

## Barack Obama - Out of Step

In early February the Muslim World League, which is a Saudi-backed group of Islamic non-profits, completed a three-day conference in Mecca on "Islam and Counterterrorism." We should note that Mecca is the most holy site in the Islamic world and the Saudi royal family is responsible for its protection. Under the leadership of Saudi Arabia's King, Salman bin Abdulaziz, and the keynote address by Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb, who is the Grand Imam of Sunni Islam's most prestigious university, the program focused on the nature of terrorism, its relationship to Islam, and what the Muslim community can do to prevent its members from becoming radicalized (1). **The proceedings were very different from the position of Barack Obama who has repeatedly stated that, "Now let's make two things clear: ISIL is not Islamic. No religion condones the killing of innocents."**(2)

Abdullah bin Abdelmohsin al-Turki, secretary-general of the Muslim World League has stated that **"The terrorism that we face within the Muslim Community and our own homelands today ... is religiously motivated.** It has been founded on extremism, and the misconception of some distorted Sharia concept of "Islamized terrorism" and further stated that "our own children" are responsible for extremist violence. The legitimate Islamic leaders are united in their fear escalating ISIS attacks within their homeland. The Muslim World League is not a fringe organization. Rather, the Muslim World League (MWL) is an international nongovernmental organization founded in 1962 to propagate Islam and to improve worldwide understanding of the religion.

**This misdirection of the Obama administration makes it difficult to solve the problem** because, as Will McCants, director of the Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World at the Brookings Institution stated, "There's a logic behind the divergence in messaging from Washington and Mecca. This conversation can't really happen in the U.S., or in the West, because the [Obama] administration is determined not to frame this [conflict] or have it be interpreted as a religious war" 3).

One would think that this destroys our Nation's credibility among the world leaders who know exactly where the problem lies. **A more responsible approach to this threat would be to join with the responsible Islamic leaders in the fight rather than to disregard them.**

The Nation's various security services are well aware of the many ISIS fighters who are in America both legally and illegally. **They are further concerned about the young American Muslims here who become radicalized and threaten everyone in our country including law-abiding Muslims.** This is not a divisive issue in the US or in the legitimate Islamic nations. Rather, it is an opportunity to unite and to fight a common enemy. This may be the defining issue for this time in history and it is certain that denying the facts, misleading the people and alienating our Islamic allies is not a recipe for success.

George Melton

## Fort Collins, CO

(1) Proceedings, Muslim World League, February 22, 2015

(2) White house press briefing, September 10, 2014 "Statement by the President on ISIL" "The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State" (Palgrave Macmillan Trade, 2015).

3)Will McCants, "The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State" (Palgrave Macmillan Trade, 2015)"The ISIS Apocalypse: The History, Strategy, and Doomsday Vision of the Islamic State" (Palgrave Macmillan Trade, 2015).