The Portrayal of British Muslim's Existence as Suspect and Security Threat Community in UK

A Selective Analysis of legislative Reforms

Hafiz Obaid ur Rehman[*]
Zia ur Rehman[**]

The Abstract:

The UK has been a safe haven for migrants for decades for its future scope. The people from all over the world and from all the walks of life have been shifting to UK for a better, prosperous, safe and bright future. The Religious and political leadership of different countries has been seeking safe zone in UK since long. But the situation changed other way round right after 9/11 A and the launch of war to eradicate Terror. And situation got worst on 7/7 attacks in UK and it paved for legislation on terrorism. Different Acts and Laws were passed to ensure the safety of British People. The only community double crossed was the British Muslim community that suffered a lot. All the legislative reforms were focusing the Muslims in UK and it added to the hardships of Muslims. The Muslim Rituals, Islam, Islamic Notions and Taboos, Muslim Heritage and culture, Employment Ratio, Religious freedom, Freedom of Expression, Muslim Ladies and children were badly affected by the legislative reforms introduced and implemented to counter the Terrorism in UK. The Muslims were stigmatized and misrepresented in Electronic and Print Media. The Muslim Community was declared as threat to the safe UK. The British Muslims' privacy was unlawfully disturbed through stop, check, interrogation and harassment.

Keywords: Legislative Reforms, Stigmatized, Notions, Taboos, Heritage and Culture.

Introduction:

The Govt. of UK has been passing the rules to tackle the terrorism since 1700s.[1] The Govt. wanted to ensure the safe and smooth run of British life

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[*] Ph.D Scholar, Department of Islamic Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

[**] Associate Professor, Department of Islamic Studies, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, , Pakistan.

without any fear of terror or harassment. The liberties provided by a Democratic Govt. were being removed and interfered gradually. After that, the Govt. was engaged by the Irish community residing in "Northern Ireland". To cope the threats of The Irish army, "The Prevention of Violence Act 1938" was passed and the Irish community was deprived of free movement and fair justice. Although the definition of Terrorism was not described in this Act, yet the Irish People were being stopped, Searched without a warrant, nominated as security threats and restricted of free movement.[2]

There is a long history of tension between the UK Govt. and the Irish Community. The role of British Media, Press, civil Society, Police and prosecution was also under question. A more detailed law was carried out in 1974 known as "the Prevention of Terror Act 1974"(PTA).In this "anti-Terror law", the Govt. was entitled to highlight the suspect groups and organizations as terrorists if found guilty under the said law.[3]

Here, the terrorism was defined for the first time throughout the British legislative process and it paved for the laws/Acts and legislation on counter terrorism in future. The PTA has been fulfilling the required needs of the UK Govt. to eradicate the terrorism for coming Decades. It equipped the Govt. and the law enforcing agencies with enough space to function safely and ensure the law and order in the state.

The need of time was to update and review the terrorism laws and make them more comprehensive and up to date. And After that the "Terrorism Act 2000" (TA)was also passed. This Act was passed to face the multi-dimensional types of terrorism in UK. The Legislators were of the view that to ensure the safety of public, it was considered necessary to widen the scope and sphere of the definition of terrorism.[4] Right after that, a great game changer, the 9/11 attacks took place and the security challenges were faced by the whole world. A "war on terror" also changed the security measure and the situations became worst .In this situation, the UK govt. also updated and revised its(TA 2000).The law justified the police forces a broad jurisdiction to fight terrorism, locally, and in international scenario.[5] In the wake of "9/11 attacks", a new Act was needed acutely to tackle the security and safety threats posed by the new terrorism. "The Anti-Terrorism, Crime, and Security Act of 2001" got approval and became implemented to combat the new posed security challenges. So, the liberties and basic rights being enjoyed by the state residents were minimized and a wide range of activities were considered as terrorism.[6]

