



MANIFESTATIONS OF ISLAMOPHOBIA:

A. In the United States and Canada:

US: Minnesota Republicans under fire for saying Muslims are infiltrating the party— Two Minnesota Republican state lawmakers and a local GOP official were facing scrutiny after they reportedly shared a Facebook post accusing Muslims of preparing to “infiltrate” the party’s caucuses this month. State Reps. Kathy Lohmer and Cindy Pugh, shared the post created by Dave Sina, chairman of the Fourth Congressional District GOP. In the post, Sina said a friend of his had attended a caucus training session held at a mosque by the Muslim American Society. MAS was a nonpartisan organization that promoted civic engagement among American Muslims with local chapters across the US. Sina claimed that Muslims were trying to “infiltrate our republican caucuses on Feb. 6” and that “they didn’t talk about the general election but I am sure they are ahead of us in that as well.” The local party chair played to a sense of hysteria that American Muslims were, and would always be, foreigners who want political influence only to harm the country.

See: The Huffington Post News’ entry, in: https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/minnesota-republicans-muslims-caucuses_us_5a7217b9e4b05253b2752e90, retrieved on 3.1.2018

US: Steve Bannon steps down from Breitbart News— Stephen Bannon had stepped down as executive chairman of Breitbart News, the company announced in an online post and a source close to Bannon confirmed. The former White House chief strategist faced mounting pressure to resign from Breitbart after he was quoted disparaging President Donald Trump and his family in a new book “Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House” by Michael Wolff. The Breitbart board started discussing his future at the company after the comments were revealed last week and continued debating it over the weekend, as media told.

See: ABC Columbia News’ entry, in: <http://www.abccolumbia.com/2018/01/10/steve-bannon-steps-breitbart-news/>, retrieved on 11.1.2018

US: Minnesota gubernatorial candidate denounces Islam as “incompatible” with the U.S. Constitution— Phillip Parrish, a Republican candidate for governor in Minnesota told a Muslim community leader that “Islam is ultimately not a faith,” and refused to meet with her if she was a “practicing Islamist.” Regina Mustafa, founder of the Minnesota-based Community Interfaith Dialogue on Islam, reached out to Parrish after learning he attended a talk by Usama Dakdok called “Revealing the Truth about ISIS.” Dakdok was one of a number of anti-Muslim speakers who had created a cottage industry touring the country to malign Islam as an inherently violent religion. In his Minnesota presentation, Dakdok said ISIS was the “true representation of Islam.” Mustafa sent Parrish an email, offering to meet with him face-to-face. “Since you have attended this talk about my faith,” she wrote, “I figured you would also like to hear from a person who actually practices Islam.” In Parrish’s reply, he condemned Islam as fundamentally incompatible with US law. First, he claimed to have, “a very unusual in-depth level of training, experience, and understanding regarding multiple faiths and the practice of Islam,” which he had suggested in public interviews was related to his time in the US Naval Reserve working in intelligence. He continued, “I separate Islam from the word faith because faith takes belief and Islam requires only submission. I will not participate in any faith dialog because Islam is ultimately not a faith.” Parrish demanded Mustafa “publicly denounce Sharia

and swear to adhere to, protect, comply with, accept, and defend the United States Constitution.” He suggested that as a practicing Muslim — or as he put it, “practicing Islamist” — she would be unable to do so. He also wrote, “Islam, Sharia, and the Quran are the antithesis of the US Constitution.”

See: SPL Center News’ entry, in <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2018/01/16/minnesota-gubernatorial-candidate-denounces-islam-incompatible-us-constitution>, retrieved on 17.1.2018

US: White Supremacists Accounted for Most Extremist Murders in 2017— A report conducted by the Anti-Defamation League showed that the white supremacist groups account for the highest number of extremist-related killings in the United States. The report said that 34 people were killed by domestic extremists in 2017, mostly by right-wing extremists who accounted for 20 of the 34 deaths. Eighteen (18)



of those 20 were by white supremacists making it the fifth deadliest year for extremist violence since 1970. Anti-Defamation League CEO Jonathan Greenblatt in a statement said: “Extremism in any form is an issue...foreign born, politically minded extremism or racially focused extremism. What the data tells us in the past 10 plus years is it is far right-wing extremism, white supremacists and their ilk that are responsible for more extremist-related murders than any other group.” Greenblatt also pointed to the current national climate in the wake of President Trump taking office as emboldening the actions of white supremacists, in adding: “Concretely, it

confirms extremists feel emboldened in the current environment. Right-wing extremists in particular were responsible for nearly 60% of extremist-related fatalities last year. The data lays bare that this is not an exaggeration, as some would try to paint it.”

