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The Islamization of Britain in 2013

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In May, new census data published by the British government showed that Islam is set to become the dominant religion in Britain within the next generation.

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The Muslim population of Britain topped 3.3 million by the end of 2013 to become around 5.2% of the overall population of 63 million, according to figures extrapolated from a recent study on the growth of the Muslim population in Europe.

At the same time, opinion surveys consistently show that voters in Britain view Islam and the question of Muslim immigration as a top-ranked public concern. The British public, it seems, is increasingly worried about the establishment of a parallel Muslim society there.

But government efforts to push back against the Islamization of Britain have been halting and half-hearted.

What follows is a chronological review of some of the main stories involving the rise of Islam in Britain during 2013.

In January, Muslim gangs were filmed loitering on streets in London and demanding that passersby conform to Islamic Sharia law. In a series of videos, the self-proclaimed vigilantes—who call themselves Muslim London Patrol—are seen abusing non-Muslim pedestrians and repeatedly shouting "this is a Muslim area."

One video records the men shouting: "Allah is the greatest! Islam is here, whether you like it or not. We are here! We are here! What we need is Islam! What we need is Sharia!"

The video continues: "We are the Muslim Patrol. We are in north London, we are in south London, in east London and west London. We command good and forbid evil. Islam is here in London. [Prime Minister] David Cameron, Mr. Police Officer, whether you like it or not, we will command good and forbid evil. You will never get us. You can go to hell! This is not a Christian country. To hell with Christianity. Isa [Jesus] was a messenger of Allah. Muslim Patrol will never die. Allah is great! Allah is great! We are coming!"

In a January 23 interview with the online newspaper International Business Times, Anjem Choudary, a radical preacher who has long called for Sharia law to be implemented in Britain and other European countries, defended the gang, saying: "This is a wake-up call for society to ask, 'where are we headed?' There is a clash between Islam and liberal democracy in hotspot areas of London."

Choudary has previously led a campaign, known as the Islamic Emirates Project, to turn twelve British cities—including what he calls "Londonistan"—into independent Islamic states. The so-called Islamic Emirates would function as autonomous enclaves, ruled by Sharia law and governed entirely outside British jurisprudence.

In February, Choudary was filmed urging his followers to quit their jobs and claim unemployment benefits so they have more time to plan holy war against non-Muslims.

Excerpts of the speech, published by the London-based newspaper The Sun on February 17, drew renewed attention to the growing problem of Muslims in Britain and elsewhere who are exploiting European welfare systems.

In the video, Choudary is recorded as saying that Muslims are justified in taking money from non-Muslims, whom he mocks for working in nine-to-five jobs their whole lives. He says: "You find people are busy working the whole of their life. They wake up at 7 o'clock. They go to work at 9 o'clock. They work for eight, nine hours a day. They come home at 7 o'clock, watch EastEnders [a British soap opera], sleep, and they do that for 40 years of their life. That is called slavery. ... What kind of life is that? That is the life of the kuffar [a non-Muslim]."

Choudary urges fellow Muslims to learn from revered figures in Islamic history who only worked one or two days a year. "The rest of the year they were busy with jihad [holy war] and things like that," he says. "People will say, 'Ah, but you are not working.' But the normal situation is for you to take money from the kuffar. So we take Jihad Seeker's Allowance."

Also in February, a judge in London acquitted two brothers from Pakistan who swapped houses in an effort to defraud British taxpayers out of £315,000 (\$520,000). The Pakistani couples, who have 11 children between them, submitted bogus tenancy agreements for 16 years so that the women could pretend to be tenants and claim housing benefits.

Judge Neil Sanders ruled: "The two men dishonestly represented through their wives to the London Borough of Redbridge that this was a genuine rental arrangement." Nevertheless,

Sanders allowed the men to walk free. "You have both worked hard in terms of making a life for yourselves and in many ways the greatest punishment is the loss of your good name," Sanders said.

