



**DIALOGUE & OUTREACH Department**

**OIC Islamophobia Observatory**

**Monthly Bulletin – July 2017**

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**MANIFESTATIONS OF ISLAMOPHOBIA:**

**A. In the United States and Canada:**

**US: Murfreesboro mosque defaced with graffiti, bacon**— The Islamic Center of Murfreesboro was vandalized in July with green graffiti messages with expletives were spray-painted in three places on the exterior of the mosque. One of the messages was on one of the side doors, another was sprayed on the back side, and another was scrawled across the basketball court behind the main building. Messages were also spelled out with slices of bacon, and bacon was wrapped around one of the exterior doors. Islamic Center of Murfreesboro had been the center of controversy for nearly a decade. In 2010, the center experienced vandalism to two signs announcing the property as being the future home of the Islamic Center of Murfreesboro. The first time a tagger spray-painted "Not Welcome" on the first sign in January 2010 before the ICM requested a site plan approval from Rutherford County Regional Planning Commission. After planners unanimously voted in favor of the mosque plans on May 2010, a vandal cut in half the second sign in June 2010. In August 2010, federal agents were called to the ICM after a coward poured flammable liquid on four pieces of construction equipment and ignited them at the site. The case was ruled an arson. Also, at least \$4,000 in cash donations were stolen from the ICM on July 2016, after the mosque's celebration of Eid al-Fitr.

See: USA Today News' entry, in: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2017/07/10/murfreesboro-mosque-defaced-graffiti-bacon/466122001/>, retrieved on 11.7.2017

**US: Image of Jesus Left outside Mosque to Insult Muslims**— A large painting of Jesus was left outside a mosque in Long Island in what police were investigating as a bias incident. The Hillside Islamic Center in North New Hyde Park said an employee discovered the picture on a fence outside the mosque. Mosque president Abdul Aziz Bhuyian told that surveillance from the building showed a man had cycled up to the mosque and hung the picture outside.

See: Newsweek News' entry, in: <http://www.newsweek.com/image-jesus-left-outside-mosque-insult-muslims-634608>, retrieved on 11.7.2017

**US: Michigan official stands by call for killing of all Muslims**— A village president in northern Michigan was refusing to apologize for sharing Facebook posts denouncing Islam and calling for the killing of every last Muslim. The Record-Eagle of Traverse City reported that Kalkaska Village President Jeff Sieting said that he did not owe anyone an apology over his Facebook posts. The posts were discovered by area native Cindy Anderson, who along with others unsuccessfully sought an apology month before. They were now looking to remove Sieting from office. Sieting said his comments were protected by the First Amendment and that those trying to oust him from office were only doing so because they oppose President Donald Trump.

See: The Spokesman-Review News' entry, in: <http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2017/jul/12/michigan-official-stands-by-call-for-killing-of-al/>, retrieved on 13.7.2017

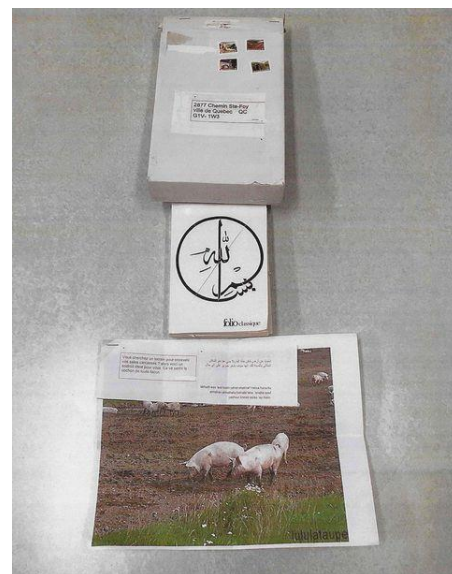
**US: Caller to Georgia mosque: 'We are going to kill you'**— The Georgia Council for American Islamic Relations (CAIR) was calling for the arrest of the man who called in multiple death threats to an Augusta mosque over the past two months. The caller said on the voice message: "We are going to raise arms and we

are going to blow the heads off of Muslim people in this country. I don't mean that we are going to just harass you. We are going to kill you." The phone calls come from a Missouri area code, while local and federal law enforcement officers were searching for the caller.

