

JUAN WILLIAMS' IRRATIONAL FEAR OF NON-TERRORISTS

I'm happy to see Juan Williams and his crappy analysis gone from NPR. But the whole ruckus over Juan Williams' firing from NPR over his admission that he does a double take when he sees people dressed in obviously Muslim garb is missing a key point.

Williams says he gets anxious when he sees people in Muslim garb.

WILLIAMS: Wednesday afternoon, I got a message on my cell phone from Ellen Weiss who is the head of news at NPR asking me to call. When I called back, she said, "What did you say, what did you mean to say?" And I said, "I said what I meant to say" which is that **it's an honest experience that went on in an airport and I see people who are in Muslim garb who identify themselves as first and foremost as Muslims, I do a double take.** I have a moment of anxiety or fear given what happened on 9/11. That's just a reality. And she went on to say, "Well that crosses the line." And I said, "What line is that?"

And she went on to somehow suggest that I had made a bigoted statement. And I said "that's not a bigoted statement. In fact, in the course of this conversation with O'Reilly, I said that we have as Americans an obligation to protect constitutional rights of everyone in the country and to make sure we don't have any outbreak of bigotry but that there's a reality. You cannot ignore what happened on 9/11 and you cannot ignore the connection to Islamic radicalism and you can't ignore the fact that what has been recently said in court with regard

to this is the first drop of blood in a
Muslim war on America. [my emphasis]

Of course, the “reality” that Williams is missing is that when Islamic terrorists get onto planes to try to blow them up, they don’t dress in Muslim garb. On the contrary, we know that Islamic terrorists make sure they appear as “normal” as possible by shaving and dressing as mainstream Americans would. Moreover, Islamic terrorists are increasingly recruiting people who look like westerners.

The last people you should be afraid of on a plane are those self-identifying by their dress as Muslims.

Maybe this is a side-effect of hanging out at with the stupid people and bigots at Fox News for so many years, this really irrational sense of what we should fear. But no matter whether you consider Williams’ statement itself bigoted or not, it is undeniably stupid. Really stupid. And on that basis alone, NPR is justified in firing Williams.

Update: George Stephanopoulos asks Williams whether he should have admitted he was being irrational.