

# President Obama: “We are not at war with Islam” – but is Radical Islam at War with Us?



## ISIS Foreign Fighters

Source: ADL

On Wednesday, February 18, 2014 at a White House Summit, President Obama presented his views on countering “violent extremism”. He suggested that Islamic terrorists misappropriate Islamic doctrine, exploit disaffected youths in communities across the US and globally throughout the Ummah—the community of Muslim believers. He suggested that youths prone to radicalization outside the US may be victimized by poverty, without job opportunities and oppressed by corrupt regimes. Countering violent extremism he suggests is a multi-pronged approach involving economic programs, political reform and community involvement to halt radicalization. His focus in the US was on creating community partnerships and pilot projects in several American cities, endeavoring to integrate Muslims in America, preserving and protecting their civil rights under our constitution against untoward surveillance. The President gathered Muslim and other religious clerics from the US and abroad, community leaders, law enforcement, homeland security officials, and high tech entrepreneurs seeking means of stopping radicalization of youths. Youths attracted by the ‘successes’ of the Islamic State blasted around the world via the internet, tens of thousands of tweets, high production videos and on-line webzines in a number of languages including English.

[Watch](#) this C-Span video excerpt of the President’s remarks at the White House Summit on Countering Violent Extremism:

Nowhere in his remarks , did the President explain what the Islamic doctrine is that has attracted tens of thousands of foreign fighters, Americans among them, to be recruited to the cause of this self-styled Caliphate, the Islamic State (IS). What he has called ISIL, the Islam State in the Levant (ISIL) is a reference to the broad geographic area that stretches from the Mediterranean coast of Israel to the shore of the Persian Gulf encompassing the Arabian Peninsula. Those 'successes' include videos of the savagery perpetrated against the hated Kuffars, Infidels, including Christians, Jews, ancient religious minorities and apostate Muslims. Those videos show barbaric beheadings, burnings, crucifixions, mass shootings and enslavement. The President mentioned recent incidents in Paris, Copenhagen, Ottawa and Sydney of attacks on victims without naming the victims; leftists, free thinkers, Christians and Jews. Neither did he identify the perpetrators. He used the unfortunate murder of three Muslims in North Carolina by an alleged atheist insinuating that it may have been a hate crime equivalent to Antisemitism. Interestingly, 60 percent of FBI hate crimes reported involve Antisemitic acts, such as vandalism spray painted on garage doors in Madison, Wisconsin last weekend. Less than 12 percent of such FBI reports involve hate crimes against Muslims. Coincidentally, the ADL, which the White House invited to the Summit, released a report, [Homegrown Islamic Extremism in 2014](#), identifying American Muslims involved in perpetrating violent hate crimes and others arrested in the process of leaving to join IS.

February 18<sup>th</sup> coincided with Ash Wednesday in the Christian calendar signifying the onset of the 40 days of Lent. The ashes of burned palm fronds dobed on the foreheads of professing Christians as an emblem of penitence reflects the biblical injunction about the fragility of life as stated in Genesis: 3:19: "For dust you are and to dust you shall return." Notice of recent atrocities committed against Christians by IS was reflected in remarks of Pope Francis in

Rome and Cardinal Donald Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington.

Pope Francis [remarked](#) about the by masked IS followers on the shores of Libya beheading of 21 Coptic Christians communicating a message to all Nations of the Cross that conquest of Rome could follow, “ they are Christians, the blood of our brothers and sisters cries out.” Following the slaughter of Christians in Libya IS perpetrated in Iraq, a barbaric burning alive of 45 Kurdish captives held in cages.

Just prior to the mid-February White House Summit, The *Atlantic Magazine* published an article by Graeme Wood, [What ISIS Really Wants](#). The subtext capsules the arguments propounded by Wood:

The Islamic State is no mere collection of psychopaths. It is a religious group with carefully considered beliefs, among them that it is a key agent of the coming apocalypse. Here’s what that means for its strategy—and for how to stop it.

