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**‘It’s not a Muslim ban!’ Indirect speech acts and the securitisation of Islam in the United States post-9/11**

**Abstract**

According to the Copenhagen School, a political issue is prioritized, or ‘securitised’, when an audience accepts a speech act with a particular security grammar pointing to the dangerous nature of the threat and calling for extraordinary security measures. This article probes the opposite: what if *not* saying ‘security’ and instead saying ‘friend’ also contributes to the securitisation? I explore this logic with the ways in which Islam has been securitised in the United States from the Bush administration to the beginning of the Trump administration and offer an analysis of what this article calls the ‘indirect securitisation of Islam.’ Drawing on the philosophy of language of John Searle, an indirect securitisation is one that is successful through indirect securitising speech acts, that is, utterances that comprise two illocutions, one direct and one indirect, with the latter being the ‘real’ request of the utterance. Using covert forms of speech such as indirect speech acts enables elite speakers to ‘deny plausibility’ and claim they are not securitising (or ‘the least racist person’ as Trump claims), thereby ‘saving face.’ Indirect securitising speech acts are therefore an important strategic tool in elite actors’ securitising playbook. The article seeks to make sense of a climate of American politics that seem ungoverned by conventional rules of speech by offering a timely study of how political leaders can ‘have their cake and eat it too’ in matters of national security.

**Keywords**: securitisation, indirect speech acts, Islam, Trump, indirect securitisation, Muslim ban

**‘It’s not a Muslim ban!’ Indirect speech acts and the securitisation of Islam in the US post-9/11**

**Introduction**

Securitisation theory draws attention to the selective use of language by politicians in the construction of security issues in the ‘West’ (Mabon and Kapur, this issue). According to Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde (1998), the authors of securitisation theory, securitisation is a ‘speech act’: by invoking a security grammar, a state representative attempts to convince an audience and claim ‘a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it’ (Wæver 1995, 55). This article probes the reverse: what if, by claiming that the issue is *not* security and by mobilising a language highlighting the peaceful nature of an issue instead, ‘a state-representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means are necessary to block it’? Drawing on John Searle’s (1975) indirect speech act theory, I argue that indirect speech acts can reveal a different type of securitisation, called ‘indirect securitisation.’ Direct securitisations are identified by an overt security grammar that labels an issue a threat, magnifies its dangerous nature, signals a point of no return and offers a possible way out, thereby lifting this issue ‘above politics’ (Buzan et al. 1998, 32-3). By contrast, indirect securitisations are characterised by a covert security grammar where securitising actors avoid labelling the issue a threat, for fear of saying something gauche and be subsequently chastised. This article demonstrates that when it comes to securitising Islam, a religion perceived as non-Western, in a ‘Western democracy’ like the United States, elite speakers tend to use indirect speech to ‘save face’ since securitising religious minorities directly would be tantamount to a form of hate speech. Thus, I investigate the securitisation of Islam as a study *in* a Western context but *of* an issue that has been constructed as non-Western, or antithetical to the ‘Western way of life.’ Further, the indirect speech act approach may open a new line of inquiry into securitisations in the non-Western world insofar as covert securitisations are about the ability to mislead and to mask, rather than the capacity to speak *per se*.

To demonstrate this argument, the article first provides an analysis of speeches made by three presidents of the United States while in office in relation to Islam and Muslim communities. The analysis indicates that in these speeches, a direct security grammar with respect to Islam was not mobilised. George W. Bush and Barack Obama make sure that Islam is not associated with ‘security,’ or ‘threat,’ and instead frame Islam as a peaceful religion that is hijacked by an extremist fringe of extremists. Even newly elected Donald J. Trump (2016b), who during his campaign talked about a ‘complete shutdown’ of Muslims entering the United States, once in power, reassured the public that his executive order was ‘not a Muslim ban’ (29/01/17). The second section unpacks Searle’s indirect speech act theory and lays the theoretical groundwork necessary for conceptualising the securitisation of Islam as an indirect securitisation. The implications of indirectness are explored in the third section, where securitising indirectly is considered a strategy deployed by elite speakers to thwart accusations of wrongdoings (such as racism). This is made possible because indirect speech allows securitising actors to deny plausibility by claiming that they never meant to securitise. Being able to save face is important for elite speakers for a failed securitising move can affect their political clout and in turn they can lose authority and legitimacy as security speakers. When President Trump has not respected the rules of covert speech and ventured outside of his speechwriter’s text, for instance when he branded African nations and developing countries “shitholes”, these incidents have backfired and have invited responses that either ridiculed him or created diplomatic tensions (for example with South Africa) (CNN 2018). As Shogan (2006, 10) notes, one way to achieve credibility and maintain authority is to use rhetoric, which includes covert strategies such as indirect speech acts.

