

DO MUSLIMS HAVE AN IMAGE PROBLEM?

By Abdullah bin Hamid Ali

Muslims in politics and participants in the political process should never allow their fear or hatred to dictate their interests. Politics is a nasty game. It takes a strong stomach and alligator skin to properly understand and navigate such an arena. In my estimation, Muslims have been largely ineffective in navigating it. We have failed to employ politics in the interest of preserving our faith and families. Rather, we have sacrificed our mores for the mere “feeling” of comfort and the fleeting experience of power. This is because we have allowed our interests to insufficiently emanate from the values of the Qur’an and Sunnah. We have believed in parts of the Book, rejected other parts, and then filled up the gaps with the moral priorities of others whose only objective is to achieve power by any means necessary. Power should never be sought simply for its own sake. If we truly believe that power corrupts, Muslims are not exempt from that rule. The proof is in the pudding as the saying goes. This is not to say that power is to be avoided at all costs. Rather, power should only be pursued by noble people to achieve noble ends.

The above is the concluding paragraph from my 2020 essay entitled “A New Political Vision for Muslim America.” My goal was to offer Muslims a different way to navigate the rough political landscape even though I always anticipated that very few would take my counsel seriously. But here I am once again attempting to prevent my brethren from undermining their own safety. If this generation finds my counsel meaningless, perhaps, one in the future will feel differently. Our primary political challenge is one of image inasmuch that no matter what political adjustments we make, we don’t seem to be able to shake off the impression that Muslims and Islam are a menace rather than something which could help improve Western society. The legacy media and Hollywood no longer serve as the primary sources for the suspicion that Muslims constitute a 5th column.¹ Most people get their news from alternative media now.² So, the legacy media has had minimal influence on how Muslims are viewed by the public. Rather, Muslims, themselves, continue to contribute to this belief held by many Americans and Westerners in several ways. If Muslims see themselves as guests in America, our behavior should reflect the courtesy of a visitor. But if we consider America our home, we should be concerned that our countrymen view us as foreign invaders, try to understand why, and then make the proper adjustments to prevent further mistreatment.

Since Trump’s first term as president, the legacy media has abandoned its pre- and post-9/11 demonization of Muslims and has embraced us as part of their coalition of the oppressed working in concert to dismantle “White supremacy.” As a result, Muslims have enjoyed 8 solid years of positive legacy media reporting overall. And even conservative media outlets like Fox have not obsessed about Muslims for several years. As “allies” of the political Left, we felt less vulnerable to attack from the political Right. We, however, sacrificed our religious mores, confused our children, and spread moral cowardice throughout our community unless of course—as always—

¹ **fifth column**, [clandestine](#) group or faction of subversive agents who attempt to undermine a nation’s solidarity by any means at their disposal. The term is conventionally credited to Emilio Mola Vidal, a Nationalist general during the [Spanish Civil War](#) (1936–39). As four of his army columns moved on Madrid, the general referred to his militant supporters within the capital as his “fifth column,” intent on undermining the loyalist government from within. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. (1998, July 20). *Fifth column | Definition & Facts*. Encyclopaedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/fifth-column>

² Atske, S. (2024, October 16). Social media and news fact sheet. *Pew Research Center*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/fact-sheet/social-media-and-news-fact-sheet/>

the matter relates to Palestine, the only issue unsuited for moral compromise by Muslims. In the following, I endeavor to demonstrate mistakes Muslims continue to make which undermine both Islam and the cause for Palestinian liberation. Until and unless we course correct, I believe we will only add to our vulnerability and social isolation.

This is Not My Country?

I am an American. America is my home. And the American people are my people. I say that while knowing the outrage it causes to many Muslims who feel culturally alienated from the West. I am a child of the West, not the East—even though my family roots go *primarily* back to Africa. Islam is my religion. Muslims are my brethren. I feel no dissonance about being both American and Muslim although for many others this poses a serious dilemma. My family is more important than yours. My children are more important than yours. So why should the security of *your* homeland be more important than mine? To be clear, this is not a jingoistic pro-nation state declaration³ but an expression of the natural affinity and love for one's place of birth. It mirrors the Prophet's own statement about Mecca—upon him Allah's blessing and peace, “By Allah! I know that you are the best of Allah's earth and the most beloved of Allah's earth to Allah. And had it not been for the fact that I have been cast out from you, I would not have left you.”⁴

Not seeing the land where one permanently resides as one's home contributes to making us vulnerable to being treated as second class citizens and viewed as a 5th column. Why would the locals not treat us as outsiders when we continue to remind ourselves and our children that we are not from here? Other than the native population, the roots of every American can be traced back to somewhere else on the planet.

There is no caliphate for Muslims to return to. And even if one were to emerge today under the leadership of those who advocate for it the most, the majority would not eagerly abandon our current countries of residence for that oft-romanticized utopia. The Shariah allows for Muslims to reside wherever they have the freedom to practice their religion.⁵ And why would anyone relocate to a place which would likely be ruled by the ideologically intolerant unless it was their original home or because they shared the moral outlook of those newly in power? That is not to ignore that Muslim societies are, generally, safer and more virtuous. But even the greatest advocates for the return of the caliphate prefer to live in the West for some reason. I think it is because the West better accommodates free expression and provides greater financial opportunities for both citizens and outsiders. The West is better at managing corruption, adjudicating disputes, restraining government overreach, and protecting civil rights.

³ On the problems of nationalism, see Blankinship, K.Y. (no date) “ISIS”- A Case of ‘Nationalism and War’, *Lamppost Education Initiative*. Available at: <https://lamppostedu.org/> (Accessed: 01 April 2025).

⁴ This hadith is reported by Ahmad, Ibn Mājah, and Tirmidhī.

⁵ Have a read of my two posts: *On Hijrah and Khilāfah: Part 1 of 2: (Abdullah bin Hamid Ali)*. (2023, December 3). <https://binhamidali.com/2023/12/03/on-hijrah-and-khilafah-part-1-of-2-abdullah-bin-hamid-ali/>

And

On Hijrah & Khilāfah: The Poverty of contemporary Muslim Political Imagination (Part 2 of 2). (2023, December 24). <https://binhamidali.com/2023/12/24/on-hijrah-khilafah-the-poverty-of-contemporary-muslim-political-imagination-part-2-of-2/>

Every non-Muslim is a potential Muslim. And all are brethren in humanity (*Banū Ādam*). Islam does not require me to antagonize or treat my fellow countrymen as enemies to be fought against or dominated. Satan is the only avowed enemy of mine. And I am expected to be one who contributes to the improvement of society, not its destruction.

A common problem of Muslims with family roots in the Muslim world is that they see themselves as visitors in a foreign land. This may be true for many. But this mentality afflicts many of those born in Western countries as well. They fail to see themselves as legitimate citizens of their countries of birth. They also fail to embrace the other citizens of those lands as their own people to whom they owe good counsel and a commitment to the peace, security, and wellbeing of their homelands. The failure of Muslims to make this paradigm shift will undoubtedly lead to greater social fragmentation, cultural alienation, and a corroboration of the belief that Muslims are here to destroy rather than to build and preserve the parts of Western culture which do not conflict with Islam's moral values.