Bill Warner of the Center for the Study of Political Islam in an email exchange with this writer after reading the Wood *Atlantic* article commented, “This is a jump in level. First, [Bill] Mahr and now this. The lib/progressive clue phone is ringing.” Russian historian at Connecticut Central State University, Professor Jay Bergman, wrote, “I read it. Superb. The [President] should read it. But of course...he won’t.”

According to Wood, IS bases all of its power and authority on a strict adherence to a Salafi literal interpretation of Islam and Sharia law, with almost a total focus on the doctrine of Tawhid. Tawhid calls for strict adherence to the laws of Allah as revealed by the Prophet Mohammed. Further that all man-made laws and systems must be rejected. IS considers, any Muslim who doesn’t adhere to the doctrine of Tawhid , an infidel, including “core Al Qaeda” and other Salafists who object to IS public displays of savagery.

Wood reveals the Tawhid doctrine of IS citing spokesman Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Adnani and Western experts like Professor Bernard Heykal at Princeton. Wood interviewed proponents of these same Salafist Jihadist views exemplified by “prophetic methodology” of the exemplar Mohammed, Allah’s messenger. Among leading Salafists in the west interviewed by Wood is Sheik Anjem Choudary in the UK, a subject of monitoring by Mi-5 for his radical views. Wood’s interview with Australian radical Muslim preacher and IS recruiter Musa Cerantonio, reveals the apocalyptic end time vision espoused by Salafists. Wood explains how doctrine IS is faithful to foundational Islam anchored in Sharia and Islamic legal rulings, frequently citing them in conduct of its feats of savage barbarity. He also notes how the leaders of the Islamic State, considers the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, Al Qaeda and even other Salafists as *takfir*, apostates, subject to death fatwas.

One illustration Wood cites is the IS justification for enslavement of infidel women as sex slave war booty like the Yazidis captured in Sinjar in northern Iraq. The Yazidis are an ancient Kurdish religious minority scattered throughout the Near East with a concentration in Iraq and Syria. They had incorporated elements of Muslim beliefs into its primordial Zoroastrianism. See below what The Tennessee Task Force on National and Homeland Security (TTFNHS) uncovered- a bill of sale of Yazid/Christian women sex slaves auctioned as war booty following their capture at Sinjar, Iraq:



“Price List–Sale of Booty. We have been informed that the market for sale of women had been witnessing a reduction in price which affects the needs for the Islamic State and the funding for the Mujahideen. For this, the commerce department had decided to set a fixed price regarding the sale of women. Therefore, all auctioneers are to abide by this and anyone who breaks the rules will be executed.”

"PRICE (in Dinar) MERCHANDISE

IQD 50,000 (\$42.17) age 40-50/Yezidi/Christian

IQD 75,000 (\$63.26) age 30-40/Yezidi/Christian

IQD 100,000 (\$84.35) age 20-30/Yezidi/Christian

IQD 150,000 (\$126.52) age 10-20/Yezidi/Christian

IQD 200,000 (\$168.69) age 1-9/Yezidi/Christian

Limit to 3 Sex Slaves with exception to foreign sales to Turks, Syrians and Gulf states."

SOURCE: [What The Atlantic Gets Dangerously Wrong About ISIS And Islam:](#)

**The article is deeply researched, and makes observations about the core religious ideas driving ISIS – namely, a dark, bloodthirsty theology that revolves around an apocalyptic narrative in which ISIS's black-clad soldiers believe they are playing a pivotal role.**

[...]

**Despite this, Wood's article has encountered staunch criticism and derision from many Muslims and academics who study Islam. After the article was posted online, Islamic studies Facebook pages and listserves were reportedly awash with comments from intellectuals blasting the article as, among other things, "quite shocking." The core issue, they say, is that Wood appears to have fallen prey to an inaccurate trope all too common in many Western circles: that ISIS is an inevitable product of Islam, mainly because the Qur'an and other Islamic texts contain passages that support its horrific acts.**

**In his article, Wood acknowledged that most Muslims don't**

support ISIS, as the sheer number of Muslim groups who have disavowed the terrorist organization or declared it un-Islamic [interview with Raw Story](#) on Tuesday. He argued that in addition to Wood's piece being "full of factual mistakes," its *de facto* endorsement of literalistic Qur'anic interpretations amounts to an advertisement for ISIS's horrific theology.

