

Headlines:

- **Trump's Vote-Winning Strategy - Attack Muslims**
- **Erdogan: EU Doesn't Want Turkey Because Majority is Muslim**
- **Pakistan Questions US commitment to Afghan Peace Process**

Details:

Trump's Vote-Winning Strategy - Attack Muslims

Donald Trump prides himself on not backing down from any fight or controversial position. Hours after the Orlando nightclub mass shooting on June 12, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee doubled down on his plan to ban Muslim immigrants from entering the United States. He also renewed his call for U.S. law enforcement agencies to use greater racial profiling, especially of Muslim Americans. "I think profiling is something that we're going to have to start thinking about as a country," Trump said in a June 19 interview on the CBS news program "Face the Nation." He later added, "I hate the concept of profiling, but we have to start using common sense. It's not the worst thing to do." In December, Trump shocked the world when he called for the ban on all Muslim travelers entering the United States - until American leaders "can figure out what the hell is going on." Throughout the campaign, Trump has advocated increased surveillance of Muslim American communities and mosques. He also said he would consider registering Muslim Americans in a database, or requiring Muslims to carry special identification cards. Trump is persisting with his attack on Muslims because it has proven to be his strongest issue, according to exit polls in many Republican primaries. In the pivotal March 15 contests, exit polls of voters in the five states that held elections revealed a remarkable fact: two-thirds of Republican voters support Trump's proposal to ban Muslim immigrants and tourists. In some states that held early primary elections - South Carolina and Missouri - nearly 75 percent of Republican voters support the ban. Since he became the presumptive Republican nominee last month, there's been much discussion of how Trump would adjust his views to appeal to a broader American public in the general election. But even if other Republican leaders denounce his views, don't expect Trump to curtail his attacks on Islam or his overt Islamophobia - he has little incentive to do so, as long as it wins him votes. The polling shows that while Trump is fanning the flames of anti-Muslim sentiment in the United States, he did not create this phenomenon. He's a demagogue who is taking advantage of deep-seated fears of Muslims among Americans, especially Republican voters. Trump is winning votes because he is willing to go further than any other candidate in tarnishing all Muslims. In an interview with CNN's Anderson Cooper in March, Trump declared flatly: "I think Islam hates us." When Cooper asked him whether the religion is at war with the West, Trump added, "There's a tremendous hatred. We have to get to the bottom of it. There's an unbelievable hatred of us." One day after his CNN interview, the moderator of a Republican presidential debate asked Trump to clarify his comments: "Did you mean all 1.6 billion Muslims?" "I mean a lot of them," Trump responded, eliciting cheers from the crowd. "And I will stick with exactly what I said to Anderson Cooper." Given several chances by his interviewers to distinguish between Islamic militants and the majority of the world's Muslims, Trump refused to make that distinction and instead continued to tarnish an entire religion. Similarly, Trump has not wavered from his proposal to ban Muslims from entering the United States, saying it would not apply to

American citizens and would be a "temporary measure" in response to the threat of attacks from jihadist groups like Islamic State. He invoked one of America's darkest periods: President Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision during World War Two to classify more than 100,000 Japanese, German and Italian immigrants as "enemy aliens." That decision paved the way for the internment of tens of thousands of noncitizens and U.S. citizens of Japanese descent. [Source: Daily Mail]

Trump's persistent calls to profile Muslims entering the US raises the specter of internment camps becoming a distinct possibility in the near future. By pushing the boundaries of political correctness, Trump's view are have become mainstream that are destined to impact both domestic and foreign policy regarding Muslims irrespective of who wins the US presidential elections.

