

ISLAMIC ONLINE NEWS SERVICES

Sources

A total of 21 wire services and major Islamic web-sites in both Arabic and English were consulted. Many online sources were either bilingual or trilingual. This study looked primarily at the Arabic sources.

References to Canada

Having examined each online wire service and major Islamic outlet over a 3-month period, Canadian news was covered in 19 individual articles. The remaining references to Canada were “embedded” articles on the Commonwealth rift, terrorism, the gap between poor and rich nations, mad cow disease, and SARS.

There were contrasts in the quantity of reporting depending on the language of each source. *Al-Jazeera Network* had 8 individual articles about Canada in its Arabic version and 55 in its English version; *Islam Web* had 243 articles in its Arabic version and 287 in English; *Islam Online* had 19 articles in its Arabic version and 23 in its English version. The Arabic language *Al-Muhayed* weekly journal had two articles. The English sources *Islamic Voice*, *Muslim Media International* and *Muslim Media* had respectively 85, 70 and 40 references to Canada. As well, English sources *iViews* and *Muslim News* had 14 and 10 references.

Findings from the Islamic online news wire services

Reporting on Canada in the Arab/Muslim wire services and media outlets generally differs according to each news organization’s trend of covering news related to the West at large. For instance, *Muslim Media International* focussed, in the three month period, on how Canadian Muslims are feeling the heat of what it described as the United States’s Islam phobia and “the brutal manner in which Muslim immigrants in the US are being abused under the notorious Patriot Act...Both in Canada and the US, treatment of immigrant Muslims is getting worse. Suspicion seems to be driving security operatives on both sides of the border, with the Americans being much more brutal.” *Muslim Media International* went on to refer to the arrest of 21 Pakistani and Indian Muslims in Canada and criticized the Canadian government’s lack of enthusiasm about defending the rights of those citizens who are of Arab or Muslim descent.

The Arab/Muslim sources mentioned also the cases of Maher Arar, the Khadr brothers, and Mansour Jabbara, who was handed over to Americans by Canadian authorities after being accused of having links to Al-Qaeda. *Islam Web* had similar headlines such as “Canadians Still Nasty to Muslims”, “Arab and Muslim Canadians Endure Year of Collective Blame after Attacks”, or “Lebanese Ambassador to Canada under Fire for Anti-Zionist Comments”.

The common denominator between all sources was coverage of mad cow disease (with some emphasis on the differences between Canada and the US over the issue), the reconstruction