In March, the London-based newspaper *The Independent* reported that at least 100 British Muslims are currently active as jihadists fighting in Syria, which has replaced Afghanistan, Pakistan and Somalia as the main destination for militant Islamists seeking to obtain immediate combat experience with little or no official scrutiny.

Also in March, St. John's Episcopal Church in Aberdeen, Scotland, became the first church in the United Kingdom to share its premises with Muslim worshippers. Church officials now welcome hundreds of Muslims praying five times a day in their building because the nearby mosque is filled to overcapacity and Muslim worshippers are forced to pray outside.

According to the rector of St. John's, Isaac Poobalan, "Praying is never wrong. My job is to encourage people to pray. The mosque was so full at times, there would be people outside in the wind and rain praying. I knew I couldn't just let this happen, because I would be abandoning what the Bible teaches us about how we should treat our neighbors."

The bishop of Aberdeen, Robert Gillies, says that by handing over sections of the church to the mosque, the church has accomplished "something of global significance on a local scale."

In April, a documentary secretly filmed inside several of the 85 Islamic Sharia Law courts operating in Britain exposed the systematic discrimination that many women are suffering at the hands of Muslim jurists.

The documentary, *Secrets of Britain's Sharia Courts*, was filmed by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and was first aired on BBC Panorama, a long-running current affairs program, on April 8.

The undercover investigation proves what has long been suspected: namely, that Sharia courts, which operate in mosques and houses across Britain, routinely issue rulings on domestic and marital issues according to Islamic Sharia law that are at odds with British law. Although Sharia rulings are not legally binding, those subject to the rulings often feel obliged to obey them as a matter of religious belief, or because of pressure from family and community members to do so.

The documentary contends that the Sharia courts, run by Muslim judges known as qadi, are putting women at risk of violence from abusive husbands by pressuring them to stay in abusive marriages.

The documentary was partially filmed at the Leyton Sharia Council, which openly states on its website that it is preparing for the full recognition of Islamic Sharia law in Britain.

Also in April, British authorities promised to redouble their fight against the spiraling problem of female genital mutilation (FGM) after a weekly primetime television show broadcast by the BBC forced the previously "taboo" subject into mainstream debate.

BBC One's *Casualty*, a popular emergency medical drama series, became the first mainstream drama on British television to feature a story about FGM. Scriptwriters on the series worked with FGM pressure groups and young girls to produce the two-part drama, which aired on April 6 and 13.

Britain has the highest levels of FGM in Europe. According to a government-funded study published in 2007, at least 66,000 women and girls in Britain have had the procedure performed on them, and more than 20,000 girls under the age of 15 are currently at risk.

These figures, however, may be only the tip of the iceberg. A 2011 Department of Health policy paper warns that "it is possible that, due to population growth and immigration from practicing countries...FGM is significantly more prevalent than these figures suggest."

On April 29, Scotland Yard [London Police] appealed for information to identify the perpetrators of FGM amid growing indications that girls in the capital are being "cut."

But the government's commitment to fighting FGM remains to be seen. A major reason for Britain's dismal record at bringing perpetrators to justice is tolerance of FGM due to political correctness and concerns over "cultural sensitivity," according to many analysts.

Although the mainstream media in Britain and elsewhere routinely take pains to avoid any insinuation that FGM has anything to do with Islam, doctrinally, historically, geographically and judicially, the practice is intrinsically linked to Islam. Critics of FGM say there is a reluctance to tackle the problem because doing so is perceived as attacking Islam.

In May, new census data published by the British government showed that Islam is set to become the dominant religion in Britain within the next generation.

The report, published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on May 16, shows that although Christianity is still the main religion in Britain—over 50% of the population describe themselves as such—nearly half of all Christians in Britain are over the age of 50, and, for the first time ever, fewer than half under the age of 25 describe themselves as Christian.

By contrast, the number of people under 25 who describe themselves as Muslim has doubled over the past ten years: one in ten under the age of 25 are Muslim, up from one in 20 in 2001.

If current trends continue—a Muslim population boom, combined with an aging Christian demographic and the increasing secularization of British natives—Islam is set to overtake Christianity in Britain within the next 20 years, according to demographers.