Are Muslims Part of the Fringe or the Mainstream?

One of the greatest comeback stories is that of President Donald J. Trump. He had a decisive victory reclaiming the presidency. And his MAGA movement helped to secure both chambers of Congress for the Republicans. This along with a conservative majority in the Supreme Court has helped to ensure that Trump can appoint loyalists committed to implementing his executive agenda. He decisively won the electoral college, the popular vote, and every swing state.⁶ And his support from racial minorities⁷ and the youth⁸ increased significantly since his first term. But this victory goes beyond MAGA inasmuch that Trump's appointment of Tulsi Gabbard and RFK Jr. to key cabinet positions along with the formation of DOGE under the leadership of Elon Musk proves that the new Trump administration represents an authentic unity government. Tulsi, RFK, and Elon were all once committed Democrats celebrated by party officials until they refused to toe the party line. Trump, similarly, for those familiar with his history, was also a celebrated Democrat by party members and Hollywood⁹ when he voted Democrat and donated to Democrat politicians like the Clintons.¹⁰ Trump even won over Muslims who have historically

⁶ *The size of Donald Trump's 2024 election victory, explained in 5 charts.* (2024, November 24). PBS

News. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/the-size-of-donald-trumps-2024-election-victory-explained-in-5-charts>

⁷ Sanders, L. (2024, November 7). *How 5 key groups voted in the 2024 Election, according to AP VoteCast data | AP News.* AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/election-harris-trump-women-latinos-black-voters-0f3fbda3362f3dcfe41aa6b858f22d12>

⁸ Soave, R. (2025, March 27). *Why Gen Z is embracing Trump.* *Reason.com.* <https://reason.com/2025/03/27/why-gen-z-is-embracing-trump/>

⁹ Inside Edition. (2016, May 12). *Re-Live Donald Trump's most memorable TV show and movie cameos* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cddrr9w4e80>

¹⁰ *History of Donald Trump's political donations, 1989-2015 - Ballotpedia.* (n.d.).

Ballotpedia. https://ballotpedia.org/History_of_Donald_Trump%27s_political_donations,_1989-2015

supported Democrats like Mayor Amer Ghalib. He made Mayor Ghalib ambassador to Kuwait,¹¹ Mayor Bill Bazzi ambassador to Tunisia,¹² and chose Dr. Mehmet Oz to lead Medicare and Medicaid.¹³

Victories and appointments are important. But even more important is the mood of the country; Recent polling reveals that the president currently has the highest approval rating of both of his presidencies.¹⁴ Amazingly, the supermajority of Republicans and the rest of the country approve of his agenda which include ICE raids to remove violent criminals, DOGE auditing of government spending, and barring biological males from competing in women's sports.¹⁵

Democrats, on the other hand, are in chaos: Only 21% of registered voters approve of the job being done by their congressional Democrats. And a greater percentage of Democrats disapprove of the party overall than the percentage of those who approve.¹⁶ More centrist Democrats struggle to reclaim their party from the radical fringe leftists who force the party to embrace the 20% side of several 80%-20% national debates. Democrat politicians refused to sign onto legislation which would keep men out of female sports and spaces even though 80% of the country—including many Democrat voters—believe that to be reasonable.¹⁷ They side with

¹¹ Booth-Singleton, D. (2025, March 8). *Hamtramck Mayor Amer Ghalib tapped for U.S. ambassador of Kuwait*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/detroit/news/amer-ghalib-tapped-for-u-s-ambassador-of-kuwait/>

¹² *Google Search*. (n.d.). <https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=bill+bazzi+ambassador+to+tunisia&ie=UTF-8&coe=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:5f4e6fe7,vid:ExEWQk1Nyk8,st:0>

¹³ Simmons-Duffin, S. (2025, March 25). 5 things to know as Dr. Oz gets one step closer to leading Medicare and Medicaid. *NPR*. <https://www.npr.org/sections/shots-health-news/2025/03/25/g-s1-55766/dr-mehmet-oz-medicare-medicaid-cms-trump>

¹⁴ Enten, Harry. "Senior Data Reporter Shows Stark Difference in Trump's Approval Ratings from First to Second Term | CNN Politics." *CNN*, February 9, 2025. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/02/09/politics/video/donald-trump-approval-ratings-data-presidential-terms-harry-enten-nr-digvid>.

Also see OSZ@opensource "Donald Trump Approval Rating" <https://x.com/OpenSourceZone/status/1906706118371377572> 31 March 2025, 6:52 AM Tweet

¹⁵ The Harris Poll, HarrisX, Penn, M., Nesho, D., & Ansolabehere, S. (2025). *Survey method*. https://harvardharrispoll.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/HHP_Feb2025_vFinal.pdf
Also see: The White House. (2025, February 24). *New poll shows massive support for President Trump and his agenda*. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/2025/02/new-poll-shows-massive-support-for-president-trump-and-his-agenda/>

¹⁶ Enten, H. (2025) *Harry Enten breaks down poll on voters' views of Democrats in Congress | CNN politics*, *CNN*. Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2025/03/15/politics/video/democrats-approval-congress-poll-voters-harry-enten-nr-digvid> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

¹⁷ *Senate Democrats block GOP-led Bill to ban transgender athletes from Women's Sports* (2025) *NBCNews.com*. Available at: <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/congress/senate-democrats-block-bill-ban-transgender-athletes-womens-sports-rcna194623> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

bureaucrats instead of taxpayers defending wasteful government spending DOGE has uncovered even though most voters support it. They also defend keeping violent gang members in the country.¹⁸ Even Democrat donors have refused to contribute to the party because of the catastrophic losses and mismanagement of funds.¹⁹ And now, some threaten to form a “blue tea party” if the current leaders like Schumer refuse to step aside.²⁰

But where are the Muslims in all of this? Most, like the majority of Black Americans, continue to uncritically support the Democrat party, its policies, and agenda. One need not look far for the evidence of this. Simply observe the language and talking points Muslims are using and the issues Muslims are championing.²¹ Also like most Blacks, Muslims are Democrats by default. It matters not that some of us voted Green or 3rd party in the last election. Muslims are under no obligation to give conservatives a chance to prove themselves. But we

¹⁸ Lieb, D. A. (2025, January 25). *Democratic states raise resistance to Trump's deportation plans* | AP News. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/trump-immigration-states-deportation-schools-40c7305db619c92a1f707d2b08bf2c3c>

¹⁹ Alvarez, P. et al. (2024) *'everything is frozen': Donors hold back dollars amid fallout over Biden's candidacy* | CNN politics, CNN. Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2024/07/10/politics/chicago-donors-fundraiser-convention/index.html> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

²⁰ French, D. (2025) *The last thing Democrats need is their own Tea Party*, *The New York Times*. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/20/opinion/democrats-tea-party-trump.html> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

²¹ Before one alleges that my aim is somehow to convert Muslims to conservatism rather than to convince them to work with all political parties, I had the following to say in 2020 about the reasons why Muslims are averse to the Republican party:

Conservatives, especially many evangelical Christians and some Jews who have contributed enormous sums to the Islamophobia industry, have been the most hostile to Muslim inclusion, especially since 9/11. During the years immediately after 9/11, members of these groups sponsored anti-Shariah legislation and exerted effort to undermine Muslim security. They pushed to have Islam declared an “ideology” rather than a “religion,” a move intended to ensure that Muslims obtained no constitutional rights worthy of respect in the religious realm. Even Donald J. Trump, in his 2016 Republican National Convention acceptance speech, took aim at Muslims, promising the LGBT community that he would protect them from a “foreign ideology.” In other words, Trump and many others understood the uncompromising stance of the Islamic teachings on the immorality of sodomy and other violations of gender norms, like cross-dressing, etc. Conservative Christians share such views with Muslims. However, many of them willingly sacrificed their moral teachings to score points against Muslims and to rid the country of this “foreign invasion” and “intrusion” into “Judeo-Christian civilization.” Today, many conservatives continue to ignore Islam’s clear contributions to Western civilization, which even America’s founding institutions acknowledged. Why else would the US Supreme Court in 1935 honor the Prophet Muhammad among the greatest lawgivers of the world in its chamber? Why would the Library of Congress honor Islam among the civilizations that contributed most to western civilization? Islam is listed in a mural against a wall of mosaic patterns as having contributed to the West, of all things, the most fundamental science of physics. The current denials, in addition to multiple incidents of violence against Muslims committed by people associated with the right, make it difficult for most Muslims to believe in the possibility of a genuine Muslim-conservative alliance. Conservative pundits, similarly, ignore Islam’s contributions and Muslim’s role in strengthening America, claiming that concepts like “secularism,” “individualism,” and “free-market capitalism” are the exclusive proceed of Judeo-Christian philosophical influence. They claim that, besides their respective religions, these three ideas are what made the West great. What this view ignores, however, is the fact that Western civilization did not win supremacy due to a simple “conversation” between the Old or New Worlds. Many lives had to be lost, enslaved, and physically dominated in the process.

Ali, Abdullah. "A New Political Vision for Muslim America." Lamppost Education Initiative. Accessed April 1, 2025. <https://lamppostedu.org/political-vision/>

can no longer behave like victims of Stockholm syndrome with respect to the Democrat party while continuing to overreact to every provocative statement Trump makes, still obsessing over what he says and how he says it rather than what he does.²²

Is Failed Leadership Good Leadership?

In the past, private endowments (*awqāf*) gave Muslim scholars and leaders the financial independence they needed to check governors and speak frankly to the public. Being privately managed ensured the governments could not easily pressure scholars to conform to their agendas. For some time, now, Imams and scholars have not been completely free to speak their minds due to being employed by governments, masjid boards, and other institutions. In American masājid, for instance, masjid boards often consist of doctors, engineers, and similar technocrats responsible for the financial viability of the masjid. They often have their own unique view of how Islam should manifest itself in the public sphere. They also have their own political leanings, which typically align with Democrats. This forces most of our Imams and scholars to also act as proxies for the Democrat party. Or it impels them to withhold views which challenge the status quo to avoid being reprimanded or fired.

In the political realm, practically all Muslim politicians are Democrats. And the most prominent of them are even part of the radical left fringe. This is extremely problematic inasmuch that the public always associates other communities with their most prominent members. If people don't have regular interaction with an unfamiliar collective, they prejudice all members by what they see and hear from those familiar. This means that if Muslim politicians and other public Muslims are known for supporting policies that undermine American and Western values, they will treat the average Muslim as a person of suspicion. And while it may seem reasonable to expect an outsider not to prejudge, that is an extraordinary demand to make as human beings are wired to prejudge others. It's nearly impossible to avoid it. We judge all conservatives by what a few of them say or do. So, why should only we have the privilege of prejudgment? To quote my 2020 article once more,

Progressives only accept Muslims who they can control and follow their marching orders. And Muslims willfully comply with their wishes. The evidence is that Muslims join progressives in support of practically every policy or practice promoted and endorsed by the left, be it prejudgment of the accused, late-term abortion, illegal immigration, rioting, looting, destruction of property, defunding the police, anti-gun legislation, the normalization of transgenderism and other ideas from queer theory, anti-capitalism, anti-

²² Trump has always been invested in the spectacle. He prides himself on being unpredictable to his adversaries. And those adversaries are both foreign and domestic. His litany of outrageous comments over the years appears to be strategic. Those include his statements about Islam, Muslims, Gaza, and tariffs. His negative comments about Islam and Muslims during the primaries leading up to his first term were meant to help him stand out from his Republican rivals. He did not mind offending Muslim sensibilities since he knew that there weren't many Muslim Republicans planning to vote in the midterms. This channel which predicted his defeat of Hillary Clinton does a good job of highlighting the method to Trump's madness: (*'Why Trump Will Smash Hillary?'* (no date) *YouTube*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LibRNYJmZ-I> (Accessed: 01 April 2025). His statements about the US taking ownership of Gaza and develop it resulted in Gulf nations like Saudi Arabia to introduce alternative proposals and suggest funding Gaza reconstruction—as Trump insisted would happen—with the condition that Hamas be exiled. His tariff threats have forced Western nations back to the negotiating table to the point that some have adjusted their tariff agreements with the US.

whiteness and so-called “anti-racism” efforts, the desecration of historical monuments, and the use of tactics that undermine public order and promote anarchy. Perhaps, the single moral issue that distinguishes Muslims in the political realm with any Islamic import is the support for justice for Palestinians. All else is a list of policies originating from the progressive leadership. And Muslims are expected to embrace them uncritically without any dissent or reservation fully.

Note that practically each policy or practice named destabilizes American society in some way. And if Muslims are involved, this gives good reason to believe Muslims are operating as a 5th column. We need to do more to reverse this perception.

At the other extreme are Muslims who embrace the “5th column” label. They openly threaten the West with destruction and colonization. Exploiting Western free expression privileges, some have proposed to outbreed Westerners, a point of anxiety already underscored by post 9/11 propaganda.²³ One podcaster publicly stated that Muslims should work to undermine US hegemony. Like these first set of voices, non-Muslim nationalists who have recently won elections in Europe are very familiar with the honest types as well. That so many Muslims follow these voices corroborates non-Muslim suspicion that Muslims are actively committed to destroying the West. This may have been a baseless assumption in the years immediately following 9/11. But today it seems that far too many Muslims are unwittingly committed to undermining their future, safety, and wellbeing.

