No Need To Play The Dhimmi

ROME — A decision to cover up nude statues from Roman antiquity during a visit by President Hassan Rouhani of Iran has drawn ridicule and scorn in Italy — much of it directed at the Italian government — and spurred a debate about the national identity.

The statues, in a corridor leading to a grand hall in Rome's renowned Capitoline Museums, were encased in tall white boxes ahead of a news conference that Mr. Rouhani held on Monday with Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy. One of the statues was the "Capitoline Venus," a Roman copy of a legendary fourth century B.C. work by Praxiteles; some of the other sculptures were of ancient Greek and Roman gods, dressed minimally, if at all.... "The problem is that those statues — yes, those icons of classicism and models of humanism — are the foundation of European and Mediterranean culture and civilization," the columnist Michele Serra wrote in La Repubblica. To conceal them, he wrote, "is to conceal ourselves." To not offend the Iranian president, he wrote, "we offended ourselves." — from the Jihad Watch.