

The continuing failure to confront radical Islam

After a recent trip to Israel, former Congresswoman Michele Bachmann reportedly called upon Christians to step up efforts to convert the Jews. Her pronouncement was met with indignation from across the Jewish political spectrum – and deservedly so, as it displayed a patronizing and flawed understanding of Jewish scripture and history. But as misguided as it certainly was, it was not a call to pogrom or massacre; and while Jews have every right to be offended, such comments are benign, albeit insulting, and pose no threat to Jewish life, limb, or belief.

Ironically, few of those who criticized Bachmann would ever chastise those Muslims who preach doctrinal supremacism or reject the very concept of a Jewish state. Nor would they denounce leftist ideologues who defend progressive anti-Semitism as political speech or delegitimize Israel. The question, then, is how they can reconcile assertive condemnations of Christian missionary zeal with apologetic attitudes towards radical Islam and a refusal to acknowledge the religious basis for much of today's terrorism.

As suggested by ongoing dialogue between the nontraditional movements and dubious Muslim advocacy organizations, and by liberal support for progressive groups like the New Israel Fund, there seems to be growing tolerance for agendas that conflict with Jewish sovereignty and national claims. There is also a tendency to express admiration for Islamic values while ignoring troubling dogmas that discourage free speech and demonize Jews.

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