

Letters to the Editor

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Muslims want part in healing

With the approach of the 9th anniversary of 9/11, a new controversy has begun to brew over the building of an Islamic Center and a place of worship near Ground Zero. Calling this project 'a deliberately provocative act that will precipitate more bloodshed in the name of Allah' is a blatant refusal of the positive contribution of millions of Muslim-Americans before and since that fateful day.

Questioning the intentions of Muslims who want to be a part of the healing process is equivalent to undermining the lofty principles of our Founding Fathers who understood the power and virtue of religious liberty in American life.

No Muslim denies the gross atrocities committed on the American soil by nineteen misguided individuals who called themselves adherent of Islam. Since that day, the media has spared no efforts in making a villain out of every Muslim on this planet and maligning the very religion whose message is compassion and whose teachings are in perfect harmony with the universe.

We have endured all that. We have survived the onslaught on our sacred book Qur'an, beloved prophet Mohammed and God himself whom we call Allah. Those who still suspect us under the ambiguous pall of 'you are with us or with them' syndrome and question our patriotism, need to look at the Muslim communities around them and try to hear them shriek condemnation every time there is an act of terrorism by Muslim individuals – American or not.

Cordoba House in the vicinity of ground zero will symbolize a bridge of understanding. Mistrust diminishes when people communicate.

Saying that Muslims in this country cannot be a part of healing is equivalent to saying that in the United States of America while Christianity and Judaism are storied religions, Islam has become pariah.

In doing so, people would be disrespecting not only the founding fathers' belief in religious freedom but the Constitution itself.

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