See: Madison365 News’ entry, in: <http://madison365.com/white-supremacists-accounted-extremist-murders-2017/>, retrieved on 21.1.2018

Canada: Maine town manager under fire for promoting white separatism, criticizing Islam— A town manager of a small northern Maine community was under fire for promoting white separatist views and making comments critical of Islam. Thomas Kawczynski said he was the leader of New Albion, a racial segregationist movement that wanted to preserve the white majority of northern New England and Atlantic Canada. He told Media he opposed Islam because it was “not compatible with Western culture.” The Bangor Daily News reported that Kawczynski frequently shared his political views on the far-right website GAB and his personal Facebook page. The media quoted Kawczynski as calling Islam “the scourge of Western civilization.” The man was quoted saying: “I would say unequivocally that I see Islam as fundamentally incompatible with Western civilization.”

See: FOXNews News’ entry, in: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2018/01/20/maine-town-manager-under-fire-for-promoting-white-separatism-criticizing-islam.html>, retrieved on 21.1.2018

US: Mom suing Chatham schools for 'promoting' Islam in middle school— Libby Hilsenrath, one student's mother, filed a complaint and request for jury trial in U.S. District Court in Newark, according to which Chatham schools were “promoting” Islam and use materials that “call to the children” to convert. The complaint alleged her son was required to accept lessons and homework assignments in his seventh-grade World Cultures and Geography class that contained religious teachings of Islam presented, not as beliefs, but as facts. Hilsenrath particularly objected to an assignment to view what she described as a conversion video posted on YouTube that she claimed was “an explicit and direct call to the children for conversion to the religion of Islam.” This conversion video, replete with biased, chastising statements encouraging the students at Chatham Middle School, including (her son), to follow the Quran and become Muslim, concluded with a direct and explicit call for the children to convert to Islam.”

See: Daily Record News’ entry, in: <https://www.dailyrecord.com/story/news/2018/01/26/mom-suing-chatham-schools-promoting-islam-middle-school/1068492001/>, retrieved on 26.1.2018

US: Parents outraged by schoolwork saying Jews, Christians and Muslims worship same God— A homework assignment given to sixth-grade students in Illinois asserted that Christians, Muslims and Jews

believed in the same God; and when an Elgin Area School District board member caught wind of it, she harshly criticized the assignment. The issue boiled over as dozens of people attended a school board meeting to express their opinions on the subject. Jeanette Ward sparked the outcry on social media. She wrote that the assignment was “utterly incorrect and false on many levels.” Ward had also taken a photo of the assignment and shared it to her Facebook page, where her followers denounced the message and the use of religion in schoolwork. She told The Star that the assignment presented a “godless view” of the world. Many religious scholars and leaders, including Pope Francis, believe there is just one God, but many others hold the opposite view.

See: The Kansas City News’ entry, in: <http://www.kansascity.com/news/nation-world/article196627819.html>, retrieved on 26.1.2018

US: Catholics, Muslims join to pray, eat together— A show of unity was expressed between the Catholic and Muslim communities in January 2018 when they broke bread and prayed in the parish hall at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church in Chino. The two faith groups joined hands in a prayer circle around the perimeter of the hall and sang the hymn version of the Prayer of St. Francis. Holding a rosary, Pastor Michael Miller opened the event by welcoming Muslims from the Baitul Hameed Mosque in Chino and asking them to conduct their evening prayers on rugs laid out in the parish hall. Fr. Miller said: “*We are happy to host a dinner to honor you and your work here in building up a more just and merciful Chino and California Inland Empire,*” while Imam Irshad Malhi chanted verses of the Koran while men and women prostrated themselves in prayer with their foreheads to the ground. Videos were presented by each faith group, including ‘The Sultan and the Saint’ showing a dramatic meeting between St. Francis of Assisi and Sultan Malik al-Kamil. At the occasion, Catholics and Muslims enjoyed a hearty chicken meal and mounds of dessert while discussing faith and every day events.

