

## **Episode 209- Dr. Omid Safi: “Islamophobia” in America**

[00:00:08] Welcome to inSocialWork the podcast series of the University of Buffalo School of Social Work at [www.inSocialWork.org](http://www.inSocialWork.org). We're glad you could join us today. The purpose of inSocialWork is to engage practitioners and researchers in lifelong learning and to promote research to practice and practice to research. We educate. We connect. We care. We're inSocialWork.

[00:00:37] Hello and welcome to inSocialWork. I'm your host Charles Simms. Muslims have been part of the fabric of America for more than 500 years. There were likely Muslim members of Columbus's crew when they arrived in the American Hemisphere in 1492. Trans-Atlantic slavery would have certainly brought Africans who practice Islam to the developing United States. During the ratification of the United States Constitution concern was voiced that one day there could be a Muslim president yet in the early 1800s the Ramadan Fast was once ended in the White House. As one can see the history of Muslims in America is long and complicated. Today regrettably the word Muslim often engenders feelings of fear, anxiety, or anger. How did we get here? What does this mean for Muslims living in America? What should social workers know? In this podcast our guest Dr. Omid Safi examines the complex history of Muslims in America. In doing so his discussion helps us to more fully understand the term Islamophobia. He critiques how the fear of Muslims has under the guise of making America safe led to the resurgence of previously used tactics of state sponsored intrusions into our civil liberties and calls for strategies that violate human rights. Nonetheless Dr. Safi is optimistic as he offers us his ideas on how the citizenry in general and social work in particular can confront this tide of social injustice. Finally he ends the podcast with his thoughts on what can and cannot make America great. Dr. Safi is a Professor of Religious Studies and the director of Duke University's Islamic Studies Center. He was interviewed in November of 2016 by Dr. Isok Kim, an assistant professor in the University at Buffalo School of Social Work. Our listeners should know that the content shared by participants in this episode is their own and not necessarily representative of any view research or practice from the University at Buffalo School of Social Work or the social work podcast series. And now doctors Safi and Kim.

[00:03:21] Thank you for agreeing to do this Podcast and I'm looking forward to hearing your thoughts on many of the things that we've been speaking about but also serve me in terms of the post election and how it impacts particularly Islam and the Muslims living in the United States as well. To start off could you sort of share with us about the history of Muslims in America?

[00:03:51] Well I think the most important aspect to keep in mind about the history of Muslims in America is that it actually predates the existence of an entity known as America. There have been Muslims in America at least since the time of Columbus's ship. We know that some of the people who sailed for the New World were themselves Muslim. The most important and prominent origin of Islam in America is actually part and parcel of the history of Trans-Atlantic slavery. Somewhere between 15 and 25 percent of the West African human beings who were stolen and enslaved and brought over to the New World were of Muslim backgrounds. Parts of West Africa that were part of the slave trade featured a substantial number of Muslim communities. And we know that over the course of time that many of the enslaved human beings were Muslims as was the case with other Africans they were robbed and dispossessed of their culture their language and their religion specifically. But it's important I think for people to recognize and realize that the history of Islam in America goes back precisely to even prior to the official start of the American republic. We know that even the Founding Fathers of America make lots of significant references to Muslims. George Washington himself is on record as having stated in 1784 that he would welcome good work men whether they come from Asia Africa or Europe. And if there are Muslims or Jews or Christians or Atheists or whatever that it would be welcome in America. We had the breaking of the Ramadan Fast in the White House in the early 1800s. And some of them have been in that sense a part of the fabric of the American experiment both as people whose work and labor contributed to the building

