, and one who was inferior to Mohammed. Any purported Universalism seeking to unify all religions is simply a form of moralism, and a shallow one, at that.

Of course, Obama’s dinner simply continues the policy of his predecessor, and the unicorn hunt for a tolerant, inclusive Islam continues.

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