See: Champion Newspaper News’ entry, in: http://www.championnewspapers.com/news/article_70868076-02da-11e8-b665-37d8d6c6c626.html, retrieved on 28.1.2018

Canada: Anti-Islamophobia motion still garners opposition in Edmonton— Around 40 people gathered in front of the Alberta Legislature in January 2018 to voice their displeasure with M-103, a federal motion that condemns Islamophobia. The rally was held on the one-year anniversary of a Quebec City mosque attack, where six men were gunned down. The demonstrators wanted to tell Ottawa that the motion, which was non-binding, was encroaching on their right to free speech. Organizer Ninna Poulsen said the day of the protest was not chosen to coincide with the anniversary of the Quebec City mosque shooting, but marked the beginning of the next session of Parliament. A vocal counter-protester disrupted the gathering at times, but the crowd remained calm. Several police officers were on hand to diffuse any tensions.

See: CBCNews News’ entry, in: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/motion-103-islamophobia-protest-1.4509452>, retrieved on 30.1.2018

US: New Scrutiny Coming for Refugees from 11 “High-Risk” Nations— The Trump administration said in January 2018 that it was resuming the admission of refugees from 11 countries with additional screening that it said would increase security. In October 2017, after a pause in admissions, the administration began accepting new refugees except for those from the 11 countries, citing the need for a 90-day security review. Officials did not name the countries, but they were widely reported to be Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Mali, North Korea, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. Those countries had accounted for more than 40 percent of all refugee admissions in recent years. President Trump set a ceiling of 45,000 refugee admissions for the fiscal year, compared with the 85,000 set by President Barack Obama the year before amid an unabated refugee crisis worldwide, including civil war in Syria and conflict in other countries.

See: The New York Times News’ entry, in: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/29/us/muslim-refugees-trump.html>, retrieved on 30.1.2018

Canada: Police probe hate posters on Bells Corners mosque— Police said they were called in to investigate “white power” posters discovered in January at an Old Richmond Road mosque. Witnesses described the posters as containing racist slogans and portraits of Adolf Hitler. The mosque was located at Seyton Drive, near the spot where 17-year-old Nick Hickey was struck and killed two weeks before. A week later, shots were fired a block away. The incident followed a weekend of national memorials

commemorating the one-year anniversary of the Quebec City mosque shooting where six men were killed, and more than a dozen wounded by a lone gunman.

See: Ottawa Citizen News' entry, in: <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/police-probe-graffiti-at-bells-corners-mosque>, retrieved on 31.1.2018

B. In Europe:

Germany: German MP investigated over anti-Muslim tweets— Deputy leader of Germany's far-right AfD Party was facing investigation after she made anti-Muslim remarks on Twitter on new year's eve. Beatrix von Storch accused Cologne police of appeasing "barbaric, gang-raping Muslim hordes of men" after officers tweeted a new year greeting in Arabic, as reported by the media. Twitter removed the tweet and suspended von Storch's account for 12 hours for breaching the site's rules on hate speech. Von Storch's tweets came as Germany began to enforce strict new rules governing hate speech on social media, which could result in sites like Twitter and Facebook being fined up to £44m if they fail to remove "obviously illegal" material within 24 hours of being notified.



See: The Week News' entry, in: <http://www.theweek.co.uk/germany/90655/german-mp-investigat-ed-over-anti-muslim-tweets>, retrieved on 3.1.2018

Netherlands: Anti-Islam leader plans apology to mosque; Said he "prefers to see it burn"— PVV's leader in Utrecht, Henk van Deún, was planning to meet the leadership of the Ulu mosque in order to apologize for his statements made on Monday evening. On a radio interview he said he would "rather see the mosque burn down" in reply to a fellow local politician saying it should be a symbol for the city. Later on the talk radio broadcast Van Deún refused to withdraw his statement, and on Twitter he would only acknowledge his words "had been cumbersome". Now, he was reportedly trying to apologize directly to the Ulu mosque for his word usage. The Utrecht's PVV leader was still convinced that the mosque should be shut down "But it has to be done without any violence. We want to do it through a legal procedure," he said. According to him, Ulu management had shown a positive response to his request for dialogue.

