Obama Sounds Like President Without a Country

Monday, June 8, 2009 1:15 PM

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“We’re no longer a Christian nation.” — Barack Obama, June 2007

“America has been arrogant.” — President Barack Obama

“After 9/11, America didn’t always live up to her ideals” — President Barack Obama

“You might say that America is a Muslim nation.” — President Barack Obama, Egypt 2009

Thinking about these and other statements from the man who wears the title of president, I keep wondering what country he believes he’s president of?

In one of my very favorite stories, Edward Everett Hale’s "The Man without a Country," young Army lieutenant Philip Nolan stands condemned for treason during the Revolutionary War, having come under the influence of Aaron Burr. When the judge asks whether he wants to say anything before sentencing, Nolan exclaims defiantly, “Damn the United States! I wish I might never hear of the United States again!”

Stunned silence settles like a pall over the courtroom. After a long pause, the judge sternly tells the angry lieutenant: “You have just pronounced your own sentence. You will never hear of the United States again. I sentence you to spend the rest of your life at sea, on one or another of this country’s naval vessels — under strict orders that no one will ever speak to you again about the country you have just cursed.”

And so it was. Nolan was taken away and spent the next 40 years at sea, never hearing anything but an occasional slip of the tongue about America. The last few pages of the story, recounting Nolan’s dying hours in his small stateroom — now turned into a shrine to the country he foresaw — never fail to bring me to tears.

And I find my own love for this dream, this miracle called America, refreshed and renewed. I know how blessed and unique we are.

But reading and hearing the audacious, shocking statements of the man who recently was elected our president — a young black man living the impossible dream of millions of young Americans, past and present, black and white — I want to ask him: “Just what country do you think you’re president of?”

You surely can’t be referring to the United States of America, can you? America is emphatically a Christian nation and has been from its inception! Seventy percent of its citizens identify themselves as Christian. Christians framed, wrote, and ratified the Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. It’s because this was, and is, a nation built on and guided by Judeo-Christian biblical principles that you, sir, have had the inestimable privilege of being elected president.

You studied law at Harvard, didn’t you, sir? You taught constitutional law in Chicago? Did you never read the statement of John Jay, the first chief justice of the Supreme Court and an author of the landmark Federalist Papers, “Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers — and it is the duty, as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation — to select and prefer Christians for their rulers”?

In your studies, you surely must have read the decision of the Supreme Court in 1892: “Our lives and our institutions must necessarily be based upon and embody the teachings of the Redeemer of mankind. It is impossible that it should be otherwise; and in this sense and to this extent our civilization and our institutions are emphatically Christian.”
Did your professors have you skip over all the high court decisions right up till the mid-1900s that echoed and reinforced these views and intentions? Did you pick up the history of American jurisprudence only in 1947, when for the first time a phrase coined by Thomas Jefferson about a “wall of separation between church and state” was used to deny some specific religious expression — contrary to Jefferson’s intent with that statement?

Or, wait a minute, were your ideas about America’s Christianity formed during the 20 years you were a member of the Trinity United Church of Christ under your pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright? Is that where you got the idea that “America is no longer a Christian nation”? Is this where you, even as you came to call yourself a Christian, formed the belief that “America has been arrogant”?

Even if that’s the understandable explanation of your damming of your country and accusing the whole nation (not just a few military officials trying their best to keep more Americans from being murdered by jihadists) of “not always living up to her ideals”, how did you come up with the ridiculous, alarming notion that we might be “considered a Muslim nation”?

Is it because about 2 million Muslims live here, trying to be good Americans? Out of a current population of more than 300 million, 70 percent of whom are Christians? Does that make us, by any rational definition, a “Muslim nation”?

Why are we not, then, a “Chinese nation”? A “Korean nation”? Even a “Vietnamese nation”? There are even more of these distinct groups in America than Muslims. And if the distinction you’re trying to make is a religious one, why is America not “a Jewish nation”? There’s actually a case to be made for the latter, because our Constitution — and the success of our Revolution and founding — owe a deep debt to our Jewish brothers.

Have you stopped to think what an actual Muslim America would be like? Have you ever really spent much time in Iran? Even in Egypt?? You, having been instructed in Islam as a kid at a Muslim school in Indonesia and saying you still love the call to evening prayers, can surely picture our nation founded on the Koran, not the Judeo-Christian Bible, and living under Sharia law. Can’t you? You do recall Muhammad’s directives [Surah 9:5,73] to “break the cross” and “kill the infidel”?

It seems increasingly and painfully obvious that you are more influenced by your upbringing and questionable education than most suspected. If you consider yourself the president of a people who are “no longer Christian,” who have “failed to live up to our ideals,” who “have been arrogant,” and who might even be “considered Muslim” — you are president of a country most Americans don’t recognize.

Could it be you are a president without a country?

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