Erdogan: EU Doesn't Want Turkey Because Majority is Muslim

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan says Europe doesn't want his country to join the EU because the majority of the nation's population is Muslim. He said his government will ask the public whether negotiations with Brussels should continue. "Europe, you don't want us because the majority of our population are Muslim...we knew it but we tried to show our sincerity," Erdogan said at a graduation ceremony in Istanbul on Wednesday, as quoted by Reuters. The comments were made on the eve of Britain's historic 'Brexit' vote, in which UK citizens will decide whether to remain part of the EU. Referring to Britain's vote, Erdogan stated that Turkey could also hold a referendum on the EU. "We will go and ask the public whether we should continue negotiations with the EU," Erdogan said. His comments come as European populist leaders and campaigners supporting Britain's exit from the EU warn of creeping Islamization and ill consequences if Turkey ever joined the bloc. Talks on possible EU membership for Turkey have been taking place since 1963, when Ankara and Brussels drafted an association agreement stating the country would aim to be a member of the bloc. After formally applying in 1987, Turkey began accession talks in 2005. However, Turkey has since made little progress to meet the necessary criteria, despite a flurry of early reforms. A new phase in Ankara's negotiations to join the bloc will take place on June 30, when Turkish and EU officials meet to discuss "financial and budgetary provisions" that Turkey must meet to become a member, AP reported. Meanwhile, Ankara and Brussels continue to negotiate a deal which would grant Turkish citizens the right to travel to the EU visa-free, if Ankara fulfills a list of 72 conditions laid out by the bloc. The agreement is part of a wider migrant deal which would see the return of all illegal migrants reaching Greece from Turkey's shores. In exchange, the EU would take in thousands of Syrian refugees directly from Turkey. The EU would also give €6 billion (US\$6.8 billion) in funding over the next five years. However, a key sticking point of the EU conditions is Turkey's strict anti-terror laws, which Europe says must be loosened for the agreement to go ahead. Turkey says the laws cannot be changed due to the threat posed by Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL), other terrorists, and Kurdish militants. "A change of attitude is out of the question," Yasin Aktay, deputy chairman of Turkey's ruling AK Party, told Reuters. Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek said last week that "Europe needs Turkey if it wants to have a stronger say in international affairs in this geography, if it wants energy supply security, if it wants even overall security," he said. "It is in our interests to remain anchored to Europe, and it is in Europe's interests to keep Turkey firmly anchored to Europe," Simsek added. Erdogan has repeatedly threatened to pull out of the migrant deal if visa-free travel isn't granted to Turkish citizens by July 1. But despite the bumpy negotiations, EU leaders have warned that threats from Turkey will not achieve results. Some European leaders also believe Turkey isn't in such a strong position,

noting that Ankara's relations with Russia, the US, Syria, Iran, and Israel are strained – meaning it needs better relations with the EU. [Source: Russia Today; Reuters]

54 years have passed, since Turkey started its negotiations with Europe to become part of the EU, and Ankara has nothing to show. The glaring evidence that Turkey's elite chooses to ignore is that Europe deeply despises Islam and does not trust Muslims. Yet despite this fact, successive Turkish leaders have sought to overlook this point and long to join the EU. Erdogan's comments is a frank admission that Turkey will never join the EU.

Pakistan Questions US commitment to Afghan Peace Process

Questioning America's commitment to the Afghan peace process, Pakistan warned that those seeking a renewed recourse to military-oriented solution need to think through its consequences. "Is it (US) ready to invest in war rather than peace in Afghanistan?" asked Pakistan's Ambassador to United Nations Dr Maleeha Lodhi while speaking in the quarterly debate on Afghanistan at the UN Security Council (UNSC) in New York on Wednesday. US, Pakistan continue to bicker over Mullah Mansour's death. She condemned the May 21 US drone strike in Naushki district of Balochistan which killed Afghan Taliban chief Mullah Akhtar Mansoor, describing it as an 'unacceptable and blatant violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and of the UN charter and international law'. The ambassador also reacted sharply to allegations made by the Afghan representative, calling these unjustified, untrue and gratuitous. Lodhi, instead, pointed out how the international community was well aware of, and has acknowledged, Pakistan's contribution and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. While expressing Pakistan's readiness to support a genuine Afghan peace process, Lodhi warned that her country will not tolerate violations of its sovereignty and its territorial integrity, "from whatever source". She demanded to know whether the international community wants negotiated peace or a military solution in Afghanistan. Referring to Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's report on Afghanistan, the Pakistani envoy said it reinforces the firm international consensus that, 'Only by a negotiated political agreement will Afghans achieve sustainable peace'. She reiterated that based on this belief in a negotiated peace, and in response to requests from Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, Pakistan agreed to facilitate the first-ever direct peace talks between the Afghan Government and the Afghan Taliban in Murree in June 2015. Calling these talks a 'promising start', Ambassador Lodhi regretted that days before the second round, in which the two sides were to also consider a de-escalation of violence, the talks were scuttled by leaking reports of Taliban supremo Mullah Omar's death. Ambassador Lodhi also pointed to Pakistan's concerted efforts that led to the establishment of the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) in which Afghanistan, the US, China and Pakistan tried to revive Afghan peace efforts. This process, Ambassador Lodhi lamented, was undermined by last month's US drone attack. This strike, she said, dealt "a blow to the Afghan peace process" and added to the intensity and complexity of the Afghan conflict. [Source: Pakistan Tribune]

Lodhi is asking the wrong question. The correct question to ask is why Musharraf and Kayani allowed America to conduct punitive drone strikes in the first place. There is a strange belief in the Pakistani army that by safeguarding American interests, Pakistan's interests will be protected. However, the stark reality demonstrates that America has betrayed Pakistan at every opportunity. Unless, Pakistan cuts ties with America, Washington will continue to use Pakistan to secure its interests every time.