of America and also as the Bogeyman against whom and notion of what it means to be American was consolidated. So I'm speaking to you from the state of North Carolina. And before the state of North Carolina officially ratified the U.S. Constitution there was a discussion on the floor of the North Carolina General Assembly 200 plus years ago where people were saying wait a minute if we sign this constitution someday there could be a Muslim president. And you know this was at a time where with the possible exception of enslaved human beings none of the people having that discussion actually knew any Muslims. But the prospect of a Muslim president still hung over them in some ways. If you move forward in history towards the end of the 19th century that was a time that we started to see a significant migration of Arabs initially to America at that time period that they would have been from the regions of Syria, Palestine, Lebanon. There was no country of Israel back then yet but the eastern Mediterranean region and about half of those Arabs were Christian half of them were Muslim. So you know when you take a look at some of the figures that are you know part and parcel of American culture. Ralph Nader, Casey Kasem, these kinds of folks. John Sununu they are Arab immigrants whose family origins go back to that particular time and a significant number of them were Muslim. What really changes the landscape of American Islam, and this is something I'm happy to talk about more, is a 1965 immigration law. Prior to 1965 the official state policy of the United States of America was to have an immigration policy that preserved the whiteness of America. So people from other countries were allowed to move into the U.S. only in a small trickle that would not be seen as disturbing the overwhelming white hegemony of America. And in 1965 that law is changed and the new national immigration policy is put into place which if you want to go back to the famous poem *The New Colossus* it has never quite been the notion of "Give me your tired your poor your huddled masses." That's a nice slogan but it has never been official policy. The 1965 regulations said essentially give us your doctors and engineers. And post 1965 we saw a significant migration of Muslims from Iran from Egypt from Turkey from Pakistan from India from Bangladesh and from other countries who are never the tired and the poor and the huddled masses. But they were the technocrats they were the doctors and engineers and we started to see migration in the hundreds of thousands of, if you would, Brown Muslims to America who were by and large highly educated much more educated than the general American population but that had a significant impact because then by 1970 for the first time the majority of American Muslims were no longer black whereas prior to 1970 Islam was not only an American tradition it was a black American tradition. And when we go back and take a look at people like Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali you know the giants of 20th century Islam they are all Black Muslims. So I think it's important to have this longer historical trajectory in mind because sometimes we tend to treat the conversation around Islam and Muslims because of everything that's happening around us in this country now as part of a it's about refugees or it's about immigrants. Whereas the you know these issues go back decades and in some cases centuries.

[00:10:24] I think that is a very interesting take on an important take on the history of America and I think you can certainly say that history of a Muslim is the story of America in a nutshell.

[00:10:37] And every aspect and every aspect of American history has some components of Muslims and the people who espouse the Muslim religion throughout the centuries and before as you've mentioned the America was born in the 1700s. I think that the fact that you've sort of nicely laid out the short history of the Muslims in America kind of presents itself to the understanding of Muslims not only in terms of the religion but also in terms of their color lines that we are now talking about. So I guess next logical question to ask is how is this kind of shapes the notion of America as a nation of immigrants and Nipe of whiteness. And you mentioned something to the effect of the browning of immigrants shaping and changing the landscape of the United States. So if you could top a little bit about that.

[00:11:40] Of course I'm happy to do that. So I think it's important again to realize that the history of America is a dream always imperfectly realized. To put it in a different ways America is a flawed

noble experiment and the contradictions are there from the very beginning. So on one hand you know we speak of we the people being created with inalienable rights endowed by their Creator, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and all of that. And yet from the very beginning Native Americans are excluded women are excluded African-Americans of course are defined as three fifths of a person. So I think there's America's foundings are part of an Enlightenment project with grand sounding humanistic and noble aspirations that yet from the very beginning were tied into a history of whiteness and that notion became more and more deliberate.

[00:12:51] Where we see that already by 1790 citizenship, the idea of what it means to be an American citizen is essentially restricted to being a free white male. And the inconsistency of those legally enforced notions and then the grand enlightenment era of humanistic universal sounding rhetoric. That has to be pointed out. It takes time, of course, and we see that after the Civil War era there are attempts to expand those rights into African-Americans and then immediately backtracked from them and then we get the Jim Crow regulations. We see that eventually we get Native Americans being brought into the fold, women later on get some of the same rights but again there's a backsliding into that. So there are poll taxes and everything established. The conversation about Muslims is part and parcel of the same context. And I think that's an important point for us to realize. So for example when Muslims start arriving in America as immigrants they see the Supreme Court to be legally classified as whites and that's part of the racial context of the U.S..

[00:14:09] I think that's something that few people realize that there are sort of there isn't necessarily a line that says Muslims are certain group versus Christians or white and many of these sort of preconceived notions about food the Muslims are in America. You know earlier you talked about how Muslims are viewed as more of a foreign and recent phenomenon but in fact the case has to be made that there are much bigger and longer history of Muslims in the United States and the sort of the contributions that they have made really goes beyond just recent history. I think it's kind of making me feel incurious about this idea of African American Muslims and Muslims like you mentioned of Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali and probably many others who have emerged as we sort of begin to shape the idea of context. And this idea between race and religion and ethnicity and the complexities of that playing out in our recent history. And part of that challenge was again going back to the understanding of the race and the meaning of race and the meaning of religion and all encompassing thoughts about what to make of us as a nation and the challenges of dealing with that the realization that United States and as a nation is changing and changing for good in many different ways not only in terms of race but also in terms of religion. And I think that's sort of interesting to think about.

