



DIALOGUE & OUTREACH Department

OIC Islamophobia Observatory

Monthly Bulletin – DECEMBER 2016

MANIFESTATIONS OF ISLAMOPHOBIA:

A. In the United States and Canada:

US: Three white men attack Muslim teenager in New York train, try to rip off her hijab—An 18-year-old Muslim woman was attacked in a subway train in New York by three White men, who screamed “*Donald Trump*” at her and tried to rip her hijab off her head, all the while screaming obscenities and slurs at her, including telling her to get out of the country. The young Muslim woman was standing on an uptown 6 platform at the 23rd Street and Park Avenue stop at about 10 pm when the trio of drunks allegedly started yelling at her. They followed her as she then boarded a train. In another incident which smacked of a hate crime, a 20-year-old NYU student came across a message saying black people “*must burn*” using a hateful term. Police said there had been 34 reported incidents since 8 November 2016.

The American Bazaar News’ entry in: <https://www.americanbazaaronline.com/2016/12/02/three-white-men-attack-muslim-teenager-new-york-train-try-rip-off-hijab/>, retrieved on 03.12.2016

US: Islamophobic graffiti scrawled in subway station near Kensington— A vandal scrawled “F**** Allah” on a bench inside the Fort Hamilton Parkway F and G station on the border between Windsor Terrace and Kensington, shocking local leaders who said it was the first Islamophobic graffiti they had seen in the area in more than a year and that they blamed Donald Trump’s victory for emboldening bigots to once again blighted the area with their hate. Mamnunul Haq, a leader in the area’s large Bangladeshi Muslim community said: “*We didn’t have any problems and now with the election a lot of people are taking advantage.*” According to Haq, Kensington had been attacked with both anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic graffiti for several years since 2013, especially along Ocean Parkway, where mailboxes and storefronts could frequently be found debased with swastikas and messages defaming Allah. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority was not aware of the vandalism until contacted, and the agency dispatched a cleanup crew in response.



Brooklyn Daily News’ entry, in: <http://www.brooklyndaily.com/stories/2016/50/dtg-anti-muslim-graffiti-fort-hamilton-parkway-2016-12-09-bk.html>, retrieved on 7.12.2016

US: Letter Threatening, Denigrating Muslims Mailed To Connecticut Mosque— The Council on American-Islamic Relations asked police to increase patrols near a mosque that received a hate-filled anti-Muslim letter.

Mongi Dhaouadi, the executive director of CAIR-CT, said that the letter was delivered in November to an Islamic Center of New Haven facility in West Haven. The mosque moved to Orange several years before but still conducts activities at the West Haven building. The letter was addressed to "The children of Satan," used vile language to describe Muslims and invoked the name of President-elect Donald Trump. Dhaouadi said that the language in the letter was really disturbing, while the similar letters were sent to mosques in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, California and Georgia. The letter read: "You Muslims are vile and filthy people. Your mothers are whores and your fathers are dogs. You are evil. You worship the devil. But your day of reckoning has arrived. There's a new sheriff in town — President Donald Trump. He's going to cleanse America and make it shine again. And he's going to start with you Muslims. He's going to do to you Muslims what Hitler did to the Jews. You Muslims would be wise to pack your bags and get out of Dodge. This is a great time for patriotic Americans. Long live President Trump and God bless the USA." Officials at CAIR-CT and the mosque have contacted police and federal authorities.

The Hartford Courant News' entry, in: <http://www.courant.com/breaking-news/hc-mosque-threat-letter-1208-20161207-story.html>, retrieved on 9.12.2016

US: First US Somali lawmaker gets 'Islamophobic threats' in taxi— The first Somali-American lawmaker in the US said she was subjected to hateful anti-Muslim threats from a taxi driver in Washington DC. Minnesota



Representative-elect Ilhan Omar said the cabbie threatened to remove her hijab during a confrontation. She wrote in a social media post: "On my way to our hotel, I got in a cab and became subjected to the most hateful, derogatory, Islamophobic, sexist taunts and threats I have ever experienced.....The cabdriver called me ISIS and threatened to remove my hijab, I really wasn't sure how this encounter would end as I attempted to rush out of his cab and retrieve my belongings. I am still shaken by this incident and can't wrap my

head around how bold are becoming in displaying their hate toward Muslims. I pray for his humanity and for all those who harbor hate in their hearts." The 34-year-old said the incident occurred just after she attended policy training at the White House. Ms Omar came to the US from a refugee camp in Kenya as a child. She made history and national headlines in November when she defeated a Republican to gain a seat in Minnesota's state house of representatives. Minnesota has the nation's largest Somali community - about 50,000, according to the US Census.

BBC News' entry, in: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-38245278>, retrieved on 9.12.2016

US: Pig carcass dumped outside Oklahoma mosque in possible hate crime— The Islamic Center of Lawton was alerted of the hog dumping to the mosque where Police were investigating the incident as a possible hate crime. Footage captured by the mosque's security cameras showed two men unloading the carcass from the back of a pickup truck before speeding off. Lawton animal control representatives quickly removed the dead hog, but a large blood stain remained in the parking lot. The imam of the mosque said the hoggish event clearly signaled that somebody intended to offend Lawton's Muslim minority, as Islamic faith prohibits the consumption of all pork products.

Daily News' entry, in: <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/pig-carcass-dumped-oklahoma-mosque-hate-crime-article-1.2903909>, retrieved on 10.12.2016

US: Americans believe Muslims face the most discrimination in the US, new survey says— A Pew Research Center survey released in December 2016 found that 82% of Americans believed Muslims face discrimination in the United States. A majority (57%) believed they face a lot of unjust or prejudicial treatment, which was a 12% increase from 2013. The survey revealed that Americans believed Muslims face discrimination the most, with blacks (76%), gays and lesbians (76%), Hispanics (70%) and women (60%) following behind. The survey also said a lot fewer Americans think Jews (44%) and evangelical Christians

(42%) face a lot or some discrimination. About 39% of Americans said whites face some form of discrimination in the US. The findings also said that about 49% of Americans believed that Islam was no more likely than other faiths to promote violence. The percentage varied from different education levels. Americans with postgraduate (64%) or college degrees (57%) believed that Islam was not more violent than other religions, while 43% of high school graduates and 49% Americans with some college education believed that to be the case. The survey was conducted several weeks after Donald Trump's victory.

Mic News' entry, in: <https://mic.com/articles/161737/americans-believe-muslims-face-the-most-discrimination-in-the-us-new-survey-says#6aboqkEhc>, retrieved on 10.12.2016

US: Hate Crimes Against Muslims: NYPD Officers Request Meeting With Trump After Spike In Racist Attacks— A group of Muslim New York City police officers, including one who was the victim of an alleged hate crime earlier in December, requested a meeting with President-elect Donald Trump for “guidance on how they will be protected” in the wake of such crimes. In a letter to Trump, Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams wrote of the heightened tensions following the long and arduous national elections which manifested into a disturbing and dangerous pattern of hate crimes in big cities and small towns across America. According to the New York City Police Department (NYPD), there had been 115 percent spike in hate crimes targeting Jewish, LGBTQ and Muslim communities since 8 November. He requested a meeting between Trump and representatives of the 900 Muslim-American officers belonging to the NYPD, the largest Muslim force in the country.