"Scholars who study Islam, authorities of Islamic jurisprudence, are telling ISIS that they are wrong, and Mr. Wood knows more than what they do, and he's saying that ISIS is Islamic?" Awad said. "I don't think Mr. Wood has the background or the scholarship to make that dangerous statement, that historically inaccurate statement. In a way, I think, he is unintentionally promoting ISIS and doing public relations for ISIS."

Awad also noted that Wood used "jihad" and "terrorism" interchangeably, which implicitly endorses ISIS's argument that their savage practices (terrorism) are a spiritually justified religious duty (jihad). In addition, there is a major issue with Wood's offhand reference to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi as "the first caliph in generations": although a caliphate can be established by force, a caliph, [does not have](#)) and caliphates are historically respectful of other religious traditions (which ISIS [bold statements](#) from respected Muslim scholars all over the globe challenging ISIS's Islamic claims.

"The majority of [Muslims] do not subscribe to [ISIS's] view of their religion. But they do subscribe to the idea of emulating the Prophet Muhammad, upholding the text, and upholding the tradition, but come up with very different end points about what that looks like."

"It's not like these Muslims are 'kind-of Muslims.' They're Muslims who are committed to the prophetic example in the texts and the Qur'an."

These criticisms from leftist allies of CAIR leader Awad fail when you look at specific examples of what Wood was addressing in his article on IS. A Tennessee Task Force on National and Homeland Security (TTFNHS) Brief No. 2015-0B151 notes that the seventh Issue of IS publication *Dabiq* has an article, "The Extinction of the Grayzone " charging several Muslims with being, *takfir*, apostates, for criticism of the Charlie Hebdo massacre in Paris. Among them is a self-styled Salafist , Imam Yasir Qadhi, head of the Memphis Islamic Center in Tennessee. IS suggests that by his actions Qadhi has abandoned his faith and calls for killing him and his mosques to be rejected. The TTFNHSC brief notes this about Qadhi:

Imam Yasir Qadhi is a Salafi Muslim who is on record calling for strict adherence to the Islamic doctrine of Tawhid, which demands the rejection of any form of man-made government. In a [2009 video](#), Qadhi described the concept of Tawhid and states that Christians and Jews are "filthy and impure", and that, in Jihad, their lives and property are legal for Muslims to take. Qadhi's description of the doctrine of Tawhid is the same interpretation espoused by Al Qaeda leader Ayman al Zawahiri in a [2014 video](#)..

Other Muslim Salafists that IS deems violators of Tawhid cited in the same *Dabiq* article "include the spokesman of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, the leading cleric of al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb, and American Imam Hamza Yusuf." An October issue of *Dabiq* even derogated "core" Al Qaeda leader Ayman Al – Zawihiri for his lack of adherence to the IS strict version of Tawhid , especially its public acts of savagery. The title of the IS publication, *Dabiq* , is taken from the site of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century battle that saw the conquest of Syria by Ottoman forces at the town of the same name located 44 kilometers from Aleppo, Syria .

Countering violent extremism as propounded by President Obama evades his responsibility to identify the radical Islamic doctrine of IS. He is instead engaged in the delusion that by campaigning for community organization, jobs and faith based programs we might prevent radicalization of Muslim youths. Instead he should listen to the wise counsel of former DIA chief, Army Gen. Michael Flynn, who in media interviews and [testimony](#) before the House Armed Services Committee has called for a global war against IS. Flynn has suggested the first cornerstone of a strategy to “degrade” and “defeat” IS is to define the ideology behind radical Islamic extremism. The fact that liberal publications like *The Atlantic* have exposed the barbarity of strict adherence to Tawhid in Islam clearly communicates that destroying IS through the exercise of American and allied military power should be the first order of business.