

Muslims Are Victims of Hate Crimes after September 11th

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Description

NBC's Jim Avila reports on one of the ugliest legacies of the 9/11 attacks: The surge of intolerance and hate crimes against American Muslims and people who are mistaken for them.

Keywords

Terrorism, September 11th, Racism, Hate Crimes, Arab, Muslims, Robert Mueller, Afghanistan, Islam, Justice Department, John Cooksey

Transcript

Muslims Are Victims of Hate Crimes After September 11th

TOM BROKAW, anchor:

One of the ugliest legacies of this crisis is home grown: the surge of intolerance and hate crimes against Muslims and people who are mistaken for them. There are about six million Muslims in America. Many of them were born here. Several of them are second and third generation. Tonight they are very anxious. And joining me now from lower Manhattan is NBC's national correspondent Jim Avila. Jim:

JIM AVILA reporting:

Tom, those two buildings truly were World Trade Centers. More than 1700 workers of Islamic heritage, Muslims, now victims of both hate and terror. Brooklyn's Atlantic Avenue where New York's Arab-

Americans look east to Mecca and west to Manhattan's gutted southern tip; terrorism at the hands of suspected Islamic extremists most Muslims neither condone nor understand.

Ms. SHEKAIBA WAKILI (Women for Afghan Women): It doesn't say anywhere in Islam to go blow up 5,000 innocent people.

AVILA: Signs posted today offering help for Muslims afraid to leave their homes because of hate crimes. The Justice Department reports 55 open investigations, including allegations of three murders, arson, shootings and vandalism.

Ms. FARIBA NAWA: (Reading) I'm hiding in my house in the heart of an Arab neighborhood in Brooklyn.

AVILA: Fariba Nawa, an Afghan-American student, wrote an essay about her fears, feeling under attack by terrorists and Americans.

Ms. NAWA: We unite as Americans, but that's the dark side of unity. We sort of need a face and a group to hate.

AVILA: How bad is it? Congressman John Cooksey, Republican from Louisiana, apologized today for this remark.

Republican JOHN COOKSEY (Republican, Louisiana): (On radio) If I see someone that comes in that's got a diaper on his head and a fan belt around his diaper on his head, that guy needs to be pulled over and checked.

AVILA: And Muslims are not just hate victims. Nearly a thousand are among the dead and missing.

Ms. TAHIRA KANN (Taimour Kahn's Mother): I'm a mother and I'm suffering very much.

AVILA: Taimour Kahn, 29-year-old Pakistani-American bond trader, still missing from his 92nd-floor office at the World Trade Center.

Ms. KAHN: This is a time of pain and sorrow and hurt for America, not only the ones who have lost, but for everyone else.

AVILA: In Boston, Rahma Salie and her husband, Michael, confirmed dead, passengers aboard hijacked American Airlines Flight 11. She was seven months pregnant.

Ms. HALEEMA SALIE (Rahma Salie's Mother): I would like everyone to know that she was a Muslim--she is a Muslim--and we are victims, too, of this tragic incident.

AVILA: Here at the rescue and recovery center, at the site itself, we've seen both the best of America, and now because of hate, begin to see some of the worst.

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