

# Cairo speech can't eradicate mistrust

Young in secondary school, I was a witty weenie with mind and mouth as my only means of defense and thus subject to a bit of terrorism.

A no-necked, hairy upperclassmen behemoth, dripping more testosterone than a Pamplona bull, had a fondness for quenching my zeal with "bowl baptism." One lesson learned was how people do nasty things when threatened and that superior reason is often as impotent in adolescent classrooms as it is in international politics.

That early lesson revisited when reading President Obama's ballyhooed Cairo Kumbaya speech. Was it good or bad and what is the role of rhetoric during tense international times?

Fortunately it was not solely another kowtow to the Sultan. However, thinly veiled apology was there.

Kumbaya choruses are fine, but American political tunesmiths should weave melodies of the miracles of our way of life. Ever hungry for the American motif, Europe gets it as their elections are indicating a profound shift towards the right center. However, Obama did not press Muslim political powers to sing along with democratic governance.

Yes, nations have the "right to choose their governance," but choice is not typical over there. Our presidents should be resolute that the best choice, the core principles most keeping with the nature of those governed and peace, is the one we represent.



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America can respect... "The right of all peaceful and law-abiding voices to be heard around the world," but not endorse systems antithetical to ours. Where, in those 6,000 words, was the articulation by the great-parenting president that there are practical consequences

should petroleum or plutonium laden potentates not "unclench their fist(s)."

Failing to walk tall, replete with big sticks in the steps of our fathers, neither enhances our image nor impresses our enemies. Hinting at unilateral disarmament makes us look like a neutered pit bull in panty hose.

Let us not rewrite history or pretend there are not glaring difference in the American and Islamic world view and behaviors such as the treatment of women or those who disagree, the role of theocratic laws in daily life or life's purpose. Americans extol First Amendment rights; others issue fatwas.

Thinking magical words can usher in a rapturous "new beginning between the United States and Muslims..." is not naive. It's narcissistic and arrogant.

Leading up to Cairo, we heard how we're not a predominantly Christian country and are one of the largest Muslim nations. This nonsense smacks of one man's personal hajj or angst. It is not presidential.

The immortal god of rhythm and grace, Fred Astaire, made the world seem to move around him when dancing. That was in film.

This is life, not the Obama blockbuster, "Flying Down To Cairo"

Where was the balance? Three thousand innocents lost their lives on 9/11 and it was denounced. Dancing in the streets afterwards was not.

Acknowledging our role in discord is honest but what of the seminal involvement of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union satellites in unsavory alliances. What of the freeing of the Iraqi people, our aide and assistance in the Balkans or that a Muslim citizen in the United States rightfully enjoys a paradise of privileges which we will fight to protect?

Muslim communities have a responsibility to themselves, their women and their citizens. Where has their enormous wealth gone in that regard?

If you stand for nothing you will lay down for everything. Decades ago I took a dramatic rhetorical stand against my terrorist. My words sizzled and sailed to the heavens, as I was dragged to the baptismal bowl once again.

However, the last time I landed a blow dirty and low. While assured I might then die, I vowed to never relent.

The Behemoth limped away and somehow, somehow I stand a much bigger man today. President Obama was right. "No single speech can eradicate years of mistrust."

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