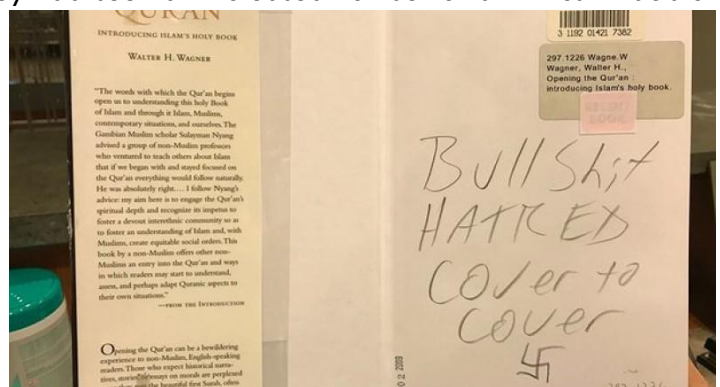
IBTimes News' entry, in: <http://www.ibtimes.com/hate-crimes-against-muslims-nypd-officers-request-meeting-trump-after-spike-racist-2458557>, retrieved on 13.12.2016

US: California man accused of hate crime in stabbing near mosque— A man was arrested on suspicion of committing an anti-Muslim hate crime and another was being sought by authorities in connection with the weekend stabbing of a worshiper near a Southern California mosque. Coming amid a surge in harassment and intimidation of Muslims reported by the FBI, the incident occurred outside the Masjid Al-Rasool mosque in the town of Simi Valley, about 40 miles northwest of Los Angeles. The confrontation began as a verbal altercation that escalated into a physical fight between the two suspects and the victim, who had attended prayer services at the mosque that evening. Officers responding to the incident found the victim suffering from non-life-threatening stab wounds, but the two suspects had fled. One, identified as 29-year-old John Matteson, was later located and taken into custody. He was booked into the Ventura County jail on felony charged of committing a hate crime and making criminal threats, as well as a misdemeanor charge of disturbing the peace. The hate-crime allegation against him was based on derogatory statements he was accused of making about the mosque, as well as the proximity of the incident to the mosque and the fact that the victim was a worshiper there. The second man, also in his late 20s, was still at large and Police provided no further details about the circumstances of the stabbing. Civil rights groups had voiced alarm at what they said a spike in attacks targeting Muslims, Hispanics, blacks and other minorities since the 8 November presidential election victory of Republican Donald Trump.

Reuters News' entry, in: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-california-mosque-stabbing-idUSKBN14126T>, retrieved on 13.12.2016

US: 'Bullsh*t hatred cover to cover': Vandals deface Korans and books about Islam in libraries across US— A number of libraries across the U.S. said they had seen an increased number of anti-Muslim acts of

vandalism and hate speech in the wake of the election of Republican candidate Donald Trump. A survey by the American Libraries Association (ALA) found that copies of the Koran and books about Islam had been defaced with swastikas and other hate speech at a number of libraries. In Oregon and Illinois, libraries were reporting defaced books and hateful graffiti. An Illinois vandal defaced seven books and adding swastikas and comments about the prophet Muhammad in a copy of *The Koran for Dummies*,



copies of the Qur'an, textbooks and conservative commentator Glenn Beck's *It's All About Islam*. Some other

recent hate incidents in libraries: A student at the University of New Mexico was studying in the school's library when she was approached by a man who tried to remove her hijab. Administrators at Reed College in Portland, Ore., discovered hateful, threatening messages and swastikas on the walls of the college's library. Anti-Semitic graffiti was scrawled on the window of a library branch in Toronto.

Raw Story News' entry, in: <http://www.rawstory.com/2016/12/bullsh-t-hatred-cover-to-cover-vandals-deface-korans-and-books-about-islam-in-libraries-across-us/>, retrieved on 13.12.2016

US: Voicemail Threatening to 'Drop a Bomb' on a California Mosque Being Investigated— A California mosque received a message on their voicemail service from an individual who threatened to drop a bomb on the mosque. The incident at the Islamic Center of Tustin that was reported to the Tustin Police Department. The voicemail was among several threats Southern California mosques been received over the recent few weeks, as was reported by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) of Los Angeles. The Police was investigating.

Christian News Network News' entry, in: <http://christiannews.net/2016/12/14/voicemail-threatening-to-drop-a-bomb-on-a-california-mosque-being-investigated/>, retrieved on 15.12.2016

US: Rep. Peter King Urges Donald Trump to Create a Federal Muslim Surveillance Program— Rep. Peter King was encouraging Donald Trump to create a federal Muslim surveillance program. He said in referring to former New York City Police Department Commissioner Ray Kelly: "*I suggested a program similar to what Commissioner Kelly did here in New York.*" For over half a decade after the 9/11 terror attacks, Kelly oversaw a surveillance program that targeted New York and New Jersey Muslims because of their faith. Officers in the since-disbanded Demographics Unit infiltrated Muslim student groups, kept track of Muslims who changed their last names, eavesdropped on conversations between Muslims, spied on Muslim-owned businesses, recorded imam's sermons, and put undercover officers and informants inside mosques. King said that this program was "*very aggressive and forward-leaning when it came to trying to estimate where terror would be coming from.*" Kelly's surveillance program, King added, "*which unfortunately the civil liberties union and The New York Times didn't like ... were very effective in stopping terrorism and they really should be a model for the country.*" During his presidential campaign, Trump called for the creation of a national database of Muslims, the profiling of Muslims and the surveillance of mosques, and after the terror attack in Orlando, Florida, Trump lashed out at New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio for disbanding the NYPD unit that monitored Muslims.

The Huffington Post News' entry, in: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/peter-king-muslim-surveillance-trump_us_5852fdcae4b0b3d4df8bc377, retrieved on 16.12.2016

US: Redmond mosque vandalized for second time in a month— The sign outside a Redmond mosque was vandalized for a second time in a month. The metal on the sign at the Muslim Associated of Puget Sound was torn off, and there was also damage to the concrete that the sign was mounted on. Police said the damage occurred just after midnight before and that the suspect was described as a tall and thin young adult white male who was wearing dark clothing and a dark baseball hat. The act was condemned by a number of public officials. Redmond Mayor John Marchione said: "*Acts like this aren't representative of the Redmond community, and will not be tolerated. The city works closely with MAPS leadership and our Islamic community to ensure that they and all residents feel safe in their homes, at their place of business, and where they worship. I am confident that this act does not represent the feelings of Redmond residents. Our community will continue to stand strongly in favor of diversity and inclusion, and not allow an individual act of vandalism to define us.*" Police said they were investigating both incidents as possible hate crimes.



SeattlePI News' entry, in: <http://www.seattlepi.com/local/komo/article/Redmond-mosque-vandalized-for-second-time-in-a-10803707.php>, retrieved on 18.12.2016

Canada: Dawson's Muslim Students Association targeted by far-right group— Dawson College and its Muslim Students Association became the targets of criticism by members of a far-right group in Quebec that



claimed to be concerned about the rise of radical Islam. The student association held an event in November in the cafeteria of the Montreal English-language CEGEP, where students were invited to try wearing a hijab. Though the student association holds similar activities every semester as part of Islamic Awareness Day, the November edition was covered by the French-language newspaper, the Journal de Montréal. Since then, Dawson received about a dozen complaints, including emails, phone messages and Facebook messages. Members of the

Muslim Students Association were also singled out for criticism. The CEGEP's administration reached out to the MSA following the outcry and encouraged members of the group to call security if ever they feel threatened. CBC Canada News' entry, in: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-far-right-dawson-college-la-meute-1.3902425>, retrieved on 21.12.2016

