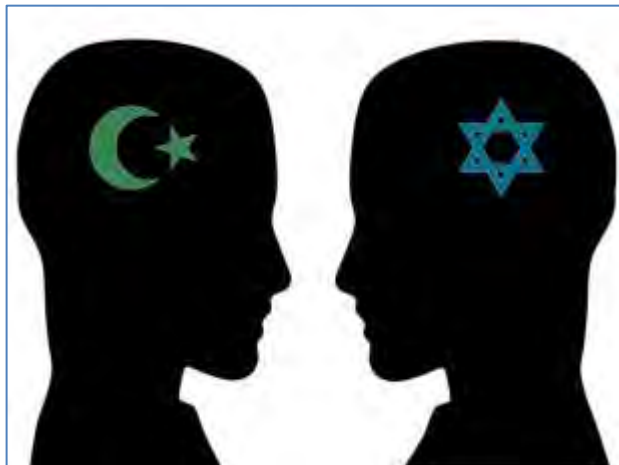


## Terrorism and Profiling

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I do not believe that I have ever written about Jewish-Muslim relations, but a National Public Radio (NPR) show that I was listening to has stimulated my thought processes.

I have participated in 5 *Middle East Peace Initiative* conferences in Israel. One of the deepest experiences I have ever had was visiting a Palestinian home doing “*home church*.” Senator Donzella James, Mrs. Susan Fefferman and I randomly knocked on the door of a Palestinian home and were immediately invited in. The mother immediately started cooking for us and after a wonderful and warm visit we departed with

prayer beads and a bottle of hand-pressed olive oil. Now, imagine the result, after knocking unannounced on a door in your own neighborhood.

The NPR show was about a Muslim woman in America who didn’t understand why people hated Muslims. After all, she said, most Muslims are not terrorists, but rather devout religious people. I agree with her, but I feel compelled to respond. I do not hate Muslims. I have worshipped in mosques and listened to religious Muslim speakers. I have also heard Muslims complain that they are profiled because of their looks, their Arabic name, and their dress.

I have noticed that with a few distinct exceptions (e.g. Oklahoma City, the South Carolina Church, the Denver Movie Theatre) nearly every terrorist incident (e.g. Southern California, Brooklyn) has been perpetrated by people with Arabic names. I am sure that the majority of *ISIS* perpetrators are probably not religious, but they do have Arabic names. I do not support *Donald Trump’s immigration policies* (my own grandparents were Russian immigrants who came to America in the second decade of the 20th century).

But the reality is that the names of the terrorists that I read about in my newspaper are overwhelmingly Arabic. My own children sport beards, but they are not profiled every time they board a Southwest Airlines plane. So why are young Muslim men stopped so often?

Several years ago during the *Gulf War* we asked a friend, a local professor, to add his signature to an ad in the newspaper condemning the invasion. He was an Arab and we felt that this would be a strong statement. However, he refused, fearing retaliation against his family by terrorists. I fully understand this. It would be like asking a Jewish person to condemn Israel’s aggression against Palestinians on the West Bank. But if one goes back to 1948, or 1967, or the *Yom Kippur War*, one will find that Israel was never the aggressor in any of those conflicts. Yes, Israel usually takes retaliation way too far. But, they have never been the aggressor.

What I need to see from serious, religious Muslims in America is for them to condemn terrorism. This condemnation should be universal regardless of the perpetrator. Muslims, as well as all others in America, need to condemn all forms of terrorism. I believe that America’s immigrants, albeit they come from Poland, Ireland, Italy, Africa, Vietnam, Eastern Europe or *Timbuktu* should want to condemn terrorists regardless of where they were from. This includes terrorists from their own homeland. Therefore, if young Muslim men want profiling against them to stop, America needs to see them stand up against terrorism. I am sure that this is frightening. Just look at how Salman Rushdie was threatened, or how *Van Gogh’s namesake* was murdered. Nathan Hale knew what the consequences of his American patriotism would bring, as did John Hancock, Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson.

Those who condemn terrorism are my true brothers and sisters. What I need is to see this condemnation become universal in America, regardless of one’s race, religion or ethnic culture. *A great philosopher* once said that “The **only thing necessary** for the **triumph of evil** is for **good men** to do **nothing**.” One of the greatest challenges to ending gangland crime is for witnesses to speak out, albeit at the risk of their own lives. Likewise for American Muslims to end profiling, either by the police or their own neighbors, they must speak out against terrorism.