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Trump's Muslim Immigration Ban: Ideology or Political Opportunism ?

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my parents who have provided me with encouragement, support, and love.

Special thanks go to my brother and sisters as well.

Rima

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my gratitude to Allah for everything, including the ability to accomplish this work.

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Abstract

This research examines the nature of Trump's anti-Muslim rhetoric which was delivered during the 2016 U.S. presidential elections. It also discusses his policy on Muslim immigrants and its implications. The purpose of this work is to investigate the motives behind Trump's discourse of hatred against Muslims. It also seeks to analyze the contradictions and the outcomes of Trump's policy on Muslim immigrants. In order to reach this purpose, the research relied on the observation of the republican candidate's speeches, declarations, and political experts' analysis and interviews that were conducted with them. It seems that Trump's anti-Muslim rhetoric was a fusion of ideology and political opportunism. On the one hand, Trump was convinced that a large segment of Muslims hate the U.S. Thus, the American government should take a restrictive stance on Muslim immigration. In addition, he advanced the protection of the national security in order not to bear the heavy burden of refugees coming from the "terror-prone places". On the other hand, Trump used an anti-Muslim rhetoric as a political tool that might have strengthened his chances in winning the 2016 U.S. presidential elections. In order to fulfill his campaign promise, the forty-fifth American president issued one of the most controversial executive orders on Muslim immigrants. His travel ban gave no mention to some Muslim countries despite having troublesome terrorist issues. This exclusion contradicts Trump's campaign. The republican president's real motives are a combination of pragmatism and ideology. Although Trump strongly believes in something, he implements policies which may be a bit different from his conviction because of trade interest.

Key Words:

Anti-Muslim rhetoric, Ideology, Muslim immigrants, political opportunism, U.S. presidential elections, terrorism, trade interest, Trump's campaign,

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List of Abbreviations

ACLU: American Civil Liberties Union

CAIR: The Council on American-Islamic Relations

CFR: Council on Foreign Relations

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation

INA: Immigration and Nationality Act

ISIS: Islamic State in Iraq and Syria

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General Introduction

For more than a decade following the attacks of 9/11¹, the Muslim issue did not receive sustained attention in the U.S. politics. However, when the lead-up to the 2016 U.S. presidential election cycle began in 2015, an anti-Muslim immigration rhetoric was mobilized by Donald Trump. The republican candidate waged a series of inflammatory comments, which articulated around race, nation, and immigration. He adopted an unprecedented discourse of hatred and rejection of Muslims since the start of his campaign. Even after winning the race to the White House, the republican president carried on his aggressiveness through issuing one of the most provocative immigration policies against Muslims. Trump's campaign discourse gave a clear overview of the life of Muslims under his administration.

Muslim immigration was a secondary issue in the U.S. politics. However, when Donald Trump announced his campaign for the U.S. presidency in 2015, the Muslim question was brought to the surface, and explicitly tackled by the republican nominee. Trump was not the only politician to talk about Muslim immigration. In fact, many U.S. politicians since Bill Clinton in the mid-nineties highlighted this issue. However, none of them treated the subject as an urgent national crisis like Trump did. The latter went further by describing the U.S. as a country failing behind because of the influx of immigrants and refugees, including Muslims.

In response to the stated problem, the study aims at highlighting the motives behind bringing up the issue of Muslim immigrants to the surface of the U.S. politics by the presidential nominee, Donald Trump. The present study aims at investigating the reason for including some Muslim countries on the American administration's travel ban list while excluding others despite having terrorism concerns. Furthermore, the research seeks to

¹ . On September 9, 2011, the United States came under attack when members of Al Qaeda hijacked four planes. Two jets flew into both towers of New York's World Trade Center. Then a third jet crashed into the Pentagon. Not long after, a fourth plane was intended for Washington D.C. crashed in Pennsylvania (Taylor).

evaluate the effectiveness of Trump's Muslim travel ban. Finally, the study seeks to trace the fulfillment of Trump's campaign promise regarding Muslim immigrants. In this vein, this research is an attempt to answer the following questions:

-Is Trump's anti-Muslim rhetoric a political tool to push his campaign ahead, or just a reflection of a deep rooted conviction?

-Why did Trump's travel ban exclude some Muslim nations despite having troublesome terrorist issues?

- Was Trump's Muslim Travel Ban an effective solution to curb terrorism?

-Did Trump fulfill his campaign promise regarding Muslim immigrants?

In this research, I'm going to adopt various approaches. First, I will use historical and descriptive approaches to depict the way American presidents treated Muslim immigrants before the coming of the forty-fifth president. Then, I will adopt the analytical approach to provide a deep examination of Trump's anti-Muslim rhetoric and discuss the implementation of his new immigration policy. Data will be collected from political statements and governmental sources in addition to the different views of researchers in the political field that are stated in their books and online articles.

In order to reach the stated objectives and answer the research questions, the present work will be divided into three main chapters. The first one is a background to Muslim immigrants and politics in the U.S. up to 2015. Donald Trump, as a candidate, introduced his political platform to the American people and revealed his plan to deal with contemporary issues in his presidential campaign. Thus, the second chapter will concentrate on Trump's rhetoric and campaign promises, which enable us to understand the motives behind his explicit discourse of hatred against Muslims. The third chapter will contain a careful examination of Trump's policy on Muslim immigrants and its implications. It focuses on the contradictions of the new travel ban. It also sheds light on the fulfillment of Trump's campaign promises.

A number of writers analyzed Trump's campaign rhetoric to understand the motives behind his provocative comments. The main available references that revolve around the present discussion can be seen in two major areas: First, Trump's call to ban Muslims from entering to the U.S was ideologically motivated. In her article "Making America 1920 Again? Nativism and US Immigration, Past and Present", Young believed that right from the beginning, Trump made it very clear that his vision for the American greatness is a nativist² one. Part of Donald Trump's promise to "Make America Great again" was to address Muslim-American relations. As a real American character, Trump vowed to take a restrictive stance on Muslim immigration to protect the American nation from the terrorist threat. Second, Trump has continuously linked Muslim immigration to terrorism in order to spread fear. In his article titled "Donald Trump: the Islamophobia President", Beydoun argued that Trump used an anti-Muslim rhetoric as form of political opportunism to push his campaign ahead.

A number of writers tried to shed light on Trump's executive order on Muslim immigrants. In his article titled "Does the Cure Address the Problem? Examining the Trump Administration's Executive Order on Immigration from Muslim-majority Countries Using Publicly Available Data on Terrorism", Milton believed that Trump's executive order restricting entry into the U.S from seven Muslim-majority countries was not an effective solution to curb terrorism in the U.S., because the administration's travel ban list excluded many Muslim countries, which suffer from troublesome terrorist issues. The travel ban affected the countries where Trump does not seem to have trade interests. In her article titled "countries where Trump does business are not hit by new travel restrictions", Helderman claimed that Trump's executive order did not include some Muslim counties where Trump's Organization is present despite having terrorism concerns. Finally, writers provided the

². "relating to nativism: the idea that people who were born in a country are more important than people who have come to the country from somewhere else," ("Nativist").

overall view of the implications of the travel ban. In her article titled “Trump travel ban cost airline industry \$185 M in bookings”, Aratani found that the travel industry was the most affected by the travel ban. She highlighted the fact that the drop in overseas travelers led to a decrease in revenues, taxes, and jobs. Trump was motivated by ideology as well as by political opportunism in addressing the Muslim issue. More specifically, this dissertation aims at revealing that Trump’s anti-Muslim rhetoric was a fusion of ideology and political opportunism. On the one hand, the republican candidate has a conviction that Muslims have hostile views towards the U.S. On the other hand, he implements policies which might be a bit different from his ideology because of Trump’s economic benefits.

Chapter One

Background to Muslim Immigrants and U.S. Politics

Introduction

Muslims had always lived in the U.S., yet they were not really visible in the political debates. In fact, it was until the eruption of the Iranian Revolution in the late 1970s that the Muslim issue became a central topic discussed in U.S. politics. By the 1990s, there was a periodic mention of Muslim's presence. However, the 9/11 attacks made Muslim immigration one of the most prominent issues discussed in any political debate in the U.S. The events of September 11, 2001 changed the American government's attitudes and policies toward Muslims up to 2015. This chapter examines some events which shaped the United States' treatment of Muslims. It also seeks to analyze the contradictions of Obama's political discourse and policy on Muslim immigrants.

