

Headlines:

- **For Religious American Muslims, Hostility from the Right and Disdain from the Left**
- **Critics of Egypt Abroad will be Punished Egyptian Minister says in Canada**
- **America Swaps its Stick for a Carrot in its Dealings with Pakistan**

Details:

For Religious American Muslims, Hostility from the Right and Disdain from the Left

It is an odd time to be a Muslim in America, in part because it depends on which America you happen to live in. Here, too, there are two Americas. On the one hand, this is a sort of golden age for American Muslims and their place in public life. Sometimes it seems like Muslims are everywhere, even though they're not. They star in their own television shows; they headline the White House correspondents' dinner ; they win Academy Awards; they become Snapchat sensations. Some of it is more subtle but striking nonetheless: If you live in a semi-hip urban setting, it's not unusual to see a headscarf-wearing woman in an ad flanked by a rainbow coalition of other diverse Americans. This can make it easy to forget the other reality that exists alongside the liberal pop-culture embrace of Muslims. The increase in anti-Muslim bigotry and other forms of discrimination against Muslims is well documented. But even if you don't experience it or see it, you know Islamophobia exists, because it is there on social media. It is also in our president's rhetoric. It is inescapable. According to polling by University of Maryland professor Shibley Telhami, favorable views of Islam actually increased during the 2016 presidential campaign, but this increase came entirely from Democrats and independents. Among Republicans, favorable attitudes toward Muslims, as people, and Islam, as a religion, remained worryingly low (at around 40 percent and 25 percent, respectively). This is the America that the lawyer and writer Asma T. Uddin is most concerned with in her book "When Islam Is Not a Religion." The title comes from the growing movement to paint Islam as a political ideology rather than a religion. If Islam is not a religion, Uddin writes, then it cannot claim the protections that U.S. law grants to religious expression. This, in effect, is how many Christian conservatives reconcile the seemingly contradictory positions of advocating for religious freedom for themselves but not for Muslims. In the process, the free exercise of religion, protected and guaranteed by the First Amendment, becomes yet another victim of partisan polarization. Throughout the book, Uddin reserves most of her criticism for Republicans and conservatives, since they are the ones imperiling, indirectly or directly, the safety and security of Muslims through the rhetorical delegitimization of Islam, along with practical measures like opposition to mosque construction in local communities. But she also points to the occasionally awkward embrace between Muslims and the left and wonders whether that awkwardness might one day reveal deeper tensions. [Source: Washington Post]

Both Republicans and Democrats will not be satisfied until American Muslims have changed Islam to resemble Christianity or Judaism. Allah (swt) says: ﴿لَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ﴾ "And the Jews will not be pleased with you, nor the Christians until you follow their religion." [TMQ: 2:120].

Critics of Egypt Abroad will be Punished Egyptian Minister says in Canada

Egypt's Minister of Immigration and Expatriate Affairs Nabila Makram has told an audience in Mississauga, Ont., that anyone speaking "against Egypt abroad" will be "punished." A video of Makram's comments last Sunday shows her making a slicing motion across her neck while making the remark. The audience of mainly Egyptian expatriates

responded to Makram's words with laughter and applause. Makram said in her talk, "We only have one country: Egypt ... and we cannot bear any negative word about it abroad." The video has gone viral after independent Egyptian journalist Mohamed Nasr posted a copy of it on Twitter. Nasr says an anonymous source who attended the event sent him the clip. Some Egyptians in Canada are incensed by Makram's words, pointing to the current Egyptian regime's human rights abuses against political dissidents, many of whom now live abroad, says Mohamed Kamel, co-founder of the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy, an opposition group critical of Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. "We consider that a direct threat," says Kamel. "We're assuming that her comments were aimed at all Egyptians around the world." Human Rights Watch estimates 60,000 people have been arrested as political prisoners since el-Sisi came to power in 2013 through a coup. [Source: CBC News]

Sisi's regime wants to rule with an iron fist and this means all domestic and international dissent carried out by Egyptians is stamped out.

America Swaps its Stick for a Carrot in its Dealings with Pakistan

Mr Trump welcomed Mr Khan to the White House for their first talks face to face. American anger was replaced with soft soap. The president flattered the former cricketer, lauding him as an athlete and leader. Their future was bright, trade deals were on the cards and the flow of aid could be switched back on. During a joint press conference, Mr Trump boasted crudely that he could wipe Afghanistan, an American ally, off the face of the Earth. But as his host blustered, Mr Khan seemed to have little cause for concern. Mr Trump's cavalier offer to mediate in the dispute between Pakistan and India over Kashmir was a boost for Mr Khan, even if, as seems certain, it leads to nothing. Pakistan has long wanted to internationalise the argument with its neighbour. India believes the two countries should sort out their 70-year row over the territory between themselves. Mr Trump's offer provoked paroxysms in Delhi. But Pakistan's former sins seemed to have been forgiven. Threats of Armageddon aside, Afghanistan explains the American president's change of heart towards Pakistan. "I think Pakistan is going to help us out, to extricate ourselves," he said, referring to America's 18-year entanglement. Pakistan "is going to make a big difference," he repeated. The administration hopes that Pakistan will use its influence over the Taliban to coax the militants into a face-saving political settlement that will allow American troops to come home. Talks led by Zalmay Khalilzad, Mr Trump's point man on Afghanistan, have been moving slowly. The Taliban want to talk with the Americans about troop withdrawal, but are refusing to engage in formal negotiations with Afghan officials to determine how the country will then be governed. They met members of the Afghan government informally this month, but the impasse persists. Mr Khan said the right things in Washington to assure America of his country's intentions. Pakistan had abandoned its policy of meddling in Afghanistan to give it "strategic depth" against India, he insisted. The army would not go behind the civilian government's back to conduct its own policy. He would sit down with the Taliban and persuade them to talk to the Afghans. America and its allies have heard such promises before and been disappointed. Militants still operate from havens in Pakistan. Officials familiar with how talks are progressing say that Pakistan has yet to throw its full support behind them. Pakistan's generals are hedging their bets; some think the Taliban may still triumph and so are reluctant to push them too hard. But the determination in Washington for success in the negotiations is intense. Mike Pompeo, the secretary of state, has said he wants a deal by September 1st. To make that happen, America seems willing to overcome its former disappointment with Pakistan and try a new approach. [Source: The Economist]

Clearly, Khan does not recognize Pakistan's strength. America desperately covets Pakistan's support to end America's longest war in time for the 2020 Presidential elections. Additionally, America wants through Pakistani invitation to play an active role in solving the Kashmir issue. America has long sought peace between India and Pakistan as a way of counterbalancing China.