

Headlines:

- **Scale of anti-Muslim Sentiment in Europe is Growing**
- **China Set to Cut U.S. Oil Imports as Trade War Heats up**
- **US Official Reminds Pakistan it is Still on Notice**

Details:

Scale of anti-Muslim Sentiment in Europe is Growing

Huge swathes of Europeans believe Islam is 'incompatible' with their views and culture, a survey has shown. Across 15 western European countries, researchers found that 42 per cent of the general population agreed with statement 'Islam is fundamentally incompatible with our values and culture'. Meanwhile, 17 per cent of Europeans said they would not be willing to accept a Jewish person as a family member. The study was carried out by the Pew Research Center and examined differing political attitudes between practicing Christians, non-practising Christians and the non-religious across Europe. In total 25,000 people were polled between April and August in 2017. Practising Christian was defined as someone who attends church at least once a month. While the research showed a majority of all groups were accepting of other cultures and religions, it also revealed that Christians - whether practising or non-practising - were less likely to be tolerant. They also are more inclined to think their country's culture and values are superior. In Britain, researchers found that 45 percent of churchgoing Christians, 47 percent of non-practising Christians and 30 per cent of the non-religious agreed that 'Islam is fundamentally incompatible with our values and culture'. In France, nearly three-quarters of Christians who attend church, or 72 percent, agreed it was important to have French ancestry to be 'truly French.' Among non-practising Christians, 52 percent took this position, compared to 43 percent of those without religious affiliations. The survey was conducted after more than 2.3 million migrants and refugees had entered Europe, according to the European border control agency Frontex. Some European countries, including Germany and Italy, have seen an anti-immigration backlash and nationalist political parties gaining support. 'Undercurrents of discomfort with multiculturalism are evident in Western European societies,' the researchers wrote in the report. Although Muslim newcomers have been the focus of far-right candidates appealing for votes and activist campaigns to seal Europe's borders, the survey also asked about attitudes toward Jews in western Europe. For example, 36 per cent of Italians, more than in any other country, agreed with the statement that, 'Jews always overstate how much they have suffered,' compared to the 11 percent of Swedes who did. One-quarter of all the respondents in Italy - Christian and non-religious combined - said they would not be willing to accept a Jew as a family member. The comparable figure in Britain was 23 percent, in Austria 21 percent and 29 percent in Germany. However, anti-Muslim sentiment exceeded anti-Semitism in every country. Asked if they would accept a Muslim as a family member, 43 per cent of all respondents in Italy, 36 per cent in Britain, 34 per cent in Austria and 33 per cent in Germany said they would not. A hotly debated question in some parts of Europe is whether Muslim women should be prohibited from wearing concealing garments such as burkas. Some 30 per cent of those surveyed in Italy, 28 per cent in Belgium and 24 per cent in both Germany and Austria agreed that Muslim women 'should not be allowed to wear any religious clothing.' Across the 15 countries where people were surveyed, the median was 22 per cent, while half agreed Muslim women should be able to wear religious clothing as long as it does not cover their faces. Pew said the survey had a margin of error of 2.7 to 3.3 percentage points depending on the number of people questioned in each country. [Source: Daily Mail]

For centuries, Europe has opposed Islam and eschewed all attempts to accommodate Muslims in Europe. The current poll clearly suggests that Europeans are returning to their natural position towards Islam, which is defined by vitriol, bigotry and intense hatred.

China Set to Cut U.S. Oil Imports as Trade War Heats Up

Chinese oil customers plan to reduce their intake of U.S. crude oil from September onwards to avoid a possible import tariff on American oil in China, due to the uncertain outcome of the current

trade tensions, Reuters reported on Thursday, citing Chinese industry sources. The heightened trade tension between the United States and China over the few past weeks resulted in China threatening to slap a 25-percent import tariff on crude oil and refined oil product imports from the U.S., if the U.S. imposes new tariffs on Chinese products, as President Donald Trump has said they will. Chinese refiners, who usually order their U.S. oil cargoes three months in advance due to the distance for shipping the crude, have been cautious about booking American oil too far in advance—beyond September deliveries. Chinese state-run giant Sinopec, Asia’s biggest refiner and China’s biggest U.S. oil customer, is keeping its typical volumes for July loadings, but can’t commit to bookings further out in time, a top trading executive at Sinopec told Reuters. Future purchases [from August-loading onwards] will depend on developments,” the executive noted. China is America’s second-largest single oil buyer after Canada, EIA data shows. In two of the past six months for which U.S. export data is available, American exports to China exceeded the volume of U.S. exports to Canada—in October 2017 and in March 2018. According to Sinopec sources who spoke to Reuters, China will not struggle to find alternatives to U.S. oil. On the other hand, according to analysts at Wood Mackenzie, “the U.S. would find it hard to find an alternative market that is as big as China.” China’s independent refiners have also been careful to book U.S. cargoes, although they are not the largest buyers and some of the U.S. crudes are not the best fit for the typical independent refinery. China’s independent refiners—commonly known as teapots—don’t expect U.S. oil deliveries for the next several months, an S&P Global Platts survey showed on Thursday. “The uncertainty generated from the China-U.S. trade war closes the door to the sector,” a Beijing-based crude oil trader told Platts. [Source: OilPriceCom]

The trade war between US and China is threatening to turn into a full-scale war. Each side is choosing products that inflict maximum damage to the other side. China’s move to cut US oil exports is strategic and indicates that Chinese confidence to take on America is growing stronger by the day.

US official Reminds Pakistan it is Still on Notice

The United States has reminded Pakistan that it’s still on notice to eliminate all terrorist sanctuaries from its territory, although relations between the two countries show some signs of improvement. The reminder — conveyed by US Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Alice G. Wells at a congressional hearing on Wednesday — re-emphasises the point that Washington never fails to mention the need for Pakistan to eliminate terrorism. In a New Year Day message this year, President Donald Trump too had put Pakistan on notice, accusing it of “taking billions and billions of dollars” from the United States while “housing the same terrorists” that it was supposed to fight. And a few days after the speech, Washington suspended more than two billion dollars of security aid to Pakistan. Pakistan has rejected these allegations as unfounded and has urged Washington not to blame Islamabad for its failures in Afghanistan. In her testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on “US policy toward Afghanistan”, Ms Wells acknowledged that the policy of coercing Pakistan into accepting US demands had not been very successful. “Despite some positive indicators, we have not yet seen Pakistan take the sustained or decisive steps that we would have expected to see ten months after the announcement of the (Trump administration’s) South Asia strategy,” she said. The senior US official acknowledged that Pakistan “has an important role to play and has legitimate interests” in Afghanistan, which “it wants to ensure are met during any peace process”. The United States, she said, was not only aware of Pakistan’s interests but was also willing to work with Islamabad to ally its concerns. “The dialogue that we have with Pakistan seeks to address those concerns while also encouraging additional concrete support for Afghan peace efforts,” she said. Her statement indicates that the Trump administration has reached the same conclusion that their predecessors had after years of engagement in Afghanistan — it’s an unwinnable war. [Source: Dawn]

As usual, American administrations tend to apportion the blame elsewhere when they lose a war. However, predictably, Pakistani governments unable to exploit this apparent weakness capitulate to American demands.