US: Donald Trump still wants to ban Muslims from US and build 'registry' despite backtracking after election— Donald Trump said he still planned to ban Muslims from entering the US and to build a Muslim registry after the recent terrorist attacks in Berlin. Following the attack, Mr Trump renewed his calls to carry out sweeping discriminatory acts against Muslims from overseas and the American Muslim population of around 3.3 million people. He said at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida: "You know my plans all along and I've been proven to be right. 100 per cent correct. What's happening is disgraceful." Mr Trump was speaking the day after a man hijacked a lorry, killed the driver and ploughed into a Christmas market, killing at least 12 people and injuring 48. He was also referring to the Russian ambassador to Turkey who was killed in Ankara. The president-elect had been seen to backtrack on his hard-line anti-Muslim stance when his December 2015 statement pledging to temporarily suspend Muslim immigration disappeared from his website the day of the election. He said at the time: "Donald J Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what is going on." He then changed his policy to only suspend immigration from countries that had been compromised by terrorism, rather than discriminating against one religion which claimed more than 1.6 billion people. Mr Trump said in a June 2016 speech. "When I am elected, I will suspend immigration from areas of the world when there is a proven history of terrorism against the United States, Europe or our allies, until we understand how to end these threats." Mr. Trump first called to ban Muslims shortly after the terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015. With every Daesh-related assault, Mr. Trump tweeted that he would be tough, smart and vigilant. A week after the election, Kansas secretary of state and Trump adviser Kris Kobach revealed the team were looking at ways to implement a registry. Mr Trump has never clarified exactly how he would plan to execute the controversial policies. Since his election, the Council on American-Islamic Relations had reported at least 900 hate crimes against Muslims across the country, from mosques being vandalized and set on fire, to Muslims being beaten, shot and stabbed on the street.

Independent News' entry, in: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/donald-trump-muslim-ban-registry-berlin-attack-twitter-you-know-my-plans-immigration-racism-a7489611.html>, retrieved on 23.12.2016

Canada: Muslim cultural center in Canada attacked for fourth time— A fire broke out at a Muslim cultural center in Sept-iles, in Canada's Quebec Province. The center was used as a prayer room in the town with 25,000 inhabitants, which was also targeted in October by an attacker who broke into the building and vandalized the walls and bookshelves. Quebec provincial police opened an investigation into the probable arson.

Daily Sabah News' entry, in: <http://www.dailysabah.com/americas/2016/12/26/muslim-cultural-center-in-canada-attacked-for-fourth-time>, retrieved on 27.12.2016

B. In Europe:

Slovakia: Once Again, Slovakia Makes Life Harder for Muslims— Over the course of 2016, the government of Slovakia made it quite clear what it considers Islam's place in its country to be. In March, far-right and populist parties emerged as winners in and of the parliamentary election. A neo-Nazi party won seats in Parliament for the first time and the Slovak prime minister, Robert Fico, warned of the dangers of Muslims ahead of the election. In May, Fico gave an interview in which he said, "*Islam has no place in Slovakia ... The problem is not migrants coming in, rather in them changing the face of the country.*" In July, Slovakia took over the presidency of the



EU Council, a change about which other European officials were apparently unenthusiastic given that Europe was in the throes of a refugee crisis and Slovakia sought to fight a refugee distribution scheme, saying it did not want to take any more refugees. In November, Slovakia presented a plan to the EU to allow countries to spend more money or otherwise do more to enforce external borders or deporting people, instead of taking in their share of migrants. Also, Slovakia suggested EU member states should agree to emergency measures on a voluntary basis in response to peak refugee arrivals. Slovakia, like all other Visegrad 4 countries, had refused to take in refugees and migrants from Italy and Greece despite a record number of asylum seekers reached Italy by boat during 2016. In December, Slovakia's government had approved a law that would ban Islam from becoming a state religion. The legislation stated that a religion must have at least 50,000 followers to qualify for state subsidy. According to the latest census, there were about 2,000 Muslims in Slovakia, a number the government's own policies had worked to keep relatively low. The law was approved by a two-thirds majority. It was proposed by the Slovak National Party, the chairman of which had said, "*We must do everything we can so that no mosque is built in the future.*"

Foreign Policy News' entry, in <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/12/02/once-again-slovakia-makes-life-harder-for-muslims/>, retrieved on 3.12.2016

Austria: Europe's populist right feels galvanized after Trump's win— Austria became the recent testing ground for European far-right populist movements energized by Britain's June vote to exit the 28-nation European Union and Trump's election victory. The rise of populism —characterized by strident nationalism, anti-immigrant sentiment, economic resentments and a deep suspicion of international alliances and trade pacts — had been building across Europe for years, particularly in its more disadvantaged corners. Now this European populist movements burst into full and furious view, driven by complex factors that vary widely from one country to the other — united by a broad sense of grievance against the political establishment and all it represents. Elections set to take place next year in Germany and France, continental Europe's main political and economic powers, were being closely watched as candidates declare themselves out of the running. So too the next year's balloting in the Netherlands, a onetime liberal bastion that could be poised to make a sharp rightward turn. Whether they saw themselves as followers or forerunners, European far-right leaders rejoiced at the American election results. Marine Le Pen, a French presidential hopeful, declared that Trump had "*made possible what was presented as completely impossible.*" Many of the populist figures embracing Trump consider his win not only a vindication of their more incendiary political views, but a sign of kinship born of proudly self-proclaimed outsider status. Hungary's staunchly anti-immigration Prime Minister Viktor Orban had until now been held at arm's length by Washington and centrist European leaders over actions widely perceived as anti-democratic.

The Star Democrat News' entry, in: http://www.stardem.com/news/national/article_eb3e3516-904f-59b3-ab98-7d77af3db067.html, retrieved on 4.12.2016

Netherlands: EU set for another hammerblow: Geert Wilders' Freedom Party soars ahead in polls— The party led by Geert Wilders would beat Prime Minister Mark Rutte's ruling conservative liberals if elections were held today. The Freedom Party (PVV) could count on 29 seats out of the 150-seat chamber, according to the latest IPSOS poll, making it the largest party in the Netherlands for now. In the space of one month the popularity of the PVV has surged with an increase of six seats. The data suggested Eurosceptic Mr Wilders could become the Netherlands' next prime minister, potentially spelling the end of Dutch membership of the European Union. Frustrations had grown with the current coalition government and an ongoing court trial involving Mr Wilders had boosted his support. Mr Wilders, who was riding a wave of populist sentiment sweeping the crumbling bloc, had called for mosques and Islamic schools to be closed. His manifesto called for a ban on the Koran and declared he wants "no more immigrants from Islamic countries".



Express News' entry, in: <http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/741449/geert-wilders-freedom-party-election-polls-ahead-eu>, retrieved on 9.12.2016

UK: Man shouting 'I want to kill all Muslims' shows rising Islamophobia in UK— The capital city of London was hit by a violent Islamophobic act as a knifeman shouted "I want to kill a Muslim" before stabbing another man on a suburban train. He reportedly shouted "go back to Syria" and "Muslims...kill them all" before stabbing his victim. Eyewitnesses said the attacker was a black man and threatened a woman wearing a headscarf with a knife before the violent attack. Tell Mama, a British group that monitors anti-Muslim incidents, said that more than 100 mosques and Islamic organizations in the last three and a half years had been the targets of anti-Muslim attacks across the country. In a separate development, the killing of UK deputy Jo Cox by a nationalist terrorist indicated growing violent white supremacy trends, violence from far-right extremism and neo-Nazi groups across the country. In a shock referendum result, Britain voted on June 23 to leave the 28-nation European Union. Pro-Brexit supporters campaigned heavily on immigration and the need to regain control on Britain's borders, in a referendum battle fought against the backdrop of Europe's worst migrant crisis since World War II. In response to increasing violence against Muslims and refugees across the country, the British government planned to ban an extreme right wing group, National Action under the Terrorism Act 2000 — the first time a right-wing organization had been banned under the legislation. There had been a surge in hate crimes across Britain in the wake of June's referendum, which saw Britons vote to exit the EU with immigration as one of the key issues. At its peak, there was a 58 percent increase in hate crimes and police recorded more than 14,000 such crimes in the period running from a week before the vote to mid-August.