See: NLTimes News' entry, in: <https://nltimes.nl/2018/01/10/anti-islam-leader-plans-apology-mosque-said-prefers-see-burn>, retrieved on 11.1.2018

Austria: Austria's far-right interior minister provokes outrage with call to 'concentrate' migrants— Herbert Kickl told a news conference that he wanted "basic services centres, suitable infrastructure that enables us to concentrate people in the asylum process in one place". The comments quickly provoked outrage, with Alexander Pollak, head of migrants charity SOS Mitmensch, calling it a deliberate provocation and left-wing essayist Robert Misik saying "a Rubicon has been crossed". The opposition Green Party warned against the language of National Socialism creeping into way of thinking and feeling, while the NEOS party said Kickl must apologise for his deliberate provocation. Kickl, became interior minister recently when his Freedom Party (FPÖ) formed a coalition with the centre-right following elections in October 2017, back-peddled in saying he did not intend to provoke anyone. He said the government would implement a very strict asylum policy in response to what he said was a rise in crimes committed by foreigners last year. The head of the FPÖ, Vice-Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache, also caused unease earlier by appearing to suggest that asylum-seekers should be kept in empty military barracks and subject to an evening curfew.

See: The Local News' entry, in: <https://www.thelocal.at/20180112/austrias-interior-minister-provokes-outrage-with-call-to-concentrate-migrants>, retrieved on 13.1.2018

Sweden: Stockholm mosque hit with Nazi graffiti— Unknown vandals spray-painted swastikas on the facade of a central Stockholm mosque in January 2018. The Nazi graffiti was seen scrawled across the front doors of the blue paint in photos the mosque's imam, Mahmoud Khalfi, said that the mosque had been hit with before, with the first told Media that the vandalism was extensive. The mosque had been hit with before, with the first told Media that the requested permission to that the request was Sweden had seen a recent years including a demonstrations by Nazi including Stockholm and Gothenburg.



According to him, the mosque 22 times during 2017. The Nazi-specific vandalism twice incident occurring in 2014. He mosque had repeatedly install security cameras but denied over privacy concerns. surge in neo-Nazi activity in number of headline-grabbing supporters in Swedish cities repeated demos in

See: The Local News' entry, in: <https://www.thelocal.se/20180120/stockholm-mosque-hit-with-nazi-graffiti>, retrieved on 21.1.2018

C. In the Rest of the World

Australia: Far-right racists movie Muslims in hijabs at Geelong park— Far-right racists stalked and secretly filmed Muslim women before posting the footage online and branding them 'garbage bags' because they wore hijabs. The video was posted on their closed Infidel Brotherhood Victoria page showing groups of people enjoying a picnic on the waterfront at Geelong, Australia, while a group member had written: 'Exterminate.' The threatening social media posts had been referred to the National Security Hotline.

See: Kaplan Herald News' entry, in: <https://kaplanherald.com/>, retrieved on 6.1.2018

China: China bans children in predominantly Muslim county from attending religious events during winter holidays— A predominantly Muslim county in western China had banned children from attending religious events during the winter holidays, as authorities step up control of religious education. School pupils in Linxia county in Gansu province, home to many members of the Muslim Hui ethnic minority, were prohibited from entering religious buildings over their break, as the district education bureau said in a notice posted online. Students must not read scriptures in classes or religious buildings, said the notice, which also ordered pupils and teachers to work to strengthen political ideology and propaganda. New regulations on religious affairs were announced by China in October 2017 and due to take effect in February 2018, aim to increase oversight of religious education and provide for greater regulation of religious activities. Chinese law officially granted religious freedom for all but regulations on education and protection of minors also said religion could not be used to hinder state education or to coerce children to believe.