[00:16:03] Absolutely. I think there's a couple of items that are helpful to add to that. So when we go back and we take a look at the history of African-American Islam and you know here of course people like Malcolm X loom very very large in that context. One of the themes that we hear consistently from Malcolm is this notion that we didn't land on Plymouth Rock, Plymouth Rock landed on us. In other words part of what he wants to emphasize is this notion which he comes back to again and again that the American dream has always been experienced as a nightmare by people of color. And partially you know sometimes people take that to mean that oh he's just anti-American or he's there and he's that. For Malcolm this is actually something that has a very specific genealogy. Malcolm knows what he's talking about and what he's talking about the fact that if you look at it historically we have the United States Naturalization Law which was passed in March 26 of 1790 which defines naturalization as immigrants who are free white people of good character and lots of groups, Slaves, Asians, Blacks, indentured servants, Native Americans, they're all excluded from that category. And Malcolm is just simply pointing out what has been the history of American policy. And then when he moves into his own age not only do you see a history of lynchings and Jim Crow policies but that in his own era he sees systematic state sponsored discrimination against African-Americans. So I think in that way Muslims are and have been a mirror for America that

they point both to the potential and the dream and the promise which is the reason that keeps people from all over the world wanting to move here while at the same time also reminding us of a history of racism, materialism and militarism which has also been the reality of what many of us have faced.

[00:18:32] So would you say that there has been sort of ongoing since the dawn of time and Malcolm X emerged and since then the Muslims and the way the Americans understood Islam was always more of sort of a militaristic sense that people misunderstood and in a way that it's been brought to the forefront of popular media? I guess what I'm wondering is since Malcolm X in the 60s and you know with the movement of Civil Rights and various other rights coming along, Black Panthers and other militaristic approach to grabbing or at least demanding civil rights and social justice to every individuals in the United States. So how do you think that have influenced the way people viewed Muslims in more recent years?

[00:19:31] Yeah that's a great question. I would say it's important to remember that Malcolm X actually never spoke in terms of civil rights. Malcolm spoke in terms of human rights and that distinction is actually important. Civil rights are rights that a government enforces and recognizes in its citizens. And when Malcolm looks around he sees an American government that is oppressing its own citizens of color. So he's not going to turn to the same government that is enforcing racist policies and beg them for rights that the people are already supposed to have. Instead Malcolm says "No no no, we are actually entitled to human rights and I'm going to take the American government to court, an international court of law, and hold you responsible and accountable there." And that's a very important distinction from the way that many of the civil rights movement, Dr. King most famously, approached the issue. And I have a world of love and respect for both of those approaches. But I think the distinction between them has to be kept important.

[00:20:48] Thank you for clarifying that I think that that is important to distinguish and discern those two things. And I think more and more people are able to recognize that human rights and sort of social justice issues overall begins to trump the idea of civil rights in general. As you mentioned it's more of a localized national and international law.

[00:21:15] Exactly. And then the other point that I think it's important to see as a continuity between the era of Malcolm X and the era of today is this battle that we know that in the 1960s as part of the Co-Intell program that the American government spied on African-American groups, Muslim groups, groups that were deemed as being communist sympathizers, socialists, human rights activists, journalists, intellectuals and others. This particular Co-Intell Pro which stands for Counterintelligence Program was an illegally enforced program signed on by the Kennedy administration and the Johnson administration which included spying on Martin Luther King. Virtually everything that King ever said was recorded by Co-Intel Pro operatives and it included spying on Malcolm X and other black separatists, human rights and civil rights organizations. The reason that I think it's important to make this point is sometimes we want to have a discussion that says "Oh these are all new policies that were established post 9/11" and because we have this unprecedented attack on American soil that all of a sudden we have to be willing to give up some of our liberties and freedom in order to somehow quote unquote be kept safe. But the truth of the matter is that the policies that we're speaking of actually go back 50 years. They have nothing to do with 9/11. They have everything to do with this suspicion of people of color and people who are speaking in anticolonial anti imperialistic discourses and people who call into question the fairness and justice of America's policies both domestically for our own citizens and globally for other people around the world.