Daily Sabah Europe News' entry, in: <http://www.dailysabah.com/europe/2016/12/14/man-shouting-i-want-to-kill-all-muslims-shows-rising-islamophobia-in-uk>, retrieved on 15.12.2016

Germany: Mosque in southwest Germany attacked with pig's head— Unknown attackers spewed a pig's head on a fence in front of Aksemseddin Mosque in Öhringen's business district Sichert in southwest Germany in December. A man discovered the impaled pig's head as he was bringing his son to a Koran course at the mosque. The mosque filed a complaint, but the community had little hope that the perpetrator would be caught. Police stated that there had been no concrete progress in the case. This was not the first attack to the mosque. In August 2015, an unknown man sprayed "Shit Muslims should die!" on the transformer house in front of the mosque. A few weeks later, attackers threw eggs against the mosque wall. At the end of November 2016, a car entered the mosque grounds as the community and Imam were leaving. The driver shouted "Dirty Foreigners" before driving off. Hatred for refugees and Muslims had been consistent in and around Öhringen for more than a year, especially in Facebook posts and at political rallies of the right alliance "Hohenlohe wake up". An increasing number of Muslims were experiencing verbal attacks, such as being called "bomb planter".

Daily Sabah Europe News' entry, in: <http://www.dailysabah.com/europe/2016/12/16/mosque-in-southwest-germany-attacked-with-pigs-head>, retrieved on 17.12.2016

UK: Mosque in Cumbernauld sprayed with racist graffiti— Anti-Islamic graffiti was sprayed on a mosque



in North Lanarkshire. The words "Saracen Go Home" and the term "Deus Vult", translated from Latin as "God Willing", were painted on two walls of the mosque in Cumbernauld. Mosque leaders described the incident as unusual and said local people were very worried by it. Azhar Din, a trustee of The Islamic Education Trust Cumbernauld, which runs the mosque, said: "The graffiti wasn't there when people left after late prayers at the mosque around nine o'clock the night before. It was discovered

when the first people arrived for morning prayers." The graffiti has been reported to police.

BBC News' entry, in: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-38353706>, retrieved on 18.12.2016

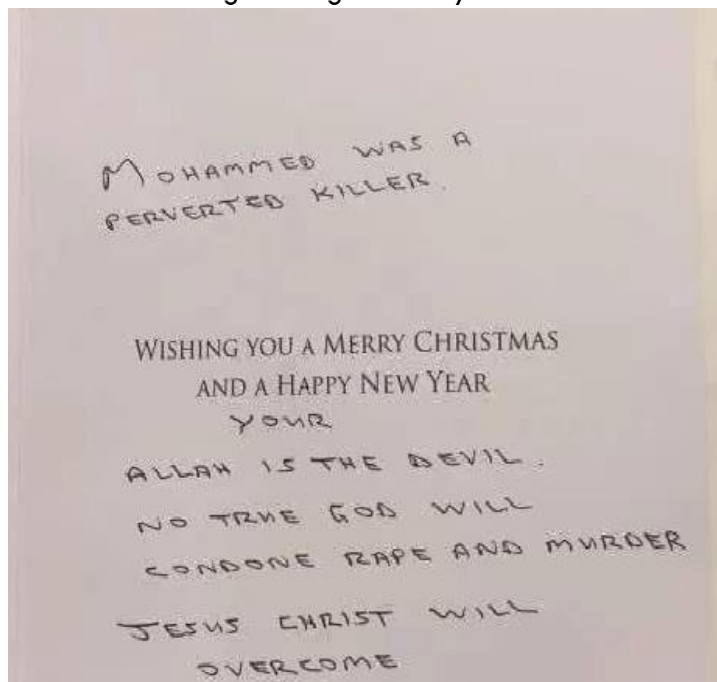
UK: Muslim Woman Dragged by Her Hijab in Busy London Shopping Area— A Muslim woman was forced

to the ground in a busy shopping area in London and dragged along by her hijab by two teenaged men in what authorities said was a hate crime. The British woman was in her 20s walking alone in Chingford, east London, when she was accosted by her attackers. The London Ambulance Service attended and treated the victim for her injuries at the scene. It was reported that two unknown males approached the victim from the side, pulled off her headscarf and then pushed her to the floor. The suspects were described as two white males, aged 17 to 19, wearing all black clothing. Scotland Yard was now appealing for information on the incident. There had been a rise in hate crime allegations across the UK following the EU referendum. Figures released by the UK National Police Chief's Council showed reported incidents rose to 58 per cent in the week following the vote for Brexit on June 23 and levels had remained high throughout the year.

NDTV News' entry, in: <http://www.ndtv.com/world-news/muslim-woman-dragged-by-her-hijab-in-busy-london-shopping-area-1638976>, retrieved on 18.12.2016

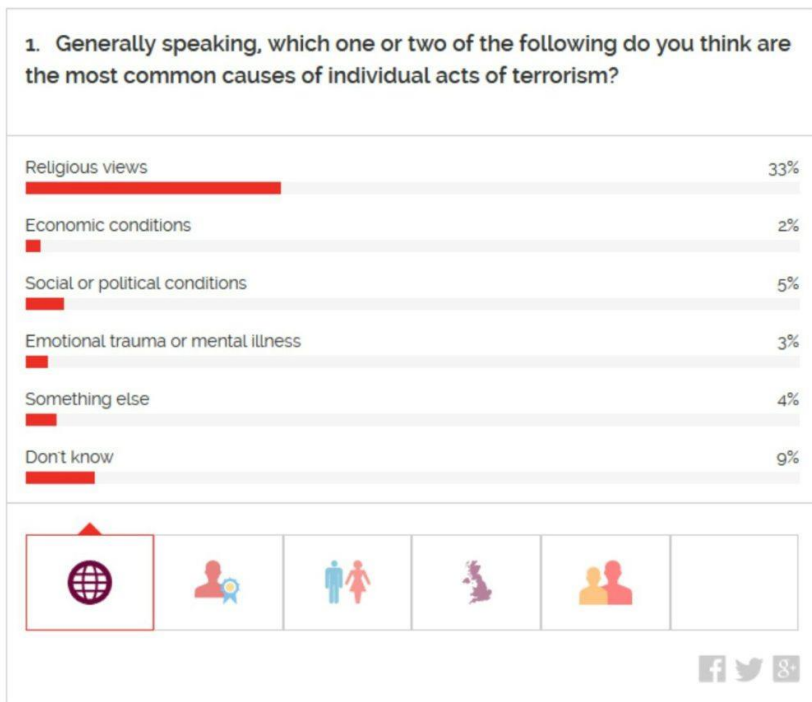
UK: Tunbridge Wells Mosque receives Christmas card stating 'Allah is the devil'—

Tunbridge Wells mosque had been left reeling from the vile and abhorrent card, which was received just days before Christmas. An anonymous poster sent the card, but wrote a hateful message instead of good cheer. It said: "Mohammed was a perverted killer. Allah is the devil. No true God will condone rape and murder. Jesus Christ will overcome." Kent Police said they were looking into the incident. A spokesman said: "Kent Police is aware of an offensive card being sent to a mosque in Tunbridge Well. The incident has not been directly reported, but officers are conducting enquiries and will offer support to the mosque."



