

Islam is not terrorism

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By **Doug Cunningham**

That was the message conveyed by Salih Erschen of the Islamic Community of Madison as he disavowed Osama bin Laden. Erschen says Islam prohibits the taking of innocent lives and bin Laden is not an Islamic leader. "He does not represent Islam," Erschen said, "And that is part of what we are here to say, that we definitely do not support these actions firstly. Secondly, if bin Laden is behind these events we do not support him either." Erschen called bin Laden a "mutant individual" created, at least in part, by the CIA. "They built their killer much like they trained their own, " Erschen said. Erschen says bin Laden represents the "deranged aftermath" of CIA's seditious acts of violence throughout the world. Islam is the second largest religion in America and the fastest growing. Erschen says Islam is not only part of the American fabric, but a very strong piece of what holds the American fabric together. Erschen says he and all true Muslims share the shock and the grief of the "heart-shattering" events that stunned America. The CIA comment refers to massive support given to bin Laden and his network of fighters by U.S. intelligence agencies during the war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the '80's.