[00:23:17] So I think there is sort of continuity of exclusion based on race or religion in the past. Unfortunately in the United States history including glaring examples like Japanese internment and

during World War Two and the Chinese Exclusion Act and in the 1800s. So I think it's befitting to recognize that the idea of checking in, I guess to put it mildly, and monitoring those who seem different than for the lack of a better word American. They were always subjected to more of the personal and privacy intrusions than most white Americans.

[00:24:03] That's right. And I mean I think you know many of us remember that interview that Megan Kelly did with Carl Higbie who is a Trump fundraiser and supporter and delegate. He's a spokesperson for the great America Political Action Committee where he brings up precisely the notion of the internment of Japanese as a model for what should be done to Muslims. I'm not the first or the last person to have done this. So I think there is actually a great deal that we can learn by connecting the dots and seeing the ways that different communities of color have been and continue to be treated.

[00:24:40] Excellent point. I think that kind of moves us to the idea of having to deal with how the 9/11 uncertainty had got us talking about the idea of Islam and the Islamist extremist group and trying to distinguish those two and maybe an inability for a lot of the American policymakers to push the idea of literally looking for ways to blame the Muslims and Islam religion for this unfortunate and a horrible horrible event. So in some ways I think as you said there were a number of you know historical precedents for monitoring screening and preventing people of certain group both race and religion within the United States but what do you think was sort of a defining change that the 9/11 had brought to us in the context I guess to the idea of dealing with the 9/11 and the discourse that comes with that?

[00:25:58] Yeah that's a wonderful wonderful question. So I think one of the first things that I often times tell people is that it's important again to see the disconnect between the official rhetoric and slogans that we see around us and the actual policies. So it sometimes feels like you're seeing classic light Animal Farm or something like that come into play that sort of George Orwellian legacy where nothing is what it's called. War is peace, up is down, day is night. And that's something called the Patriot Bill is actually a massive assault on liberties and freedoms that were guaranteed in the Constitution. So there's a couple of points that I often times make to people. One of them is that it's quite important to realize that their particular policies that were implemented post 9/11 that they had a pre 9/11 origin. And that is as true for the militarism. Right. So for example one can take a look at the fact that as of right now the United States is bombing and droning Muslims in seven different countries. The most disastrous of them of course is Iraq followed closely by Afghanistan. The war on Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11. There was no Al-Qaeda in Iraq prior to the U.S. invasion of Iraq. But what we had was a number of U.S. politicians, Dick Cheney most famously, who just kept repeating Al-Qaeda and Iraq in the same sentence to the point that eventually some I think it's 44 percent of the Americans. And Al-Qaeda's base was in Iraq. Whereas until the U.S. illegally attacked and occupied Iraq and created a devastating sense of chaos there Al-Qaeda had no foothold and no base in the Iraqi context. On the contrary if you go back to the late 1990s the Neoconservatives a lot of the people who formed the eventual Bush Cabinet. They had a think tank in DC called the PNAC Project for the New American Century. And there's a public letter that they wrote to President Clinton saying "Please invade Iraq. Iraq is important for our geopolitical interests. And by the way Iraq has oil." Now that letter was written in 1998. It's still on their Website. It has nothing to do with 9/11 obviously. We use the excuse of September 11th to wage in colonial imperialistic and exploitative policies whose seeds have been planted long before 9/11. The same thing is largely true about these processes of the national registries that we're hearing so much about. At a very fundamental and basic level these policies violate fundamental assumptions of our American legal tradition. In America a person, not a community, a person is held accountable for actions that they commit actions that they commit. We are not held possible for thoughts or beliefs and in most cases even for speech. But we ended up establishing a policy known as NSEERS National Security Entry Exit Registration System which was by and large

designed to target Muslims. Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Lebanon, Morocco. I mean you tell me what all these countries have in common. They throw in North Korea just to make sure that it wasn't all Muslim countries. And interestingly enough the first set of countries that were put under NSEERS were Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan and Syria. Whereas the actual hijackers of the 9/11 planes 15 out of the 19 of them were Saudi citizens. So we actually establish methods of mass registry of Muslims which didn't even pretend to have protected us against the actual terrorists.