Let's Make More Enemies

During the George Floyd protests of 2020, a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. started to circulate which stated that “...a riot is the language of the unheard.” Prominent Muslims publicly endorsed this quote and added when challenged, “Who are you to tell them how to react to their oppression?” This was meant to scold Muslims critical of the riots, looting, property destruction, and physical attacks on Whites happening in Black neighborhoods that year. Anger has its place. But to paint Dr. King as a Bolshevik revolutionary is a step too far. King was a well-known advocate for non-violent protest. That fact should’ve been a catalyst for skepticism about the true implications of this quote. Opportunistic Muslims, unfortunately, used it to justify the chaos which ensued. Reading the Stanford version of King’s full quote leaves no doubt that he was not endorsing violent protest and looting. He said,

It is as necessary for me to be as vigorous in condemning the conditions which cause persons to feel that they must engage in riotous activities as it is for me to condemn riots. I think America must see that riots do not develop out of thin air. Certain conditions continue to exist in our society which must be condemned *as vigorously as we condemn riots*. But in the final analysis, **a riot is the language of the unheard**. And what is it that America has failed to hear? It has failed to hear that

²³ (2011) *Europe Will Be An Islamic Muslim State*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2c5oaGtAMQI> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

the plight of the Negro poor has worsened over the last few years. It has failed to hear that the promises of freedom and justice have not been met.²⁴

So, King clearly considered riots to be unproductive and worthy of condemnation but an understandable reaction of the less disciplined living under extreme conditions. **And while one may not feel justified in dictating to others how to react to their oppression, the Shariah reserves every right to do so.** A committed Muslim conforms to the demands of the Shariah. The morally depraved attempt to defend the indefensible.

During the month of Ramadan of 2025, one Muslim activist posted that “Supporting Gaza now is more important than praying Taraweeh...” Though clearly outrageous, it garnered much support. Regardless of the justification offered, it reveals how dependent Muslims have become on material means to resolve deeply spiritual problems. It is this reductive Marxist revolutionary absurdum which scoffs at appeals to God, religious devotion, and serious study which explain much of the root of Muslim failure.

Over the many protests which have erupted since the start of the massacre of Gazans, activists have often responded abrasively to calls for tactfulness. Coalition building remains an essential part of any important effort, especially when oppressors hold so many tools at their disposal. Muslims are not in a position of strength regarding Palestine. We don't hold many cards when it comes to resolution of the conflict. This is why we are left begging US presidents to force ceasefires and merely hope they'll do so. Others direct their animus against the leaders of Muslim countries for not intervening militarily.

The last thing Palestinians need at this point is an apathetic public or apathetic government. And there has been an increased interest and concern for Palestinian lives this time around even on the political Right. Podcasters like Candace Owens²⁵ and Tucker Carlson²⁶ have been extremely critical of Israel and oppose providing any material support using American tax dollars. Congressman Thomas Massie is also one of Israel's most vocal critics. Conservative voices like Mark Dice, Brett Pike, AnOmal, and Jake Shields are regularly critical of Israel as well as the political Right for their moral hypocrisy. Even more daring than these are personalities like Lucas Gage, Stew Peters, and Dan Bilzerian who regularly critique Jewish doctrine in the same way that conservatives scrutinized Muslim sources post 9/11. Matt Walsh, still currently employed with The Daily Wire,

²⁴ Smith, K. (2020) *No, Martin Luther King was not pro-riot*, *National Review*. Available at:

<https://www.nationalreview.com/2020/06/no-martin-luther-king-was-not-pro-riot/> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

²⁵ Candace Owens who was fired from Ben Shapiro's "The Daily Wire" after expressing her support for Palestinian victims of the Israeli genocide has been running a blitzkrieg against the Zionists and their influence on American and Western politicians. She admits that she was moved by the imagery of dead and dismembered Palestinian children, which made her rearrange her thinking about Muslims and the negative views she had of them since years past dating back to the events of 9/11. While difficult to watch, this shows how posts of dismembered bloodied bodies of dead Palestinian children on Tiktok and X have played a major role in awakening Americans to Israeli war crimes. With the younger generation on both sides of the politic divide more sympathetic to Palestinian victims, younger Jews less attached to the state of Israel, and more Christians and non-Jews more aware of Jewish religious doctrine towards gentiles, there is reason to imagine a liberated Palestine in our lifetime. The real question is what form will such a liberation take? And will it mean an end to Israeli oppression and greater inclusion of Palestinians in the decision-making process in the region?

²⁶ Tucker Carlson was fired from Fox after refusing to abandon his reporting on stories the channel's owners had no interest in airing. He also apologized for participating in the anti-Muslim and anti-Arab propaganda campaign during the Iraq War. He, like Candace, has expressed strong pro-American first views and that those with commitments to other countries should not have major influence on our politics.

has posted more than once that American tax dollars should also not go to Israel. And while more of a centrist, Joe Rogan recently interviewed Ian Carroll, a staunch critic of Israel and other forms of corruption.

Such developments are encouraging. However, Muslims need to work harder on maintaining and expanding “real” alliances. A refusal to engage with conservatives may prove to be fatal, especially since they now control the government and are winning control of governments in Europe and other parts of the world. These are people who often hold negative views of Muslims and Islam and see us as a danger to the West. Reacting to this sentiment abrasively thereby creating greater distance between us and the political Right has many hazards. Muslim mobilization against LGBT educational indoctrination in Michigan²⁷ and Maryland²⁸ inspired conservatives and won their respect. Fox News even invited Muslim leaders to speak about their efforts.²⁹

This signifies the potential for common cause between the Right and Muslims. But the more that Muslims antagonize conservatives, the likelihood of them resuming their post 9/11 posture against us steadily increases. There are good reasonable people on both the Right and the Left. We must abandon this exclusive openness to dialogue to the Left. The Qur’an commands us to invite to Allah’s way with wisdom, beautiful preaching, and to respond to others in the best way. He also expects us to ignore their slights and insolent behavior. This is because Muslims are held to a higher spiritual standard which means that we should anticipate the abuse that comes our way. Such is the state of the misguided. Muslims cannot run away from or refuse to engage with people simply because they hurt our feelings. We should also not unnecessarily alienate the non-Muslim public, creating enemies where there were potential friends. Such a message, however, is only meaningful to those who have a sense of mission³⁰ and whose most celebrated accomplishment is having guided someone to Allah’s way as the Prophet—upon him Allah’s blessing and peace—said to Ali—Allah be pleased with him—prior to the raid on Khaybar, “By Allah! That for one man to be guided by you is better for you than the most prized of camels (*humur al-na‘am*).”³¹

Shutting down traffic like crazed climate change activists in Europe will undoubtedly create enemies. Consequences are the same for preventing students—foreign and domestic—from schooling they paid tens of thousands of dollars per year for. The same goes for desecrating historical landmarks and American flags or replacing them with the flags of foreign countries. Even if one supports a boycott of Tesla, keying the car of a private Tesla owner might force one to quickly abandon support for one’s protest.

In truth, Palestine is not the most important thing in the lives of most Americans even if it may be the most important issue to many Muslims. Insisting otherwise makes people feel they must prioritize Palestinian lives and wellbeing over their own personal ambitions and interests. And the plight of one race will almost never become a focal point in the lives of non-members. The same goes for the impression that the “real” Muslims are

²⁷ *‘a sense of betrayal’: Liberal dismay as Muslim-led US city bans Pride Flags* (2023) *The Guardian*. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/jun/17/hamtramck-michigan-muslim-council-lgbtq-pride-flags-banned> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

²⁸ (No date) *YouTube*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7q19FaQ-cc> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

²⁹ (No date a) *YouTube*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3UI2H6HOnEw> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

³⁰ The Qur’an 41:33-35 say, “Who is more eloquent than one who invites to God and acts with integrity, saying, “I am one of those who acquiesce to God”? For good and evil are not equal: promote what is better, and then one between you and whom there was enmity will be as a friend, a relative. But no one will be offered that but those who have been constant; and no one will be offered that but one of great good fortune.”

