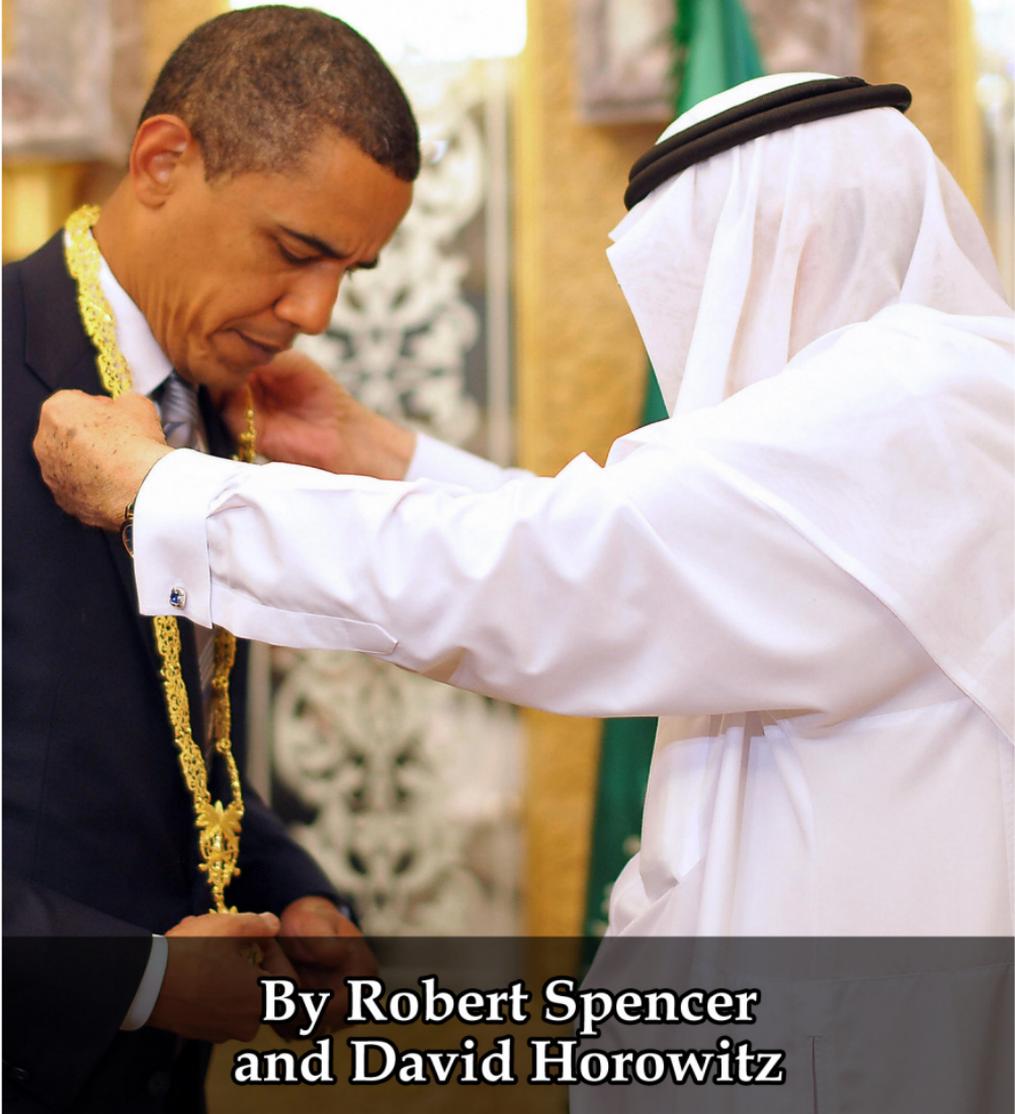


# **Obama and Islam**

**UPDATED AND REVISED**



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[www.frontpagemag.com](http://www.frontpagemag.com)  
ISBN: 1-886442-77-0  
Printed in the United States of America

\$3.00 Each  
\$1.00 each for orders of 25 or more

# Obama and Islam

*By Robert Spencer*

As demonstrations and revolts swept the Muslim world during Barack Obama's first term as President of the United States, Obama was generally enthusiastic. He had encouraging words for the "Arab Spring" demonstrators in Egypt and Tunisia, and even gave military assistance to their Libyan counterparts. During the third and last debate of the 2012 presidential campaign, Mitt Romney and Obama sparred over which could express support for the Syrian rebels more strongly, and as Obama's second term began, his administration was inching ever closer to military aid for those rebels. Yet there were two large-scale demonstrations in Muslim countries that Obama did not support – and those two exceptions are extraordinarily revealing about his disposition, as well as his policy, toward Islam.

The two pro-democracy revolts that Obama refused to support were arguably the only two that

were genuinely worthy of the pro-democracy label: the demonstrations against the Islamic regime in Iran in 2009, and the anti-Muslim Brotherhood demonstrations in Egypt in winter 2013. There is a common thread between these two that distinguishes them from all the others: in Egypt in late 2012 and early 2013, as well as in Iran in 2009, the demonstrators were protesting against Islamic states; all the other demonstrations led to the establishment of Islamic states. To be sure, the Iranian demonstrators in 2009 contained many pro-Sharia elements that simply objected to the way the Islamic Republic was enforcing Sharia, but they also included many who wanted to reestablish the relatively secular society that prevailed under the last Shah. Whether the Sharia or the democratic forces would have won out in the end is a question that will never be answered – in no small part thanks to Barack Obama.