A great challenge was faced by the UK Govt. after 7/7 attacks in UK. The Govt. introduced a new "Terrorism Act 2006". It was criticized for being ill balanced and unjustified. "New offenses were introduced such as inciting or encouraging terrorism, the possession of terrorist publications, and the glorification of terrorism".[7] "If someone have disseminated/created terrorist publications, trained or obtained the skills necessary for terrorist acts, could also be indicted under the bill. Most notably, this bill also applies electronically, in order to include offenses conducted by persons on social media".[8] After that ‚a "Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015" was passed. It was introduced to handle the suspected and hard liner people. It also gave police the freedom of seizing passports fastly.[9] After that (TEOs) "Temporary Exclusion Orders" was passed by the UK Govt. to ban the return of the supposedly suspect people to UK for a period of almost 2 years.[10]

The Purpose of this Proposed Study:

The following Purposes of Proposed Research are aimed at:

> ➢ To elaborate the chronological history of Safety and anti-terrorism legislation in UK.
> ➢ To present above mentioned history chronologically to show the different types of security threats.
> ➢ To throw light on the two targeted societies in UK, Muslim and the Irish.
> ➢ To bring into light how the Muslims are being misrepresented in UK.
> ➢ To highlight the Islam Phobia in UK.
> ➢ To discuss the role of Politicians, Law Makers, Police and the Media regarding Islam and Muslims.
> ➢ To throw light on Muslims being declared Suspect.
> ➢ To take into consideration the Extremism in British society.

Significance of the Study:

Islam has been a largest at number 2 religious doctrine being practiced in UK after the prevailing Christian Religion. A great number of people have been taking interest in Islam and it has become the fastest growing religion of UK being embraced by the Non-Muslims. A lot of allegations have been raised against Islam and Muslims in UK. The Muslims have been victimized and stigmatized badly. A series of Acts have been passed to control and combat terrorism but having affected the Muslims a lot. They have been kept under suspect and their personality has been misrepresented through Media. A campaign has been launched

by the Print and electronic media and extremism has been associated with Muslims unjustly. The British white society has been showing a change in dealing with Muslims and it was the result of propaganda. The Basic Human rights of Muslims were abolished by the UK Govt. And different acts and legislative reforms were introduced and the focus was solely on the Muslims. The discrimination on the basis of religion is being practiced since 7/7 attacks. An increase in attacks on Muslims, their Masajid and women observing veil has been on peak since 9/11. The Muslim unemployment ratio has been increased during the said period. This study shall bring into account the Different anti-Terrorism Acts and their impacts on Muslims present in UK.

Newly designed PREVENT strategy has authorized Universities to have a check on their students and monitor whether they are opting an extremism or not. The Muslim and Non-Muslim Religious associations have been made responsible to control ridiculous and extremist approach amongst their fellows. They should join hands with universities to eradicate the terrorism in UK. But this strategy has created a sense of Isolation amongst young Muslims which may lead them into the path of extremism.

The Review of the Literature:

A great number of Books, Articles and Columns have been compiled on the British Muslim's problems as being stigmatized and associated with terrorism. Many Muslim and Non-Muslim writers have exposed the flaws and unjust sections in the British Anti-Terrorism laws which are pressing hard the Muslim community in UK. T Abbas has compiled "The symbiotic relationship between Islamophobia and radicalization, Critical Studies on Terrorism". In this composition, the writer has pointed out the Islam phobia in British white society. British Islam followers have been posed as terrorists, misfit and threat in UK. Awan wrote (2012a) "I'm a Muslim not an extremist': How the Prevent Strategy has constructed a'suspect' community. Politics & Policy". The writer has brought into light the behavior of the state and society towards Muslims. The Muslim Society was practically considered terrorist, has been discussed in the publication.

Awan (2012b) also compiled "The impact of policing British Muslims: A qualitative exploration. Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter-terrorism". The writer has shown the difference between the dealing of Police with Muslim and Non-Muslim British society. The

Police force had vast range of jurisdiction to tackle the Muslims. S Bonino Wrote (2013) "Prevent-ing Muslimness in Britain: The normalisation of exceptional measures to combat terrorism. Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs". The writer brings into light the strategies adopted by the UK Govt. to face Islam and Muslims. Another compilation was made by N.Braakmann, "Islamistic Terror, the War on Iraq and the Job Prospects of Arab Men in Britain: Does a Country's Direct Involvement Matter"? Here the writer has discussed the scenario of Iraq war and its Different Dimensions.