³¹ Al-Bukhari, Muhammad b. Ismā’il. *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Damascus and Beirut: Dar Ibn Kathir, 2002, p. 726, hadith #2942.

“over there.” Islam is *God’s* religion. He needs none of us. And He will replace us with grateful willing servants if we turn our backs on His teachings (Q 5:54). As said before, every non-Muslim is a potential Muslim. Muslims often have conquered their conquerors, not by force of arms but by strength of character and conviction. Nothing contributes more to apathy than arrogance and declaring one’s own priorities more important than those of others.

Muslims would benefit greatly from a broader coalition. Many may not feel comfortable waving a Palestinian or Ukrainian flag. But those same people would embrace a posture, slogan, and prop in opposition to war. Not everyone likes the idea of being pro-Palestinian. But many are all in on being anti-war. That includes the effort to defund an “ally” committing an active publicly declared genocide.

Conservatives who voted for Trump increasingly oppose funding for both Ukraine and Isreal.³² And they want American tax dollars to be used for the benefit of Americans. Conservative politicians, on the other hand, throw their support behind Israel but not Ukraine for two reasons: 1) Ukraine is not an ally of the United States; and 2) because the Zionist lobby is so strong that most politicians fear losing their seats for opposing them. This is a bipartisan dilemma which should teach us more about the power of lobbies and political realism, not so much that politicians genuinely love the state of Israel. Even Zionist Christians do not love Jews. They simply are willing to compromise their moral teachings to aid in the return of the Messiah. If politicians had good reason to believe they won’t lose their jobs for opposing Israel, they might take the risk. This is precisely why Thomas Massie can be critical. He has strong support in his home state.

Muslims could take advantage of these developments. But that would require a different type of maturity and wisdom from our current leadership. Instead of catering to mass sentiment, we should educate them about the reality of politics and that pragmatism will always play a role in strategizing. Our leaders already know this. Over the past 8 years, they have merely chosen to compromise our core values following Democrats. They comprised our sexual ethics and tolerated other heretical ideas—all because they thought Democrats would support the liberation of Palestine. Intelligent communities replace their leaders when their political wisdom proves to be harmful. There is typically a course correction in search of new paradigms and new ideas. When will the Muslims learn from the good experience and practices of others?

Down with the “Autocrats”

Anarchy is foreign to Islam. And political leaders are tasked to manage the public purse, help the needy, settle disputes, protect citizens from criminals, defend the borders, and promote moral virtue. These are the teachings of Shariah. The Qur’an and Sunnah demand obedience to those in charge if orders do not clearly defy the revealed law. The rebel in Muslim theology is a heretic. That is why Al-Tahāwī in his widely accepted Sunni Creed said, “We do not accept any rebellion against our leaders and the administrators of our public affairs even if they are oppressive...”³³ That is because rebellion typically leads to widespread civil unrest, bloodshed, famine, starvation,

³² (No date a) *Republican opposition to Israel aid is latest headache for the pro-Israel community* | *The Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle*. Available at: <https://jewishchronicle.timesofisrael.com/republican-opposition-to-israel-aid-is-latest-headache-for-the-pro-israel-community/> (Accessed: 31 March 2025).

³³ Ibn Abī al-Izz al-Hanafi (1331-1390) says, “It is binding to obey them even if they are oppressive because multiple times greater evil will result from rebellion against them than from their oppression. Rather, enduring their oppression leads to the expiation of sins and the multiplication of rewards. For Allah—High is He—only granted them dominance over us because of our moral corruption. And punishment is commensurate with crimes committed (*al-jazā’ min jins al-‘amal*). So, we must

dislocation, and the murder of innocent people as we've seen several times in recent decades. Rather than being a death cult, Islam teaches Muslims to value life.

Al-Tahāwī suggests that the heretics are those who pray against leaders of Muslim populations while the upholders of orthodoxy are those who pray for their wellbeing and moral rectification.³⁴ The commentators explain that this is because prayers against them will only increase their tyranny while prayers for them invite divine succor which may lead to greater wisdom, less anxiety, and societal flourishing. Soft words soothe the ego. Pious prayers reach the heart if the Changer of Hearts (*Muqallib al-Qulūb*) so wills it. And the prayers of the oppressed are eventually answered.

This, however, does not mean that tyranny should be ignored, and tyrants should be praised. Praising tyrants betrays our tradition and the oppressed. Supplications for their moral rectitude and showering them with gratuitous praise are not one and the same thing. That, however, does not mean that acknowledging good policies and decisions by the head of state is misguided. It may encourage further improvements and reduce political anxiety. It benefits no one to make governors abhor religion through constant condemnation of their bad actions and never acknowledging their good works.

Governors have the power to inflict the greatest damage on a population. But they are also best positioned to bestow the greatest degree of benefit to their citizens. The best of them will be in the shade of Allah's throne on the Judgment Day. And they are among only a few people whose prayers are never rejected by Allah according to the Prophet—upon him Allah's blessing and peace.³⁵

But justice is not easy. Every governor—no matter how pious—is threatened by forces within and outside his society with ambitions to uproot and replace him. And when he responds to such threats, he becomes a tyrant in the minds of the losers. It doesn't matter if his society is stable, safe, and flourishing for most of its inhabitants. And no governor has been able to escape the allegation of injustice.

To the apostates and those who withheld Zakat from him, Abu Bakr—Allah be pleased with him—was a tyrant. To Persians like Abu Lu'lu'ah, Umar—Allah be pleased with him—was an oppressor. To his assassins, Uthman—Allah be pleased with him—deserved his death due to injustice they perceived. The Khawarij—the religious extremist rebels—declared Ali, Mu'awiyah, and 'Amr b. al-'As—Allah be pleased with them—all unbelievers before they set out to assassinate them. The point is that no ruler can ever ingratiate all citizens. Disparate levels of education, class differences, and the inability to see the situation from the standpoint of the ruler all contribute to misunderstanding. All states have domestic and foreign policies. Some policies are good. Others may be harmful. But that's just the nature of being a statesman. Hard decisions must be made at times. One's hope always is that Allah will bless governors with prudence. But the accusation of "tyranny" is often a subjective appellation.

be assiduous in asking forgiveness, repentance, and repairing deeds...Then, if citizens wish to free themselves from the oppression of the emir, let them abandon oppression." (Al-Hanafī, Ibn Abi al-'Izz. *Sharh al-'Aqīdah al-Tahāwīyyah*. Beirut: Al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988, p. 381).

³⁴ Imam al-Tahāwī also says, "We also do not pray for evil to befall any one of them." About this Al-Maydani (1807-1881) says, "Because of the aversion that causes to hearts, the schism it creates, and because they might induce them to intensify the oppression." Al-Tahāwī continues, "We pray for their probity, success, and welfare." Al-Maydani says, "That is [we pray] for the reform of their intention, the soundness of their hearts, the success of their endeavors to subdue those who oppose their religion, and [welfare] from the oppression within them and their bad behavior." (Al-Maydānī, 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Ghanīmī. *Sharh al-'Aqīdah al-Tahāwīyyah al-Musammāh Bayān al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*. Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1997, p.111).