1.1. Muslim Immigrants and American Politics up to 9/11

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed the arrival of a large number of Muslim immigrants. During that period, the American society prospered and many jobs were available. Another contributory factor was the invention of the steam engine and the railroad, which facilitated transportation all over the world. Since that time, the influx of Muslims to the U.S. continued to increase. A modern age of Muslim immigration flourished after the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which brought a radical change to the process of admitting new comers to the U.S. after decades of immigration restrictions (Beydoun Am 69).

The Muslim issue was not clearly visible in the U.S. politics. It was until the outbreak of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1978 that the American government started to consider the Muslim presence. Concerns about the coming of Iranians to start a revolution in the U.S. had grown rapidly. The White House was carefully following the developments in Iran. Due to the exaggerated media coverage, which portrayed the hostile events in Iran, Muslims were viewed as a source of terror threatening the American national security. The early scenes of

the Islamophobic sentiment in the U.S. started to appear as a result of the Iranian Revolution.

The Iran Hostage Crisis, which lasted from November 4TH, 1979 to January 20TH, 1981 coupled with the Persian Gulf War of 1991 had further contributed to the creation of the worst stereotypes about Muslims in the U.S. “the Islamic Revolution of Iran and the Hostage Crisis became emblematic of the ‘threat of Islam’” (Bassiri quoted in Beydoun Am 87). The escalation of tension between Washington and Tehran in the aftermath of the Hostage Crisis, which resulted in the capturing of U.S. diplomats and citizens in Iran for 400 days, changed the U.S. government’s view towards Muslims. The historian Bassiri said: “The event that most significantly affected the history of Islam in America at the outset of the 1990s was the Persian Gulf War” (quoted in Beydoun Am 89).

Since then, an anti-Muslim sentiment invaded the U.S. politics. The demonization of Muslims could be traced well before the terror attacks of 9/11. The rise of fear, hate, and discrimination against Muslims come from a deeply rooted American tradition of portraying Islam as a threat. Muslims were always victims of governmental policies and law enforcement. Following the Oklahoma City bombing, which occurred on April 19th, 1995, media reports claimed that “Islamic extremists” were behind the attack. Later on, this allegation was proved wrong as the FBI found no direct contact between the bombers and Muslims. Despite having no evidence about a potential link between Muslims and the Oklahoma City bombing, the American government issued legislations against Muslims. On April 24th, 1996, Bill Clinton issued the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, in an attempt to curb terrorism and provide justice to victims. The law led to further restrictions on the political and social activities of Muslim Americans. Under the act, many Muslims with real or imaginary links to terrorist groups were deported from the U.S.

1.2. Political Views on Muslims after 9/11

After the 9/11 attacks, Muslims immigration became a touchstone in the U.S. political debate. The Tower-Twin bombing led to a familiar and predictable reaction in the U.S. on two sides: government policies targeting people from Muslim and Arab descent, and nationwide violence against them. In fact, the federal government engaged in a campaign against terrorism. In addition, the administration and federal agencies introduced a series of policies at the expense of Muslim's civil liberties. A glimpse on these discriminatory laws and policies can provide a clear overview of the impact of the attacks of September eleven on the Muslim community in the U.S.

Muslims in the U.S. were victims of the counter-terror campaign. Within weeks, a number of Muslim and Arab non-citizens were arrested on suspicion of terrorist links. Later on, these accusations were proved wrong as the FBI found no contact between the detainees and the terrorist groups. Some of the detainees were charged with minor crimes while others were held in custody on immigration violations such as overstaying temporary non-immigrant visas. Non-immigrant Muslim students were subjects to mass arrest for violating the terms of their visas. The arrested students came mainly from: Iran, Syria, Pakistan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan. All these countries were accused of being safe haven for terrorists. In fact, the criminal process violated the civil liberties of many Muslims. The detainees were not identified while being in custody. This led the American Civil Liberties Union and other organizations to fill a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit in federal court in Washington urging the Attorney General to reveal the basic information of the detainees who were held in anonymity.

George W. Bush mobilized an anti-Muslim rhetoric which was further intensified by discriminatory policies targeting Muslim immigrants in the U.S. The Bush administration introduced many counter terror measures by advancing the protection of the national security

as its main rationale. The House of Representatives and the Senate agreed on the passage of the Patriot Act which relied on the racial and religious profiling of Muslims and Arabs. Muslims were negatively targeted by the counter terror measures. This put the status of American Muslims into question as most people were probably asking, if the government does not trust these people, why should we?

Individuals from Muslim and Arab descent were subject to nationwide violence. Many Americans questioned the possibility of establishing links between Western Muslims and Terrorism. With the rise of the Islamophobic sentiment, several Muslims were verbally or physically assaulted. In addition, many people “Muslims or Muslims looking” were murdered in response to the 9/11 attacks (Ali quoted in Beydoun Am 35). Most of them were Sikhs due to the clear resemblance between them and Muslims in terms of clothing because Sikhs men “wear turbans that look similar to the turbans worn by Osama Bin Laden and the Taliban” (Sticks and Stones quoted in Beydoun Am 94). Animosity against Muslims or Muslim looking individuals increased in the American society. “In 2007, CAIR reported receiving about 1,900 complaints of abuse and noted that anti-Muslim physical violence increased by 52% between 2003 and 2004” (Moore quoted in Beydoun 104). This violence was fueled by many laws which accused Muslims of posing a threat to the national security by depicting Islam as an alien and Muslims as foreigners.

In response to the attacks, Muslim diaspora in America showed their sympathy towards the families of the victims. Furthermore, they harshly condemned the senseless violence and explained that Islam does not allow such violent practices. In Paterson and New Jersey, many American Muslims held banners reading “The Muslim Community Does Not Support Terrorism”. The American Muslim Political Coordination Council issued a press release proclaiming that American Muslims harshly denounce all acts of terrorism against innocent civilians. They called for a severe punishment of the perpetrators. A similar position was taken by The Islamic Circle of North America, which proclaimed that Islam does not permit

such unjust acts.

The Afghan war was one of the main events that affected the American government's vision towards Muslims. Afghanistan became a land for U.S. troops after president George W Bush invaded the country by force in response to the 9/11 attacks. Although Afghanistan was the base of El-Qaeda, none of the nineteen hijackers were Afghan nationals. The Bush administration advanced the eradication of El-Qaeda and combating terrorism as the main reasons behind the invasion of Afghanistan. This mission of maintaining world peace dragged the country into a long civil war. The political instability in Afghanistan softened the ground for the terrorist organizations to grow and expand. Since then the Muslim issue was excessively discussed in the U.S. politics.

The American government's vision was profoundly affected by the political upheavals in Iraq. The ongoing turbulence in Iraq created a black image on the Muslim world. As a result, Muslim immigration remained a central issue in the American politics. Following the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the U.S. military invaded and occupied Iraq in order to take revenge for those acts of terrorism. Furthermore, this military involvement was mainly driven by the belief that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. The U.S. and its allies advanced the elimination of the weapons of mass destruction, destroying the terrorist groups, and ending the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein as the primary rationales for the war on Iraq. However, all these allegations were proven unrealistic because no weapons were found, and no terrorist group existed in Iraq. The state of instability in the oil-rich country softened the ground for the spread of the terrorist groups.

1.3. Obama's Political Rhetoric on Islam and Muslims

It seems that Obama's political rhetoric was soft towards Muslims. After each terrorist attack, he tried to unite the nation and ensure a sense of security among the Americans. In the aftermath of any terrorist attack committed by Muslims, Obama sought to avoid any kind of conflation of Islam with terrorism which would put the Western and Muslim worlds in

confrontation (Lewis quoted in Friedman). He tended to choose his words with particular care when addressing the connection between Islam and terrorism. He avoided labeling the war against El Qaeda members as a war against “Muslim” terrorism or referring to their ideology as “Islamic” or “Jihadist”. Obama told The Atlantic’s Jeffrey Goldberg: “loose language that appears to pose a civilizational conflict between the West and Islam or the modern world and Islam, then we make it harder, not easier, for our friends and allies and ordinary people to resist and push back against the worst impulses inside the Muslim world”. Labeling the brutal acts of violence as “Islamic” would confirm the jihadists’ narratives of an existing war between the U.S. and Islam itself (quoted in Friedman).

Obama’s refusal to acknowledge the “Islamic Terrorism” subjected him to widespread criticism. In response, he addressed his political opponents by stressing the fact that Muslims too were targeted by terrorism and there is no religious rationale, which could justify these barbaric acts. For Obama, probably the best way to curb the spread of terrorism was not to target Muslims by issuing immigration policy that would suspend their entry but to impose gun control restrictions. Obama believed that since guns were accessible to everyone in the U.S., the level of the terrorist threat would rise.