Also in May, a BBC documentary called "Married for a Minute" reported that an increasing number of Muslims in Britain are reviving the Islamic practice of temporary marriage.

Temporary marriage—a euphemism for religiously sanctioned prostitution—is an Islamic custom that unites a man and an unmarried woman as "husband and wife" for a limited period of time (sometimes for less than half an hour).

The proliferation of temporary marriages—combined with the spike in polygamous marriages—shows how Muslims in Britain are using Islamic Sharia law with impunity to establish parallel forms of "marriage" that are otherwise illegal for non-Muslims in the country.

Because of the informal nature of temporary marriage, there are no official statistics to show how many of these unions there are in Britain. But Islamic scholars interviewed by the BBC say the practice is widespread, and anecdotal evidence suggests it is especially popular among the younger generation of Muslims in England and Wales.

In June, the Central Criminal Court of England and Wales (aka the Old Bailey) sentenced seven members of a Muslim child grooming gang based in Oxford to at least 95 years in prison for raping, torturing and trafficking British girls as young as 11.

The high-profile trial, which ended on June 27, was the latest in a rapidly growing list of grooming cases that are forcing politically correct Britons to confront the previously taboo subject of endemic sexual abuse of children by predatory Muslim paedophile gangs. The 18-week trial drew unwelcome attention to the sordid reality that police, social workers, teachers, neighbors, politicians and the media have for decades downplayed the severity of the crimes perpetrated against British children because they were afraid of being accused of "Islamophobia" or racism.

According to government estimates that are believed to be "just the tip of the iceberg," at least 2,500 British children have so far been confirmed to be victims of grooming gangs, and another 20,000 children are at risk of sexual exploitation. At least 27 police forces are currently investigating 54 alleged child grooming gangs across England and Wales.

Also in June, a Muslim cab driver named Mohamed Hacene-Chaouch was jailed for seven years and three months after being found guilty of raping a female passenger in his unlicensed taxi. Hacene-Chaouch—an Algerian married father of five—assaulted the woman after she got lost in Soho, central London.

The case drew public attention to a wave of sex crimes involving predatory Muslim taxi drivers who are raping female passengers. The number of so-called taxi rapes is snowballing to such an extent that a British judge has issued a warning that no woman can expect to be safe while traveling in a cab.

Reliable statistics on taxi rapes nationwide are difficult to obtain, and Freedom of Information requests seeking accurate data on cab-related sexual assaults are routinely denied (here and here).

However, a much acclaimed report produced by the London Metropolitan Police Service estimates that on average there are a total of 1,125 sexual assaults, including rapes, each year involving taxi drivers just in London; this works out to approximately 22 sexual assaults against women by taxi drivers each week in the capital city of England alone.

Meanwhile, Robert Spencer and Pamela Geller—two well-known counter-jihad activists who are opposed to the spread of Sharia law in the West—were banned from Britain under the so-called

Unacceptable Behavior policy, following a personal intervention from Home Secretary Theresa May.

In a letter posted on the Internet, May writes: "The Home Secretary will seek to exclude an individual if she considers that his or her presence in the UK is not conducive to the public good. We condemn all those whose behaviors and views run counter to our shared values and will not stand for extremism in any form."

It later emerged that the main reason why Spencer and Geller were banned from Britain was because of their strong support for Israel.

At the same time, the British government had no problems with allowing the Saudi Sheikh Adel al-Kalbani—who says all Jews and Christians should be removed from the Arabian Peninsula—to embark upon a speaking tour of Britain.

Britain also allowed into the country another Saudi hate preacher, Mohammed al-Arefe, who has said: "Devotion to jihad for the sake of Allah, and the desire to shed blood, to smash skulls, and to sever limbs for the sake of Allah and in defense of His religion, is, undoubtedly, an honor for the believer. Allah said that if a man fights the infidels, the infidels will be unable to prepare to fight."