The concept of indirect securitisation provides an innovative twist to securitisation theory and is fundamental to how minority groups become securitised by elite speakers with the executive power to move issues ‘beyond politics,’ an issue that is relevant beyond the Western world. Indeed, when a securitisation constitutes a form of hate speech, such as saying that Muslims are a threat to the United States who need to be monitored, securitising actors securitise indirectly for fear of being accused of racism or discriminating against a minority group. This article speaks to philosophies of everyday language, in particular to covert forms of hate speech and racism, and offers a timely analysis of the indirect securitisation of Islam in the United States. Indirect securitisations illuminate the ways in which various American administrations, Democrat and Republican, can claim the war on terrorism is ‘not a religious war’ while at the same time target the Muslim population domestically and internationally. While covert language is not yet central to the philosophy of language (Saul 2017), how established speakers manipulate, lie and mislead their audiences is vital in the world and has become an increasingly pertinent area in International Relations since the rise of Trump and right-wing populism. Indirect securitisations can shed light on the nexus between the securitisation of minority groups and racism, notably how ‘security’ is intertwined with racist constructions, and how these practices reinvent themselves in the 21st century in the face of actors who claim they are the ‘least racist person’ (Trump 09/12/2015; Trump 15/09/2016; Trump 16/02/2017).

**Framing Islam as a peaceful religion**

On September 17, 2001, six days after the September 11 attacks, Bush travelled to the Islamic Centre in Washington DC to speak to American Muslim communities and reassured them that the United States was not at war with Islam. He declared that ‘[t]he face of terror is *not* the true faith of Islam. That’s *not* what Islam is all about. Islam is peace.’ Equally, on September 20, 2001 Bush asserted that the terrorists ‘pervert the peaceful teachings of Islam’ (Bush 17/09/2001, emphasis added). Offering an olive branch to the Muslim world, Barack Obama (04/06/2009) announced in Cairo that ‘America and Islam are not exclusive,’ instead, ‘they overlap, and share common principles – principles of justice and progress; tolerance and the dignity of all human beings.’ More recently, newly elected President Trump (29/01/17), from the Oval Office, claimed that the ‘extreme vetting’ executive order passed during his first hundred days in office is ‘*not* a Muslim ban.’ Yet, Bush’s 2003 invasion of Iraq, Obama’s extensive drone programme and Trump’s several attempts to ban individuals coming to the United States from a list of predominantly Muslim countries created by Trump’s administrative team,[[1]](#footnote-1) suggest that in the context of the war on terrorism Islam has been ‘securitised,’ meaning that security measures, exceptional and mundane, target the Muslim population.

This article is particularly concerned with elite speakers (such as the president of the United States) who have the executive power to trigger extraordinary measures like the PATRIOT ACT, the surveillance of ‘Muslim neighbourhoods’ and the assassination of American citizens by drones in territories with which the United States is not at war. To a certain extent, this article reinstates the elitist and exceptional understanding of securitising moves, which has been compared to the conceptualisation of politics by the German jurist Carl Schmitt (2005 [1922]), and rightly contested by a wide array of scholars, from the Paris School of Securitisation (Bigo and Tsoukala 2008; CASE collective 2006; Diez and Huysmans 2007) to scholars working on the governmentality of security, technologies of risk and the securitisation of catastrophic events and trauma[[2]](#footnote-2)2. They argue that while the Copenhagen School has opened space for thinking of security beyond Cold War balance of power, the School has also closed it by merely exploring exceptional discourses of powerful actors, at the expense of everyday security practices and the ‘little security nothings’ (Huysmans 2011). Some have thus called to go beyond the ‘spectacle of security’ and instead investigate everyday experiences of (in)security (Lundborg and Vaughan-Williams 2011, 369).