See: WSB-TV News' entry, in: <http://www.wsbtv.com/news/local/caller-to-georgia-mosque-we-are-going-to-kill-you/564261099>, retrieved on 20.7.2017

**Canada: Muslim cemetery fallout deepens as Quebec mosque reveals it received hate package**— A package expressing hate towards a Muslim cemetery project was delivered in July to the Quebec City mosque where six men were shot dead in January. Quebec City police said they had stepped up security around the Centre Culturel Islamique de Quebec and were taking the matter seriously. The package arrived two days before a referendum on the proposed cemetery was held in nearby Saint-Apollinaire, but the mosque did not immediately report it to avoid influencing the vote. Voters rejected a zoning change that would have allowed the burial ground project to move forward by 19 votes to 16. A month before, a pig's head was left at the entrance of the same mosque during Ramadan.

See: The Globe and Mail News' entry, in: <https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/hateful-package-sent-to-quebec-city-mosque-before-muslim-cemetery-vote/article35729286/?ref=http://www.theglobeandmail.com&>, retrieved on 20.7.2017



**US: Discrimination against Muslims is increasing in U.S., Pew study finds**— Anti-Muslim discrimination was common and on the rise — and so, too, were expressions of support for Muslims, according to a new study of the Pew Research Center, as it released the results of a new survey of Muslims nationwide that highlighted a broad sense of anxiety and unease about their place in the United States and with a president who most consider unfriendly toward Muslims. A nationally representative sample of 1,001 Muslim adults were surveyed by telephone between January and May 2017, and overall results carried a six-point margin of sampling error. The report wrote: “Overall, Muslims in the United States perceive a lot of discrimination against their religious group, are leery of President Donald Trump and think their fellow Americans do not see Islam as part of mainstream US society.” The study also found that share of US Muslims who had experienced discriminatory treatment was trending upward, with 48 percent of respondents saying they were subjected to at least one discriminatory incident based on religion over the past year, compared with 40 percent a decade before. A large majority — 75 percent — said there was a lot of discrimination against Muslims in the United States. Nearly three-quarters said Trump was unfriendly toward Muslims, compared with just 4 percent who said that of President Barack Obama in 2011. About two-thirds said they don't like where the nation is headed. Most of the estimated 3.35 million Muslims living in the United States were immigrants or the children of immigrants; and nearly two-thirds of those surveyed said they think the American public did not consider Islam a part of mainstream society. The poll found that Trump was not the only source of mistrust. Six in 10 respondents said they think US media coverage of Islam and Muslims was unfair. About a third of Muslims said they had been treated with suspicion at least once over the past year, the highest in Pew surveys since 2007. Nearly 1 in 5 said they had been called offensive names, and a similar share have seen anti-Muslim graffiti in their communities. Six percent said they were physically threatened or attacked, identical to the share saying this in 2011. Those who appeared Muslim — either because of the way they look, dress or speak — were significantly more likely to experience discrimination for being Muslim, and women overall were more likely to report discrimination than men. A significant minority — one third — said they were at least somewhat worried that the government was tapping their phones because of their religion. The poll found that 30 percent said they were skeptical of law enforcement sting operations against suspected terrorists, thinking that authorities mostly arrested “people who were tricked and did not pose a real threat.”