In every case Barack Obama has been consistent: in response to the demonstrations and uprisings in the Islamic world, he has without exception acted in the service of Islamic supremacist, pro-Sharia regimes. For whatever complex of personal affinity and political calculation, he has steered the United States, in the words of the Egyptian newspaper

*Rose el-Youssef*, “from a position hostile to Islamic groups and organizations in the world to the largest and most important supporter of the Muslim Brotherhood.”<sup>1</sup>

The transformation of U.S. foreign and domestic policy is the most significant manifestation of Obama’s warmly positive stance toward Islam. Speaking at the Pentagon in 2010 on the ninth anniversary of 9/11, Barack Obama returned to a recurring theme of his presidency: that the attacks on Americans and the war that has been declared against the West have nothing do with Islam. “As Americans, we will not and never will be at war with Islam,” Obama declared, echoing almost verbatim words he used in his June 2009 Cairo address, and then adding: “It was not a religion that attacked us that September day. It was al-Qaeda, a sorry band of men, which perverts religion.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ahmed Shawki, “A man and 6 of the Brotherhood in the White House!,” *Rose El-Youssef*, December 22, 2012. <http://www.investigativeproject.org/3868/a-man-and-6-of-the-brotherhood-in-the-white-house>

<sup>2</sup> Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President at the Pentagon Memorial,” WhiteHouse.gov, September 11, 2010. [http:// www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/09/11/remarks-president-pentagon-memorial](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/09/11/remarks-president-pentagon-memorial)

George W. Bush had affirmed that the U.S. was not at war with Islam, but Obama drove home the point in numerous ways: purging military and intelligence training materials of any mention of Islam in connection with terrorism; employing the might of the Justice Department to win special accommodation for Muslims in workplaces and schools; and lending the prestige and power of his administration to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's efforts to compel Western states to criminalize criticism of Islam.

### **A President's Job?**

Obama on numerous occasions throughout his presidency has showed himself to be an active and eager opponent of such criticism. In his notorious June 2009 Cairo address, Obama made a strange statement: "I consider it part of my responsibility as President of the United States to fight against negative stereotypes of Islam wherever they appear."<sup>3</sup> When and how did this become part of the job of the President of the United States? Why should this be part of his job description? How about negative stereotypes about America, or about

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<sup>3</sup> Barack Obama, "Remarks By The President On A New Beginning," June 4, 2009.

Jews? What about upholding the First Amendment protection of the freedom of speech – even speech that is offensive to Islam?

Obama’s desire to pander to the Islamic world, even to the extent of falsifying its basic tenets, was also apparent in his 2010 Ramadan message, in which he claimed that during this holy time, Muslims “provide support to others to advance opportunity and prosperity for people everywhere.”<sup>4</sup>

But in fact, it’s against Islamic law to give *zakat*, the almsgiving that is one of the pillars of Islam and is required of every Muslim, to non-Muslims. With the divide in Islam between believers and unbelievers so deep that Muslims are commanded to be “merciful to one another, but ruthless to the un-believers” (Koran 48:29), the only reason for the President to have made such a statement was to give Islam the political equivalent of cosmetic surgery.

In the same speech, Obama also said that

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<sup>4</sup> Barack Obama, “Statement by the President on the Occasion of Ramadan,” WhiteHouse.gov, August 11, 2010. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/08/11/statement-president-occasion-ramadan>

Ramadan's rituals of fasting and prayer "remind us of the principles that we hold in common, and Islam's role in advancing justice, progress, tolerance, and the dignity of all human beings."<sup>5</sup> This flies in the face of passages in the Koran such as the one that designates non-Muslims as "the most vile of created beings" (98:6). The Koran's command that Muslims must fight against Jews and Christians until they pay a religion-based poll tax, *jizya*, "with willing submission and feel themselves subdued" (9:29) likewise militates against the idea of universal human dignity that Obama professes to have discovered in Islam. "And here in the United States," Obama continued, "Ramadan is a reminder that Islam has always been part of America and that American Muslims have made extraordinary contributions to our country."<sup>6</sup>

But is this true? Could Obama provide a list of the Muslim Founding Fathers, the Muslim

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<sup>5</sup> Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on the Occasion of Ramadan," WhiteHouse.gov, August 11, 2010. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/08/11/statement-president-occasion-ramadan>

<sup>6</sup> Barack Obama, "Statement by the President on the Occasion of Ramadan," WhiteHouse.gov, August 11, 2010. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/08/11/statement-president-occasion-ramadan>

heroes of the American Revolution, the names of the Muslims killed fighting in the Civil War, World War I, and World War II? And could he support his rhetoric by producing a list of those “extraordinary contributions”?

It is important for a President to speak for all American citizens in his public pronouncements, not just one religious group – and it is also important that his efforts at “inclusiveness” not be justified by historical fabrication.

### **Banning the Truth About Islam**

Yet his cosmetic efforts continued. In November 2010, Obama spoke in Mumbai, the site of a series of extraordinarily bloody jihad mass murder attacks in November 2008. In his address, he condemned the attacks and even noted that some of the victims were Muslims, but did not note that the terrorists who committed the atrocities were also Muslim. He praised Islam as “the religion that teaches peace, justice, fairness and tolerance.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> “Remarks by the President & First Lady at St. Xavier College town hall,” CNN, November 7, 2010. <http://whitehouse.blogs.cnn.com/2010/11/07/remarks-by-the-president-first-lady-at-st-xavier-college-town-hall/>

This address was emblematic of the Administration's determination to whitewash the connection between Islam and jihad terrorism. And so it was no surprise when the Obama Administration officially banned the truth about Islam and jihad terror in October 2011.

On October 19, 2011, the Executive Director of an Islamic organization called Muslim Advocates, Farhana Khera, wrote a letter to Obama's Deputy National Security Advisor for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, John Brennan. It was signed by 57 organizations, including many with ties to Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR); the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA); Islamic Relief USA; the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA); the Muslim American Society (MAS); and the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC).

The letter denounced U.S. government agencies' "use of biased, false and highly offensive training materials about Muslims and Islam," and emphasized that they regarded this as an issue of the utmost importance: "The seriousness of this issue cannot be overstated, and we request that the

White House immediately create an interagency task force to address this problem, with a fair and transparent mechanism for input from the Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities, including civil rights lawyers, religious leaders, and law enforcement experts.”

This was needed because “while recent news reports have highlighted the FBI’s use of biased experts and training materials, we have learned that this problem extends far beyond the FBI and has infected other government agencies, including the U.S. Attorney’s Anti-Terrorism Advisory Councils, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Army. Furthermore, by the FBI’s own admission, the use of bigoted and distorted materials in its trainings has not been an isolated occurrence. Since last year, reports have surfaced that the FBI, and other federal agencies, are using or supporting the use of biased trainers and materials in presentations to law enforcement officials.”