Obama had always this tendency of considering Muslims as part of the American society. He stressed the fact that the anti-Muslim rhetoric was incompatible with the nation’s values. He tried to fight all kinds of bigotry and defended religious freedom. For him, Muslims were a group of immigrants who served the U.S., and contributed to its economic development. In his first visit to a U.S. mosque, Obama said: "Thank you for serving your community, thank you for lifting up the lives of your neighbors, and for helping keep us strong and united as one American family" (Obama condemns anti-Muslim rhetoric in first US mosque visit). Obama claimed that Muslims were still being ill-treated because of the acts committed by individuals with an Islamic faith. Many people knew Islam from the news after the terrorist attacks or from the press, and films which characterized Muslims as dangerous groups of immigrants by

creating the bad stereotype about them (Ibid).

Obama had over criticized the exaggerated media coverage and movie portrayals, which depicted Muslims as a dangerous group of immigrants. In the aftermath of many terrorist attacks, the press tried to show the bad side of Islam by portraying Muslims as religious extremists who believe only in jihad. They totally forgot to reveal the scenes which convey a humanitarian message transmitted by Muslim Americans. In the wake of several terrorist acts, Muslims were providing aids to the victims' relatives. In addition, they condemned all sorts of aggression against innocent people because these practices have nothing to do with Islam. Obama emphasized that the media should shed light on the positive side of Muslims and contribute to softening the ground for the beginning of a new era of the Muslim-American relations. U.S. television shows must reveal Muslim characters without giving mention to terrorism; the Muslim issue should not be always linked to the national security. Obama had also urged Muslims to denounce the terrorist attacks in order to avoid any conflation between Islam and terrorism.

Obama's reactions to the terrorist attacks committed by jihadists provided a large window into his thinking on Islam. In the wake of the killing of 11 employees of the Charlie Hebdo magazine on January 7th, 2015, by religious extremists, a number of the world's presidents marched along with French protesters to condemn Islamic radicalization. Despite being present in Paris, Obama did not join the march because he believed that by doing so, he would strengthen the jihadists' belief of an existing war between Islam and the West. Obama called for "a new beginning in the American-Muslim relationships".

Contrary to his soft discourse on Muslims, Obama followed the footsteps of his predecessor, George. W. Bush. He engaged in a counter terror campaign, which seemed to single out Muslims for more scrutiny. Obama's immigrant background and Islamic roots led many Muslim immigrants in the U.S. to expect some immigration reforms which would serve them. However, he endorsed some of Bush's programs and policies such as the Patriotic Act

and the Immigration and Nationality Act (Esposito and Finley 236). If immigrants thought that Obama would deviate from his predecessor's path regarding the issue of immigration, it was clearly visible from his senate record that he would maintain Bush's position.

Obama continued to advocate "Immigration reforms in terms of national security, the role of the law, and fairness" (Dorsey and Dias-Barriga). According to Esposito and Finley:

Record deportations, increased border militarization, delegation of immigration enforcement authority to local officials, expanding workplace enforcement failing to aggressively pursue comprehensive reform, and not doing well to stem a rising tide of anti-immigrants sentiment are all noble deficiencies (30).

Conclusion

In fact, Muslims had always lived in the U.S. with little visibility. When the Iranian Revolution erupted in 1979, the issue of Muslim immigration was brought to the surface of the U.S. politics. The American government was highly concerned with the political upheavals in Iran. In fact, before the 9/11 attacks, Muslims were not really present in the U.S. politics, although they had their shares of media coverage and movie portrayals. However, from 9/11 onwards, the question of Muslim immigrants became a central topic in the American politics. The Tower-Twin bombings coupled with the war in Afghanistan, and the question of Iraq made Muslim immigration one of the most crucial topics discussed in any political debate. The American government's attitudes and policies against Muslims were mainly shaped due to the exaggerated media portrayals, which depicted the horrible scenes of the wars. Nearly one decade following the events of September 11, Barack Obama emerged as a political figure, who used a soft tone in tackling the Muslim topic. Contrary to this softness, Obama had just followed the footsteps of George Bush by issuing a number of laws which singled out Muslims and put them under scrutiny.

Chapter Two

The Muslim Issue in Trump's Electoral Campaign

Introduction

Muslim immigration was a secondary issue. It did not dominate the political scene of the U.S. until the coming of Donald Trump. The Muslim issue was discussed by many U.S. politicians since Bill Clinton in the nineties, yet none of them treated the issue as an urgent national crisis like Trump did. The republican candidate, who had no political experience, participated in the 2016 U.S. elections by endorsing a quite different ideology in dealing with some crucial topics like the Muslim issue. He adopted an explicit discourse of hatred and rejection of Muslims. He had largely built his presidential campaign, which started in 2015, around provocative pronouncements which targeted Muslims in the U.S. This chapter investigates the impact of the political upheavals in some Muslim countries on Trump's own thinking and ideology. It also seeks to examine the possibility of using an anti-Muslim rhetoric as a tool that would strengthen Trump's chances in winning the 2016 U.S. elections.

2.1. Trump's Electoral Campaign Amidst Global Influence and Regional Dilemmas

The Middle East and North Africa witnessed a state of disorder and disarray. Political instability and upheavals have been to the fore over the past eight years in Syria, Libya, and many Muslim countries. There were many peaceful demonstrations led by ordinary citizens on the basis of ending the dictatorship, promoting a democratic transition of power, and improving the living conditions of the citizens. In some countries which witnessed the Arab spring, the path towards democracy was full of success. In Tunisia, the demonstrators managed to overthrow the president Zin El Abidine Ben Ali. President Hosni Mubarak was likewise forced from power and sentenced to life in prison (Hendawi quoted in Ismael 230). However, in some Muslim nations as Libya and Syria, the desire of ambitious people was hijacked by corrupt regimes. The state of instability and insecurity which was created by the 2011 uprising paved the way for one of the biggest terrorist organizations to expand and grow

rapidly in the conflict zones.

The impact of the Syrian civil war was clearly seen in Trump's campaign rhetoric regarding the Muslim issue. In fact, the developments of the Arab spring gave hope and power to the Syrian demonstrators to break the wall of silence which remained solid for a long period of time. The popular uprising in Syria; however, deviated from its peaceful path. The state of disorder and instability caused by the war lasted for years until the present day. In 2011, a revolution started all over Syria, but the demonstrators did not manage to ouster their president Bashar El-Assad. The peaceful manifestations led by ordinary citizens turned out into a brutal civil war between Al Assad's regime and the opposition groups. The circumstances in the region created a fertile land for ISIS¹ to grow and expand. This had pushed Trump, as a candidate, to introduce a solution which would stop the spread of ISIS into the American society without getting the country involved in a war.

The U.S. was highly concerned with the political instability in Libya. It was driven by the idea that the Libyan fighters who had been radicalized and trained by extremist groups would be able to carry out some terrorist activities in the countries to which they may travel. Libya became a vital area for the terrorist operations of ISIS which managed to penetrate its borders. The security gaps, which were created following the removal of Gaddafi, softened the ground for one of the most dangerous terrorist groups to expand rapidly in the region. The peaceful demonstrations in Libya were not successful as it was the case with the neighboring Tunisia. The revolt against Muammar Gaddafi was transformed into an armed conflict, ultimately resulting in the intervention of the NATO to back the opposition; this involvement which was justified by an international "responsibility to protect" (Rieff quoted in Ismael 230). Following this military invasion, Gaddafi was captured by Libyan rebels in October, 2011 and eventually subjected to summary execution. Instead of pushing the country towards a new era

¹ ISIS: an acronym which stands for "the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria". "It is an offshoot of Al Qaeda in Iraq, a terrorist group which attacked the U.S. on Sep. 11, 2001". (Specia)

of reconstruction, the different parties were competing to grab more power and resources. This led the peaceful transition of power to end up by a brutal civil war in 2014.

2.2. The Position of the U.S. from the Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa

During the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign, the republican candidate, Donald Trump, harshly criticized the previous American presidents for what he called the “disastrous” intervention of the U.S. in the Middle East and North Africa, claiming that the citizens are still suffering from the outcomes of these interventions (Trump). Johnson reported an important statement made by Trump, and that showed the isolationist strategy as the new America’s foreign policy. Trump endorsed “America First Policy”, which highlighted the fact that the interest of the U.S. is above all and each foreign operation should be done in reference to America’s benefits. Although Trump showed his complete and total disagreement with the American military interference in many regions of conflicts including the Middle East and North Africa, he promised to make deterrent actions when necessary, He said: “I will not hesitate to deploy military force when there is no alternative... if America fights, it must fight to win” (Trump quoted in Johnson).

