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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE
BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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Should Muslims Object To "24?"

Not at all. Muslims are upset that in two out of the last three seasons Muslims have been involved in terrorist cells. As FOX point out to USA Today:

"Over the past several seasons, the villains have included shadowy Anglo businessmen, Baltic Europeans, Germans, Russians, Islamic fundamentalists, and even the (Anglo-American) president of the United States," the network said. "The show has made a concerted effort to show ethnic, religious and political groups as multidimensional, and political issues are debated from multiple viewpoints."

In the first four episodes, we've seen FBI agents sidestep the law in order to harass and profile a Muslim group. This was portrayed as being objectionable and unconstitutional to at least some people on the show, including the President's sister. Nonetheless, we see the Muslim head of the group be understanding of the pressures the gov't faces and wanting to cooperate before he is arrested and thrown into a holding cell. This treatment is ALSO seen as unconstitutional and wrong and debated vociferously at the highest levels of gov't. Despite this, when this American Muslim overhears what he believes to be crucial information, he immediately arranges to get the info out to the FBI say they can act immediately. Then he insists on going back into holding so he can spy some more, risking his life in order to hopefully prevent a terrorist attack. Jack himself is teamed with a Muslim who has renounced terrorism and wants to encourage a peace process. There is much more on every issue, but in short we see good and bad Muslims of every stripe, just like we have with every other group. Complaining is just not smart. Instead they should recognize this is a show and push the positive portrayals as something to celebrate -- when was the last time American TV depicted an American Muslim in a positive light? Use this opportunity to educate instead of just wishing "24" would go away. It isn't.

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