Many of the examples Khera adduced of these “bigoted and distorted materials” involved statements that were simply accurate. Khera complained:

A 2006 FBI intelligence report stating that individuals who convert to Islam are on the path to becoming “Homegrown Islamic Extremists,” if they exhibit any of the following behavior:

- “Wearing traditional Muslim attire”
- “Growing facial hair”
- “Frequent attendance at a mosque or a prayer group”
- “Travel to a Muslim country”
- “Increased activity in a pro-Muslim social group or political cause”

The actual FBI intelligence report doesn’t actually say that converts to Islam are “on the path” to becoming “extremists” if they wear traditional Muslim attire, grow facial hair, and frequently attend a mosque; it includes these among a list of fourteen indicators to “identify an individual going through the radicalization process.” Others include “travel without obvious source of funds”; “suspicious purchases of bomb making paraphernalia or weapons”; “large transfer of funds, from or to overseas”; and “formation of

operational cells.”<sup>8</sup> Khera selectively quoted and misrepresented the list to give the impression that the FBI was saying that devout observance of Islam led inevitably and in every case to “extremism.”

The letter also stated: “In 2007, William Gawthrop, a FBI intelligence analyst who has stated that the Prophet ‘Muhammad’s mindset is a source for terrorism’ taught a class at the National Defense Intelligence College, the professional education institution run by the Defense Intelligence Agency.”

Khera leaves it to the reader to assume that this statement is self-evidently false. However, numerous terrorists have invoked Muhammad as their inspiration and model. In December 2003, an Iraqi jihadist invoked Muhammad to explain why he was fighting against America’s presence in Iraq: “The religious principle is that we cannot accept to live with infidels. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, said, ‘Hit the infidels wherever you find them.’”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, “The Radicalization Process: From Conversion to Jihad,” May 10, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Ian Fisher, “A Tale of War: Iraqi Describes Battling G.I.’s,” *New York Times*, December 5, 2003.

Fawwaz bin Muhammad Al-Nashami, leader of the jihadists who attacked Americans in Khobar, Saudi Arabia in 2004, killing twenty-two people, also invoked Muhammad: “We are Mujahideen, and we want the Americans. We have not come to aim a weapon at the Muslims, but to purge the Arabian Peninsula, according to the will of our Prophet Muhammad, of the infidels and the polytheists who are killing our brothers in Afghanistan and Iraq.<sup>10</sup> Al-Qaeda Sheikh Aamer Bin Abdallah Al-Aamer wrote in the Al-Qaeda’s online journal *Sawt al-Jihad*: “Perform the Jihad against your enemies with your hands, sacrifice your souls and your property in fighting your enemy, as an imitation of your Prophet [Muhammad] in the month of Ramadan, enrage your enemies.”<sup>11</sup>

Ignoring the factual accuracy of the material about which they were complaining, the Muslim groups signing the letter demanded that the task force “purge *all* federal government training

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<sup>10</sup> “Commander of the Khobar Terrorist Squad Tells the Story of the Operation,” Middle East Media Research Institute Special Dispatch Series No. 731, June 15, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> “Al-Qa’ida Internet Magazine Sawt Al-Jihad Calls to Intensify Fighting During Ramadan -- ‘the Month of Jihad,’” Middle East Media Research Institute, Special Dispatch No. 804, October 22, 2004.

materials of biased materials”; “implement a mandatory re-training program for FBI agents, U.S. Army officers, and all federal, state and local law enforcement who have been subjected to biased training”; and more to ensure that only the message about Islam and jihad preferred by the signatories would get through to intelligence and law enforcement agents.<sup>12</sup>

The very same day that Khera sent her letter, Deputy U.S. Attorney General James Cole declared at a conference in Washington that he had “recently directed all components of the Department of Justice to re-evaluate their training efforts in a range of areas, from community outreach to national security.”<sup>13</sup> This “reevaluation” removed all references to Islam in connection with any examination of Islamic jihad terror activity. The Obama Administration placed off-limits any investigation of the beliefs, motives and goals of jihad terrorists.

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<sup>12</sup> AlMaghrib Institute et al, Letter to John Brennan, October 19, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> “Deputy Attorney General James M. Cole Speaks at the Department’s Conference on Post 9/11 Discrimination,” U.S. Department of Justice, October 19, 2011. <http://www.justice.gov/iso/opa/dag/speeches/2011/dag-speech-111019.html>

Also that day, Dwight C. Holton, former U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon, emphasized that training materials for the FBI would be purged of everything politically incorrect: “I want to be perfectly clear about this: training materials that portray Islam as a religion of violence or with a tendency towards violence are wrong, they are offensive, and they are contrary to everything that this president, this attorney general and Department of Justice stands for. They will not be tolerated.”<sup>14</sup>

Holton said that he had spoken with Attorney General Eric Holder about FBI training materials that Holton claimed were “egregiously false,” and that Holder was “firmly committed to making sure that this is over....we’re going to fix it.” Holton said that this “fix” was particularly urgent because the rejected training materials posed “a significant threat to national security, because they play into the false narrative propagated by terrorists that the

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<sup>14</sup> Ryan J. Reilly, “DOJ Official: Holder ‘Firmly Committed’ To Eliminating Anti-Muslim Training,” TPM Muckraker, October 19, 2011. [http://tpmmuckraker.talkingpointsmemo.com/2011/10/doj\\_official\\_holder\\_firmly\\_committed\\_to\\_eliminating\\_anti-muslim\\_training.php](http://tpmmuckraker.talkingpointsmemo.com/2011/10/doj_official_holder_firmly_committed_to_eliminating_anti-muslim_training.php)

United States is at war with Islam.”<sup>15</sup>

Cole suggested that these training materials had done damage domestically as well: “One of the many, tragic legacies of 9/11 has been an increase in prejudice, discrimination and hatred directed against persons of the Muslim and Sikh faiths and those who are, or who are mistakenly perceived to be, of Arab or South Asian descent. Some have wrongly sought to blame the horror of 9/11 on Arab-American, Muslim American, Sikh-American and South Asian American communities. It has led to attacks against places of worship and other hate crimes, to job discrimination, and to the tragic harassment of children in our schools.”