S Brighton (2007) wrote, "British Muslims, multiculturalism and UK foreign policy: 'Integration' and 'cohesion' in and beyond the state, International Affairs". The writer has pointed out the differences in UK foreign policy regarding different cultures. The behavior of the State with Muslims has been elaborated in detail. T. Choudhury wrote (2011) "The impact of counter-terrorism measures on Muslim communities. International Review of Law, Computers & Technology". Here the writers show the bad results after Anti-Terrorism Reforms and laws on Muslim groups in UK. The Muslim community has been deprived of some basic rights which are being enjoyed by other communities in UK.

Kelly- Heath composed,2013. "Counter-Terrorism and the counterfactual: Producing the 'radicalisation' discourse and the UK PREVENT Strategy." Here the UK Govt. introduced PREVENT Strategy has been discussed and criticized in detail. The PREVENT law was launched by the British Govt. to eradicate the terrorism. J Klausen wrote,(2009) "British counter-terrorism after 7/7: Adapting community policing to fight against domestic terrorism" .The UK Govt. actions to defeat the terrorism has been brought into light. The 7/7 attacks and its draw backs have also been discussed. A Kundnani wrote, (2014) "The Muslims are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism and the Domestic War on Terror" .Here the extremism, its different reasons and the behavior of the British society has been discussed and criticized.

L Moosavi compiled, (2013) "Islamophobia in the representations of Islam and Muslims by the British government between 2001 and 2007". The role of British Govt. has been discussed that how the Muslims and Islam have been portrayed by the Govt. during time span of 2001 to 2007.

J Rehman wrote,(2007) "Islam, 'war on terror' and the future of Muslim minorities in the United Kingdom: Dilemmas of multiculturalism in the aftermath of the London bombings". The coming unsafe future of Muslim Minorities has been discussed in the scenario of 7/7 attacks.

The Suspect and Security Threats:

Before the 9/11 attacks and 7/7 bombings, only the Irish community was declared as a suspect in UK. But now all over the world, this title of suspect has been attached towards Muslims specially in UK after 7/7.[11] The 1974 terrorist attacks compelled the UK Govt. to pass strict and unpleasant counter Terrorism act handing over powers to police and law enforcing agencies which makes it different from previous counter terrorism law. The British Muslims are facing brutal charges of politicians and the media where controversial issues on Islam and Muslims are raised. It shows that the UK counter terrorism policies have been criticized for not being that much fruitful. The PREVENT Strategy has also got a lot of criticism for being draconian.[12] A New "Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015" was introduced to tackle the extremist Muslims. The 9/11 and 7/7 attacks have been given more attention due to linking it with Muslim Extremism and terrorism. The situation in Iraq and Syria paved for new legislative reform known as "Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015". This act has changed the role of universities and they have been entitled to defeat radicalization and extremism. The right of free speech was demolished and vast freedoms have been minimized through this act. The "Ex British Prime Minister David Cameron", during an address in a conference at Bratislava charged the Muslims for not striving enough to eradicate extremism. It was his second speech criticizing the Muslims and Extremism.[13]

In the same way, the Lee Rigby case has also explored the two counter terrorism policies of the State. This case was not handled as per merit laid down for Muslim related terrorism actions. The police have been given a main and vital decisive role to face and combat the extremism with free hands. All the required legislation was also made. The UK counter Terrorism policy contains flaws which may lead the situation towards destruction. The mere focus on Muslim Religion and Islamic culture can create problems.[14] The Muslims are facing otherisation , discrimination and misrepresentation.[15]

The Muslim culture is being criticized for its nature which does not suit the British society. It is considered a big hurdle in allowing Muslims to embrace British Culture and life style. Therefore Muslims are considered

"others" in society.[16] The symbolic, Mental and physical torture and violence against Muslim Minorities is on peak and the Muslims have lost confidence to report to authorities for being considered "others" and incredible. They believe that the hate crime reporting shall not result in good.[17] The Muslim populated areas are targeted for physical assault and gangs victimize the Muslim Men. While Muslim women are being preyed through online anti-hate-crime at the rate higher than Muslim men. Although no one gang/group can be declared responsible for these crimes yet some traces are found regarding "British National party" or "the English Defence League"[18]. There is no doubt that the "violent extremism" brings about a suspect society. The racism and the sense of "othering" is the key to misrepresentation of Muslims.[19]