See: The Washington Post News' entry, in: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/discrimination-against-muslims-is-increasing-in-us-pew-study-finds/2017/07/25/dfa52756-717a-11e7-9eac-d56bd5568db8\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.136b0f3d59aa](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/discrimination-against-muslims-is-increasing-in-us-pew-study-finds/2017/07/25/dfa52756-717a-11e7-9eac-d56bd5568db8_story.html?utm_term=.136b0f3d59aa), retrieved on 27.7.2017

**US: 92% of US Muslims are proud to be American, though most see 'a lot' of discrimination**— Ninety-two percent of Muslims in the US were proud to be American, even though 75 percent said there was a lot of discrimination against Muslims in the US. Nine-in-ten Muslims reported having a positive feeling about

living in the US, even though 75 percent believed it had become harder to be Muslim in the US in recent years. The survey found that Muslims felt that the main problems they faced in the US were negative media coverage about the religion (60 percent), misconceptions about Islam (9 percent) and President Trump's attitudes and/or policies towards Muslims (9 percent). The survey was conducted 23 January to 2 May, and 1,001 U.S. Muslim adults participated. Nearly 48 percent have experienced some type of discrimination. Researchers at the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) found that the number of hate groups specifically targeting Muslims in the U.S. has nearly tripled in the past year. SPLC reported that there were 34 hate groups in 2015 and the figure has risen to 101. The SPLC attributed the increase in hate groups in part to Trump's campaign rhetoric. However, despite the backlash Muslims had received from Trump's presidency, participants said they had experienced support in the past few months from non-Muslims.

See: Circa News' entry, in: <https://www.circa.com/story/2017/07/26/nation/us-muslims-survey-pew-research-center-finds-92-percent-proud-to-be-american>, retrieved on 27.7.2017

**US: 2017 Witnessed A 91% Increase In Anti-Muslim Hate Crimes**— The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) released a report on anti-Muslim hate crimes saying there had been an astounding 91 percent increase in Islamophobic hate crimes in the first six months of 2017. Anti-Muslim bias reports also increased by 24 percent compared to the first half of 2016. The report compared the toll with the second quarter of 2016, as there were 946 reported bias incidents out of which 451 cases “*contained an identifiable element of anti-Muslim bias.*” The most frequent type of incidents included harassment (16 percent), violent hate crimes (15 percent), FBI targeting victims (12 percent), intimidation (12 percent) and cases involving the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (8 percent). The study also revealed the crimes were provoked by a victim's ethnicity, the person being a Muslim or wearing a headscarf, their place of worship or their political opinions.

See: CarbonatedTV News' entry, in: <http://www.carbonated.tv/news/91-percent-increase-in-anti-muslim-hate-crimes-in-us-cair-video>, retrieved on 27.7.2017

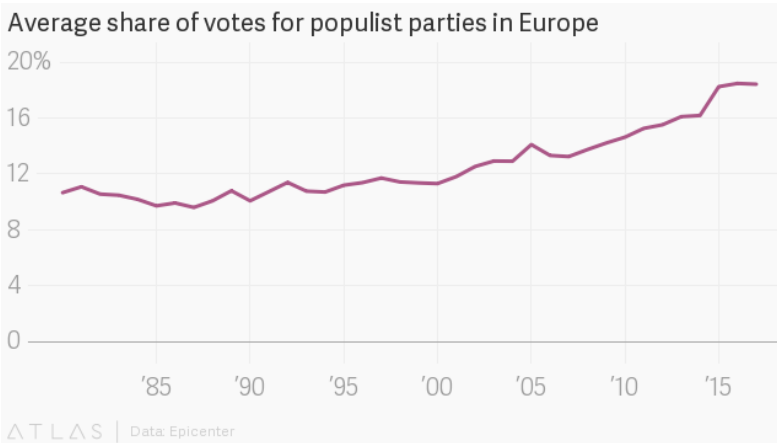
## **B. In Europe:**

**UK: Man who ripped off woman's veil while shouting "You f\*\*\*ing stupid Muslim" is jailed**— The man, Peter Scotter, targeted a 21-year-old woman, who described herself as a practising Muslim, outside a shopping centre in Sunderland on 3 July last year. It came just weeks after the Brexit vote, which coincided with a sharp increase in the number of racially or religiously aggravated crimes. After sticking his middle finger up at a photographer as he arrived at Newcastle Crown Court, Mr Scotter pleaded guilty to racially aggravated assault by beating. The court heard how the woman had been waiting with her nine-year-old son for her husband outside a jewellery shop at The Bridges shopping centre. Mr Scotter, from Roker in Sunderland, then walked towards her and pulled her niqab veil from her head really hard, before throwing it to the ground. After exposing the distraught woman's face, he shouted racist slurs at her, such as “*you're in our country now f\*\*\*ing get out*” and “*you f\*\*\*ing stupid Muslim*”. The victim's husband then came out of the shop and pushed Mr Scotter away in order to protect his wife, while a few members of the public also came to offer her assistance. Sentencing Scotter to fifteen months in prison, Judge Stephen Earl, said: “Comments like you have made cannot be accepted in our society.”