I focus on presidents not because statesmen are the only actors shaping our understanding of what constitutes a societal and security issue. This would assume a top-down and overtly discursive understanding of how knowledge and meaning are generated. I focus on elite speakers for an important reason, namely, that these speakers contribute to the pervasiveness of covert forms of racism and hate speech, which remain unabated and unpunished because these actors can claim they never meant to securitise or that what they said is ‘not racism.’ This practice has become ubiquitous since the election of Trump, who has activated the securitisation of Islam in the United States, but has couched it under Executive Orders and the language of national security (Hassan 2017, 187-8). I do not suggest that actors other than the presidents of the United States have not securitised Islam or that practices other than speech do not contribute to seeing Muslims as threats. Securitisation is always manifold and includes a multitude of direct and indirect, discursive and non-discursive, exceptional and everyday *acts* performed by a variety of what the Copenhagen School calls functional actors, ‘actors who affect the dynamics of a sector’ and ‘who significantly influence decisions in the field of security’ (Buzan et al. 1998, 36).

Functional actors like Fox News assert quite explicitly that the United States should be worried about the role of Islam in American society, but others such as the police have relied on more imagined and less explicitly means of communication, for instance explaining the radicalisation of Muslim individuals with metaphors of growing bad seeds and incubators (Eroukhmanoff 2015). These securitising moves constitute the background knowledge necessary for the indirect securitisation to be successful, as we will see later in this article. They are instrumental in the growing Islamophobic attitudes in the West, founded on the perception that Islam is a threat to the Western liberal-secular order and a threat to security (Mavelli 2013, 160-1). The election of Trump (2016b) has crystalized anti-Muslim prejudices by being overtly critical of Muslims during the 2016 election campaign, even calling for a ‘total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what the hell is going on.’ Trump’s Islamophobia is, as Hassan (2017, 188) notes, well documented. Still, prejudices about Islam and the role of Muslims in the War on Terror also stem from less overt iterations than Trump’s ‘Muslim shutdown’ comment. Indirect speech acts are part of this covert construction and as such should be examined on their own merit, especially in the context of a Trump presidency which has been successful in maintaining Islam is at the centre stage of politics while simultaneously preserving the Bush and Obama administrations’ official rhetoric that the war on terrorism is ‘not a battle between different faiths, different sects, or different civilizations’ (Trump 21/05/2017). Indirect securitisations can unravel the contradictory and unpredictable messages sent from a president that seem to defy any systematisation (Bentley et al. 2017). This question matters even more precisely because there has been a constant effort on the part of each president to reassure the public that Islam is a religion of peace and a friend of America, paralleled by security measures that discriminate against this minority group like the ‘Muslim ban.’

As such, the next section proceeds with an analysis of nine speeches made by former President Bush, former President Obama and the forty-sixth president of the United States, President Trump. The speeches were selected on the grounds that they fulfil the ‘total speech act situation,’ that is, the conditions necessary for the speech act to succeed, which depend on the appropriateness and authority of the speaker, and the context in which the speech is enunciated; for example, its location, if the speech takes place after or prior to an important event, or whether it is broadcasted. In other words, the total speech act situation relates to the sociological conditions external to the speech, rather than its internal grammar (Balzacq 2011, 5). The speeches selected represent significant moments in time, were scripted, were all televised, sparked a debate about the role of Islam in American society and in the War on Terror and about the choice of words made by the respective presidents. They include the first address after the September 11 attacks, the visit to the Islamic Centre in Washington D.C. on 17September 2001 where Bush declared that ‘Islam is peace’, and the declaration of the ‘Global War on Terror’ on 20 September 2001. With respect to Obama’s speeches, the article explores Obama’s highly praised remarks in Cairo designed to improve US relations with the Muslim world by seeking a ‘new beginning’ during his first term, the address on national security and counterterrorism in his second term delivered at the National Defense University in 2013, and lastly, his remarks at the White House summit on countering violent extremism, in which he urges Muslims to not let ISIS hijack Islam in 2015. The next section also examines three speeches made by Trump that have been worthy of attention in his presidency so far, such as his victory speech of the 2016 US elections calling for American unity, Trump’s first declaration as a president on combatting radical Islamist terrorism delivered in Ohio, and Trump’s much-anticipated address to the Muslim world in Saudi Arabia in 2017.