After sketching out this horror tale, Cole declared: “We must never allow our sorrow and anger at the senseless attack of 9/11 to blind us to the great gift of our diversity.” And this, he said, must involve a rejection of the stereotyping of Muslims: “All of us must reject any suggestion that every Muslim is a

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<sup>15</sup> Ryan J. Reilly, “DOJ Official: Holder ‘Firmly Committed’ To Eliminating Anti-Muslim Training,” TPM Muckraker, October 19, 2011. [http://tpmmuckraker.talkingpointsmemo.com/2011/10/doj\\_official\\_holder\\_firmly\\_committed\\_to\\_eliminating\\_anti-muslim\\_training.php](http://tpmmuckraker.talkingpointsmemo.com/2011/10/doj_official_holder_firmly_committed_to_eliminating_anti-muslim_training.php)

terrorist or that every terrorist is a Muslim. As we have seen time and again – from the Oklahoma City bombing to the recent attacks in Oslo, Norway – no religion or ethnicity has a monopoly on terror.” It was George Bush, he said, who after 9/11 “made clear to the nation that these terrorist acts were committed by individuals who distort the peaceful religion of Islam,” and now all government analysis of jihad terror would reflect that perspective.

In a *Los Angeles Times* op-ed that also appeared on the same day (one might be forgiven for thinking this was a coordinated effort), Salam al-Marayati of the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) roundly criticized existing training materials about jihad terror and demanded that the FBI and the Justice Department “issue a clear and unequivocal apology to the Muslim American community; establish a thorough and transparent vetting process in selecting its trainers and materials; invite experts who have no animosity toward any religion to conduct training about any religious community to law enforcement.”

Al-Marayati complained that training materials reflected “bigoted and inflammatory views on Muslims, including claims that ‘devout’ Muslims

are more prone toward violence, that Islam aims to ‘transform a country’s culture into 7th century Arabian ways,’ that Islamic charitable giving is a ‘funding mechanism for combat’ and that the prophet Muhammad was a ‘violent cult leader.’”<sup>16</sup>

Al-Marayati took for granted that such assertions are false, without bothering to explain how or why. Unfortunately, however, there is considerable evidence that they are true, and that in banning such materials, the Obama Administration essentially banned the truth.

Are “‘devout’ Muslims more prone toward violence”? While certainly not all devout Muslims are terrorists, virtually all Islamic terrorists are devout Muslims. In recent years, not only Osama bin Laden<sup>17</sup> but also devout Muslims such as Khalid

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<sup>16</sup> Salam al-Marayati, “The wrong way to fight terrorism,” Los Angeles Times, October 19, 2011. <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/oct/19/opinion/la-oe-almarayati-fbi-20111019>

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in Robert Spencer, “Senator Graham: ‘Let’s don’t accuse people of basically giving him a pass cause he’s a Muslim, cause I don’t think there’s any evidence of that,’” Jihad Watch, November 12, 2009. <http://www.jihadwatch.org/2009/11/senator-graham-lets-dont-accuse-people-of-basically-giving-him-a-pass-cause-hes-a-muslim-cause-i-don.html>

Sheikh Mohammed<sup>18</sup>, would-be Times Square bomber Feisal Shahzad<sup>19</sup>, Arkansas jihad murderer Abdulhakim Muhammad<sup>20</sup>, and other jihad terror plotters such as Khalid Aldawsari<sup>21</sup>, Baitullah Mehsud<sup>22</sup>, and Roshonara Choudhry<sup>23</sup>, among many others, reference Islamic teachings to justify violence against unbelievers. Detroit underwear bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab declared in court that Muslims should only be judged by the

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<sup>18</sup> Khalid Sheikh Mohammed et al, “The Islamic Response to the Government’s Nine Accusations,” March 1, 2009. <http://www.jihadwatch.org/2009/03/911-defendants-we-ask-to-be-near-to-god-we-fight-you-and-destroy-you-and-terrorize-you-the-jihad-in.html>

<sup>19</sup> “Al Arabiya airs failed Times Square bomber tape,” Al Arabiya, YouTube, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=hwOiXxTOxrA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=hwOiXxTOxrA)

<sup>20</sup> Kristina Goetz. “Memphian drifted to dark side of Islamic extremism, plotted one-man jihad vs. homeland,” Memphis Commercial Appeal, November 14, 2010. <http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2010/nov/14/memphis-man-plots-jihad-against-homeland/>

<sup>21</sup> “Khalid Ali-M Aldawsari Affidavit,” U.S. District Court, Northern District of Texas, February 23, 2011. <http://www.scribd.com/doc/49479930/Khalid-Ali-M-Aldawsari-Affidavit>

<sup>22</sup> “Pakistan Taleban vow more violence,” BBC News, January 29, 2007. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/6292061.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/6292061.stm)

<sup>23</sup> Vikram Dodd. “Roshonara Choudhry: Police interview extracts,” The Guardian, November 3, 2010. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/nov/03/roshonara-choudhry-police-interview>

Koran.<sup>24</sup>

Is the “Islamic charitable giving” a “funding mechanism for combat”? If not, one wonders why so many Islamic charities in the United States and around the world have been shut down for funding terrorism, including what was once the largest Islamic charity in the United States, the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development (HLF), as well as the Global Relief Foundation (GRF), the Benevolence International Foundation (BIF), and many others.

Was Muhammad a “violent cult leader”? Certainly one definition of a cult is that members are not free to opt out if they choose to do so – and it was Muhammad who enunciated Islam’s notorious death penalty for apostasy by saying, “Whoever changes his Islamic religion, then kill him.” (Bukhari 9.84.57). Also, there are several celebrated incidents in which Muhammad lashed out violently against his opponents, ordering the murder of several people for the crime of making

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<sup>24</sup> “Transcript: Read Abdulmutallab’s statement on guilty plea,” Detroit Free Press, October 12, 2011. <http://www.freep.com/article/20111012/NEWS01/111012038/Transcript-Read-Abdulmutallab-s-statement-guilty-plea>

fun of him — including the poet Abu Afak, who was over one hundred years old, and the poetess Asma bint Marwan. Abu Afak was killed in his sleep, in response to Muhammad’s question, “Who will avenge me on this scoundrel?” Similarly, Muhammad on another occasion cried out, “Will no one rid me of this daughter of Marwan?” One of his followers, Umayr ibn Adi, went to her house that night, where he found her sleeping next to her children. The youngest, a nursing babe, was in her arms. But that didn’t stop Umayr from murdering her and the baby as well. Muhammad commended him: “You have done a great service to Allah and His Messenger, Umayr!” (Ibn Ishaq, 674-676).