The Sun News' entry, in: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2461380/tunbridge-wells-mosque-racist-christmas-card-allah-devil/>, retrieved on 23.12.2016

UK: Most Brits Think Terrorism Is Inspired by ‘Religious Views’— Britons were more likely to think that terrorism was inspired by religious views than for any other reason, such as poverty or mental illness. In an online poll by YouGov examining the causes of terrorism, in which respondents were asked to pick one or two from a list of possible causes for terror acts, 33 per cent of those polled opted for “religious views”. The next most commonly chosen response was “don’t know”, which nine per cent of respondents chose, followed by “social or political conditions”, chosen by just five per cent of respondents. The results stayed broadly consistent across all British regions, with those in London least likely to ascribe terrorism to religious views (27 per cent), and those in the Midlands most likely to do so (37 per cent). Meanwhile, young people were half as likely as the elderly to ascribe terrorism to religion, with 20 per cent of 18-24-year-olds choosing that option against 41 per cent of those aged over 60. Young people were more likely to be unsure of the causes, with 13 per cent of 18-24-year-olds, and 15 per cent of 25-39-year-olds saying they



didn't know why people engaged in terrorist acts. The poll surveyed 4,812 British adults on 22 December with the results weighted to be representative of the British population. In a follow-up question, respondents were asked whether “terrorist acts that are carried out by Muslims do or do not tell us anything about the nature of Islam?” Overall respondents believed that they did not, with 50 per cent saying no, against 33 per cent who said they did think Islamic terrorism said something about the nature of Islam. The poll was taken just days after an Islamic terrorist drove a truck into shoppers at Berlin’s main Christmas market, killing twelve people.

Breitbart News’ entry, in: <http://www.breitbart.com/london/2016/12/23/brits-mostly-think-terrorism-inspired-religious-views/>, retrieved on 24.12.2016

Netherlands: Islamic centre burnt down in the Netherlands by suspected far-right arsonist as tensions continue to rise across the continent— A mosque had been destroyed by a massive fire after a suspected far-right arson attack in the Netherlands.

Dramatic footage showed the moment emergency crews arrived to tackle the huge blaze at an Islamic centre in the town of Culemborg. It was suspected extreme anti-migrant thugs had torched the former public baths building, which was in the process of being converted into a hub for Muslims in the area. The building was recently bought by the Association of Islamic Communities in Culemborg. Police launched a hate crime investigation believing it might have been the target of violent skinheads.



The Sun News’ entry, in: <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2497073/islamic-centre-burnt-down-netherlands-suspected-far-right-arsonist-tensions-rise-across-continent/>, retrieved on 30.12.2016

C. Rest of the World:

Australia: Judge denies to hear Muslim woman's evidence until she takes off veil—A judge in Australia had denied to hear evidence from the wife of an Islamic extremist after she refused to remove the veil of her burqa despite being offered alternative options. Moutia Elzahed, one of the two women married to convicted criminal and Islamic extremist Hamdi Alqudsi, was suing the police alleging they punched her and called her a 'bitch' during the Operation Apple by terrorism raids at her Revesby home in south-west of the Sydney on 18 September, 2014. Elzahed refused to take off her burqa and she failed to turn up to the fourth day on November 30 of the hearing. Her lawyer Clive Evatt said, for religious reasons, his client could not show her face to any man. Judge Balla gave Elzahed a choice; she could have the court closed while she gave evidence or she could give evidence via video link. Evatt declined both options on his client's behalf because the mostly male lawyers on both sides would still be in court and would see her face.



OutlookIndia.com News' entry, in: <http://www.outlookindia.com/newswire/story/judge-denies-to-hear-muslim-womans-evidence-until-she-takes-off-veil/961719>, retrieved on 03.12.2016

India: Mumbai teacher 'barred from wearing burqa, hijab in school' quits— Khan Shabina Nazneen, a teacher in Vivek English High School in Kasaiwada, Kurla, allegedly because she was asked to remove her hijab and burqa on the campus by the headmistress. Nazneen, who had been working as an ICT teacher in the secondary section for the past two years and nine months, said she was being targeted by a new headmistress who had joined the school in June. She said: "Since the new headmistress joined, she has asked me to remove my hijab and burqa on several occasions, saying it was against the decorum of the school. When I pointed out that I had the right to wear my traditional attire, I was told I had to abide by the rule. I was told that other Muslim teachers did not wear the hijab and I must follow suit." Nazneen added she resigned after an incident on December 5, when she was asked to remove her burqa before singing the national anthem. The principal of the school, however, said that there was no such discrimination.

The Indian Express News' entry, in: <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/mumbai-teacher-barred-from-wearing-burqa-hijab-in-school-quits-4419662/>, retrieved on 12.12.2016

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS:

A. In the United States and Canada:

US: Boston Jews, Muslims to march in solidarity against racism — Organized by the Jewish Voice for Peace Boston chapter, the Hanukkah solidarity march was a way for Jews, Muslims and all allies to combat Islamophobia and racism at a time treacherous for those minorities. Liza Behrendt, an organizer with Jewish Voice for Peace Boston, said: "This is the second annual Hanukkah against Islamophobia but given the past election year we've been through, we're seeing a rise in hate crimes targeting Muslims." Kanwal Haq, director of development of Jetpac Inc., said: "There were more than 60,000 Muslims in the Greater Boston area, and yet their voices were not heard." Jetpac Inc. was an organizing partner of the march and a political advocacy center that focuses on equipping Muslim residents with relevant skills. Haq spoke at the march about Jetpac and about how communities in Boston could work in solidarity together. Shannon Erwin, executive director of the Muslim Justice League, said that the timing of this march was important for getting people who were wondering what they could do to help involved.

Metro News' entry, in: <http://www.breitbart.com/london/2016/12/02/populist-mp-fined-e450-linking-terrorism-islam/>, retrieved on 3.12.2016

US: Dozens of Demonstrators Gather at Houston Mosque to Support Muslims— In a show of solidarity with the Muslim community, dozens of non-Muslims showed up outside the Islamic Society of Greater Houston mosque, bearing signs that read, "We're glad you're here" and "We are all Americans." The demonstrators greeted Muslims as they entered the mosque for Friday afternoon prayers, then shook hands and hugged them as they left, while one demonstrator's young daughter handed out flowers. Many of the attendees told the Houston Press they had decided to come to show love and support amid national apprehensive rhetoric directed at Muslims, rooted in fear of difference and spread by politicians including the president-elect, Donald Trump. Stephanie Koithan who organized the demonstration said: "There's been a climate of fearmongering and hateful rhetoric in the past couple years in America, and we have to ask ourselves what's going on to create this climate of



fear and hatred." Koithan was not an organizer on behalf of any group, but simply a regular citizen who felt like there was something she could do as she kept reading news stories about hate crimes against Muslims across the United States.

Houston Press News' entry, in: <http://www.houstonpress.com/news/dozens-of-demonstrators-gather-at-houston-mosque-to-support-muslims-8996802>, retrieved on 6.12.2016

US: Obama: If We Make Terrorism a War between the U.S. and Islam, We Will Lose More Lives— At MacDill Air Force Base, in Tampa, FL President Barack Obama warned against the stigmatization of "good patriotic Muslims" and that it would feed the "terrorist narrative." Obama said: "We are fighting terrorists who claim to fight on behalf of Islam, but they do not speak for over a billion Muslims around the world. They do not speak for American Muslims, including many who wear the uniform of the United States of America's military. If we stigmatize good patriotic Muslims, that just feeds the terrorist narrative. It fuels the same false grievances that they use to motivate people to kill. If we act like this is a war between the United States and Islam, we're not just going to lose more Americans to terrorist attacks, but we'll also lose sight of the very principles we claim to defend. So let me final words to you as your commander in chief, be a reminder of what it is you are fighting for, what it is that we are fighting for. The United States of America is not a country that imposes religious tests as a price for freedom. We are a country that was founded so that people could practice their faiths as they choose. The United States of America is not a place where some citizens have to withstand greater scrutiny or carry a special ID card or prove that they're not an enemy from within."