Trump’s influence of the political upheavals in the Middle East and North Africa was clearly visible in his campaign pronouncements, which revolved around denying individuals from Muslim majority-countries entry into the U.S. During the 2015 U.S. presidential campaign much ink has been spilled on the state of political instability in the Middle East and North Africa. Contrary to his predecessors who got the U.S. involved in military operations in Syria, Donald Trump felt the necessity to deal with the rise of ISIS, which threatened the American national security by endorsing a different strategy. Despite the fact that Trump showed his opposition to the Syrian president Bashar El-Assad, he promised to distance the U.S. from the Syrian conflict (Johnson). Instead of engaging in a counter-terror war in Syria

and dragging the U.S. into a conflict from which it will not benefit, Trump favored to deal with this issue by preventing people with an Islamic background from entering the U.S. He insisted to label the world terror “Radical Islamic terrorism”². Trump has been calling for taught entry measures on foreigners. His focus was put mainly on Muslim aliens relating any terrorist event to individuals with an Islamic faith.

2.3. Trump’s Campaign Discourse against Muslims

In fact, trump mobilized an anti-Muslim discourse since he announced his candidacy for the U.S. presidency. During his presidential campaign, Trump made inflammatory comments around Muslims and Islam by stating that: “there is a great hatred towards Americans by a large segment of Muslim population” (Trump quoted in Wang). In an interview with the CNN, the republican president stated: “I think Islam hates us,” when he was asked if he was referring to “radical Islam,” he responded, “It’s radical, but it’s very hard to define. It’s very hard to separate. Because you don’t know who’s who”(Trump quoted in Schleifer). Trump had always used the term radical Islam whenever he describes the brutal acts of the terrorists. Many believe that the term will strengthen the belief that radicalism is deeply rooted in the religion of Islam. He is the first president to conflate Islam and terrorism since the attacks of 9/11. “I think this is the single most important difference between Trump and his predecessors—the extent to which he conflates Islam, immigration, and terrorism” (Neumann quoted in Gilsinan). This tendency of linking immigration and terrorism was visible in Trump’s rhetoric after each terror attack especially when it is carried out by Muslims. Trump is accustomed to immediately acknowledge the attacks committed by Muslims even before the exact evidences are released by the FBI, while he remains reluctant to respond to white supremacist terrorism (Fang).

The anti-Muslim sentiment was a permanent part in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

². the term refers to a terrorist action committed by individuals or a group of people who pledge allegiance to the Islamic State and who embrace the Islamic ideals (Encyclopedia, Islamic terrorism).

Trump was not the only candidate to deliver an anti-Muslim and xenophobic rhetoric. Many republican candidates normalized the anti-Muslim discourse to mobilize voters. Aziza argued: “One in which more candidates are using Islamophobic rhetoric as a way to establish conservative credentials and galvanize voters” (Aziza). During the 2016 U.S. presidential election, the candidate Sen. Ted Cruz exploited the Brussels bombing which was carried out by Islamic extremist, to warn against “homegrown” terrorism”. He called for law enforcement to “patrol and secure Muslim neighborhoods” (Cruz quoted in Zezima and Goldan). The Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson likewise argued that Islam was incompatible with the constitution. Fear about Islam was believed to be present in U.S. elections.

Trump’s campaign gained sustained attention among observers from all sides of the political spectrum. The election of the republican candidate who had no political or military experience and demonstrated very little knowledge of foreign and domestic policy was a surprise to many citizens and politicians including his party leaders. Trump had largely built his presidential campaign around provocative pronouncement articulated around race, nation, and immigration. Throughout the 2015-2016 campaigning period, Trump’s speeches become a target for growing chorus of critics. His inflammatory comments which challenged large portion of the American society ignored the general rules of political discourse. His presidential campaign varied a lot from that of his predecessor. In his race for the White House, Barack Obama treated all minority groups as U.S. citizens. However, Trump took a restrictive stance on immigrants. He sought to bring America to its greatness again by adopting a white nationalist ideology.

Trump has been calling to impose taught entry measures on foreigners. His focus was put on individuals with an Islamic background. Following the failure of 2011 uprising which took place in many Muslim countries, ISIS started to score success namely in the Middle East and parts of North Africa. Trump’s action was driven mainly by the belief that nationals who come from conflict zones in which ISIS is highly active may travel to the U.S. and subject the

country to potential terrorist activities. Trump's belief was clearly reflected in one of his pronouncements when he declared: "Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure what is doing on" (Trump).

The republican candidate's stunning electoral campaign victory was debatable. Certainly his slogan "Make America great again" contributed to Trump's triumph. Many people were inspired by his slogan. The first three words hold a strong desire to bring the nation back to its glorious past. In order to understand Trump's success, historians should focus on the last word of the slogan: "again." This single word took the electorate back to a historical era during which America was great. Trump began his bid for the presidential race with a speech describing the U.S. as a nation falling behind (Young). Throughout the campaign Trump argued that the key obstacle which prevents America from becoming great again is immigration. During his presidential campaign, Trump labeled the Mexican immigrants "rapist and criminals". He went even further by promising to build a "big, beautiful" wall along the southern borders. Furthermore, Trump kept conflating Islam and terrorism, calling for "a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering to the U.S" (quoted in Young 218). Trump made it clear right from the beginning that the only way to make America great again is by endorsing a nativist vision.

This nativist vision was clearly visible in the 1920s during which immigration was sharply restricted. This means that Trump's America looked more like America of the 1920s. The American nativists who were in opposition to Muslim immigration, argue that this group of immigrants is inassimilable. Muslims come from linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds which are totally different from that of the native born American majority. They fail to adapt to the American society because they usually tend to cling to their own heritage. By this rationale, Muslims presence put the Christian identity of the American society at risk. Furthermore, the nativists had tendency to view Muslim as dangerous groups because of their

purported links with religious extremists. In her article titled “establishing a ban on Muslims entering the U.S.”, Carroll argued that Trump believes that Muslim hate America. Thus, the government should not let people with hostile views enter the United States (Carroll).

Trump’s real aim was to ban Latin Americans from entering the U.S. By mobilizing an anti-Muslim rhetoric, the republican candidate was just trying to divert attention and prepare the public for the building of the wall along the Southern borders. In fact, Latin Americans come in large numbers and they are more hostile than Muslims. Many cases of domestic violence and drug dealing are attributed to them. During his presidential campaign, Trump described Mexicans by saying: “They are bringing drugs. They are bringing crime. They are rapists” (Moody). Another likely motive behind Trump’s rejection of Muslims could be linked to the issue of refugees. Many Muslim countries including Syria, Yemen, Somalia, and Libya were dragged into brutal civil wars. Trump was not willing to bear the heavy burden of refugees. He could not publically announce that he did not want people who fled the terror-prone places in his country; otherwise he would have been accused of being inhuman. Trump intelligently advanced the protection of the national security in order to keep refugees away from the U.S.

Donald Trump has proven that the strategy of spreading fear is deeply rooted in the U.S. politics. Fear has always been historically an effective tool in political rhetoric, so it was not surprising to see Donald Trump exploiting the public’s anxieties in a presidential campaign. "From start to finish, the 2016 presidential election vividly revealed that Islamophobia is alive, and potent and politically resonant as ever. Scapegoating Islam and vilifying Muslims was far more than merely campaign messaging; for Donald Trump it was a winning strategy"(Beydoun). During his presidential campaign Donald Trump stated:

Without looking at the various polling data, it is obvious to anybody the hatred is beyond comprehension. Where this hatred comes from and why we will have to determine. Until we are able to determine and understand this problem and the

dangerous threat it poses, our country cannot be the victims of horrendous attacks by people that believe only in Jihad, and have no sense of reason or respect for human life. (Trump quoted in Estepa)

As a candidate, Donald Trump tended to exploit the threat of terrorism in order to stop Muslims coming into the U.S. He used the Bernardino shooting³ to propose his “Muslim ban”. In fact, many critics believe that Trump is an opportunist who takes “advantage of situations”. Despite having no evidence that the attack was carried out by Islamic extremists, Trump waited no time to criticize Muslims and propose his “Travel ban”. While Barack Obama asked for justice and solidarity with Muslims, Donald Trump responded to the shooting by calling for: “total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States” (Fang). According to Trump’s campaign manager the Muslim ban was applied on all Muslim with immigrant and non immigrant visas (Lewandowski quoted in Diamond). This showed that Trump’s ideology is applied against all Muslims without singling out the extremist ones. This proposal contradicted everything the founding fathers of the American nation stood for and believed in. The Bernardino shooting was an opportunity for Trump to introduce his travel ban that targeted Muslim-majority countries.