³⁵ The Prophet reportedly said, "There are three whose prayers are not rejected: the faster until he breaks his fast, the just leader, and the prayer of the oppressed..." (Al-Tirmidhī, Abu 'Īsā. *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*. Damascus and Riyadh: Dār al-Fayhā' and Dār al-Salām, 1999, p. 819, hadith #3598). Interestingly, both the just ruler and oppressed are given the same status.

If someone needs assistance and then disparages the help after being told that conditions are not ideal, how inclined do you think he would be to help? And if disparagement escalates to threats of physical harm and overthrow, the help would be even less inclined. He might even decide that support would be unwise since those in need might simply use that assistance to harm *him*. Thus is the state of the Muslim “autocrat.” I place “autocrat” in quotes to remind Muslims that Islamic governments and dynasties have never been popular democracies. Even the Ottoman empire, whose 1923 collapse so many Muslims lament, was not a cadre of officials elected by the populace. All dynasties are autocratic. Even modern democracies function autocratically. The only time democracy typically plays a part in democratic governments is during the election process.

It is easy to praise a king under whose rule one never lived. It is harder to find common ground and appreciate the complexities of statecraft with contemporaries. Ibn Khaldun saw nothing inherently evil about hereditary monarchies.³⁶ Prophets David and Solomon—upon them both Allah’s peace—were kings after all. Democracies are just as, if not more, prone to corruption as monarchies. Democracy can often be too disruptive to society. If one finds a good king, the extension of his rule is a net boon for citizens. If the king needs to abdicate rule for another due to elections, that may result in societal chaos. It is not the view of Shariah that extended hereditary rule is inherently evil nor that Islamic government is inherently democratic. Muslim governments could probably do better in the freedom and tolerance departments. But these are novel viewpoints which do not serve as clear evidence of tyranny. Those criteria do not accord with the reality of Muslim governance historically. They undermine any defense or praise of past regimes like the Ottomans or Abdul-Hamid II since they were a hereditary sultanate, not a democracy.

Palestinians are Not Uniform

I once asked if Palestinian lives are more important than their land and property. One respondent asked, “Why not let Palestinians decide?” Of course, this person lives comfortably in the West, not in a tent enduring the elements worried where their next meal might come from and when the next Israeli bombing campaign might begin. Western Muslims—especially those who don’t consider the West their home—seem to operate in the same way the US government does with respect to conflict areas like Ukraine. Ukrainian and Palestinian blood appears cheap. They are proxy soldiers on the frontline we exploit to defeat our enemies halfway around the world. Neither Ukrainians nor Palestinians should consider defeat an option. Abandoning one’s land is cowardice. Suffering is a mark of valor and dying at the hands of our enemies is the ultimate honor. If only those of us who cheer on the fighting from our computer screens would prove just how much we believe in these values by joining our brethren in their struggle.

One thing that Gaza proves is that Palestinians do not share this suicidal vision. More than 80% of Gazans fled once the Israeli bombs started to drop.³⁷ That means that more than 80% of Gazans choose life over death. Even if Fulān Fulānī in the US or UK thinks it’s great to die crushed under the rubble of one’s apartment building,

³⁶ Al-Hadramī, ‘Abd Al-Rahmān b. Muhammad b. Khaldūn. *Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldūn*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1993, p. 152.

³⁷ *Palestine - conflict in Gaza leaves 83 per cent of the population internally displaced in less than three months* (no date) IDMC - Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. Available at: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/spotlights/Palestine-Conflict-in-Gaza-leaves-83-per-cent-of-the-population-internally-displaced-in-less-than-three-months/> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

most Gazans do not seem interested in such a fate. And recently Anti-Hamas protests have erupted in the Palestinian territories blaming Hamas for their suffering and demanding that they leave.³⁸

Ask the Palestinians what is more important? Which Palestinians should we ask? Should we ask Hamas members? Should we ask the more than 80% of Gazans who fled the conflict? Or should we ask Palestinians living in the West? And which Palestinians living in the West? Of course, answers will vary from one group to another. If Hamas wants to fight to the last drop of blood, then so be it. But those who wish to live a dignified stable and comfortable life should not be forced to endure suffering along with them. And those who do not believe they should have to abandon their homeland and are willing to risk Israeli bombs should also be allowed to make that choice.

There are always multiple viewpoints prevailing among large populations. Not even Jews or Israelis are united in their vision for the future. Do I support the Palestinians? Yes, I do. I support all people who prefer life over death. In all civil conflicts there are *not* only two sides. It is not only the rebels, or the regime involved. There is also the majority who typically flee from the violence attempting to salvage what they can even if it means relocating until the conflict has ended. I have always supported this majority.

“Muslims” Have No Leverage

Zionists have worked for a century or more to achieve the level of control they exercise over Western politicians today. Their resources allow for them to make and destroy kings in democratic elections. Blackmail also factors into their methods.³⁹ Muslims constantly complain that American politicians are slaves to the Israeli lobby. And large donor capital is often highlighted as the reason for that fidelity. If money is the only factor in swaying politicians, Muslims might want to consider forming their own political action committees instead of constantly complaining of double standards as if one can shame politicians into voting their conscience. If Mariam Adelson can donate 100 million dollars to Trump, why can't Muslims do the same?

The reason Muslims don't is because they know deep down that money isn't the only factor involved in determining how a politician will govern, especially since multiple donors vie for the politician's ear while knowing that he/she can only guarantee that some, not all, of the client's desires can be fulfilled. A man can have only one master, not ten. Elon Musk donated more than Adelson to Trump's campaign. But Muslims do not claim that Trump is controlled by Elon. Would Muslims be satisfied if politicians did their bidding as they do the bidding of Israel? And if AIPAC is a 5th column in the US, wouldn't a blind allegiance to Muslims to serve our goals in the Middle East make us a 5th column as well?

This is why I emphasize the importance of embracing America as our home and its people as our people. Islam is a force of good. And society needs to know that. Non-Muslims should not be afraid of Islam and Muslims, especially when Muslims are weak minorities. The American public has cultural leverage. The Gulf nations have

³⁸ General, J. and Lindell, S. (2025) *for god's sake, Hamas out: Anti-hamas protests break out in northern Gaza*, CNN. Available at: <https://www.cnn.com/2025/03/25/world/video/anti-hamas-protests-northern-gaza-ugc-digvid> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

³⁹ Reporter, S. (2024) *Disgraced paedophile Jeffrey Epstein, the spy theory and israel angle*, TRT World - Breaking News, Live Coverage, Opinions and Videos. Available at: <https://www.trtworld.com/us-and-canada/disgraced-paedophile-jeffrey-epstein-the-spy-theory-and-israel-angle-16616743> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

financial leverage. Trump has political leverage. But Western Muslims have no real leverage. Muslims should be careful not to assume that since most young Tiktokers took the side of Palestinians that they will always act as committed soldiers in campaigns that Muslims spearhead. People are fickle and change when perceptions do. Gen-Z is one of Trump's core support bases. And if Muslims continue to openly fight against Anglo-Saxon heteronormative Christian capitalistic civilization, it's just a matter of time that those with real leverage will turn on us.