Al-Marayati’s demand that the FBI and Justice Department “invite experts who have no animosity toward any religion to conduct training about any religious community to law enforcement” is at the heart of this entire affair, and illustrates the assumptions upon which the Obama Administration is now proceeding. For years Islamic advocacy groups like MPAC and Hamas-linked CAIR have asserted loudly and often that telling the truth about Islam’s doctrines of jihad warfare and supremacism constituted “hatred,” and endangered innocent

Muslims. Hamas-linked CAIR has trumpeted and even fabricated hate crimes against Muslims in order to exaggerate this perception of Muslim victimhood.<sup>25</sup>

The entire premise of all this, however, is false. The now-banned FBI training materials were not written out of hatred for Muslims. They were put together in order to give agents an accurate picture of the beliefs and perspectives of jihad terrorists. It is unfortunate but true that the Koran and Sunnah do contain doctrines of warfare and exhortations to make war against and subjugate infidels (cf. Koran 2:191; 4:89; 9:5; 9:29; 47:4, etc.), and it is not an act of “hatred” to point this out, or even to scrutinize the Muslim community in the U.S. in order to try to determine its view of these texts and teachings. The only people who are genuinely threatened by such scrutiny are those who wish jihad terrorism to be able to proceed unhindered.

Nonetheless, in a November 3, 2011 letter to Fatima Khera that was written on White House stationery, John Brennan (whom Obama has since

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<sup>25</sup> Daniel Pipes and Sharon Chadha, “CAIR’s Hate Crimes Nonsense,” *FrontPageMagazine.com*, May 18, 2005. <http://www.danielpipes.org/2627/cairs-hate-crimes-nonsense>

named director of the CIA) made it official. “Please allow me to share with you the specific steps we are taking,” Brennan wrote to Khera, “to ensure that federal officials and state, local and tribal partners receive accurate, evidence-based information in these crucial areas.”

“I am aware,” Brennan went on, “of recent unfortunate incidents that have highlighted substandard and offensive training that some United States Government elements have either sponsored or delivered. Any and all such training runs completely counter to our values, our commitment to strong partnerships with communities across the country, our specific approach to countering violent extremist recruitment and radicalization, and our broader counterterrorism (CT) efforts. Our National Strategy for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States highlights competent training as an area of primary focus and states that ‘misinformation about the threat and dynamics of radicalization to violence can harm our security by sending local stakeholders in the wrong direction and unnecessarily creating tensions with potential community partners.’ It also emphasizes that our security is ‘inextricably linked to our values,’ including ‘the promotion of

an inclusive society.’”

Brennan then assured Khera that all her demands would be met: “Your letter requests that ‘the White House immediately create an interagency task force to address this problem,’ and we agree that this is necessary.” He then detailed the specific actions being undertaken to ensure this, including “collecting all training materials that contain cultural or religious content, including information related to Islam or Muslims.” He went on to tell Khera that his view of this problem was identical to hers, and that remedies were being implemented quickly: “We share your concern over these recent unfortunate incidents, and are moving forward to ensure problems are addressed with a keen sense of urgency. They do not reflect the vision that the President has put forward, nor do they represent the kind of approach that builds the partnerships that are necessary to counter violent extremism, and to protect our young people and our homeland. America’s greatest strength is its values, and we are committed to pursuing policies and approaches that draw strength from our values and our people irrespective of their race, religion or ethnic background.”

The letter concludes with Brennan again assuring Khera that her “concerns” would be soon assuaged: “While much work remains, I am confident that concrete actions are being taken to address the valid concerns you raised. Thank you again for your letter and for your leadership in addressing an issue that is critical to ensuring the security of the United States.”<sup>26</sup>

Accordingly, in February 2012, the government purged more than 1,000 documents and presentations previously used in training programs that the Muslim groups had deemed inaccurate or offensive to Muslims.<sup>27</sup>

In banning the truth about Islam and jihad, the Obama Administration has opened the door for increased jihad terror activity in the United States. Agents who do not understand the threat they face and are constantly surprised by the places where that threat is coming from will be powerless to stop this jihad activity. And the nation will reap the

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<sup>26</sup> John O. Brennan, Letter to Fatima Khera, November 3, 2011. <http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/misc/742.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> “FBI removes hundreds of training documents after probe on treatment of Islam,” FoxNews.com, February 21, 2012. <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/02/21/fbi-purges-hundreds-training-documents-after-probe-on-treatment-islam/>

whirlwind.

## **Working for Muslim Accommodation**

In Cairo in June 2009, Barack Obama said that “freedom in America is indivisible from the freedom to practice one’s religion. That is why there is a mosque in every state in our union, and over 1,200 mosques within our borders. That’s why the United States government has gone to court to protect the right of women and girls to wear the hijab and to punish those who would deny it.”<sup>28</sup> And Obama continued to make sure that the United States government would go to court to secure special accommodations and privileges for Muslims.

In October 2011, the Obama Justice Department forced the Chicago-area Berkeley School District to pay \$75,000 to a first-year teacher who demanded time off so that she could make the pilgrimage to Mecca, the hajj.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> “President Obama’s Cairo speech text,” USA Today, June 4, 2009. [http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2009-06-04-Obama-text\\_N.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2009-06-04-Obama-text_N.htm)

<sup>29</sup> Tina Sfondeles, “Woman wins right to Mecca trip,” Chicago Sun-Times, October 13, 2011. <http://www.suntimes.com/news/metro/8200883-418/woman-wins-right-to-mecca-trip.html>

Safoorah Khan initially asked for “almost three weeks of unpaid leave” so that she could go on the hajj. She wrote that “based on her religious beliefs, she could not justify delaying performing hajj,” although since a Muslim has his or her entire lifetime to perform the hajj, it’s unclear what would have made it impossible for her to justify delaying doing so.

If she wasn’t in imminent danger of death, there was no reason why she had to go on the hajj at that time. And since the Islamic calendar is a lunar one with a year of 355 days, the time to perform the hajj moves by ten days every year. All she had to do was wait until the time for the hajj fell during summer vacation, and then there would have been no problem.

But instead, she demanded three weeks of leave. Yet three weeks of leave, even unpaid, out of the school year is a significant chunk of time -- after all, the school year is only about nine months long. So she is essentially demanding to keep her job despite being away for nearly a tenth of the time during which the job is to be performed.