See: Independent.co.uk News' entry, in: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/man-peter-scotter-muslim-woman-veil-ripped-off-newcastle-crown-court-sentence-brexit-result-a7822286.html>, retrieved on 5.7.2017

**Europe: Populist, authoritarian leaders are still on the rise across Europe**— The world sighed with relief

when a number of European populists, including the Netherlands's Geert Wilders and France's Marine Le Pen, lost their elections this year. That relief might be short lived, as the long-term trends of populist support in Europe suggested that this authoritarian movement was not going away. One in five Europeans (a total of 55.8 million people) voted for a populist party in 2016 and 2017, according to a new study by the European Policy Information Center. The think tank analyzed electoral data in EU member states as well as Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, Serbia, and Montenegro and found the vote share for



authoritarian populist parties jumped from 10.6% in 1980 to 18.4% in 2017. The vote share for populist parties had overtaken support for liberalism in the last two decades. Over the same period, there had been a decline for support for mainstream ideologies, including of conservatism and Christian democracy (down 4.7 percentage points), while support for social Democracy had decreased by 4.1 percentage points. The 2009 recession and the ongoing refugee crisis gave nationalist-authoritarian-populist parties their biggest boost, with many receiving their best electoral result during the last year. Among a number of examples of right-wing populist parties in the report were



Le Pen's Front National, Wilders Party for Freedom, and the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP).  
 See: Quartz Media News' entry, in: <https://qz.com/1027518/populist-authoritarian-leaders-are-still-on-the-rise-across-europe/>, retrieved on 13.7.2017

**Belgium: Top Europe court upholds ban on full-face veil in Belgium**— the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) upheld a Belgian ban on wearing the full-face niqab veil in public. The veil had been a controversial issue across Europe, with some countries banning the garment in public in the name of safety and rights groups arguing that this amounts to a violation of civil liberties. The court ruled that the ban sought to guarantee social cohesion, the protection of the rights and freedoms of others and that it was "necessary in a democratic society. Belgian banned the wearing of the full-face veil in June 2011. It prohibited appearing in public with a face masked or hidden, in whole or in part, in such a way as to be unidentifiable. Violations could result in fines and up to seven days in jail.

See: Inquirer.Net News' entry, in: <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/913188/top-europe-court-upholds-ban-on-full-face-veil-in-belgium>, retrieved on 13.7.2017

**C. In the Rest of the World**

**Australia: Islamophobia In Australia: Pig's Head Outside Muslim College In Brisbane, CCTV Footage Captures 'Hate Crime'**— Queensland Police Service had launched an investigation after a severed pig's head was found in front of an Islamic school in Brisbane. The pig's head was found inside a backpack with a swastika in front of the Islamic college which was owned by Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, based in Sydney. The authorities were particularly worried because the people been targeted in the apparent hate crime were young children, as the school consisted of over a thousand pupils, the youngest of 5-year-olds. Two men who were believed to be responsible for this act were captured on school cameras.

See: Inquisitr News' entry, in: <https://www.inquisitr.com/4376914/islamophobia-in-australia-pigs-head-outside-muslim-college-in-brisbane-cctv-footage-captures-hate-crime/>, retrieved on 20.7.2017

**Australia: Rotting pig's head dumped at Islamic school gate in Brisbane**— Staff at the Islamic College of Brisbane discovered a bag and rotting meat hours before more than 1,000 students were to pass through the school's entrance. Police responded after being notified, and school authorities provided CCTV footage of the incident, which allegedly showed two men in a Subaru WRX vehicle dropping the items. The car's number plate was also captured in the video footage. The Islamic College of Brisbane was among those schools owned by the Sydney-based Australian Federation of Islamic Councils.