[00:30:26] So that's very interesting and a lot of people are probably aware of it and aren't aware of it unless pointed out the fact that a group of people that we are talking about now wasn't necessarily part of these targets that eventually became a battleground so to speak in different parts of the world particularly in the Middle East. Which is, I guess, very disheartening to realize that American policy is continuing to be opportunistic in ways that jeopardizes not only the citizens of the world and Middle Eastern region Muslims of course but also for American citizens and the people that are trying to articulate the dangers of becoming more isolatistic approach to dealing with this challenge in a world that is becoming much and much more divisive.

[00:31:32] That's right. And I think it is not only the case that the world is becoming more divided. I think we're also seeing the rise of a new model of authoritarian in them in many Western countries. So it's easy of course to look quote unquote over there and speak about the Ayatollahs and Erdogan in Turkey and Sisi in Egypt. But what about you know we now have an open racist xenophobe as the president elect of the United States, in the UK we've seen Brexit and you have Nigel Farage in place. You're seeing Marine Le Pen emerge as a very prominent possible candidate for France and of course you have Putin in place. So we are actually seeing the rise of authoritarianism in Western countries in addition to the dictators that have always been in place in many Middle Eastern North African countries and elsewhere. So I think even the notion that this is somehow a clash of democracy versus totalitarianism is missing the part. In fact we're seeing extraordinarily aggressive xenophobic and militaristic political movements underway in the very heart of Europe and North America.

[00:32:59] Absolutely. Sort of mind boggling advancement, in exactly I've mentioned of authoritarianism across the world. I mean you mentioned the Brexit, you mentioned Le Pen in France, certainly Russia certainly in the United States where things are more becoming more sort of a reactionary and divisive I guess and that is sort of very new to I guess many of the people who observed the election process 2016 and a lot of people I'm sure including those who voted for either party have been alarmed by this shared disdain or disregard for civility and national discourse about what to do and what should be the course of action as a nation in the United States.

[00:33:57] That's right. And so I think you know it's one of the reasons why in some of my own public speaking and writing I have insisted they have to reframe the conversation. Really the question I think is less that someone like Donald Trump is misinformed about the reality of Islam and Muslims. I think the most important issue is that they're fundamentally wrong on America and they're wrong for America and the place to contest them. You don't go to someone who is openly espousing racist ideas and start listing off the contributions that your people have made to humanity. You actually have to call them out on the notion of what it means to be a citizen.

[00:34:49] I think more and more people are realizing, including myself, the perspective of dealing with someone who actively promotes inaccuracy is about many people not only regarding Muslims. Before a lot of folks who may disagree with Donald Trump's policy on what he's going to do once he takes office in January. But I am curious to know in the context of this sort of very chaotic political and civil moment in the history of United States what can we do as U.S. citizens in particular to advocate and to support those who are being targeted particularly in this case American

Muslims to be able to support sort of ongoing movements that allows us to be sane again?

[00:35:46] I think my suggestion is to always look to the model of ground solidarity. The kind of fear mongering, and it is exactly that, you know these comments are not offhand comments. They're not haphazard comments there are comments that are designed specifically to appeal to a primal level of fear and rage and frustration among many Americans, white Americans in particular. And I think a way of countering them and I'm sure other people have great ideas as well is to actually begin by forming coalitions among Asian Americans, Hispanics, Muslims, African-Americans, working class folks of all colors and stripes, women's rights groups, environmental groups, public education groups. And if you start putting all of those together then you actually have a majority of America. I think it's important to realize that Trump doesn't have a mandate and he doesn't have a landslide. He won less than a quarter of the vote. Half of them Americans who are eligible to vote didn't vote. Of the half who did vote more than half of those voted for Hillary Clinton. But Trump really has about a quarter of America which is overwhelmingly white. Eighty one percent of white evangelicals voted for him. White men voted for him by a factor of 31 percent and even a majority of white women voted for Trump. An open misogynistic who talks about grabbing women by the pussy and doing whatever he wants to them. A majority of white women voted for Donald Trump but he still has less than a quarter of the vote. There's three quarters of America on the other side. And I think it's important to not give in to despair and to fear which is exactly what these techniques are designed to do. Fear mongering is designed to invoke a sense of fear. And I think it's important instead not for each one of our communities just to be looking out for our own community but actually operate from the bases that says I can't be who I want to be until all of us be who we ought to become.