Aqsa Belongs to God

Aqsa is the property of Muslims. Orthodox Jews claim it's theirs. But they also claim territories stretching from the Nile River to the Euphrates.⁴⁰ Both Muslim and Jewish scripture employ old world moral logic to justify such claims. That moral logic can be summarized like this: 1) All lands belong to God as God is their creator. And since God created the human being to worship Him, the transfer of ownership of any lands acquired by His devotees can never be legitimate, as those lands are mortmain (*awqāf*) dedicated to the service and worship of God alone. The word that most accurately expresses this meaning is masjid i.e. the place of prostration and worship. The Qur'an says, "...and the *masājid* belong to God. So do not call upon anyone along with God." This verse is typically quoted as evidence that *masājid* are mortmain belonging to God alone. 2) The second principle at play is one of warfare which is that winners keep the spoils.

Before the international paradigm shift establishing the new policy declaring the invasion of sovereign nations to be immoral, the world operated under the presumption of war. Tribes and large states usurped territories belonging to others whenever resistance was too weak to repel invaders. If invaders could totally subdue their victims, the victors were deemed the rightful owners of the lands. And just as an apple or game becomes one's lawful property through the effort exerted to acquire them, the casualties suffered in the process of an invasion was the price paid for ownership.

Our Prophet said, "All land is God's land. And all people are God's people. So, whoever gives life to dead land, it belongs to him."⁴¹ Both Jewish and Muslim scripture endorse the old-world policy of incursions. The Qur'an showcases it in the travails of God's people, especially the Children of Israel, Moses and David.⁴² Muslim

⁴⁰ *Greater israel: An ongoing expansion plan for the Middle East and North Africa* (no date) MEPEI. Available at: <https://mepei.com/greater-israel-an-ongoing-expansion-plan-for-the-middle-east-and-north-africa/> (Accessed: 30 March 2025).

⁴¹ Al-Haythamī, 'Alī b. Abī Bakr. *Majma' al-Zawā'id* (Mu'assasah al-Ma'ārif, 1986), 4/160.

⁴² Several verses of the Qur'an allude to the notion that the land and property of enemies once vanquished is an inheritance of the victors. After speaking of the gardens, springs, and treasures Pharaoh and his forces left behind, Q 26:59 says, "So it was. And we had the Israelites inherit them." Similarly, Q 44:28 reads, "So it was; and We had other people inherit it." With reference to the raid on Khaybar, Q 33:26-27 read, "God has brought down from their fortifications those of the people of scripture who backed them, casting terror into their hearts, as you killed some of them and captured some of them; and made you heirs of their land, their dwellings, and their property, as well as land you have never trod upon: for God has power over all things." Surah 5:20-24 relates a story of Moses telling the Israelites, "My people, enter the holy land that God ordained for you..." where "ordained for you" appears to mean "ordained as a result of your promised victory." Unfortunately, many of the men refused to participate in the battle due to fear of the enemy occupier telling Moses, "Moses, we will never get in there as long as they remain there. So you and your Lord go and fight. We'll be sitting here." Because of their refusal, they were punished to wander in the desert for 40 years. Q 2:246-251 gives the Qur'an's account of the fight between David and Goliath which concludes with God saying of the victors, "And they routed them, with God's permission, and David killed Goliath: and God gave him dominion and wisdom, and taught him what God wanted." If God owns the Earth, it stands to reason that there is a price to

jurists held that Islamic territories cannot revert to being non-Islamic territories. This is why Muslims have continuously fought to recapture Jerusalem over the centuries with the most spectacular moment being the retaking of the city under Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi. Another layer of the conundrum was added when Palestinians were forcefully displaced, killed, and had their homes stolen. This made the matter about more than the Aqsa Mosque. It, then, became a matter of repelling the assailant (*daf' al-sā'il*) to defend one's property⁴³ as well as resisting the imposition of non-Muslim rule over a Muslim population.⁴⁴

But the new moral order further complicates the Israeli Palestinian “conflict” inasmuch that European Jews were allowed to operate according to the old moral order to take Palestine. And when Muslims appeal to “international law” rather than their religious foundations which legitimate the premodern moral logic of warfare, even greater confusion pervades. Of course, this decision to make international law the moral criterion for resolving the conflict is because of the difficulty of reconciling the old paradigm with new expectations. For other Muslims, however, it is merely a ploy obfuscating a more insidious mission to conquer the West through the political process.

These constitute elements subversive to Western democracies legitimating their distrust which, unfortunately, affects all Muslims. That notwithstanding, few nations today consider colonial expansionism moral. This includes conservatives who plead with critics not to judge the founding fathers who owned slaves

be paid to possess or become custodian of a part thereof. It so happens that warfare serves as a means of transferring ownership. This is why Ibn Juzayy al-Kalbī (1292-1340) lists war spoils (*al-ghanimah*) as an example of lawful wealth acquired without a substitute (*al-kasb bi ghayri 'iwad*). [Al-Kalbī, Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Juzayy. *Al-Qawānīn Al-Fiqhiyyah*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1998, p. 186]. The same logic applies to taking a life. Only God can take life or authorize human beings to take life.

⁴³ A man came to the Prophet—upon him Allah's blessing and peace—and asked, “O God's Messenger! What if a man wanted to take my property? The Prophet said, “Don't give it to him.” The man said, “But what if he fights me?” The Prophet responded, “Fight him back.” The man then asked, “What if he kills me?” The Prophet said, “Then you are a martyr.” The man said, “And what if I kill him?” The Prophet responded, “He is in Hell.” (Al-Nawwawī, Yahyā b. Sharaf. *Sahīh Muslim bi Sharh al-Nawwawī*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995, 1/2/134, hadith #140). Most scholars consider this hadith evidence of the permissibility to kill anyone attempting to take one's wealth regardless of how trifling the amount may be. Some Mālikis, however, held that one could not kill one's assailant if it is something small such as a garment or food. They also differ about the permissibility to kill someone who intends physical harm or tries to take one's life. Imam al-Nawwawī says, “There is no disagreement that it is compulsory to repel those invading one's sanctuary (*harīm*).”