In July, a House of Commons research report entitled "Prison Population Statistics" showed that the number of Muslim inmates in England and Wales jumped to 11,248 in 2012, up from 3,681 in 1997. It was the first time that the number of Muslim convicts in British prisons has surpassed the 11,000 mark. Stated another way, the number of Muslims in British prisons has jumped by more than 200% over the past 15 years.

The rate of increase of Muslim inmates in British prisons is eight times faster than that of the overall prison population, and the numbers show a clear over-representation of Muslim convicts: Muslims, who make up roughly 5% of the British population as a whole, now make up 13% of the British prison population (compared to just 6% in 1997).

The growth in the number of Muslim inmates has fueled fears that British prisons are becoming hotbeds for Islamic radicalization.

Although most of the Muslims in British prisons are immigrants from Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, an increasing number of Muslim inmates are converts to Islam.

Writing in the July 2013 issue of the prisoner's magazine, Inside Time, a "long serving prisoner" at the Long Lartin Prison in Worcestershire has this to say: "We are able to cook our own food here but if we attempt to cook pork in the communal kitchen it is deemed dangerous, even a threat to your life. The kitchen is usually occupied by 90% Muslims and we have been told if we cook pork we will be stabbed. There have been incidents here where people have been targeted and pressured and bullied into converting to Islam."

He adds: "I am writing to inform people of these radical extremists views in this prison where I see no official steps being taken to combat them. Young Muslim men are being radicalized in here and one day they may commit acts of terrorism in this country. There seems to be nothing being done here to stop it and people are scared to speak out. I hope we get some feedback from this; it needs to be sorted out."

In August, an Islamic television channel based in Birmingham was hit with a hefty fine after a Muslim hate preacher told viewers—live on air—that it was the duty of all Muslims to murder anyone who shows disrespect for the Prophet Mohammed.

Noor TV, a Satellite Television Channel that broadcasts programs about Islam throughout Europe, was fined £85,000 (\$115,000) by the British broadcasting regulator known as Ofcom for inciting people to commit murder.

Ofcom said the fine imposed on August 21 was so large due to "the serious nature of the breaches of the Broadcasting Code." It said young Muslims watching Noor TV could become "radicalized" and take "violent and criminal action as a result of watching videos of Muslims with extreme views."

In a separate case, Ofcom ordered DM Digital Television to pay a fine of £85,000 (\$115,000) after it broadcast a speech by an Islamic scholar who said Muslims had "a duty to kill" anyone who insulted the Prophet Mohammed.

The Manchester-based channel—which claims it has a worldwide audience of 30 million—describes itself as bringing "Asian and English cultures closer" by integrating its people, the cultural diversity, communities and the economy.

In its ruling, Ofcom cited a program called Rehmatul Lil Alameen [Mercy unto the Worlds] which featured a live lecture it said was "likely to encourage or incite the commission of crime or to lead to disorder."

Ofcom stated that some of the comments on the program could be seen as "a generic call to all Muslims encouraging or inciting them to criminal action or disorder, by unambiguously stating that they had a duty to kill anyone who criticizes or insults the Prophet Mohammed and apostates."

In September, the Birmingham Metropolitan College reversed a ban on Islamic veils after furious Muslim students complained of discrimination, and launched an online petition drive that gathered more than 8,000 signatures in just two days.

The college backed away from its ban on September 12, just hours before a mass demonstration by hundreds of Muslim students threatened to disrupt the normal functioning of the college. Local high school students visit the engineering department of Birmingham Metropolitan College.

The controversy began on September 9, the first day of the autumn term, when the college announced that students and employees would be ordered to remove any face coverings so that individuals are "easily identifiable at all times."

The college's ban on face-covering niqabs or the body-covering burqas—as well as caps, hoodies and other types of head covering—was billed as a security measure.

Tory MP for Kettering Philip Hollobone told the British newspaper *The Independent* that the college's reversal was a shameful disgrace and argued for the urgent need for legislation to ban the niqab in all public spaces.