This was clearly another attempt to force

American workplaces to change the way they operate in order to accommodate Muslims, once again reinforcing the principle that where Islamic law and practice and American law and practice conflict, it is American law and practice that have to give way. And the Obama Administration aided and abetted her in setting this precedent, forcing the school district to make a big payout to her. Said Khan: “I’m glad that we settled and I hope this does set a precedent...I hope this helps people and their employers to accommodate Muslims and their requests.” It certainly will.

Nor was this the only such case. The Obama Justice Department also sued Essex County, New Jersey, after officials forbade Yvette Beshier, a female Muslim prison guard, to wear a headscarf – not because they were “anti-Muslim,” but because it was a choking hazard in a volatile environment. The Department forced the County to pay Beshier \$25,000.<sup>30</sup> And when the Hamas-linked Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) wrote to Obama’s Defense Secretary Leon Panetta

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<sup>30</sup> “Justice Department Settles Religious Discrimination Lawsuit Against Essex County, N.J.,” Department of Justice, November 12, 2010. <http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2010/November/10-crt-1288.html>

demanding that Junior ROTC uniform rules be changed to accommodate Muslim headgear, Panetta immediately complied.<sup>31</sup>

While it pursued suits that secured special accommodation for Muslims, the Obama Justice Department quietly dropped terror finance prosecutions against CAIR and other Islamic supremacist groups.<sup>32</sup> Contact between the Obama Administration and Muslim Brotherhood-linked groups was so extensive that when investigative journalist Pamela Geller submitted a Freedom of Information Act request for documents detailing these contacts, an initial search turned up over 14,000 documents.<sup>33</sup>

In his haste to placate, Obama even changed the mission of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), directing it to turn

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<sup>31</sup> Caroline May, "Army to allow hijabs, turbans in Junior ROTC," Daily Caller, December 22, 2011. <http://dailycaller.com/2011/12/22/army-to-allow-hijabs-turbans-in-junior-rotc/>

<sup>32</sup> Patrick Poole, "Did Obama and Holder Scuttle Terror Finance Prosecutions?," PJ Media, April 14, 2011. <http://pjmedia.com/blog/did-obama-and-holder-scuttle-terror-finance-prosecutions/>

<sup>33</sup> Pamela Geller, "DOJ in bed with Islamic supremacist groups," World Net Daily, September 6, 2011. <http://www.wnd.com/2011/09/342081/#WsSeArVTjh40suUC.99>

from space exploration to--of all things--Muslim outreach, as Charlie Bolden, the man Obama appointed NASA chief, revealed in the summer of 2010: “Perhaps foremost, [Obama] wanted me to find a way to reach out to the Muslim world and engage much more with predominantly Muslim nations to help them feel good about their historic contribution to science, math, and engineering.”<sup>34</sup>

These contributions, such as they were, took place centuries ago and were followed by extreme intellectual calcification. Islamic self-esteem would be better served by permitting women to have an education and by encouraging actual scientific exploration, rather than by launching a public relations campaign to glorify a distant and largely fictive past.

## **The War Against Free Speech**

Most ominous of all is how the Obama Administration has aided in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)’s war against the freedom of speech. The Secretary General of the OIC, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, issued a warning

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<sup>34</sup> Keith Cowing, “Charlie Bolden: Stealth Middle East Diplomat?,” by NASA Watch, July 2, 2010.

in 2008: “We sent a clear message to the West regarding the red lines that should not be crossed” regarding free speech about Islam and terrorism. And he reported success: “The official West and its public opinion are all now well-aware of the sensitivities of these issues. They have also started to look seriously into the question of freedom of expression from the perspective of its inherent responsibility, which should not be overlooked.”<sup>35</sup>

But it wasn't until Barack Obama became President that these efforts really began to bear fruit. His anxiousness to accommodate the OIC's efforts to compel the international community to criminalize criticism of Islam began almost as soon as he became President. In 2009 the Obama Administration co-sponsored an anti-free speech resolution at the United Nations that had been introduced by OIC member states and their allies. Approved by the U.N. Human Rights Council, the resolution called on U.N. member states to condemn and criminalize “any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to

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<sup>35</sup> Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, “Speech of Secretary General at the thirty-fifth session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference,” June 18, 2008.

discrimination, hostility or violence.”<sup>36</sup>

The resolution also condemned “negative stereotyping of religions and racial groups,” which was, of course, an oblique reference to accurate reporting about the jihad doctrine and Islamic supremacism. That, and not actual negative stereotyping or hateful language, is always the focus of anti-free speech agitation by the OIC and allied groups.

In an analysis of the measure, legal expert Eugene Volokh explained why it was so disturbing: “If the U.S. backs a resolution that urges the suppression of some speech,” he explained, “presumably we are taking the view that all countries -- including the U.S. -- should adhere to this resolution. If we are constitutionally barred from adhering to it by our domestic constitution, then we’re implicitly criticizing that constitution, and committing ourselves to do what we can to change it.” In order to be consistent, Volokh continued, “the Administration would presumably have to take what steps it can to ensure that supposed ‘hate speech’ that incites hostility will indeed be

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<sup>36</sup> Bob Unruh, “U.S. sponsors plan to restrict free speech,” WorldNetDaily, October 19, 2009.

punished. It would presumably be committed to filing amicus briefs supporting changes in First Amendment law to allow such punishment, and in principle perhaps the appointment of Justices who would endorse such changes (or even the proposal of express constitutional amendments that would work such changes).”<sup>37</sup>

Then on April 12, 2011, the U.N.’s Council on Human Rights passed Resolution 16/18, with full support from the Obama Administration. This resolution calls upon member states to impose laws against “discriminatory” speech, or speech involving “defamation of religion.”<sup>38</sup> This was a telling indication of Obama’s continued contempt for the freedom of speech, and desire to limit it, despite the First Amendment. For who will judge what constitutes “defamation of religion”? Truthful speech about Islam and jihad is almost certain to be included under this rubric, and truth will be no defense.

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<sup>37</sup> Eugene Volokh, “Is the Obama Administration Supporting Calls to Outlaw Supposed Hate Speech?,” Huffington Post, October 1, 2009.

