

OBAMA CHAMPIONS RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

On August 14, President Barack Obama announced that he supports the right of Muslims to build a mosque near Ground Zero.

Technically speaking, the president was right: the government has no business telling any religion where to build a house of worship. But the real issue is whether Muslims should build a mosque near this hallowed ground. Most Americans, and most New Yorkers, do not want the mosque to be built there, making disingenuous the argument on the part of its supporters that it is designed to bring people together: it has already had the opposite effect.

To justify his position, Obama proclaimed that “our commitment to religious freedom is unshakable.” It most certainly should be. But since when has he been so serious about this issue?

Under Obama, his administration effectively gutted faith from his faith-based initiatives, worrying infinitely more about separation of church and state than religious freedom. Just last Christmas, his administration seriously weighed stripping the White House of manger scenes, and offered tree ornaments with the picture of mass murderer Mao Zedong on them. When he spoke at Georgetown University last year, his advance team made certain to put a drape over IHS, Latin for Jesus, just to show how sensitive they were to the freedom *from* religion crowd. School vouchers for sectarian schools are always rejected by his administration, yet he always finds a way to fund abortion. The Obama administration scored a first in U.S. history when it invited radical atheists to the White House, promising them a place at the table. Moreover, when he was running for president, his Catholic advisory board was stacked with Catholic dissidents.

So for Obama to choose the building of a mosque at Ground Zero as his moment to declare his “unshakable” commitment to religious liberty strikes us as contrived.