[00:38:12] That's an excellent comment. I think you know what Dr. King has said before and probably a lot of people are sort of reiterating this quote as the fact that injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. The challenges of us being alert and responsible and be active. I think it's important for us to be vigilant not just for ourselves and for those who are on the minority but for those who are for equal rights human rights, social justice, and advocating for peace and harmony for all civility, all humans across the globe. It says something about the importance of keeping it together, keeping it solid and making sure that what you've just told is the fact that we have to realize that there are more of those who actually believe that things are going to be better if we act if we act together rather than sort of you know singling out one group or one religion to be the target or bear of the responsibility for that matter. So thank you for that comment. And I know that we've been talking in terms of more of a historical election of 2016 and many began talking about the idea of being a Muslim in the United States and how that sort of impacts their life here in the United States. And it all kind of goes back to the beginning where you started to talk about the inclusiveness of the United States history. That has an ideal but never really kept that promise and needing to realize that you know we all need to work together. We all need to be alert and vigilant in terms of the threats that we are facing. And I think you know I don't know if you'll agree with me on this but the election of 2016 was a reflection of what we had only amplified maybe a thousand fold in many minorities and people of color feared and have experienced all along.

[00:40:45] That's right. And so I mean I think one of the interesting divides that I have noticed in the aftermath of the election, and this is of course a generalization, it doesn't explain every single person's opinion. But I find it very striking that when I would go and speak with my white American friends particularly maybe folks of a more liberal progressive vent that the overwhelming response was "How could this happen? How could someone like this become president?" And yet when you would go and you would speak with particular African-Americans they were by and large not surprised and they would tell you "We've been trying to tell you that this racism is real and it's pervasive and it's not just Trump it's millions of people out in society and you don't hear us. You don't listen to us." And I found that disconnect to be very prominent and very revealing in some

ways. If I'm not someone given to hopelessness. And I still do hold up some hope that the people who voted for Trump they were here before and the racism that animates so much of his support, That was the part of America before as well. Now that it's open and out in the open maybe this can be an opportunity to cleanse it and to heal this country from the demon of bigotry and racism and to form together a different kind of America.

[00:42:31] Well I think that's a very good statement perhaps to end the discussion. I think this conversation could go on and on and on and that sort of high emotions and high frustrations that's been you know spilling over since the election. And I do want to take a moment to really appreciate the fact that you were able to give a historical perspective on what we're dealing with. I mean even though we are talking about the issues of Muslims facing continuous distrust continuous violation of their human rights. I think it's important to realize it's again it's not the first time it's not the only time that happened in the history of United States. We can learn from this. We can learn from the fact that we were able to come back and rise of it all. We did that once. I think we are going to continue to press for that civility and the idea of social justice for all people not just a few exceptions that continues to keep us divided. Do you have any last comments or sort of closing comments that you wish to make?

[00:43:52] You know I think the only thing that I would leave us with is an open-eyed message of hope which is that we've now gone through an entire year of having heard the candidate who is now the president elect of the United States speak about making America great again and his rival Secretary Clinton who won the popular vote but did not become president kept on responding that no we don't have to make America great again because America has always been great. I think there has to be those of us in particular from communities of color who stand up and say actually an America that practiced centuries of slavery was not great, an America that engaged in genocide of its indigenous population was not great, an America that engaged in Jim Crow poll taxes and disenfranchisement was not great, and America that put Asian Americans of Japanese background in internment camps and excluded Asians from citizenship was not great, And then America that has continued to spend more on its military than the next 12 countries combined has not been great. We hope for America to become great as long as greatness is not merely defined by the size of our economy and certainly not by the size of our military, but greatness by the extent to which we're able to bring love into the public spaces by which we can make sure that the most vulnerable people in our communities are treated fairly and justly and compassionately and that if we actually share that notion of wanting to live in a great America we have to recognize that greatness is not in our past. It's not in our present. But if we're willing to take on this challenge and rely on the twin foundations of love and justice that it may still be a possibility for us in the future.

[00:46:07] Thank you for that wise comment. Thank you again for your time. I know you've been awfully busy and I'm so glad that we had finally had a chance to sit down and discuss this issue.

[00:46:22] You have been listening to Dr. Omid Safi's discussion on Islamophobia in America. We hope this has been thought provoking. Please join us again as we explore other topics of interest and importance to the profession of social work.

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