These speeches were delivered both in the United States and in the Muslim world, thereby having been written for different audiences, but arousing global public interest. They symbolize(d) defining moments of a presidency, such a president’s first visit to a foreign country, or a declaration of war. Of course, the texts selected represent a slim number of speeches for each speaker, especially for Obama, who ran two terms. But what this article is interested in is not every iteration of these actors. Rather, this article explores those iterations that have avoided the connection between Islam and terrorism and those that have claimed that the war on terrorism is not a war against Muslim friends, in other words, this article is concerned with the absence of direct securitising language. These utterances, which are part of the macro-securitisation of Islam in the ‘West’, are still securitising, albeit indirectly.

1. President George W. Bush

Bush’s first move sought to securitise the Taleban regime. In his declaration of the War on Terror, Bush referred to the Taleban regime as ‘threatening people everywhere’ and demanded to be handed the terrorists responsible for the attacks. Bush frames justice in a Talionic understanding of ‘an eye for an eye’ that guarantees that ‘[w]hether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done’ (Bush 20/09/2001). Afghanistan is categorized as a different and clashing civilisation to the one of America, where individuals are free to have beards as short as they wish and where women have equal rights in society. A Manichean divide is presented when he speaks about the bravery and ‘the daring of our rescue workers, the caring for strangers and neighbours’ as opposed to the destructive value of evil, ‘the worst of human nature’ (Bush 11/09/2001) and ‘the enemies of freedom’ (Bush 20/09/2001).

Here, the direct security grammar is in place. Bush (20/09/2001) emphasises the existentially threatening nature of al Qaeda by arguing that al Qaeda ‘hates’ the American people, signalling a point of no return and offering a solution or a way out, lifting the issue ‘above politics’. Indeed, terrorists hate American freedoms and ‘kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life.’ Interestingly, the emphasis on al Qaeda’s hatred for the United States as one of the core reasons for the attacks is reminiscent of George Kennan’s telegram that warned the Harry Truman administration against the Soviet’s ‘innate antagonism’ towards the United States. That this direct security grammar was available in 1946, when the famous Mr X’s telegram was sent, attest to the existence of a securitising logic across time and space. Both Kennan and Bush’s direct security speech acts were successful. Kennan’s telegram alarmed the Truman administration and eventually led it to officialise the Truman doctrine of containment. Shortly after Bush’s address on 20 September 2001, Congress voted in favour of the PATRIOT act, which extended the surveillance power of the state, and in favour of two wars, one in Afghanistan and the other in Iraq to deter global terror.

Bush’s speech acts were also successful in securitising the Muslim population, yet in the absence of a direct security grammar. Indeed, six days after the September 11 attacks, Bush (17/09/2001) hastened to visit the Islamic centre in Washington D.C. to declare that ‘Islam is peace’ and that the terrorists are not the ‘true’ face of Islam. On September 20, 2001, Bush (20/09/2001) stated that ‘Islam’ should not be equated to ‘terrorism’ and should be separated from the terrorists by declaring that ‘the terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself.’ Fierke (2007, 88) argues that apart from Bush’s misguided reference to the ‘crusade,’ Bush’s 9/11 address explicitly avoided reference to the Islamic identity of the attackers and a discourse of a clash with Islam. Indeed, for Bush (20/09/2001, emphasis added), ‘[t]he terrorists practice a *fringe* form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics, a *fringe* movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam’ and that ‘those who commit evil in the name of Allah *blaspheme* the name of Allah.’ The notion of a ‘fringe’ of extremists who pervert the ‘real’ teaching of Islam, whose essence is peaceful, was also echoed by Obama.