The implementation of 2006 Contest Act has turned the focus of the UK Govt. on Muslim extremism. And all the subsequent legislation was focusing the Muslims and Islam.[20] The 7/7 attacks have compelled the UK Govt.to respond to terrorism. All the Local and International threats of Terrorism were kept into considerations while making the policies. But the Muslims were victimized through these hard line policies and a sense of insecurity and fear emerged amongst them.[21]"The Muslim Council of Britain" has pointed out that the Muslims are being harassed by the agencies and police and they are not feeling well and easy with this legislation introduced to combat the extremism.[22] Another study showed that the Muslims were considered security threat and security agencies are stigmatizing them deliberately.[23]Another research pointed out the Muslims were being isolated and considered others due to the counter terrorism policies.[24] And most of the British society takes this legislation and anti-extremism policies and steps necessary for their safe and bright future. Therefore a political and cultural pressure is given towards this legislation and so the Britishers feel easy on this legislation.[25] But this legislation has demolished the Bright face of UK Democracy where equality, liberty and due respect had been proclaimed over centuries.[26] The Risks of victimization have led Muslims to the feelings of isolation and alienation and they have been broken inwardly and their confidence has been shaken down.[27]

The 7/7 attacks have marginalized and otherised the Muslims which caused a lot of problems on different levels.[28] In the same way , installation of disputed security cameras in Muslim populated areas which has become a bone of contention. It has challenged the privacy and free movement of the Muslims. It is considered unethical and interference in the private life of the Muslims.[29] The police has been authorized to question any Muslim anywhere without any charge and he can be detained for an extensive period. The interrogation at airports pushes the Muslims away from the main stream and the sense of radicalization is intensified.[30] Such steps and policies overlook the different dynamics playing a vital role within a religion and ethnic minority.[31]

The British policy of Moderate and Extremist Muslims has divided the Muslim community into two halves. Thus dividing people on the basis of suspect and trustworthy Muslims is not a just and fair play. In this way, the Govt. exploits one group and uses it to control the other suspect and extremist Muslim Group.And so, the Govt. loses its trust and the Muslims feel the second class citizens.[32] This categorization is not a good one for a strong and prosperous country. The Only way out is to build a strong bond of confidence between the Muslims and the police. There is no cooperative and friendly relationship between Muslims and the security forces in UK. The Only solution to combat the extremism is confidence building and its absence is destroying all the efforts to end extremism.[33]

The "Tell MAMA" team, "Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks" surveyed that during 2012 to 2013 March studies, 74 % of hate crimes against Muslim groups have been reported online.[34] Another study shows that jihad, Islamic code of life and the spread of Islam in UK has been denounced a direct threat towards European civilization and ethical values.[35] The statistical calculations highlight that hate crimes are on peak and are increasing by every day against Muslims in UK.[36] Before the Murder of Rigby, average 28 hate crimes were recorded per month. This score was 22 during April 2013.But it raised after the murder of Rigby upto 109.The Reports filed between May 2013 to February 2014 show that the score was raised to 734 and out of these,599 anti-Islamic crimes were committed online while rest of cases were of offline abuses and attacks.[37]

A nursery was searched by British police and counter terrorism department in 2009 on the charge of children being radicalized there. This type of activities draw a wide gap between Muslims and the Law

enforcing agencies.[38] A great debate spread out throughout the state about the application of "PREVENT". The question was raised that how the innocent children were considered as suspects. Why they were charged of radicalization and extremism.[39]

        This case threw light on the top-down strategy of the UK Govt. Policing of suspect that has always been a problematic. The said case caught the interest of the people and a criticism was made over it.[40]

Since the launch of Terror war, The Muslims are being treated just like the previous African and Irish people were declared suspect by the UK Govt. And a time to time legislation was being introduced to combat the trouble makers. Now the only suspect group in UK is the Muslim community being charged of security threat. The powers to detain, search,stop ,interrogate and being charged of downloading a prohibited material leads to deprivation and isolation of the Muslims. All the legislation implemented during 2000,2005 and 2006 has been adding to the hardships of the Muslims. Gordon Brown's Govt. was criticized by the Muslims for not consulting on the PREVENT Agenda. Their part and role has been totally denied by the Elected Govt.and it is not a characteristic of a Democratic Govt.[41]The Muslims were treated prejudice. They were facing poor socioeconomic Situations and were alienated and isolated from the main stream British Society.[42] 34 out of 42 organizations were charged of extremism under counter terrorism acts and they all have had Islamic thoughts.[43] There were 125 terrorists in the custody of the Govt. in 2008 and 91 percent of them were Muslims.[44] The data shows that The Irish and Muslims are shown as negative, suspect   and the security challenges.[45] The Muslim portrayal as cultural problems and challenge for the British values and ethics is a burning issue.[46]