See: Independent News' entry, in: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/china-children-religious-events-ban-muslim-county-linxia-winter-holidays-gansu-province-education-a8163896.html>, retrieved on 18.1.2018

Myanmar: Myanmar finalizes preparations for repatriation of Rohingya Muslims— Burmese State Media in January 2018 Myanmar was making final preparations to take back the first batch of Rohingya Muslims who had fled conflict in troubled Rakhine state, despite growing doubts about the plan among refugees and in the United Nations. Rakhine State Chief Minister Nyi Pu insisted on completion of the finishing touches on buildings, medical clinics and sanitation infrastructures during a visit to repatriation camps in the state, as was reported by the Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper. It published a photo of his delegation standing by a long, wooden house that would be used to house returnees at the camp near the town of Maungtaw. A wire-mesh fence topped by barbed wire appeared in the background of the photo. Over 655,500 Muslim Rohingya fled to Bangladesh after the Myanmar military cracked down in the northern part of Rakhine in response to militant attacks on security forces in August 2017. The United Nations described the operation as ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya, which Myanmar denied. It was also reported that Myanmar would start receiving Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh at two reception centres and the temporary camp near Maungtaw starting in January and continuing over the coming two years, under an agreement to be signed the two countries.



See: Hindustan Times News' entry, in: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/myanmar-finalises-preparations-for-repatriation-of-rohingya-muslims/story-IaJRgm90dbdrEe3FoixxsK.html>, retrieved on 21.1.2018

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS:

A. In the United States and Canada:

US: 'Fighting Hate One Halal Taco at a Time:' Local Muslims and Latinos Join Together to Promote Unity — A unique movement had brought two different communities together, as Muslims and Latinos broke bread in Sacramento to promote love and unity in a time where people from both sides feel like targets. "Taco Trucks at Every Mosque" made a stop at the Salam Islamic Center in January 2018 to serve halal tacos in an effort to encourage Muslims and Latinos to embrace their identities. A participant from the crowd said: "*When we're fighting justice we need to for all of our rights, especially our civil rights. We are fighting hate one halal taco at a time, tacos being the symbol of love and the symbol of service to our community.*"

See: FOX40 News' entry, in: <http://fox40.com/2018/01/19/fighting-hate-one-halal-taco-at-a-time-local-muslims-and-latinos-join-together-to-promote-unity/>, retrieved on 20.1.2018

US: Trump says he is ready to apologize for anti-Muslim videos— President Donald Trump said in a British television interview in January that he was ready to apologize for retweeting anti-Muslim videos from a far-right British group, and he reiterated his assertions that he was not a racist In the interview with the 'Good Morning Britain' program, Trump was pushed by Piers Morgan, the presenter, about his November retweet of three videos by the group called Britain First that caused outrage in Britain and brought a rare rebuke from Prime Minister Theresa May. Trump said he was unaware of the group's politics and that the tweets showed his concern over the threat of radical Islamic terrorism. Trump was quoted saying "*If you are telling me they're horrible people, horrible, racist people, I would certainly apologize if you'd like me to do that.*"

See: BostonGlobe News' entry, in: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/news/politics/2018/01/26/trump-ready-apologize-for-retweeting-anti-muslim-videos/ApzTQalQPnxrHw63NUBCnl/story.html>, retrieved on 29.1.2018

US: Donald Trump: I love Muslims and they love me— Trump was condemned for retweeting comments from far-right group Britain First's leader Jayda Fransen in November 2017. They showed what the group

claimed was a Muslim man destroying a statue of the Virgin Mary, and a teen being hurled to his death from a roof by an 'Islamic hate mob'. Trump now insisted that was a misunderstanding on his part, and insisted Muslims back his tough security policies. He said: "*I had good support from Muslims during my presidential run, and I think I have good support now.*"

See: Metro News' entry, in: <http://metro.co.uk/2018/01/28/donald-trump-love-muslims-love-7268005/>, retrieved on 29.1.2018

Canada: Trudeau pledges to fight Islamophobia one year after mosque shooting— Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said that Islamophobia and racism were to blame for the murders of six men in a Quebec mosque last year and could never have a place in the country. Trudeau made the assertion just hours before he was to attend a vigil in Quebec City to mark one year since a gunman killed six and injured 19 others when he fired into the Islamic cultural centre during evening prayers. Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard, along with opposition leaders, were also there to commemorate the grim anniversary. In speech in the House of Commons earlier that day, Trudeau called on all MPs to stand against Islamophobia. He said: "We owe it to (the victims) to speak up and stand tall and explicitly against Islamophobia and discrimination in all its forms." His call to action received just tepid applause, conjuring up memories of the heated debate about the use of the term Islamophobia which took off after Liberal MP Iqra Khalid introduced a 2016 motion which also called on parliamentarians to condemn Islamophobia and all forms of discrimination and have a committee study how to combat it.

