

Is Obama Muslim or Arab: A Discussion

Tony E. Hansen (and Friends)

Should this matter? Whether you are a Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative, the point is whether a question is relevant. I have often asked the same question as Ms. Brown but she finally says what seems to be the missing point to the discussion. At some point in the Constitution is written that (Article VI: "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.")

Brown, Campbell. (13 Oct 2008) Commentary: So what if Obama were a Muslim or an Arab? Cnn.com. Retrieved on 13 Oct 2008 from <http://www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/10/13/campbell.brown.obama/index.html>

In discussing this article with a friend, a point was noted that Kennedy was able to be elected "despite" his Catholic roots and further, the questions were raised that ask,

"Is Obama trying to disguise his religious affinity? I thought he went on record as a Christian. While the question doesn't matter as to whether you can participate in the process, it does define you to the voter (as does your view on Capital Punishment, Right-to-Choose, Gun Control et.al.)."

I share with you my response ...

I don't think so. Obama is Christian and he has said that he is only that. He went to a school in Indonesia where some Muslims went, but I am no more Jewish because of going to school with them. I went to school and employment with other religions, but I

am no less Catholic because of them. No, the matter does not define whether one can participate, and the matter may generalize certain values about a person (depending upon what your perspectives of those generalizations are).

The fact is that Obama has lived in other parts of the world where poverty and strife are much more severe than here. The world perspective of a gleaming city on a shiny hill has to rein, and someone who understands what the world is thinking can bring a dose of reality to our perspective of what our actions are doing to the world. Many pundits will say that "when the US sneezes, the world catches a cold" as part of a catch phrase and not really understand what they are saying. Obama has experiences of those colds and may be more tolerant of Islamic traditions than some here in the US.

To be tolerant and accepting of other cultures is the mark of a good leader, and we do not have to be ignorant of good Islamic traditions. We do not have to follow them, but we can grow together to believe in each other's goodness. Remember, the extreme fundamentalists have skewed our view of Muslims in much the same way that Christian fundamentalists have altered the face and good intentions of good Christians. This goes back to that one question a while back of war in terms of righteousness or in terms of greed. We need not war to learn from each other though or even to learn about ourselves.

Thank you for listening...

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