Trump used the Orlando shooting⁴ to promote his “extreme vetting” Muslim ban. The shooting was exploited by the republican presidential candidate to stress the necessity of implementing a kind of immigration restrictions on Muslims who were portrayed as dangerous people. Julian E. Zelizer, a professor of history and public affairs at Princeton, said Mr. Trump was using the attack as an “I-told-you-so” moment. “He would see this as a

³ In 2015, a muslim couple opened fire at a social sevice center in San Bernardino, California. The attack left 14 people deas and 17 injured (Ferner el all).

⁴ On June 12, 2016, in Orlando, Florida, Omar Mateen killed 49 people and injured 53 others at a gay nightclub (BBC).

confirmation of all the things he has been saying about the threat the United States faces and the need to be more aggressive” (quoted in Patrick and Thomas). Shortly after the Islamic State said that it was behind the attack, President Obama said there was no clear evidence of possible ties between the gunman and the Islamic state (BBC). In an opposite reaction, Trump delivered a speech “on immigration, terrorism and national security” (Gilsinan). He used the fact that attacker was born in America to Afghan parents to criticize the U.S. immigration system by stating: “the bottom line is that the only reason the killer was in America in the firstplace was because we allowed his family to come here” He continued: “We are importing radical Islamic terrorism into the West through a failed immigration system” (Gilsinan). Michael Signer argued that Mr. Trump took advantage of the Orlando shooting to spread fears. “This was what we were all worried about, that some kind of national disaster would come along that would give him what he wants” (Signer quoted in Healy and Kaplan).

The rise of Donald Trump as an Islamophobic leader evoked a sense of fear Muslims had after 9/11/. In fact, the anti-Muslim sentiment existed long before Donald Trump. Muslims were targets of prejudice, racism, and discrimination. The attacks of 9/11 on the World Trade Center created the worst stereotypes on Muslims. With the rise of ISIS, fear of Islam had further increased. However, the emergence of Trump in the political sphere intensified the anti-Islamic sentiment. During his presidential campaign, Trump delivered provocative statements about Muslim immigrants and terrorism. Although the political rhetoric is not the only factor which exposed Muslims to discriminatory actions, it remains so effective in influencing the public vision towards Islam.

The rhetoric of political leaders can profoundly shape the public vision. The way politicians respond to terrorist attacks can be reflected in people’s reaction to a certain issue. California State University-San Bernardino’s Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism in its recent report examined hate crimes cases following two reactions to terror attacks from two American presidents. First, George W Bush’s rhetoric in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks

stating that: “Islam is peace” and “the face of terror is not the true faith of Islam,” and the second, Trump’s call to ban Muslims from entering the U.S. as a response to the Bernardino shooting. The report highlighted that hate crimes witnessed a decline following Bush’s remarks while Trump’s comments contributed to the increase in hate crimes.

Trump’s inflammatory comments on Muslims led to an increasing level of hate crime cases against this minority group. In his article published on Al Jazeera World entitled, “Islamophobia in the USA” Abdullah Elshamy showed that trump supporters had either attacked, harassed or plotted to kill Muslims during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign. These incidents would question the possibility of an existing relation between Trump’s anti-Muslim oratory and the increasing number of hate crime cases in the U.S. The Council on American-Islamic Relations published a report titled “The Empowerment of Hate” on May 9TH, 2016 recording fifty-seven percent increase in anti-Muslim incidents over 2015. The same period witnessed an increase of forty-four percent in anti-Muslim hate crime cases. (Council on American- Islamic Relations)

During Trump’s campaign Muslims were subject to different kinds of miss treatment. The Council on American-Islamic relations published a report revealing the top five types of anti-Muslim bias incidents which included harassment, the FBI investigations, employment issues, hate crimes, and denials of religious accommodations. Harassment was on the top of anti-Muslim bias incidents. The case during which the complainant was investigated by the FBI came in the second position making fifteen percent of the total number of the incidents. The third largest category was employment issues which encompassed denial of work, being passed over for promotion, or harassment by a supervisor accounting for thirteen percent of the cases. Hate crimes were placed in the fourth position making thirteen percent at large. Denials of religion which include the inability of the complainant to wear headscarf at work or possessing Quran in their jail cell, was put in the fifth category. If the Trump presidential campaign led to the increase in hate crimes against Muslim Americans, one can imagine what

will Trump's presidency bring?

Conclusion

During the 2016 presidential campaign, the republican candidate, Donald Trump run on a platform of blocking Muslim immigration to the U.S. Trump's Muslim ban was ideologically motivated as he was convinced that a large segment of Muslims hate the U.S. Thus, the government should take a more restrictive stance on immigration in order to ban individuals with hostile views from entering the U.S. Trump's vision was profoundly affected by the regional upheavals in the Muslim world. He advanced the protection of the national security in order not to bear the burden of refugees. Another motive behind Trump's rejection of Muslims could be linked to his desire to return to greatness. For him, America was "falling behind" and losing its real values due to the influx immigrants, including Muslims. Furthermore, the republican president's real aim was to ban Latin Americans from entering the U.S. By mobilizing an anti-Muslim rhetoric, Trump was just trying to divert attention and prepare the public for the building of the wall along the Southern borders. Trump is an opportunist who takes advantage of situations. His anti-Muslims rhetoric was far more than merely campaign messaging; it was a winning strategy.

Chapter Three

Trump's Policy on Muslim Immigrants and its Implications

Introduction

During the U.S. presidential cycle, Trump called for a “total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the U.S.” In order to hold on his campaign promise, Trump issued one of the most controversial executive orders on Muslim immigrants. This chapter will track down the republican president’s campaign pledges and declarations regarding Muslims. It investigates the reason behind targeting some Muslim countries and excluding others despite having troublesome terrorist issues. In addition, it focuses on the legitimacy and the effectiveness of the anti-Muslim immigration policy. It will also shed light on the consequences of the Trump Administration’s Executive Order on different sectors such as education, tourism, and travel industries. It finally traces the fulfillment of Trump’s campaign promise on Muslim Immigrants.

3.1. Trump’s Executive Order on Immigration from Muslim-majority Countries

Since his first days in office, many executive orders on immigration have been issued by the Trump administration. The most controversial one was issued on January 27th, 2017, just one week after his inauguration as the forty-fifth president of the United States. The travel ban, which was titled “Protecting the nation from foreign terrorists entering to the United States”, covered Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Libya, Sudan, Yemen, and Iran. Nationals from those countries were not allowed to enter the U.S. for ninety days. It indefinitely suspended refugees from Syria. The executive order also blocked the entry of all refugees to the U.S. for four months. It also sought to review the visa interview waiver program. Multiple District and Appellate courts in the U.S. blocked the implementation of the order on the basis of violating the religious freedom guaranteed by the constitution. As argued that protesters had a "strong likelihood of success" in establishing that their removal "violates their rights to Due Process and Equal Protection guaranteed by the United States Constitution"(Ann M. Donnelley).

Due to ongoing criticism and legal challenges, the original executive order was revised

and reshaped on March 16th, 2017 to reduce the number of countries being affected by the decision into six nations. This time, the second version of the travel ban excluded Iraq from the countries whose citizens were denied entry to the U.S. It blocked the entry of individuals from Syria, Somalia, Iran, Libya, Yemen, and Sudan for ninety days and all refugees for 120 days. In fact, “the watered down version” of the original order did not seem to please opponents. Many lawsuits were filed to challenge the legitimacy of the travel ban. In mid June, the Supreme Court upheld Trump’s travel ban. The third version of Trump’s travel ban suspended the admission of foreign nationals from Syria, Somalia, Iran, Yemen, Libya, Venezuela and North Korea with different levels of travel restrictions. The Supreme Court allowed a “partial ban” excluding those with “bona fide”¹ relationships. In its decision, the court said national from six Muslim-majority countries must have a close relative in order to be able to enter the U.S. On December 2017, the Supreme Court agreed on allowing the new travel ban to take effect.