⁴⁴ Imam al-Nawwawī quotes Qādī 'Ayyād as saying, “Scholars agree unanimously that the appointment of an unbeliever to leadership [over the Muslim population] shall not be confirmed, and if the [Muslim] leader apostatizes, he shall be removed...The same applies if he abandons the canonical prayers and the invitation to perform them...Most apply this [rule] to heresy (*bid'ah*) as well...Some scholars of Basra said: It will be confirmed for him and upheld (i.e. the heretic) since he is [merely] making a [bad] interpretation [of the sources]...If he apostatizes or alters the revealed law or becomes a heretic, he departs from the rule of governorship (*hukm al-wilāyah*), obedience to him is no longer binding, and Muslims become obligated to resist him, remove him, and erect a just leader if that is possible for them to achieve. Then, if that is only possible for a faction of them, they become obligated to resist to remove the unbeliever. But it is not an obligation towards the heretic unless they believe they can overpower him. But if they realize they are incapable, resisting is not compulsory. And let the Muslim emigrate from his land to another fleeing with his faith...It (leadership) is also not confirmed for a depraved person (*fāsiq*). But if the caliph becomes depraved, some have said he must be removed unless civil unrest and war results from it. And the supermajority of those who uphold the prophetic way among the jurists, hadith scholars, and theologians say that he shall not be removed because of depravity, injustice, and the suspension of rights. He shall not be removed. And it is impermissible to rebel against him because of that. Rather, he must be admonished and reminded to fear God considering the hadiths reported in that regard.” (Al-Nawwawī, Yahyā b. Sharaf. *Sahīh Muslim bi Sharh al-Nawwawī*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1995, 6/2/180, hadith #1709).

and colonized the American wilderness by today's moral standards. And when Muslims join the chorus of condemnation of American colonialists characterizing America as a nation founded upon slavery and the massacre of the natives as a polemic against the state of Israel, we further alienate our countrymen who seem open to old world rationalizations but wish not to be made liable for the failings of their ancestors.

What If Trump Succeeds?

At the start of this essay, I highlighted the extraordinary success of the Trump campaign and the popularity of his agenda to the American people. Both of his electoral victories happened in the shadow of reduced trust in public institutions. Trump voters sent him back to the White House because they believe he will fix America's problems and restore trust in government. The serendipitous congressional victory was an added boon which helped Trump make key appointments which improve chances of restoring that trust. And there is a chance that that majority will increase in the midterm elections if Democrats don't recover their equilibrium, especially if the economy improves. Whether it be the legacy media, the medical and food sectors, the FBI, the military, education, or criminal justice system, trust among Americans is at an all-time low.

The appointment of RFK Jr. as Secretary of Health and Human Services could inject a more science-based approach into vaccines and improve the health of our food. Jay Bhattacharya, the new director of the National Institute of Health (NIH) could alter the way that money influences scientific research. Kash Patel, the first FBI director of Indian heritage, could reform the agency and prevent it from being weaponized as a partisan tool of whoever occupies the oval office. Alternative media outlets could become the new legacy media but one trusted by most Americans as they are today. Qualified immunity could be restored to police. And the military could rebuild its stockpile of weapons and increase its recruitment of patriotic soldiers.

If President Trump succeeds in restoring trust in government institutions and Muslim activists and politicians continue antagonizing those on the right, things may not bode well for our community. This is an important consideration because the American public presently does not have the stomach for invasions of the scale seen during the Iraq war. It appears that the most that either the US or Israel can afford to do to its enemies is conduct bombing campaigns. But any military strategist would tell you that it takes boots on the ground to conquer an enemy. This will be the status quo unless and until the American people sees a need in such a campaign. But with the many reckless actions and statements being made by Muslim leadership, we may be one extraordinary event away from a shift in public opinion. The potential for that increases the more that Trump over halls the government with DOGE and his other appointees.

What If Trump Fails?

If Trump fails to restore trust in the public institutions, there's another potentially dangerous possibility: Politicians may weaponize the reckless activities of Muslim leftists to distract the American public by blaming economic and other problems on us. This method has been used by governments for centuries. So, with a secure border, illegals being deported, and the refocus on Muslim "anti-American" activism, an extraordinary event could also trigger an extreme reaction from the American public as it did after 9/11. We already know the American educational system is in shambles inasmuch that citizens haven't learned the critical tools needed to discern fact from fiction. This makes Americans ripe for manipulation. We all witnessed the mass psychosis event during the covid lockdowns. So, what makes us think another psychological operation would not succeed?

Conclusion

Muslim failure to overcome the stigma of unbelonging places us in a precarious situation as religious minorities. Far too many citizens perceive of us as a malignant threat to national identity. And when we do things that reinforce this suspicion, we corroborate those claims. If America is your permanent residence, you need to embrace it as your home and the American people as your people. That, however, does not mean you need to shed your Islamic identity and indulge in the vicious aspects of American culture. When you embrace your home, you are less prone to conduct yourself in a way which can be interpreted as unpatriotic and subversive to the public order. Rather, your protest will reflect the love for your country and desire to see it become a “more perfect union.” If any, the only flag one should be waving at protests are American flags. And if we want to avoid persecution by a pro-American government, we should not be burning American flags and calling for the death of America.

You can burn American flags and call for America’s fall somewhere else. But if you plan to reside here, there are consequences to these reckless actions which you should be willing to live with. And when you are prosecuted, you are not a victim. You are living the consequences of your choices. So, embrace them. Freedom of speech and expression are not absolute. That is why terroristic statements and indecent exposure are criminalized. Every country has restrictions on free speech and expression. Even Shariah punishes for disparaging God’s emissaries and calumny. Muslims cannot be in favor of free speech when it suits us and demand the punishment of others when they are critical of Islam and Muslims. If it is wrong to punish people for false accusations of Antisemitism, it is also wrong to punish them for perceived Islamophobia.

Muslims in America must decide both mission and strategy; Is our mission merely to liberate Palestine? Or is it to embody and deliver God’s message to humanity? Is our strategy designed merely for self-preservation? Or is it to complete the larger mission of delivering the message to those willing to embrace it free of compulsion? Are our countrymen our enemies? Or are they our brethren in humanity and neighbors whose rights deserve equal consideration as our own?

Men should lead the charge as we have been appointed by God as those responsible for guiding and protecting our community. That does not devalue the role that women play. But the most vulnerable should not be those leading the charge into dangerous territory. There is nothing controversial about this teaching. Its truth is acknowledged around the world despite claims to the contrary. The heresy is found in the reversal of these roles.

It is hazardous to announce one’s desire and plans to colonize the West. And if cultural assimilation is bad, the only reasonable options remaining are persuasive transformation or simply to live and let live. I am not jolted when I hear a conservative use the term “radical Islam” because the qualifier makes clear to me that I am not the object of that attack. I feel no more uneasiness about it than hearing that a murderer or rapist should be punished. That’s because I am neither of those things. Of course, a tolerant apolitical practicing Muslim may be seen as a radical as well. But as long as some Muslims act belligerently and imprudently, I have little cause to be offended by the use of the term. I put my trust in God that He will protect me from the beguiles of the treacherous. And even if I am victimized, I will turn to Him seeking his forgiveness and wisdom to endure such a trial as so many before me have done.

Muslims are challenged by disunity. And their primary causes are ideological (religious/political) and a failure of leadership to appeal to the better angels of our nature. The essence of loving one’s nation is to want good for it. And I want the same for both my Muslim brethren and my countrymen. Control your ego, anger, and lusts. Do not let them control you. The undisciplined soul is ripe for manipulation. Do not put our proverbial eggs in one basket by appealing to aid from one political party as opposed to another. Promote and embrace

dialogue and debate among Muslims rather than blacklisting voices that challenge mainstream Muslim political views. Seek the guidance of more well-rounded leaders and learn that repetitive failed political wisdom of leadership disqualifies them from leadership. Do not expect from non-Muslims the spiritual maturity that one should expect from Muslims. Work to create virtuous societies. Work with any and all political parties. And most importantly, stop being a victim.