Breitbart News' entry, in: <http://www.breitbart.com/video/2016/12/06/obama-if-we-make-terrorism-a-war-between-the-u-s-and-islam-we-will-lose-more-lives/>, retrieved on 7.12.2016

US: Norwood neighborhood residents stand up to Islamophobia— Muslim residents living in the Norwood neighborhood were standing up to Islamophobia. Members of the area's Muslim community took part in weekly meetings about how to better their community. Signs line windows in the neighborhood saying: "Standing with Muslims Against Islamophobia and Racism." Community members said the signs and meetings gave them hope that one day they would no longer have to live in fear.



News12 The Bronx News' entry, in: <http://bronx.news12.com/news/norwood-neighborhood-residents-stand-up-to-islamophobia-1.12719560>, retrieved on 8.12.2016

US: Feds sue Virginia County that refused permit for mosque— The Justice Department was suing a Virginia county accused of discriminating against Muslim residents who wanted to build a small mosque. Federal prosecutors said that authorities in Culpeper violated the rights of the Islamic Center of Culpeper when it denied the sewage permit for their new house of worship. The county had never denied an application in 26 attempts since 1992, according to the filed suit, which said the county violated a federal law on religious discrimination and land use passed in 2000. A Community member told that residents had called that the mosque for about 20 people would bring terrorism to small town Virginia, and gathered crowds cheered when the permit was rejected in April 2016. The Islamic Center of Culpeper, currently operating out of a small home, did not immediately respond to a request for comment about how it would proceed after the federal suit.



Daily News' entry, in: <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/feds-sue-virginia-county-refused-permit-mosque-article-1.2908403>, retrieved on 13.12.2016

US: Tech workers pledge to never build a database of Muslims— When asked on the campaign trail whether he thought the United States should create a database of Muslims in the country, Donald Trump said: "Oh, I would certainly implement that — absolutely." In December 2016, hundreds of members of the technology industry weighed in on whether they would help build such a database. The answer was 'Absolutely not'. Around 590 software engineers, designers, business executives and data processing personnel from US firms such as Google, Twitter, Microsoft, Mozilla and Palantir Technologies had signed a pledge "choosing to stand in solidarity with Muslim Americans, immigrants, and all people whose lives and livelihoods are threatened by the incoming administration's proposed data collection policies." As part of the pledge, the individuals promised, among other things, to: Refuse to participate in the creation of databases that would allow the government to target individuals based on race, religion or national origin; Advocate within their organizations to minimize data collection that would facilitate ethnic or religious targeting; Responsibly destroy high-risk data sets and backups; Resign from their organization if ordered to build such a database. It was still unclear whether the incoming government would lean on the tech sector to build such databases, or if it would even make good on its promise to bar Muslims from entering the country. In the weeks following Trump's victory, the president-elect's team backtracked on his earlier statements, saying that he had never advocated for any registry or system that tracks individuals based on their religion. However, Trump's website was still calling for a "total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States" — a proposal that, if implemented, could rely on such a database. The US government had been known to pressure the technology industry for help — whether it was asking Microsoft to help the National Security Agency circumvent encryption on Outlook.com Web chats or the FBI demanding that Apple help unlock the iPhone of one of the shooters in the San Bernardino terrorist attack (Microsoft complied; Apple refused). Whether such a pledge would have material effect on the creation of a Muslim database was still unknown, since the signatories represented only a tiny fraction of the number of people who work for big tech firms. Google alone was having nearly 60,000 employees and most tech executives stayed mum on the topic.

Los Angeles Times News' entry, in: <http://www.latimes.com/business/technology/la-fi-tn-tech-oppose-muslim-database-20161214-story.html>, retrieved on 15.12.2016

US: Students Wear Hijabs to Support Muslims on Campus— A group of Brigham Young University students was turning heads on campus by wearing traditional hijabs. For three Wednesdays, Sondra Sasser and 11 other students had added the garment to their wardrobe to show support for Utah's Muslim community. She said: "A lot of Muslims are feeling uncomfortable about things... feeling scared about things or just misunderstood, and so any show of solidarity I think can be touching." The move was raising a lot of eyebrows around the Provo campus.

NBC New York News' entry, in: <http://www.nbcnewyork.com/on-air/as-seen-on/Students-Wear-Hijabs-to-Support-Muslims-on-Campus-New-York-407019826.html>, retrieved on 17.12.2016

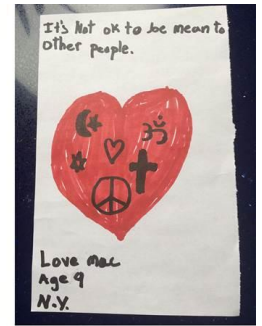
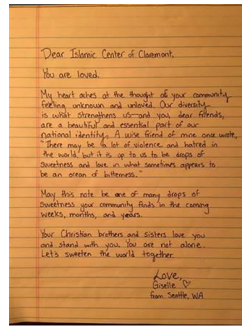
US: White supremacist gets 30 years prison for his plot to kill Muslims and Obama— A self-proclaimed white supremacist convicted on charges he planned to use a 'death ray' to kill Muslims and Barack Obama was sentenced to 30 years in prison. Glendon Scott Crawford, 52, a Navy veteran and a member of the Ku Klux Klan, was found guilty in August 2015 of conspiring with another man to build a radiation dispersal device, dubbed a 'death ray' by tabloids. Crawford was the first person being convicted under a law barring attempts to acquire or use a radiological dispersal device, which combined conventional explosives, such as dynamite, with radioactive material. US district judge Gary Sharpe imposed the sentence at a hearing in Albany. He was convicted on three counts, including conspiring to use a weapon of mass destruction. Crawford's co-conspirator, Eric Feight, pleaded guilty in connection with the case and was sentenced to eight years and one month in prison. US prosecutors had sought life in prison for Crawford. He faced a mandatory minimum of 25 years. After his release, he would be supervised for life. Authorities said Crawford, who worked at General Electric Co., carried out extensive research on radiation dispersal devices, learning what level of emission was required to kill humans and conducting reconnaissance on potential targets, including a local mosque. In conversations recorded without his knowledge by a confidential law enforcement source, Crawford spoke often of his hatred of Muslims and said he would go after Obama in the White House with the device.

The Guardian News' entry, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/dec/19/death-ray-plot-muslims-obama-glendon-scott-crawford-new-york>, retrieved on 20.12.2016

US: Man Gets 20 Years for Hate Stabbing at Queens Mosque— Bernhard Laufer who stabbed a caretaker at a mosque in Queens had been sentenced to 20 years in prison. He was sentenced after being convicted of attempted murder as a hate crime and other hate charges in the 2012 attack at the Masjid Al-Saaliheen Mosque on Kissena Boulevard. Prosecutors said Laufer had repeatedly called the mosque and threatened to kill all Muslims before stabbing the victim as he opened the mosque for morning prayer. Laufer had previously been sentenced to six months house arrest and mental treatment for sending an email threatening to kill an employee of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR).