Many opponents believed that the travel ban was in fact a “Muslim ban”, a claim which was repeatedly rejected by the Trump administration. A debate about the legitimacy of the term “Muslim ban” was opened. Critics argued that the latest travel ban, which added Venezuela and North Korea, was designed to hide the real fact that it was still a Muslim ban. By adding non Muslim-majority countries, the Trump administration was trying to challenge the legal argument brought against the previous versions. Associate justice, Sonia Sotomayor referred to statements Trump made during his campaign including his call for "a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what the hell is going on." This strengthens the belief that Trump’s ban was in fact a “Muslim ban”. She argued: "Taking all the relevant evidence together, a reasonable observer would conclude that the proclamation was driven primarily by anti-Muslim animus,

¹. They have to prove their relation to a parent, spouse, child, adult son or daughter, son-in-law, daughter-in-law or sibling.

rather than by the government's asserted national-security justifications" (quoted in Rubin).

Supporters of Trump's travel ban rejected the term "Muslim ban", claiming that the ban was not based on religion, but on the protection of the national security. On January 29, Trump responded to criticism by stating: "To be clear, this is not a Muslim ban, as the media is falsely reporting. This is not about religion. This is about terror and keeping our country safe" (The White House). Trump argued that the order was not applied on more than forty Muslim-majority nations; it singled out national from only seven predominantly Muslim countries which made about twelve percent of the world's Muslim population. Sean Spicer, Trump's press secretary also refused the term "Muslim ban" stating that:

I think the president has talked about extreme vetting and the need to keep America safe for a very, very long time. At the same time, he's also made very clear that this is not a Muslim ban, it's not a travel ban. It's a vetting system to keep America safe. (quoted in Volverde)

3.2. Dimensions of Trump's Executive Order

Although Trump's travel ban received widespread criticism, there has not been an attempt to use the available data on terrorist activity to scrutinize the main reason of denying entry to people from seven Muslim countries. Is there any proof which could back the inclusion of Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Somalia, Libya, and Yemen on the American administration's list of the banned countries from which terrorists are likely to come from? Does the evidence support the inclusion of those countries while excluding others?

Trump's travel ban is a complicated issue that may have a variety of reasons. In fact, the main argument, which could help analyze the travel restriction debate, is related to the protection of the national security as the main rationale for banning individuals from Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Somalia, Libya, and Yemen from entering the U.S. This argument assumes that allowing entry to people coming from conflict zones will subject America specifically and the world generally to terrorist threats.

The executive order did not include countries whose nationals had previously carried out terrorist attacks on the American soil. This point tends to revolve around the most tragic and horrific terrorist event in the American history: The September 11TH, 2001 attacks. The fact that none of the attackers was originated from the abovementioned countries made Trump's executive order flawed. The Trump administration claimed that the seven Muslim majority countries were selected due to their connection to terrorism. Although the majority of the September 11 hijackers came from Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Lebanon, these countries did not appear on the administration's list. In response to this argument, one administration official argued in an interview with the CNN that the U.S. is dealing with current terrorist attacks, not what happened in 2001 and the U.S. had to deal with present terrorist threat (quoted in Milton).

In fact, there is no clear evidence that Muslims from the five Muslim majority nations represent a threat to the national security of the U.S. Protecting the U.S. from terrorist threats was the main reason advanced by the Trump administration to ban entry into the U.S. by citizens from Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, and Yemen. Many critics questioned the authenticity of the travel ban and urged the government to provide evidences in order to sustain its claim. In his article titled "Donald Trump's Travel Ban Is Still a Muslim Ban No Matter What the Supreme Court Ruled", Ilya Soumin, a law professor at George Mason University, claimed that Trump's order was not based on facts. He stated: "The overwhelming majority of the people barred by the "proclamation" are Muslim, and there is little if any evidence indicating that their exclusion protects national security" (Soumin).

According to New America, no individual from the five Muslim-majority nations was involved in the killing of U.S. citizens. The overwhelming majority of the attackers were American citizens or legal residents. The libertarian Cato Institute counted seventeen foreign nationals from Yemen, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Iran who carried out or attempted to carry out terrorist activities on the American soil from 1975 to 2017. The data showed that none of

the individuals from the abovementioned countries was charged with the murder of U.S. citizens. However, nationals from Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirate, and Egypt were responsible for committing terrorist attacks on the American soil. These countries were not included on the administration's travel ban list despite the fact that their citizens were involved in terrorist activities in the U.S.

The travel ban affected the countries where Trump doesn't seem to have trade interests. In her article titled "countries where Trump does business are not hit by new travel restriction", Helderman claimed that Trump's executive order did not include some Muslim countries where Trump's Organization is present despite having troublesome terrorist issues (Helderman). By his decision, Trump tried not to upset some wealthy and most powerful Muslim nations such as Egypt. Eisen, the chairman for Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington and a former ethics advisor to Barack Obama, tweeted: "WARNING: Mr. Pres. Your Muslim ban excludes countries where you have business interests. That is a constitutional violation..."(quoted in Helderman). In fact, there are many convincing arguments for the exclusion of some Muslim countries such as Turkey. Despite being subject to several terrorist attacks in recent months, the travel ban gave no mention to Turkey. The article shows that Trump did a big business in Turkey where he managed to build two luxury towers. His financial gains from deals in Turkey reached \$ six million as shown in his recent financial disclosure.

Although many hijackers who got involved in the 9/11 attacks came from Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, the travel ban makes no mention of these two countries. The exclusion of United Arab Emirates is linked to Trump's business interest. The abovementioned article reveals that Trump established big project in UAE; he owns a golf resort in Dubai in addition to a luxury home development and spa. Saudi Arabia, a close ally to the United States, likewise remained untouched by the executive order. This exclusion came under sharp criticism due to the fact that the overwhelming majority of the 9/11

attackers came from Saudi Arabia. Trump had many trade ties with wealthy businessman in Saudi Arabia. He was willing to establish a hotel in the oil-rich country, a deal which was canceled later. Kamal Essaheb, director of policy and advocacy for the National Immigration law centre, said:

To be blunt, we really don't know what to make of which motives are driving this president's decisions. From what we could tell from his campaign and his actions since he became president, what seems to be first and foremost on his mind is his own self-interest and an obsession with his brand. (Essaheb quoted in Helderman)

Trump's call to ban Muslims from entering the U.S. is stalled. As a presidential candidate, Trump called for a ban on Muslims entering the United States, arguing that "there was a great hatred towards Americans by large segments of the Muslim population". Trump made it clear right from the beginning of his presidential campaign that he had an intention to establish a "Muslim ban". However, he seemed to have changed his mind after few months of his first pronouncement. In her article titled "Trump stalls on promise for 'total and complete shutdown' of Muslims entering the United States", Valverde argued that Trump withdrew his Muslim ban stating: "We must immediately suspend immigration from any nation that has been compromised by terrorism until such time as proven vetting mechanisms have been put in place" (Donald Trump 2016 RNC draft speech transcript). Valverde reported Trump declined to acknowledge that he was rolling back his previous statement in an interview with the NBC news. Trump stated :

I actually don't think it's a rollback. In fact, you could say it's an expansion. I'm looking now at territories. People were so upset when I used the word Muslim. Oh, you can't use the word Muslim. Remember this. And I'm okay with that, because I'm talking territory instead of Muslim (Trump in an interview with NBC quoted in Diamond).

Trump's campaign promise to establish a ban on Muslims entering the U.S. is broken. Politifact is a website specialized in tracing the fulfillment of campaign pledges made by

electoral candidates as part of their future political platforms. The website which is described as “Fact Checker” launched a platform called “Trump O Meter” to investigate whether Trump as a president has kept his campaign promises or not. In order to protect the national security, Trump has promised to ban entry by citizens into the U.S. from Muslim countries. After winning the race to the White House, Trump seemed to distance himself from his campaign rhetoric. He declined to call it a Muslim ban. The travel ban did not fulfill Trump’s campaign pledge to impose a “total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the U.S”. This action contradicts Trump’s first declarations because the travel ban did not target all Muslim communities as he previously promised in the early month of his presidential campaign (Trump-O-Meter).

In fact, there is little evidence that Trump’s travel ban can help protect the national security. There is, however, a fact that doing so will damage the American economy. Tourism, education, and travel industries are the most affected sectors by the travel ban. The travel restrictions imposed by the Trump administration on the basis of religion and national origins can be interpreted as a flagrant violation of the U.S. values and ideals. Such discriminatory policies may stop the influx of money and talent into the U.S. It may also destroy the image of the American democracy.