See: Ottawa Citizen News' entry, in: <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/trudeau-pledges-to-fight-islamophobia-one-year-after-mosque-shooting>, retrieved on 30.1.2018

B. In Europe:

Germany: Germany's new social media hate speech law is now being enforced— Germany had passed a sweeping anti-hate speech law requiring websites to promptly investigate reports of posts illegal under German law and delete them. On January 1st, 2018, the grace period before that law would begin being enforced by authorities expired. Companies affected by the Network Enforcement Act (NetzDG) included Facebook, Twitter, Google, YouTube, Snapchat, and Instagram, while professional networks like LinkedIn and Xing were expressly excluded as were messaging services like WhatsApp. Germany has strict laws prohibiting content like neo-Nazi propaganda, swastikas, and Holocaust denial, and NetzDG would require the sites in question to investigate user reports of such postings, delete most within 24 hours, and act on more complicated cases within a week. The German parliament originally passed the law in late June 2017 and it went into force in October 2017, but legislators gave sites three months to put together internal systems to remove the banned content.

See: Gizmodo News' entry, in: <https://gizmodo.com/germanys-new-social-media-hate-speech-law-is-now-being-1821697245>, retrieved on 2.1.2018

Greece: Twitter blocks account of Greece's far-right Golden Dawn party— Twitter had suspended the account of Greece's far-right Golden Dawn party amid a push to combat white supremacist and other hateful groups operating on the microblogging site. The move came two weeks after Twitter announced it had broadened its "hateful conduct policy" to permanently suspend any account that displays "violent threats, multiple slurs, epithets, racist or sexist tropes, incites fear or reduces someone to less than human." In a statement, Golden Dawn slammed the decision, saying the ban was orchestrated by the entangled news media and the corrupt political power which was controlled by the new world order. The party said it had sent a tough message of complaint to the company, arguing that disabling its account constituted a brutal undemocratic act that violates political rights as well as the individual rights of half a million Greek Golden Dawn voters who were excluded from being informed about their party's positions.

See: EuroNews News' entry, in: <http://www.euronews.com/2018/01/05/twitter-blocks-account-of-greece-s-far-right-golden-dawn-party>, retrieved on 6.1.2018

Austria: Austrians demonstrate against far-right coalition— More than 20,000 people rallied in January in Vienna against Austria's new conservative-far right coalition over its hardline stances on immigration and social policy. Marchers descended on a central district housing several ministries to make known the views of a protesters' "New Year welcome committee" for the administration of Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, who became the world's youngest leader. While police said 20,000 people marched, organisers claimed as many as 60,000 took to the streets to protest against the inclusion in the government of the anti-immigrant Freedom Party (FPÖ), which held six cabinet portfolios, including that of the vice-chancellor, party leader Heinz-Christian Strache. People of all ages, including families, answered the call of leftist and anti-racist groups, marching in a long procession through the centre of the Austrian capital. The march came to an end at the former imperial Hofburg palace, where crowds gathered, illuminating the darkness with the light of thousands of smartphones.



See: The Local News' entry, in: <https://www.thelocal.at/20180114/austrians-demonstrate-against-far-right-coalition>, retrieved on 15.1.2018

UK: Far-right activist charged over rally 'hate speech'— Paul Rimmer, a far-right activist, appeared in court charged with inciting hatred during a speech at a Britain First-linked rally. He faced two charges of using threatening, abusive, insulting words or behaviour at the Northern Ireland Against Terrorism rally outside Belfast City Hall in August 2016. Mr Rimmer was the third person charged in connection with the demonstration. The others were Paul Golding, the leader of Britain First, and Jayda Fransen, its deputy leader.

See: The Times News' entry, in: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/ireland/far-right-activist-charged-over-rally-hate-speech-2nxvpa5f0>, retrieved on 19.1.2018

UK: London School Reverses Hijab Ban Amid Accusations of Islamophobia— Saint Stephens Primary School in London's east-end reversed its ban on young children fasting and wearing Islamic veils. In response to the rule, Islamist advocacy group Muslim Engagement and Development started a public campaign accusing the school of intolerance. The campaign gained widespread support from London's Islamic community and left-wing policymakers. The ban was only enforced for one week.