        A direct relation is shown between Muslims and terrorism. The "Terror" is the most being repeated word in the news relating Islam. It appeared in the headlines 170 times and another term "Attack" was repeated 57 times. It shows the mind set of national press regarding Muslims Presenting as separate. The repetition of Rushdie, Race and Veil Terms symbolically declare Muslims a big threat to British Values. Indeed, the regular appearance of words like "RUSHDIE, VEIL, RACE and RIOT/S" suggest that Muslim portrayal as a challenging threat to prevailing British Norms is on peak.The Media Has been giving a deep coverage to Muslim related issues.[47] And a lot of research articles were launched to pose Muslims as outsiders and intruders.[48] During a 2002

survey, 82.6 percent British Muslims faced Racism while 76.3 percent Faced Discrimination.[49]

Effects on Muslim Earnings:

During this situation, along with other losses, a great loss in the earnings of the Muslims was also observed. An estimate made to have a look into the outcomes of the attacks on the employment and earnings of the 16 to 64 year age group of Muslims and discrimination was found there.[50] Another survey on the age group of 16 to 25 years Muslim men was carried out and a 9 to 11 Percent decrease in the employment and earnings has been observed after 9/11. And 10 percent decrease has been noticed in the employment and earnings of the Muslims after 7/7 attacks in UK.[51] Another study shows a 9 to 11 percent decrease in wages and per week wages of Muslim Arab and Non-Arab Men after 9/11. But the researchers find no remarkable effects on the work status of the Muslims after 9/11.[52]

Attacks on Muslims and Masajid:

After Rigby's Murder, A "Somali Muslim Center" was Burned in an attack.[53]And on the same week, "A Muslim faith school" was under another arson attack in Kent.[54] The Same Year, Another Masjid in Essex area was under a fire attack. And right after that "An Islamic Cultural Center" was attacked by two retired British Soldiers with petrol Bombs. [55]

During 2014, another Britisher was declared guilty of arson attack on a masjid in Milton Keynes.[56] Ryan Mcgee was not only the advocate of (EDL) but also possessed weapons including Nail Bombs in his custody to harm the Muslim Community and their Islamic centers.[57]

The British Govt Just labeled Muslims with terrorism ignoring the same type of terrorist, the British far Right. [58] Another research found out that the European Govt's sole focus on Islamic extremism overlooked the same type of Terrorism from the far-right. [59]A 15 year study on 31 countries showed that 38 percent of terror attacks were linked with Muslims while 33 percent were committed by extremist Right-wings in Europe.[60]

Legislation on Terrorism in UK:

Sabir, a post graduate Research scholar described his story how he was kept under arrest and for approximately 6 days under the jurisdiction of 41 clause of 2000 TACT in operation Minerva. He was charged of having an open source material on Hamas and Al Qaida downloaded from US Justice Department Website. Upon release, he filed a petition against police for a false crime charge and won the case being paid £20,000.

During the detained period, Sabir did not share his history with interrogative team and the sole question posed before them why and under which Rule he was detained? He was being observed and considered as a terrorist by the police during 2008 to 2010.He was also searched and stopped under 7 section of TACT 2000. [61] A total of 28 departments were jointly working on CONTEST to ensure the deep and vast range security checks on local and international terrorism. [62]