"People are frightened of standing up and speaking out in this discussion because of political correctness and the intolerant reaction from Muslim groups who jump up and down with fury whenever anyone says that it makes sense for people to go around with their faces perfectly visible to everyone else, which is the way human beings were created in the first place," Hollobone said.

Hollobone presented a bill in the British Parliament on September 6 that would make it illegal to wear clothing obscuring the face in public; the bill will be considered on February 28, 2014.

In a live debate entitled "Should Britain Ban the Veil?" and aired on BBC Radio 5 on September 6, Hollobone said, "Society can't function if people go around with facial coverings. If we all covered our faces the world would be a very different place. Imagine Parliament where everyone had their face covered. It makes it very difficult for the police to identify troublemakers. I am sad that legislation may be necessary to address this problem. It's basic common sense to most people. It would ultimately lead to the breakdown of our society."

Hollobone denied that his proposal amounted to an attack on Islam: "We have to be quite clear—the burka isn't religious clothing. It's a choice."

Also in September, a taxpayer-funded Muslim school in England inflamed public anger after it emerged that the institution was operating according to Islamic Sharia law.

Islamic fundamentalists running the Al-Madinah School in Derby, an industrial city in central England, had ordered all female teachers—including those who are not Muslim—to cover their heads and shoulders with a hijab, an Islamic scarf.

In addition to the strict dress code, pupils were banned from singing songs, playing musical instruments, or reading fairy tales, activities deemed to be "un-Islamic," according to non-Muslim staff members at the school.

Critics say the school—which originally marketed itself as an "inter-faith" school in order to qualify for taxpayer monies—promised that at least 50% of its students would be non-Muslim. But after it obtained £1.4 million (€1.7 million; \$2.25 million) in government financing, the administrators of Al-Madinah were accused of switching gears by operating the school according to Islamic law, apparently to ensure that the school will eventually be 100% Muslim.

Also in September, the British Department of Education revealed that it is recruiting former agents of the British secret service (MI5) to investigate the alleged infiltration of British schools by Islamic extremists.

The agents will form part of a new counter-extremism unit, established to investigate schools in which radical activity has been suspected. Speaking to the Sunday Times on September 29, Education Secretary Michael Gove said some schools are being "taken over" by Muslim hardliners in the hope of radicalizing pupils and staff. He also said he was determined to "weed out" schools whose practices do not conform to British values.

A survey published by the BBC on September 25 revealed that more than a quarter of young British people distrust Muslims and feel Britain would be better off if there were fewer of them in the country. Of the 1,000 young people questioned in the survey conducted by ComRes, a leading market research agency, 27% of 18-to-24-year-olds said they did not trust Muslims, while 28% said Britain would be better off with fewer Muslims. It also emerged that 60% thought the British public had a negative image of Muslims, and 44% said Muslims do not have the same values as the rest of the population.

A separate survey published by Lord Ashcroft Polls on September 1, showed that six in ten Britons thought immigration had produced more disadvantages than advantages for their country; only 17% thought the pros outweighed the cons. The biggest concerns were about migrants claiming benefits or using public services without having contributed in return.

In London, a judge on September 16 ordered a Muslim defendant to take off her full-face veil to give evidence in court. But—in a case that made legal history—he said the woman could retain the veil for all other parts of her trial.

Judge Peter Murphy said the court should recognize "freedom of religious expression," but that allowing her to retain the niqab during her evidence, as she wanted, would "drive a coach and horses through justice administered in England and Wales for centuries." Murphy said he hoped that "Parliament or a higher court will provide a definite answer to the issue soon" to avoid "judicial anarchy."

Also in September, the British Ministry of Justice confirmed that a total of 186 Muslim inmates at three different prisons are suing the British government, claiming their human rights were violated after tests confirmed that halal food being served to them contained pork meat.

The legal cases are being brought by the prisoners under Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which affords the right to the freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

In October, more than a dozen Muslim clerics at some of the biggest mosques in Britain were caught on camera agreeing to marry off girls as young as 14.