<sup>38</sup> Abigail R. Esman, “Could You Be A Criminal? US Supports UN Anti-Free Speech Measure,” Forbes, December 30, 2011. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/abigailesman/2011/12/30/could-you-be-a-criminal-us-supports-un-anti-free-speech-measure/>

The most vivid indication of this was the rush on the part of Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, as well as other Administration officials, to blame a video that portrayed Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, in a negative light for the murderous jihad attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi on September 11, 2012. In the months that followed that attack, the creator of the Muhammad video was jailed on a parole violation (while numerous others who have violated parole in more serious ways roam free), while no one who actually committed the murders in Benghazi has been prosecuted or imprisoned.

### **Consistent**

When Obama bowed to the Saudi King whose country was home to 15 of the 9/11 attackers, and whose government funds Islamic jihad worldwide, he created an image worth a thousand words. But more than words and gestures have been involved.

Obama made it clear from his first weeks in office that he would pursue such a course. Just after being elected, he declared that building bridges with the Islamic world would be a high priority

of his administration: “I think we’ve got a unique opportunity to reboot America’s image around the world and also in the Islamic world in particular.” He said he hoped to “create a relationship of mutual respect and partnership in countries and with peoples of good will who want their citizens and ours to prosper together.”<sup>39</sup> After nearly four and a half years, we see what that means: accommodation to Islam domestically and internationally, and continuing elaboration of policies based on the perverse idea promoted by apologists for the jihad, that America somehow deserved the 9/11 attacks, and a new and ugly hostility toward Israel.

Journalist Caroline Glick noted just weeks after Obama took office that a new and disturbing tone was emanating from the White House toward the Middle East’s only democracy and the U.S.’s principal ally there: “From President Barack Obama’s intense desire to appease Iran’s mullahs in open discussions; to his stated commitment to establish a Palestinian state as quickly as possible despite the Palestinians’ open rejection of Israel’s right to exist and support for terrorism... to his plan

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<sup>39</sup> Christi Parsons, John McCormick and Peter Nicholas, “Barack Obama Plans to Reach Out to Muslim World,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 10, 2008.

to withdraw US forces from Iraq and so give Iran an arc of uninterrupted control extending from Iran to Lebanon, every single concrete policy Obama has enunciated harms Israel.”<sup>40</sup>

Contempt for Israel and the existential threat it faces from Islamic supremacists was on full display in Obama’s rude and dismissive treatment of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu during his March 2010 visit to the White House—another signal the President sent to the Islamic world that the principles that had guided U.S. support for its only truly reliable ally in the Middle East over the last sixty years no longer applied.

This hostility to Israel reached its apex during Obama’s long-delayed first visit to Israel, in March 2013. Obama pressured Netanyahu to apologize to Turkey’s Islamic supremacist Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, for Israel’s defensive action against the Mavi Marmara “aid flotilla” in 2010, and to pay reparations to the families of the jihadis killed during that action. The people on the flotilla were actually armed, and were chanting a jihad war cry recalling Muhammad’s massacre of

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<sup>40</sup> Caroline Glick, “Our World: Obama’s new world order and Israel,” *Jerusalem Post*, February 9, 2009.

the Jews of Arabia: “Khybar, Khybar, O Jews, the army of Muhammad will return.”<sup>41</sup> Yet in rapidly re-Islamizing Turkey, the fact that Israel fought back against these jihadis is a serious offense. In apologizing under pressure from Obama, Israel has now set a dangerous precedent: that actions in its own self-defense are illegitimate and to be rejected. In bowing to Obama’s pressure, Netanyahu set a precedent that Israel can be pressured into rejecting its own self-defense and making self-defeating concessions in the process.

Obama also lectured the Israelis about being willing to make peace, while not making any similar calls to the Palestinians to reject the genocidal calls to destroy Israel utterly that go out regularly on Palestinian television. He compared the plight of the Palestinians to that of black Americans facing segregation and discrimination, while saying nothing about the ongoing Palestinian bloodlust against innocent Israeli civilians.

Obama’s eagerness to throw Israel under the bus has won no reciprocal gestures of good will from

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<sup>41</sup> “Gaza flotilla participants invoked the killing of Jews,” Palestinian Media Watch, May 31, 2010. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=b3L7OV414Kk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=b3L7OV414Kk)

Iran or its terrorist clients Hamas and Hizballah, nor from the Palestinian Authority. Yet this has not deterred Obama from continuing to appease the Muslim world. His insistence on pursuing this course raises the question yet again that has often been dismissed as evidence of “Islamophobia” and “bigotry”: what exactly is Barak Obama’s relationship to Islam?

### **Obama’s Muslim Background**

Barack Obama’s personal attachment to Islam began early, although just how early is a matter of contention. Obama’s own comments haven’t shed much light on this question. In December 2007, when the issue came up in the Democratic primary, he said: “I was raised by my mother. So, I’ve always been a Christian. The only connection I’ve had to Islam is that my grandfather on my father’s side came from that country. But I’ve never practiced Islam. For a while, I lived in Indonesia because my mother was teaching there. And that’s a Muslim country. And I went to school. But I didn’t practice.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> “Obama asked about connection to Islam,” MSNBC First Read, December 22, 2007.

But a few months later, in March 2007, *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof wrote, “Mr. Obama recalled the opening lines of the Arabic call to prayer, reciting them with a first-rate accent. In a remark that seemed delightfully uncalculated (it’ll give Alabama voters heart attacks), Mr. Obama described the call to prayer as ‘one of the prettiest sounds on Earth at sunset.’”<sup>43</sup>

He might have learned the call to prayer simply as a result of living in a place where it was repeated five times every day. But as Kristof noted, Obama recounts in his autobiography, *Dreams From My Father*, that “in the Muslim school, the teacher wrote to tell my mother that I made faces during Koranic studies.”<sup>44</sup> At the time Obama attended school in Indonesia, only Muslim children attended Koranic studies.<sup>45</sup> Obama’s first-grade teacher contradicted his assertion about always being Christian when she recalled that the future president “was Muslim.”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Nicholas D. Kristof, “Obama: Man of the World,” *New York Times*, March 6, 2007.

<sup>44</sup> Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father*, Crown Publishing, 2004, p. 154.

<sup>45</sup> Kim Barker, “Obama madrassa myth debunked,” *Chicago Tribune*, March 25, 2007.