It was clear that imposing a travel ban on some countries would have serious economic implications mainly on tourism industry. The travel ban stopped the insurance of non-immigrant visas. Immediately when the ban went into effect, the number of tourists from Syria, Iran, Libya, Yemen, and Somalia dropped significantly. In fact, the money spent by tourists on U.S. goods and services can help create many job opportunities. Low level of foreign visitors had ultimately resulted in a loss of revenue, taxes, and jobs (Neumayer quoted in Panduranga et al). Trade relations had also decreased. The travel ban brought few investments and less scientific and cultural exchanges. It is estimated that the U.S. gained \$247 billion from international travel (Panduranga et al). There was a decrease of

approximately 700,000 international visitors reported by the Department of Commerce in 2017. (Glusac)

Travel industry was seriously affected by Trump's executive order. In her article titled "Trump travel ban cost airline industry \$185 M in bookings", Aratani found that according to The Global Business Travel association, one week following the announcement of Trump's executive order, travel industry lost \$185 million in business travel booking. Overseas travel seems to generate large incomes to U.S. business. Thus, imposing a travel ban will certainly have its own drawbacks. Mike McCormick, Global Business Travel Association's executive director said: "Large corporations and small businesses alike will suffer. The biggest driver of our economic recovery of the past seven years from the most recent downturn was international outbound travel" (McCormick quoted in Aratani).

According to the Department of State, when the ban took effect nonimmigrant visas from the five countries that were subject to the travel ban have declined, as shown in figure 3.1. This resulted in a drop of international students. There are serious impacts of the travel ban on the prospective travelers to the United States. Based on population, Iran was the most affected country. Although the ban made exceptions for students, the latter faced increased scrutiny. These strict entry measures pushed many foreign students who have accepted offers in the U.S. to change their destiny by studying elsewhere. The vice president of the national Iranian American Council was reported saying that there was a significant decline in "Iranian students at American medical residencies and graduate programs" (Parlapiano).

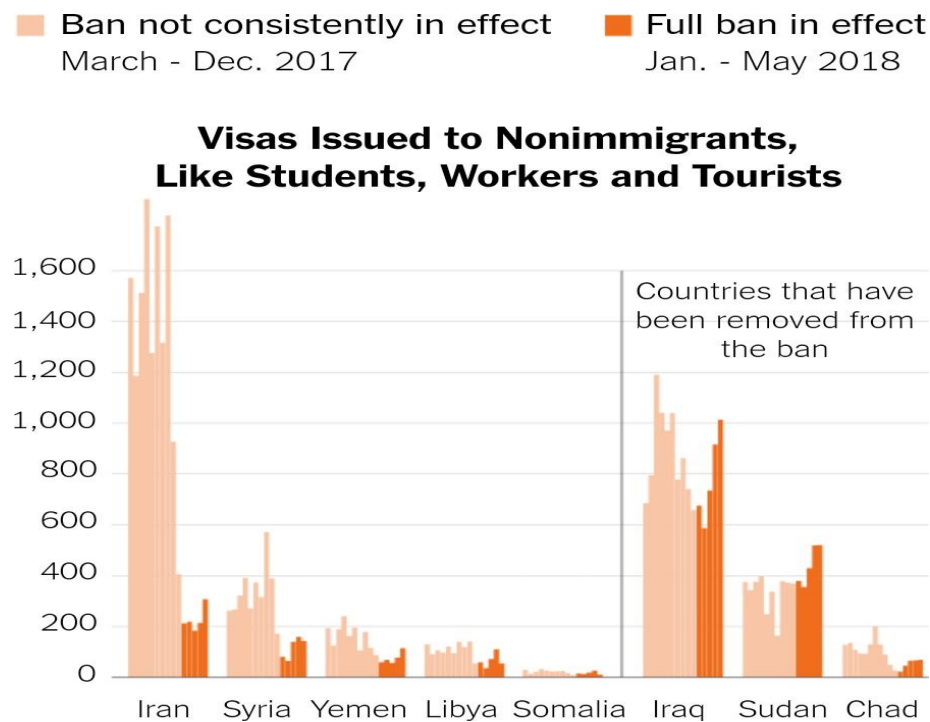


Figure 3.1

Source: State Department

The travel ban had negative consequences on the education industry specifically and the economy more generally. According to the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), Iran is considered as one of the top twenty-five countries for sending graduate students to the U.S. The CFR revealed that international students add \$30.5 billion to the U.S. national economy and create 373,000 job opportunities (Alden). Placing Iran on the travel ban list caused loss in jobs and revenues. A decrease to education spending due to the travel ban could reach fifteen percent, which made \$4.6 billion (Ibid)

Trump's executive order had negative consequences on Muslim immigrants. America became no longer the land of immigrants. The decision of the Supreme Court allowing Trump's travel ban to go into effect had a negative impact on immigration. According to the state department many immigrant visas were refused due to the travel ban, as figure 3.2. shows. When the travel ban took effect, the number of immigrants from the five predominantly Muslim nations dropped significantly. A data released by the State Department showed many immigration visas were refused due to the travel ban. Iran was badly affected

by the decision; few visas have been issued to Iranian immigrants. Yemen likewise was denied many immigrant visas.

■ Ban not consistently in effect ■ Full ban in effect
 March - Dec. 2017 Jan. - May 2018

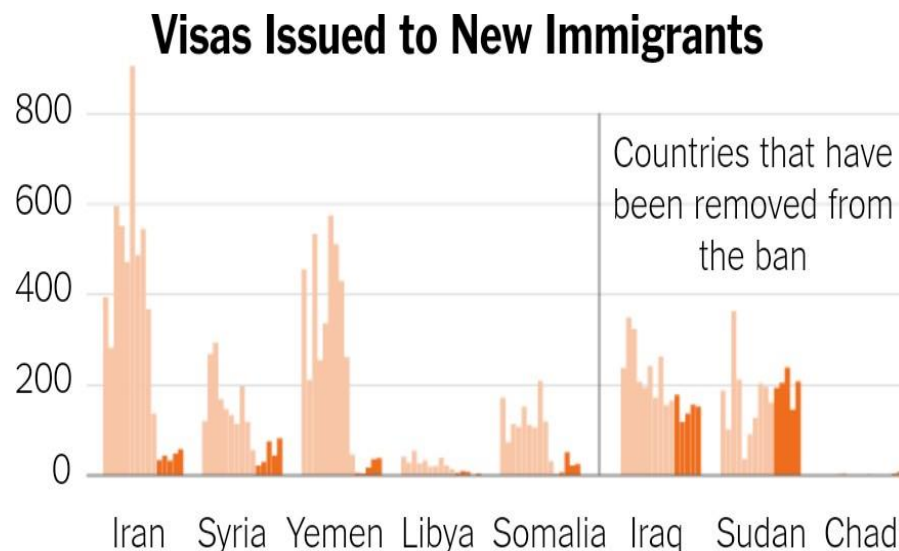


Figure 3.2.

Source: State Department

3.3. Internal Reactions to Trump's Muslim Travel Ban

Restricting visas on the basis of religion and national origins will completely hit the American values. The U.S. has always been considered as the land of immigrants. Its constitution protects the freedom of religion and provides an equal treatment to all individuals. These moral values make America a model of democracy. The Nationality and Immigration Act of 1965 eliminated the previous systems of admitting new comers based on race, sex, nationality, place of birth, or place of residence. In contrast, the emergence of Trump as the forty-fifth president of the U.S. seems to destroy the core of the U.S. ideals. Trump's anti-immigration legislation, which was based on religion, came under harsh criticisms. State Department officials argued that: "We do not need to alienate entire societies to stay safe. And we do not need to sacrifice our reputation as a nation which is open and

welcoming to protect our families” (Morello). The travel ban targeted the most miserable countries which are suffering from civil wars. People fled the wars in Syria, Libya, and Yemen to seek refuge in the U.S. In an interview with the New York Times, Gladstone reported Mohammed Noor, a Somali-American activist saying that many people affected by the travel ban were upset with the Supreme Court decision. He argued: I “think we were expecting the Supreme Court would stand on moral grounds,” he continued: “we live in America. This is a land of immigrants” (Noor quoted in Gladstone).

President Trump’s supporters believe that the Supreme Court decision upholding Trump’s executive order was a confirmation from the highest court of his sincere attempt to secure the nation from the terrorist threats. In a statement, the White House wrote that the Supreme Court’s decision was “a tremendous victory for the American People and the Constitution”(The White House statement). Contrary to this view, many critics argue that Trump’s travel ban was not compatible with the nation’s ideals. They take the word that Trump’s order is part of an anti-Muslim agenda that violated the U.S. constitution and destroyed the hopes of thousands of people who fled their countries due to ongoing state of warfare. Their desire of establishing a new life in the land of fortune was corrupted by Trump’s illegal decision.