Undercover reporters filming a documentary about the prevalence of forced and underage marriage in Britain for the television program ITV Exposure secretly recorded 18 Muslim imams

agreeing to perform an Islamic marriage, known as a nikah, between a 14-year-old girl and an older man.

Although the legal age for marriage in Britain is 16, according to Sharia law girls can marry once they reach puberty. The imams who agreed to marry the girl openly mocked the legitimacy of British law, reflecting the rise of a parallel Islamic legal system in Britain.

One of the Muslim clerics who agreed to perform the underage marriage is Mohammed Shahid Akhtar, the imam of the Central Jamia Masjid Ghamkol Sharif Mosque in Birmingham, the second-largest mosque in Britain with a capacity of more than 5,000 worshippers.

On being informed that the girl did not want to get married, Akhtar replied: "She's 14. By Sharia, grace of Allah, she's legal to get married. Obviously Islam has made it easy for us. There is nothing against that. We're doing it because it's okay through Islam."

The documentary also shows Akhtar expressing his contempt for British marriage laws: "You've got the kuffars [non-believers], the law, the English people that ... you know, you can't get married twice but, by the grace of Allah, we can get married four times."

Meanwhile, British taxpayers were left to pay a legal bill of £350,000 (€410,000; \$566,000) after Muslim parents went to court to win the right to shave the pubic hair of their disabled daughter.

The mother and father of the young woman, who is referred to as "ED" in court documents, said their daughter's pubic hair should be removed according to Islamic tradition. But their local council, which has cared for the disabled woman since 2008, questioned whether she had the mental capacity to consent to her hair being removed.

After more than two years of legal fights, the Muslim couple abruptly dropped the case on October 22, after a "cultural expert" concluded that "whilst there was a duty to remove pubic hair, both for religious and cultural reasons, there is an exemption for those incapacitated such as ED."

The local authority involved had incurred costs of £138,000, the couple of £82,000 and the official attorney, appearing for ED, of £130,000, with taxpayers footing the entire bill.

"This is an astonishing sum of money," a judge at London's High Court, Justice Roderic Wood, told the Daily Telegraph newspaper. "I thus remain utterly baffled by the course this litigation has taken, and perplexed by this lack of clarity in their case. Obtaining a 10-day slot of a High Court Judge's time is not easy, for there are many competing cases of equal if not greater urgency than this one."

In lead up a final hearing, which had been scheduled for late October, "a great morass" of evidence was prepared, including 740 pages of witness statements, 300 pages of expert evidence as well as other documents, the judge said.

Also in October, the London Stock Exchange said it would be launching a new Islamic bond index in an effort to establish the City of London as one of the world's leading centers of Islamic finance.

Britain also plans to become the first non-Muslim country to issue sovereign Islamic bonds, known as sukuk, beginning as early as 2014.

British Prime Minister David Cameron announced the plans during a keynote speech at the ninth World Islamic Economic Forum, which was held in London from October 29-31, the first time the event has ever been held outside the Muslim world.

"Already London is the biggest center for Islamic finance outside the Islamic world," Cameron told the audience of more than 1,800 international political and business leaders from over 115 countries.

"And today our ambition is to go further still. Because I don't just want London to be a great capital of Islamic finance in the Western world, I want London to stand alongside Dubai and Kuala Lumpur as one of the great capitals of Islamic finance anywhere in the world."

The plans are all part of the British government's strategy to acquire as big a slice as possible of the fast-growing global market of Islamic finance, which operates according to Islamic Sharia law and is growing 50% faster than the conventional banking sector.

In Scotland, meanwhile, the largest-ever immunization program was halted on October 2 after Muslim parents complained that the so-called Fluenz vaccine contained pork gelatin. The roll-out of the flu vaccine in Glasgow was postponed after parents at Glendale Primary in Pollokshields—which has a large number of Muslim pupils who cannot consume pig products for religious reasons—became aware of the ingredients and complained.

The National Health Service of Greater Glasgow and Clyde, an area that contains the overwhelming majority of the Muslims in Scotland, said that 100 Islamic scholars had agreed that pork gelatin was permissible within a vaccine, but it had postponed the vaccinations anyway "following concerns raised by a small number of parents."