NBC New York News' entry, in: <http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/Man-Gets-20-Years-for-Hate-Stabbing-at-Queens-Mosque-406708565.html>, retrieved on 16.12.2016

US: Students Collect Love Letters to Counter Islamophobia— Following threatening messages received by several mosques in California, a group of college students countered anti-Muslim sentiment through love letters. In just a few weeks, the students said they had collected nearly 200 letters of solidarity and support for the Muslim-American community from across Southern California, as well as from places as distant as New York, Mexico, Canada, Morocco, and South Korea. The letters came from individuals, organizations like the Center for Inquiry and the Methodist Federation of Social Action, and elected officials, including Mayor Bao Nguyen of Garden Grove, California. They said: "Our goal is simple: To show that community across difference and disagreement can stand and work together against injustice and ignorance in our nation. When we show the power and beauty that is the diversity of the American fabric, we don't merely talk about it, we show it in every way we can. This letter campaign serves as a foundation stone to promote education and service between communities that may not understand each other, to live up to our motto: E pluribus unum." The students hoped



Dear Islamic Center of Claremont,

I write to you as an American who has been target of hate and intolerance all my life with a few words of support. My race is a drop in the ocean of humanity, but I keep the war words of Jakkabul Haas in my heart as I share this message with you.

"You are not a drop in the ocean. You are the entire ocean in a drop."

To those who have sent you message full of hate towards Muslims and Jews are first and foremost reflecting harm to their own selves. Their first victim of hate is themselves. And that is what makes this one of the most challenging battles for us in the here and now.

More and more Americans are expressing their hate and intolerance towards Muslims, Jews, LGBTQ, Sikh, Hindu, Hispanic, Woman among others. Countering this hate requires an incredible outpouring of love from us as an organized American family with members representing of faith, gender, ethnicity, cultural, and developmental backgrounds. We have to offer prayer first for those individuals and groups whose hearts are filled with hate. We have to send them our message: We have to send them our prayers.

I stand with you as an imperfect American who has his own shortcomings, who while being target of hate and intolerance has at times struggled to find something in common with those hateful souls. But my Sikh faith teaches me that the same light and energy resides in all our hearts. We have to practice love to the best we can for we are that light inside all of us. This vision is what guide us to confront hate and intolerance.

You are not alone. You are part of the American family that like any family has problems, sometimes members who are estranged from basic values of love and respect. Some members who have completely gone off course.

In these difficult times I come to you as a member of the family to say I am here to offer my love for you to offer you to defend your basic human rights, to fight for your freedoms.

The heart is a
The strongest original instrument
That can only be tuned with
Love.

Khalid Shams ul Din (Muslim and Hindu) @ 2016/12

Your family member,
Wahid Singh (aka Captain America)
Creator of Sikhisms.com
New York City

Dear Islamic Center of Claremont,

We love you all and hope you feel our support and our solidarity. May we stand together and share in our wonderfully diverse community with love. D & E

Dear Friends,

I am deeply sorry that you had to read that disgusting letter. For someone to write with so much hate and anger, his/her is clearly the evil one. I am not Muslim, but I have close friends and family members that are. I feel for them and I feel for you. Please know that even though we are hearing of acts of hatred, there are a lot more acts of love and kindness. I am here to support you & I will send much love & many blessings your way.

S/Gina

to collect 500 letters and deliver them to the Islamic Center of Claremont — one of the mosques that received the original message. The Islamic Center of Claremont is expected to create a display out of the messages.

NBC News' entry, in: <http://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/students-collect-love-letters-counter-islamophobia-n700321>, retrieved on 28.12.2016

B. In Europe:

Finland: Populist MP fined for linking terrorism and Islam— A member of Finland's True Finns party had been sentenced to pay a fine for the crime of agitating against an ethnic group in a blog post. True Finns local chapter leader Terhi Kiemunki had rejected the ruling that a blog post she wrote was defamatory, and said despite the €450 fine she was the true victim of the case and had been miscast and been unfairly convicted due to public interest in the case. The case came to the attention of Finnish police after Ms. Kiemunki reported herself to them for investigation, as she had grown tired of accusations online that her writings were slanderous. Following her sentencing about the blog post, she said: "In these times, specifically in the recent past and today, all of the perpetrators of terrorist acts have turned out to be Muslim.

Breitbart News' entry, in: <http://www.breitbart.com/london/2016/12/02/populist-mp-fined-e450-linking-terrorism-islam/>, retrieved on 3.12.2016

France: Far-right French mayor to be tried over Muslim comments— Robert Menard, an ally of France's anti-immigrant National Front party, would face a charge in a Paris court of incitement to hatred or discrimination.



He would be tried over comments that included a claim the number of Muslim students in his city was a 'problem'. He was saying in September 5 "In a class in the city centre in my town, 91 percent of the children are Muslims. Obviously, this is a problem. There are limits to tolerance." Also in September he tweeted his regret at witnessing "the great replacement", using a term by xenophobic writer Renaud Camus to describe the country's white, Christian population being overtaken by foreign-born Muslims. Menard prompted outrage in October by

putting up anti-migrant posters and calling for a local referendum ahead of the arrival of asylum-seekers in his town. Under the headline "That's It, They're Coming", was an image of a crowd of migrants, all of them men, outside the cathedral in Beziers. It was reminiscent of a controversial poster created by leading Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage, former head of Britain's anti-immigration UK Independence Party (UKIP), showing a vast queue of migrants under the slogan "Breaking Point".

RFI News' entry, in: <http://en.rfi.fr/france/20161222-far-right-french-mayor-be-tried-over-muslim-comments>, retrieved on 23.12.2016

Russia: Putin: No Link between Islam, Terror— Speaking at his annual year-end press conference, Putin said he would prefer not to link Islam with terrorism. He said: "I would prefer Islam not to be mentioned in vain alongside terrorism. You are right here," when asked if the phrase Daesh should be banned from use by the media. Following the assassination of a Russian ambassador in Turkey, Putin's comments only strengthen previous statements on Islam and terror. In May, at an event devoted to discussing Islam and Russia, Putin said Russia would always be a reliable ally to the Islamic World. He said at the time: "I would like to confirm that in Russia, the Islamic world will always find a reliable ally, prepared to cooperate in resolving pressing problems. We support the position of Muslim countries to strengthen values such as justice and the rule of law in international relations."

Yahoo News' entry, in: <https://www.yahoo.com/news/putin-no-between-islam-terror-152643531.html>, retrieved on 24.12.2016

UK: Prince Charles: 'Normally at Christmas' We Think of Jesus; This Year Remember Muhammad— In a message recorded December 19 at St. James's Palace, Britain's Prince Charles admonished his subjects to consider the millions of people around the world suffering from religious persecution. He also said that at a time of year when people normally think of Jesus, they should spend time remembering Muhammad. The Prince of Wales began his pre-Christmas address by giving voice to the persecution of religious minorities around the world. He said for such people *"Religious freedom is a stark choice between life and death. Normally at Christmas, we think of the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. I wonder, though, if this year we might remember how the story of the nativity unfolds, with the fleeing of the holy family to escape violent persecution. And we might also remember that when the prophet Muhammad migrated from Mecca to Medina he was seeking the freedom for himself and his followers to worship..... Whichever religious path we follow, the destination is the same – to value and respect the other person, accepting their right to live out their peaceful response to the love of God."*



PJ Media News' entry, in: <https://pjmedia.com/faith/2016/12/26/prince-charles-normally-at-christmas-we-think-of-jesus-this-year-remember-muhammed/>, retrieved on 27.12.2016

SITUATION OF MUSLIMS

UK: London Muslims donate 10 tonnes of food for homeless at Christmas— Hundreds of Muslims flocked to the East London Mosque in a drive to feed London's homeless during the festive period. Pictures showed members of the 7,500 strong Muslim congregation donating food as they attended Friday prayers at the mosque in Whitechapel. Shopping bags filled with rice, pasta, cereals and other tinned goods, were ready to be distributed to people living on the street. Organisers estimated that over seven tonnes of food were donated with local businesses, schools, a university and leaders from other faiths chipping in. More than 90 per cent of the food, which was given to homeless charity Crisis, would go to non-Muslims, with Christian Reverend Gary Bradley describing the drive as all faiths working together for a common humanity. Shaykh Abdul Qayum, Chief Imam of the East London Mosque, who organised the collection along with charity Muslim Aid, said the drive was inspired by their faith. He said: *"Muslims are inspired by their faith towards helping others in need. It is a religious duty for Muslims to try to help others, irrespective of a person's faith or background. This compassion is truly reflective of what Islam stands for."* The number of people sleeping rough in the UK had risen dramatically, with government figures estimating that over 3,500 people slept on the streets each night. The charity Centrepoin warns that 25,000 young people could be at risk of homelessness during the 2016 Christmas.