<sup>46</sup> Paul Watson, “As a child, Obama crossed a cultural divide in Indonesia,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 15, 2007.

Obama's half-sister Maya Soetoro-Ng said flatly: "My whole family was Muslim."<sup>47</sup>

Whatever Obama's creed may be today, clearly he has retained an idea that Islamic law is a good thing for a society, and is to be encouraged. For if he did not believe this, his actions as President would make no sense at all.

### **Ignoring Realities of the "Religion of Peace"**

Barack Obama has never shown himself to be capable of honestly considering whether the Islamic world was prepared to grant to non-Muslims religious freedom, even as his Justice Department pressed Americans to give Muslims special accommodation. In his ongoing statements to Americans about the "religion of peace," and his praise of Islam and Muslim achievements, the President should at least sometimes indicate reasonable displeasure with the lack of religious freedom in the Islamic world. He should also acknowledge the inequality and oppression of women that is mandated by Islamic law, as well as

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<sup>47</sup> Jodi Kantor, "A Candidate, His Minister and the Search for Faith," *New York Times*, April 30, 2007.

that legal system's justification for the persecution of gays. When excoriating Israeli "settlements," he should recall the fact that no non-Muslim is permitted to set foot in Mecca on pain of death, and the fact that the Jewish and Christian Scriptures are banned in Saudi Arabia.

Obama, as the putative leader of the free world, might also reasonably be expected to mention the repression of "infidel" religions generally in the Muslim world. The 2010 annual report from the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) named ten Muslim countries among the 13 designated as Countries of Particular Concern for their persecution of non-Islamic religions: Eritrea, Iraq, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Conditions have not improved since then.

Along with those, the worst violators of religious freedom around the world, six other Muslim countries were on the USCIRF's watch list: Afghanistan, Egypt, Indonesia, Somalia, Tajikistan and even nominally secular Turkey.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> "Turkey On US Watch List For Violating Religious Freedoms," ANSAmEd, April 30, 2010.

Afghanistan, remember, is the country where the Karzai government, America's supposed ally, has seen a sharp rise in murders of NATO soldiers by their alleged Afghan "allies," and also had to be prevented from executing a convert from Islam to Christianity, Abdul Rahman, because the Koran makes this apostasy punishable by death. (The execution was averted only after America intervened and offered to find another country for the apostate to settle in.)

And while Obama and his appointees continue to claim that Islam teaches peace and tolerance, Christians and other non-Muslims face escalating persecution from Muslims in Egypt, Nigeria, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Indonesia, and elsewhere in the Islamic world.

The President has the obligation to tell the truth to the American people. Islamic jihadists on a daily basis use the texts and teachings of Islam to justify violence and supremacism. No amount of soothing words from Obama will change that. A White House that worries about "Islamophobia" should also have spoken up for people oppressed by Islamic intolerance and xenophobia, and should demand that Muslim groups in America who

present themselves as “moderate” do so as well.

## **Reaching Out to Jihadists and Islamic Supremacists**

As part of his “opening” to the Muslim world, Obama, from the early days of his administration, began reaching out to domestic groups with ties to jihad terrorism. He sent his Senior Adviser Valerie Jarrett to give the keynote address at the Islamic Society of North America’s convention, ignorant of or indifferent to the fact that this group was created by the Muslim Students Association, a subsidiary group of the Muslim Brotherhood, godfather to al-Qaeda and Hamas. ISNA was named an unindicted co-conspirator in the FBI’s case against the Holy Land Foundation for funding Hamas.<sup>49</sup>

In April 2010, the *New York Times* reported that Obama was reaching out to unnamed “Muslim and Arab-American advocates” groups in the United States to accommodate their views on air security. *Times* reporter Andrea Elliott wrote that this meeting with top White House officials, including Jarrett, Homeland Security Secretary Janet

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<sup>49</sup> “Mainstream’ Islamist Convention Features Hate Speech and Hezbollah Defense,” IPT News, July 8, 2009.

Napolitano and Attorney General Eric Holder, had discussed, among other things, “counterterrorism strategy.”<sup>50</sup> White Houses sources said that the protests of these Muslim leaders played a role in Obama’s decision to scrap a policy that subjected airline passengers from Muslim countries to greater security scrutiny than travelers from other places. According to Elliott, “That emergency directive, enacted after a failed December 25 bombing plot, has been replaced with a new set of intelligence-based protocols that law enforcement officials consider more effective.”<sup>51</sup>

Which ones? On what grounds? How could it be more effective to subject people from areas with active jihad terror groups to the same scrutiny as people from countries without these security concerns?

But in line with this, in March 2013 it came to light that the Department of Homeland Security was set to give air passengers entering the U.S. from Saudi Arabia “trusted traveler” status, which would

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<sup>50</sup> Andrea Elliott, “White House Quietly Courts Muslims in U.S.,” *New York Times*, April 20, 2010.

<sup>51</sup> Andrea Elliott, “White House Quietly Courts Muslims in U.S.,” *New York Times*, April 20, 2010.

enable them to bypass normal passport controls.<sup>52</sup> Given that fifteen of the nineteen 9/11 hijackers were Saudis, this decision was inexplicable, and – characteristically for Obama – unexplained.

Yet despite all Obama’s efforts, the objects of his affections remain unsatisfied with his performance. Palestinians burned photos of him when he visited Israel in March 2013, and effigies of him have frequently been set aflame during anti-American demonstrations in Pakistan and elsewhere.<sup>53</sup>

And so as Barack Obama pursues his second term agenda, the jihadists pursue their own, while their motives and goals remain unknown, unexplored, and unchallenged, because they are no longer called by the right name.

Islamic supremacists have declared war on America, Israel and the infidel world as a whole. Most disheartening about Obama’s strenuous efforts at Muslim outreach is that they are entirely unreciprocated, and instead generally seen in the

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<sup>52</sup> “DHS questioned over decision to let Saudi passengers skip normal passport controls,” FoxNews.com, March 20, 2013.

<sup>53</sup> Khaled Abu Toameh, “Bethlehem rioters set fire to pictures of Obama,” Jerusalem Post, March 18, 2013.

Islamic world as a sign of weakness. It is hard to imagine, as Obama's second term continues, that the consequences of this perception will not eventually be catastrophic.