See: Arab News News' entry, in: <http://www.arabnews.com/node/1131656/world>, retrieved on 20.7.2017

**South Korea: Korean comedy-drama sparks uproar for 'disrespecting Islam'**— Korean comedy-drama Man had caused an uproar for misusing Islamic values and portraying a false image of Muslims in its scenes. The drama, which had been broadcasted on MBC TV since July 19, told the story of Jang Dal-goo who traveled to a fictional country in the Middle East, gets rich, received a title and then became a citizen under the name of Saeed Fahd Ali. He later returned to Korea to reunite with his long-lost daughter and her husband. The actor appeared as a stereotypical Arab man by wearing thawb, headscarf and black robe. In one scene, Saeed Fahd Ali was greeted by women wearing revealing swimsuits and donning hijab near a swimming pool. There was also a scene in which Saeed Fahd Ali drank wine for breakfast. Also, in one of the drama's promotional posters, Saeed Fahd Ali posed in front of an open book that looks like a Quran, with his foot raised beside the book.

See: The Jakarta Post News' entry, in: <http://www.thejakartapost.com/life/2017/07/23/korean-comedy-drama-sparks-uproar-for-disrespecting-islam.html>, retrieved on 24.7.2017

**Australia: 'Islam is a cancer that will destroy society': Sydney baptist pastor claims 'Muslims are culturally incompatible with western values'**— A Baptist pastor who claimed Islam was 'a cancer that will destroy society' during a recorded sermon had come under fire. Footage of Keith Piper, pastor for Liberty Baptist Church in north-west of Sydney, had been submitted to the education department after it was revealed the church provided scripture to government schools. Liberty Baptist Church provided scripture lessons for special religion education (SRE) - an optional 30-minute weekly class offered to students by government schools when a teacher was available. In the 40-minute video, which was recorded in April 2016 and uploaded to YouTube, Mr Piper repeatedly condemned Islam and the Koran. He told the crowd "*Islamism is a cancer. We must destroy the cancer or the cancer will destroy out society and our freedoms and everything we hold dear. Islam and Koran-practising Muslims were culturally incompatible with western and Christian values.*" Piper went on to claim he was not anti-Muslim but was anti-Koran. He said: "*The Koran is the evil rotten, rotten cause of every Islamic terrorist action in the whole world.*"

See: Dailymail.co.uk News' entry, in: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4726910/Keith-Piper-Sydney-pastor-Islam-cancer-destroy.html>, retrieved on 26.7.2017

## **POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS:**

### **A. In the United States and Canada:**

**US: Community Support Builds for Bloomington Mosque**— Community support continued to build for an Islamic center after a bombing Governor Mark Dayton branded a terrorist attack. Members of Pax Christi Catholic Church in Eden Prairie delivered in a basket more than 200 handwritten notes of support to the Dar Al-Farooq Center. Other signs of support arrived through the day, and a crowdfunding campaign had raised nearly \$30,000 to help pay for repairs at the Islamic Center.

See: Kare11.com News' entry, in: <http://www.kare11.com/mobile/article/news/community-support-builds-for-bloomington-mosque/462396013>, retrieved on 9.7.2017

**US: Boston Launches Anti-Islamophobia Poster Campaign**— The city of Boston was launching a poster campaign to fight Islamophobia by encouraging bystanders to intervene, in a non-confrontational way, if

they witnessed anti-Muslim harassment. The city began installing 50 posters around the city with advice on what to do if someone saw Islamophobic behavior. The posters recommended sitting by a victim of harassment and talking with them about a neutral subject while ignoring the harasser. A resource said: "*The technique is called 'non-complementary behavior,' and is intended to disempower an aggressive person by countering their expectations.*" A similar campaign was also underway in San Francisco.