Evening Standard News' entry, in: <http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/london-muslims-donate-ten-tonnes-of-food-for-homeless-at-christmas-a3422611.html>, retrieved on 18.12.2016



Evening Standard News' entry, in: <http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/london-muslims-donate-ten-tonnes-of-food-for-homeless-at-christmas-a3422611.html>, retrieved on 18.12.2016

UK: Muslims and Christians team up to help homeless— Muslim and Christian groups in Britain were



joining forces to help the country's homeless and other vulnerable groups during the Christmas period. Organisations including Muslim Aid, the Al-Khair Foundation, Streetlytes, and churches across the English capital of London were expanding their efforts by providing meals and shelter packs to rough sleepers. Their aim was to make sure those most in need were protected from cold weather and hunger during the holidays when many shops and services were closed or operating at reduced capacity. More than 100 homeless people attended a Christmas dinner event organised by the groups at the Church

of St Stephen and St Thomas in Shepherd's Bush, west London.

Aljazeera News' entry, in: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/12/muslims-christians-team-homeless-161219213135022.html>, retrieved on 23.12.2016

ON BURQAH AND VEIL RELATED ISSUES:

Germany: With Election in Sight, Merkel Calls for Burqa Ban— German Chancellor Angela Merkel was suddenly running as a conservative ahead of 2017 general election as she was now talking tough on mass-migration and calling for a ban on the Burqa. Merkel addressed her party's convention held in the city of Essen in saying: "The full-face veil is not acceptable in our country. It should be banned, wherever it is legally possible." While referring to the European Migrant Crisis, she also said: "A situation like the one in the late summer of 2015 cannot, should not and must not be repeated. That was and is our, and my, declared political aim." The moderate shift to the right was intended to mollify the conservative wing of the party that had grown increasingly worried about Merkel's welcoming stance toward refugees from Syria and other crisis regions, which saw nearly 900,000 migrants arrived in Germany in 2015.

Legal Insurrection News' entry, in: <http://legalinsurrection.com/2016/12/with-election-in-sight-merkel-calls-for-burqa-ban/>, retrieved on 9.12.2016

Related: German chancellor demands stricter asylum laws and ban on burqa— Just weeks before, the New York Times called German Chancellor Angela Merkel "the last defender of Western freedom." However, Merkel made clear what this amounts to. At the CDU party congress in Essen, she delivered an extraordinarily right-wing speech full of xenophobic attacks and demands for the strengthening of the police and military. Previously, Merkel's refusal to impose a firm upper limit for the acceptance of refugees, as the Christian Social Union (CSU) had urged, was portrayed as a "welcoming culture" toward refugees. In the interests of German big business, which had profited from the freedom of movement within Europe, Merkel opposed the reinforcement of national borders and worked for a so-called "European solution" to the refugee crisis. The substance of this "solution" was the closure of Europe's external borders. Merkel began her speech with a clear concession to her right-wing critics. She noted that Germany would never again accept several hundred thousand refugees in a matter of months, saying, "A situation like that in the late summer of 2015 cannot, should not and will not be repeated. While Merkel warned repeatedly about the danger posed by the growth of the AfD, her xenophobic policies and the reactionary content of the resolution would result in a strengthening of the right-wing radicals.

WSWS News' entry, in: <http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2016/12/08/merk-d08.html>, retrieved on 9.12.2016

Australia: Turnbull rules out burqa ban in Australia— Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull rejected calls to ban the burqa in his country following Chancellor Angela Merkel's call to ban full-face veils in Germany. He said: *"It is not something my government would support or propose."* Pauline Hanson, the leader of Australia's anti-Islam party One Nation, wrote on Facebook that she would push for a similar law to Merkel's proposal to be introduced to the parliament in 2017. regarding what was happening in Germany, Turnbull said: *"The Europeans regrettably lost control of their borders,"* adding that European leaders spoke with him recently about the threat posed to their societies by 'large-scale irregular migration.'



Australia had been maintaining a stiff border policy of intercepting and turning back all boats carrying asylum seekers trying to reach its shores, with hundreds then forced to languish in offshore detention centres in Nauru and on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island.

Gulf Times News' entry, in: <http://www.gulf-times.com/story/523960/Turnbull-rules-out-burqa-ban-in-Australia>, retrieved on 9.12.2016

ON DIALOGUE:

Canada: MPs, Muslims gather on Hill for anti-Islamophobia event— An event was held on Parliament Hill in December to celebrate the tabling of an e-petition to denounce Islamophobia, and the subsequent introduction of a motion to move that conversation forward into a parliamentary study into its root causes. The event, held in the Sir John A. Macdonald building, was attended by members of the Muslim community,



as well as a number of MPs. The event was hosted by Liberal MPs Frank Baylis and Iqra Khalid. Baylis presented the e-petition to parliament, which was started by his constituent Samer Majzoub, with the focus on the language of 'always together'. Baylis told the crowd: *"Everywhere we went, we were always welcomed with open arms. Ever place we went, people said yes, we will help. That openness that we say really impacted us because you don't have to look far today to see that there are people who are looking to get ahead by demonizing people."* In the 120 days that e-petitions were allowed to gather signatures, Baylis said that it gained so much momentum that it was signing up to 2,000

signatures per day, and he now claimed the most-signed e-petition by a significant margin. Baylis also said that they not only reached out to the Muslim community, but also the Sikh community, the Jewish community and Christian churches. Other speakers included Conservative senator Salma Ataullahjan, NDP MP Rachel Blaney and Green Party leader Elizabeth May.

iPolitics News' entry, in: <https://ipolitics.ca/2016/12/06/mps-muslims-gather-on-hill-for-anti-islamophobia-event/>, retrieved on 7.12.2016

US: Faith community stands with Muslims in wake of hate mail— Vermonters of various faiths were showing their solidarity with the Islamic Society of Vermont after it received a letter expressing disdain for the Muslim religion. About 150 nonmembers gathered to pray with the Muslim congregation, and many had

sent messages of support. Reports said more than 100 mosques in the US received hate mail in late November. It called the behaviors of Muslim people un-American, and the writer vowed to try to prevent the further entry of Muslims into the United States. Farhad Khan, president of the Islamic society, said “*When anything hateful happens we have such an outpouring of love.*” Vermont Interfaith Action was a coalition of more than 40 congregations, which promoted religious tolerance.

VT Digger News' entry, in: <https://vtdigger.org/2016/12/18/faith-community-stands-with-muslims-in-wake-of-hate-mail/>, retrieved on 19.12.2016

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