A similar vaccination program in Leicestershire, England, was halted in September after the same flu vaccine was deemed to be "insensitive" to Muslims.

In November it emerged that Choukri Ellekhliifi, a British man who was killed fighting alongside al Qaeda-linked extremists in Syria, funded his trip by mugging people in an affluent area of London.

Ellekhliifi threatened victims with a Taser-style high-voltage stun gun and forced them to hand over valuables including designer watches and mobile phones.

He lived in London until a year ago when he skipped bail and travelled to Syria to join a group of Islamic extremists waging war on the Assad regime. He was one of three British men killed as

their group attacked pro-government forces near the city of Aleppo on August 11. The trio were part of a group of ten British jihadists who joined up with 20 other Britons to fight with the Al-Nusra Front, allied to Al-Qaeda.

Separately, Ifthekar Jaman, a 23-year-old jihadist from Southsea, Hampshire, told Richard Watson—the host of the BBC's flagship daily news and current affairs program called Newsnight—that he traveled to Syria to fight with the Al-Qaida-linked ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant). Jaman said he supported the principle of jihad before he left Britain. He told the BBC:

I was already a jihadi [while in the UK] I understood I was on the jihadi path. Where it all began? It began from the book [the Koran]. And I read this and in there you see what jihad is about. I used to be scared of the word jihad. I once went to my sister when I was young I said to her, I saw it in the book and it said fighting. And my sister said to me jihad means what you have in your heart, what you did in your heart. This is what I was taught. It wasn't taught to me that Islam is peace and there's no fighting. It is peace but it requires fighting. The duty of a Muslim is to love jihad. One of the sayings of the prophet peace be upon him whoever does not go jihad or doesn't even talk about it dies with the characteristic of hypocrisy. I am actually a Muslim following the way I should be.

Also in November, the head of MI5 (British domestic intelligence), Andrew Parker, told the British Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee that there are thousands of people living in Britain today who support al Qaida; and the head of MI6 (British foreign intelligence), Sir John Sawers, warned that the threat of terrorist attacks against Britain is increasing. Parker said that British intelligence had foiled 34 terrorist plots since the July 7 London bombings in 2005.

In December, two Islamists, Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale, were found guilty of the murder of British soldier Lee Rigby outside the Woolwich Barracks in southeast London on May 22, 2013. The crime shocked the country and has drawn nationwide attention to the rise of radical Islam in Britain.

Adebolajo, 28, and Adebowale, 22, were each accused of attacking the 25-year-old Rigby by running him over from behind with a car and then attempting to decapitate his motionless body with a meat cleaver and kitchen knives.

Both men were born in Britain and raised as Christians before converting to Islam as teenagers.

During the trial, Adebolajo said there was an ongoing "war between the Muslims and the British people" and that he was a "soldier of Allah."

Assistant London Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick, the most senior counter-terrorism officer in Britain, told the newspaper The Telegraph that British soldiers are at risk from "thousands" of lone-wolf terrorists who hold to a "perverted ideology" like the home-grown fanatics who murdered Rigby. She said the threat could never be eliminated.

Meanwhile, three Muslim men were sentenced at the Old Bailey on December 6 for confronting and abusing non-Muslims in London in January 2013. The three—who called themselves the Muslim Patrol—confronted, physically assaulted, and verbally abused members of the public whose behavior was in violation of Sharia law. They then posted the videos of their actions on YouTube.

Also in December, Marks & Spencer, the biggest clothing retailer in Britain, backed down after facing a boycott from thousands of angry customers who were furious at the store's decision to allow Muslim staff to refuse to serve customers buying alcohol or pork products during the Christmas shopping season.

The policy was revealed after customers trying to buy pork or alcohol from a Muslim cashier at an M&S store in central London were told that because of her religion, they would have to use another checkout lane.

Critics of M&S's policy of accommodation said it was just another example of how British law and practice is giving way to Islamic Sharia law and practice.

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