See: OAN News' entry, in: <http://www.oann.com/london-school-reverses-hijab-ban-amid-accusations-of-islamophobia/>, retrieved on 23.1.2018

Germany: Merkel condemns the rise of right-wing populism as a 'poison' and declares there is too much 'national egotism' as she makes veiled swipe at Trump— German Chancellor Angela Merkel described the rise of right-wing populism in Europe as 'a poison'. Merkel, speaking at the economic forum in Davos, Switzerland, said the problem stemmed from unresolved issues in Europe and she was trying to get it 'under control'. In Germany's case she pointed to the bailout of Greece during the financial crisis and the influx of migrants in 2015 as the drivers of right-wing support. Both events happened while she was leader of the country. Her comments come after the far-right AfD party won its first ever parliamentary seats at the last German election, which left Merkel struggling to form a government. She now entered formal negotiations with her old partners the SPD, but no deal had been hashed out more than four months after voters went to the ballot boxes. Merkel also said there was too much 'national egoism' in politics and that leaders needed closer cooperation to face modern challenges.

See: DailyMail News' entry, in: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5307603/Merkel-says-rise-right-wing-populism-poison.html>, retrieved on 25.1.2018

UK: Britain First deputy leader Jayda Fransen 'called Muslims rapists and b***s' in 'aggressive' clash, court hears**— Britain First's deputy leader Jayda Fransen called Muslims "bastards" and "rapists" in an aggressive clash, a court heard in January 2018. Fransen was standing trial alongside the leader of the far-right group, Paul Golding, 36, accused of religiously-aggravated harassment. They were arrested in May 2017 as part of an investigation into the distribution of leaflets and online videos which were posted during a trial at Canterbury Crown Court.

See: The Mirror News' entry, in: <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/britain-first-deputy-leader-jayda-11934336>, retrieved on 30.1.2018

ON BURQA AND VEIL RELATED ISSUES:

Switzerland: 76% of Swiss Citizens Support Burqa Ban: Survey— The initiative "Yes to a ban on face coverings" garnered more than the required 100,000 signatures last September 2017 to put the decision to a popular vote. A study revealed that 76 percent of Swiss people support the burqa ban; 20 percent disagreed, and three percent had 'no view' on the issue; The Swiss government had publicly opposed the idea; A vote was unlikely to take place before 2019, and; Three in four people in Switzerland supported an initiative to ban all face coverings in public - which would effectively ban the burqa. The survey of 1,167 people was conducted by two Swiss Sunday papers, found 76 percent of those spoken to were in favor of the initiative. This was compared with 20 percent who disagreed and three percent who said they had 'no view' on the issue. This put the initiative on the ballot under Switzerland's system of direct democracy, which let voters decide major policy issues. The measure was proposed by a group including MPs from the nationalist Swiss People's Party that was also behind a ban on building minarets in Switzerland. The group called for it to be made illegal for anyone to cover their face in public. Some exceptions include local custom, the weather and health and safety reasons. Such a law would mean the effective ban of the niqab and burqa, although the committee says it is also targeting hooligans who cover their face for criminal intent. The Swiss government has publicly opposed the idea, saying it is up to each of the 26 cantons (areas) to legislate on the issue.

See: Albawaba News' entry, in: <https://www.albawaba.com/news/76-swiss-citizens-support-burqa-ban-survey-1070912>, retrieved on 9.1.2018

ON DIALOGUE:

US: A Priest, a Rabbi, and an Imam Walk Into a Church in Dallas— Three religious leaders in North Texas—a priest, an imam, and a rabbi—proved it was possible to come together in times of division. The Rev. Dr. Chris Girata, Imam Omar Suleiman, and Rabbi David Stern gathered at Saint Michael and All Angels Church in Dallas to discuss where their respective faiths diverge, and where they unite. The panel discussion, presented by the Women of Saint Michael and moderated by the Rev. Amy Heller, drew in people of all backgrounds. The three panelists, who talked like old pals, helped facilitate a light-hearted environment. The solidarity shown by the priest, imam, and rabbi enlightened and inspired many of the hundreds of people gathered at the church.

See: DMagazine News' entry, in: <https://www.dmagazine.com/frontburner/2018/01/omar-suleiman-chris-girata-david-stern-dallas-interfaith-panel/>, retrieved on 31.1.2018



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