See: WBGO News' entry, in: <http://wbgo.org/post/boston-launches-anti-islamophobia-poster-campaign#stream/0>, retrieved on 19.7.2017

**Canada: Canadian man charged with hate crime over anti-Muslim comments online**— Kevin J. Johnston was charged with committing a hate crime. Johnston was charged following a five-month investigation after he posted a YouTube video in March offering a \$1,000 reward for a recording of Muslim students at Friday prayers "spewing hate speech. He later raised the amount to \$2,500 before his YouTube account was suspended. The video caused school officials to issue a memo to be extra vigilant about recordings and it resulted in concern among Muslim families. On his website Johnston also attacked Mississauga MP Iqra Khalid, who introduced a successful anti-Islamophobia motion in the Canadian House of Commons. The rise of the anti-Islamic right in the West was something that Canada was experiencing. The Canadian statistical agency, Statistics Canada, found that there was an increase of reported hate crimes against Muslims in Canada from 2014 to 2015, from 99 incidents to 159, an increase of 60 percent. The far-right groups in Canada had taken a firm stand against immigration, seizing on problems arising from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's welcoming of 40,000 Syrian refugees. The membership numbers of far-right groups in Canada were steadily increasing. Much like Geert Wilders in The Netherlands, they were critical of Islam, saying that it did not comply with Western values, oppressed women and dictated life to an illiberal extent. While there were currently no viable political parties in Canada which threaten the establishment like the Front National or Wilders' Party for Freedom, they did have some public and online presence.

See: Daily Sabah News' entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/duplicate/2017/07/26/canadian-man-charged-with-hate-crime-over-anti-muslim-comments-online>, retrieved on 26.7.2017

## **B. In Europe:**

**Germany: Germany warn social-media companies on 'hate speech'**—The German parliament has voted in favour of a law that includes the provision to levy fines of up to €50 million from popular companies such as Facebook and YouTube if they failed to remove hateful posts in a timely manner. The law, which was due to come into effect in October 2017, would affect sites with more than 2 million users nationally. It required internet giants to find and delete posts containing "evidently unlawful" abusive material within 24 hours to avoid being hit with a penalty.

See: WorldNetDaily News' entry, in: <http://www.wnd.com/2017/06/germany-warns-social-media-companies-on-hate-speech/>, retrieved on 1.7.2017

**UK: Men charged with hate offences on Nottingham mosque** — Two men, Jamie Mullins and Mathew Sarsfield, had been charged with religiously aggravated public order offences at a Nottingham mosque. Both appeared at Nottingham Magistrates' Court on 1 August 2017. A Police Spokesman said "We are committed to working with all of our communities and support them in every way possible."

See: NottsTV News' entry, in: <https://nottstv.com/men-charged-hate-offences-nottingham-mosque/>, retrieved on 4.7.2017

## **ON DIALOGUE:**

**Hungaria: Hungarian Pastor Fights Intolerance, No Matter the Cost**— Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orbán and his ruling Fidesz Party were scapegoating migrants and other minorities—which included cracking down on NGOs, threatening university, and exerting control over the media, etc., but some faith leaders were defying government attacks on marginalized communities. Catholic Priest Father Zoltan Nemeth was among those who take risk by provided refugees shelter from the winter cold in a church building, a move that had attracted local condemnation and international attention. The church functioned as a multipurpose social service center in the troubled neighborhood, offering language classes for refugees, free counseling for

homeless people, a base for social workers, and accommodations for those who would struggle to find a stable home elsewhere.

See: Huffington Post News' entry, in: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hungarian-pastor-fights-intolerance-no-matter-the-us\\_5963e290e4b09be68c0054b9](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/hungarian-pastor-fights-intolerance-no-matter-the-us_5963e290e4b09be68c0054b9), retrieved on 11.7.2017

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Compiled by:

*Dr. Dodik Ariyanto*

Dialogue & Outreach Department

Email: [dariyanto@oic-oci.org](mailto:dariyanto@oic-oci.org)