The"CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism is divided into five sections: the   definition of the threat, Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare" It was designed to combat the terrorism after 9/11.[63] The PREVENT was designed to stop and tackle the Radicalization before it happens which is controversial and Ironic. Thomas,Paul.Commented on the negative aspects of PREVENT, it "provides the most comprehensive summary of all the criticism levelled at Prevent (in his terms PVE) to date":   The "PVE has focused on Muslim communities only…. [this] focus has been a vehicle for surveillance and intelligence-gathering by police and security services, so antagonising the very communities that PVE is trying to win over. This focus on Muslims is in stark contradiction to wider government priorities of community cohesion, and may well be having damaging consequences as a result. Finally, the actual design and implementation of PVE has led to very significant tension between government departments at national level, and between different agencies at a local level".[64]

The PREVENT has been targeting and disturbing the Muslims for being unhelpful. It did not engage the Muslims in a smooth way.[65] Lindekilde asserts that counter extremism legislations has been focusing the Muslims solely in Europe.[66] Jackson says, "CTS(Critical Terrorism Studies) has four main criticisms of traditional terrorism studies: it is ahistorical, state-centric, financed by the 'terrorism industry' and focused on problem-solving rather than critical work" [67] The UK'S anti-terrorism policy CONTEST comprises four versions. But its first version of 2003 was never disclosed to public. The 2006,2009 and 2011 versions have been publicized. The 2003 and 2006 acts were prepared by the "Labour Govt."

while the 2011 act, the extension of the two previous acts was prepared in coalition of conservatives and Labour Govts.

The 2011 CONTEST securitizes Islam and Muslims. Its schedule 7 provides police with the freedom to stop and search at Ports, rail stations and air ports and (Director of Public Prosecution) has no concern in it as just police has a free hand. The Securitization policy was developed by the "Copenhagen School".[68] McDonald condemns securitization for its three narrow types .He concludes that the form, the context and the nature of the act are too narrow. [69] The Contest 2006 unfolds the beginning of the official response of the UK Govt. towards 7/7 attacks. It was the first occasion when the Govt. showed its intentions and commitments to combat the terrorism. The UK had observed approximately 60 terrorist attacks in between 1970 and 2001 all from the Irish Community. Between TA 2000 and first CONTEST Policy, there have been four legislative reforms on terrorism control known as ATCS 2001, The CJA 2003, PTA 2003 and TA 2006.

After 7/7 attacks, the PM Tony Blair delivered a policy speech and announced the change in the rules of the game and it was declared necessary to win the battle of common values challenged by the evil attack of ideas, hearts and minds.[70] Within an Year, TA 2006 was passed and implanted and it brought about new offences. Two months later, a new and updated CONTEST policy was made public for the first time. This policy comprised 33 pages with all paragraphs being numbered and text also divided into different sections standing as headings.

Conclusion:

Like previous Africans and Irish Societies, The Present Muslim Society has been declared "others, Misfit and Suspect" in UK. The UK state having a long chronological history of Legislation on terrorism control but the focus was zoomed in the Muslims. They were called Extremists and hard liners. On the same time, they were assumed a threat to the democratic values of UK. The portrayal of Muslims in Press and media was of an extremist and a terrorist. They were isolated in the society and a great change in the behavior of the Britishers was noticed towards Muslims. The Muslims were divided into two Groups and this division added more towards the isolation of young Muslims. The Muslim Employment ratio decreased gradually and attacks on Muslim Men were observed in several areas of UK. Their Masajid and nurseries were burnt at several places. Hate Crime ratio also increased against Muslims.

The Different acts targeted the Muslims and a free hand was given to Police and law enforcing agencies to control the propagated Muslim Terrorism. The right to stop, check, arrest without a warrant, passport seizure and investigations made Muslims realized of loneliness. The State has failed to win Muslims' trust and confidence. The Muslims lost trust in Govt. Police and the Prosecution. All the Acts and Legislation failed to win Muslims confidence and could not ensure them of their importance and role in the British Society.

Recommendation for Further Study:

The British Muslims have been suffering since the launch of "War on Terror". It is recommended that a further study should be conducted to see whether the sufferings of British Muslims have been minimized? Has any legislation been introduced to give Muslims proper place and equal right of Freedom of Speech, living, moving, trading, worshipping, employment, health facilities and earning livelihood?

Did any change occur in the Philosophy of RELIGION in UK?

The discriminative behaviour on the basis of race and Religion has disturbed the mental health of Muslims. They are being misrepresented and how the media and the Legislative Process can be approached to change the prevailing mindset of the Britishers about Muslims and Islam.

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