Trump’s executive order was met with harsh condemnations from various civil rights groups and associations. Discrimination based on religion coupled with the absence of any legal explanations indicated that the travel ban is a flagrant violation of the first amendment, which bans the government from introducing any policy that discriminates on the basis of religions. In response to Trump’s executive order, The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) filed a lawsuit against the order. The council, which speaks on behalf of Muslims in America, argued that the travel ban is a “Muslim exclusion order” because it explicitly targeted people of the Muslim faith. Despite the fact that Trump did not ban all Muslims from entering to the U.S., writes the ACLU's David Cole, he "never gave up his

focus on the religion of Islam. Friday's executive orders are of a piece with his many anti-Muslim campaign promises"(quoted in Zurcher). The opponents of Trump argued that his action violates the first amendment of the U.S. constitution, which prevents government policies that discriminates on the basis of religion. In fact, the immigration law of 1965 protects the rights of foreign nationals. It states that individuals cannot be "discriminated against in the issuance of an immigrant visa" because of their "race, sex, nationality, place of birth, or place of residence". However, Trump's order was a clear discrimination against foreigners based on where they are from (Ibid).

When Trump signed his executive order into a law, the public opinion shifted against Trump's Immigration reform. Many protests across the U.S. cities and airports were held in opposition to trump's executive order banning nationals from seven predominantly Muslim nations from entering the U.S. In his article titled "Protecting a 'Muslim ban' that is un-American and does nothing to make us safe", Capehart tracked down the reaction of thousands of individuals who took to the American streets to protest president Trump's immoral and unconstitutional travel ban. He mentioned that the demonstrators chanted slogans such as "No hate, no fear, immigrants are welcome here", "Make America think again", "We stand for equality, peace and love", "Islamophobia is not an American value". In their article titled "A Change of Heart? Why Individual-Level Public Opinion Shifted Against Trump's 'Muslim Ban'", Lajevardi et al tried to shed light on the rapid shift in opinions among Americans following the implementation of Trump's immigration policy. A poll released on January 12th, 2017 by Quinnipiac university, revealed that weeks before issuing the executive order, the latter received widespread support: 48- 42%. But by February 7th, public support to the travel ban decreased significantly to reach forty percent, and opposition to the travel ban has risen to reach fifty percent (Lajevardi et al).

Before the details of the travel ban were revealed, many Americans supported the president's executive order. They were driven by the belief that Trump's proposal will help

protect the national security of the U.S. However, the Americans seemed to have changed their minds when the Oval House revealed the name of the countries on the administration travel ban list. The Muslim ban singled out the most destitute and dysfunctional countries. In an interview with the Washington post, Tim Malloy, assistant director of the Quinnipiac poll, said: “This is an issue that hits you in the gut, especially when you consider who the potential victims are” (Malloy). Another factor which helped change public opinion is the aggressive media coverage. Mass protests in U.S. big cities and airports were portrayed by the press. This state of chaos did not seem to please the Americans.

3.4. The World’s Response to Trump’s Muslim Travel Ban

Trump’s decision to block the entry of nationals from seven predominantly Muslim-majority nations sparked widespread criticism from around the world. Trump’s executive order was met with outrage and condemnation from the targeted countries. In her article titled “Here’s how the world is responding to Trump’s ban on refugees, travelers from 7 muslim nation”, Erickson tracked the world’s reaction to the travel ban. She argued that Iraq, which was removed in the second version of the travel ban, was willing to take tit-for-tat measures in response to the travel ban, a move which would badly affect the U.S. soldiers and diplomats. She reported Renas Jano, a member of the Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee telling journalists that “after the U.S. president’s decision to stop granting visas for Iraqi citizens, it is very likely that Iraq will stop granting U.S. citizens entry visas.” In a similar reaction, Erickson stated that Iran likewise vowed to retaliate by limiting visas to U.S. nationals and considering “appropriate legal, consular and diplomatic measures. The Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement describing Trump’s executive order “flagrant insult to the Muslim world, especially the great Iranian nation” (Tehran Slams US travel ban as Great insult to Iranian Nation, vows to reciprocate).

Although the travel ban received widespread criticism from the European powers, Trump kept defending it. He highlighted the fact that his action was mainly driven by the protection

of the national security and he will do his best to keep America safe from terrorism. Some European powers took a firm stand against Trump's discriminatory decision. France described the travel ban as isolationist (Erickson). The French president François Holland argued that the travel ban showed a lack of responsibility from the United States, calling the European nations to respond firmly. He told reporters "when he refuses the arrival of refugees, while Europe has done its duty, we have to respond" (Ibid). The travel ban seems to anger Germany, home to more than one million refugees and immigrants since 2015. Many German leaders criticized the decision of Trump to limit immigration and refugees from some Muslim countries. The German foreign Minister, Sigmar Gabriel said at a news conference in Paris: "The United States is a country where Christian traditions have an important meaning. Loving your neighbor is a major Christian value, and that includes helping people" (Gabriel quoted in Erickson).

Conclusion

One week after his inauguration Trump issued one of the most controversial executive orders on Muslim Immigrants. In fact, the Travel ban was illegitimate because it targeted countries, which do not represent a threat to the national security of the U.S. This claim is backed by the fact that individuals from the five Muslim-majority countries, which appeared on the administration's travel ban list did not get involved in the killing of any U.S. citizens in the last decades. Trump has a complex character. On the one hand, he kept rejecting Muslim on the basis of protecting the national security of the United States. On the other hand, he applauds the Saudis. The contradiction of his executive order lays in the exclusion of Saudi Arabia, home to 15 of the 9/11 hijackers. This exclusion, which is justified by Trump's trade interest, makes the travel ban flawed. By issuing the travel ban, Trump was still not holding on his campaign pledge because his executive order was not applied on all Muslim nations as he promised in his electoral campaign. The travel ban caused many economic losses because low level of visitors resulted in a decrease of revenues, taxes, and jobs.

General Conclusion

Muslims had always lived in the U.S. with little visibility until 9/11, when the question of Muslim immigrants was highlighted in the U.S. politics. However, with the rise of Donald Trump, the Muslim issue dominated the political sphere, particularly the 2016 American presidential elections. The republican nominee, Donald Trump, mobilized an anti-Muslim rhetoric during his electoral campaign.

Thus, the objectives of this research were to investigate the motives behind bringing the issue of Muslim immigrants to the surface of the U.S. elections by making promises to ban Muslim from entering the U.S., and to investigate the reason behind including some Muslim countries on the American administration's travel ban list, while excluding others despite having troublesome terrorist concerns. It also sought to trace the fulfillment of Trump's campaign promise.

Trump's anti-Muslim rhetoric which was mobilized during the 2016 U.S. elections, was a fusion of political opportunism and ideology. On the one hand, Trump was ideologically motivated; the political upheavals in the Muslim world had profoundly shaped his attitudes towards Muslims. Trump was not willing to bear the burden of refugees. In addition, he wanted to get rid of people who had hostile views towards the U.S. Furthermore, his primary aim was to build a wall along the Mexican borders because the real threat comes from Latin Americans, who come in large numbers. He was just trying to divert the public attention by mobilizing an anti Muslim rhetoric. Trump was also motivated by electoral opportunism because he exploited the threat of terrorism by endorsing an explicit discourse of hatred as a tool to win the elections.

Trump's executive order was not effective because it did not target countries whose individuals represent a threat to national security of the U.S. In fact, the travel ban gave no mention to the countries where Trump does business. On the one hand, Trump has totally rejected Muslims and adopted a discourse of hatred against them. On the other hand, he tried to build good diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia on the basis of benefiting from trade

opportunities with the oil-rich country. Although the overwhelming majority of the 9/11 attackers were Saudi citizens, Trump's Muslim travel ban excluded Saudi Arabia from the administration's banned list. Finally, it indicated that Trump's campaign promise to establish a ban on Muslims entering the U.S. is broken because the travel ban did not target all Muslim communities as he previously promised in the early month of his presidential campaign.

It is true that the travel ban was upheld by the Supreme Court, but attempts to overturn the bill are in progress. Democratic members of congress are working hard to repeal the so-called Muslim travel ban despite having little chances to gain White House approval. The current research is contemporary; this will open doors to other researchers to shed the light on other changes that the travel ban may face. This research will end up by asking a question, which will open doors for further discussions: If the most powerful Muslim nations had responded firmly, would the Muslim travel ban have gone into effect?

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