1. President Barack Obama

Ten years on in the War on Terror, Obama (04/06/2009) in Cairo spoke about a ‘new beginning’ between the United States and Muslims around the world, one based on mutual interest and mutual respect, and one based upon the truth that ‘America and Islam are not exclusive.’ The speech in Cairo was widely considered an olive branch to the Arab world, to reach out to Muslim communities in a region that gained stronger anti-American sentiments than during the earlier Bush administration (Guerlain 2014, 482-3). An emphasis on commonalities between the ‘Muslim world’ and the ‘West’ would be the basis for a new partnership. Obama talked about the American-Arab relationship in non-security terms and seized this moment to press the reset button. Indeed, according to Obama, ‘in order to move forward, we must say openly to each other the things we hold in our hearts and that too often are said only behind closed doors.  There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other; to learn from each other; to respect one another; and to seek common ground’ (Obama 04/06/2009). At the National Defense University four years later, Obama (23/05/2013, emphasis added) reiterated that ‘the United States is *not* at war with Islam.’

In addition, in a press conference on countering violent extremism, Obama (19/02/2015) went to great lengths to remember the ‘good Muslims,’ ‘the more than one billion people around the world who do represent Islam, and are doctors and lawyers and teachers, and neighbours and friends.’ He (19/02/2015) also makes reference to the ‘good Muslim’ policeman during the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris, ‘who died trying to stop [the terrorists],’ and to the Muslim worker at the Jewish supermarket who remarked that it was not a question of Jews, Christians or Muslims, and that ‘we are all brothers.’ More recently, Obama (23/05/2013, emphasis added) reiterated that ‘the United States is *not* at war with Islam.’ Instead, Obama stated that ‘we are at war with people who have *perverted* Islam’ (Obama 19/02/2015, emphasis added). Securitising speech acts that dehumanise ‘terrorists’ are not lacking.[[3]](#footnote-3) Yet, these speeches often make terrorists ‘traitors’ to their own faith (Jackson 2005, 64) and are thus not directed at the Muslim community as a whole.

By doing so, Bosco (2014, 28) suggests that American discourse short-circuited the Clash of Civilisations from one of a clash between Islam and the West, to one *within* Islam. Bosco (2014) argues that the ‘distorted’ and ‘extremist’ interpretation of Islam, the one adopted by Islamist terrorists, was securitised in the United States, whereby the referent object for security – the object to be secured – was ‘moderate’ Islam, the ‘true’ meaning of Islam. The true threat was not religion. Rather, it was a twisted interpretation of Islam, whose peaceful essence was considered as eternal (Bosco 2014, 4). Indeed, terrorists were ideologues ‘obsessed with ambition,’ who distorted the harmony and peaceful nature of their religion and who must be stopped before their crimes multiplied (Bush 06/10/2005). This discourse allowed the Bush administration to use religion strategically, by avoiding framing the War on Terror as a religious war, and thus distant from the rhetoric of al Qaeda.

Still, this short-circuit allowed it to place Islam center stage, and prevented a blowback from the neo-conservatives during the Bush administration for appearing ‘too soft on Islam.’ Overall, Western political leaders such as Bush moved away from the cultural and religious traits of the ‘terrorists’ in order to limit religious hostility by focusing on common values between the various communities in the West (Booth and Dunne 2002, 3). According to Bosco (2014, 28), ‘if the War on Terror had a religious component, there was no reason why the Western state too could not harness religion as a weapon.’ Yet, this strategic deviation and the official discourse that stated that ‘Islam is a religion of peace’ were unable to avoid the deployment of security measures that targeted the Muslim population and unable to caveat the antipathy toward those seemingly perceived as Arabs, Muslims and Middle Eastern (Ross 2014, 77).

While securitisations occur as a result of causal and non-causal, linguistic and non-linguistic, visual and non-representational elements, the constant effort by Obama to place Islam next to positive adjectives such as ‘good,’ ‘virtuous’ or ‘peaceful,’ or to place Islam in opposition to war, tells us what kind of realities and ideas the president of the United States wishes to bring into being. In that respect, the reassurances that Obama kept offering could even be termed desecuritising moves, attempts to bring Islam back into ‘normal politics.’ This argument leads to the conclusion that these moves have failed, for Obama was unable to put an end to the drone programme in Somalia, Yemen, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq, to the Guantanamo Bay detention centre, to the use of torture in ‘black jails’ of Afghanistan, or to the heightened surveillance of Muslims in the US. Presidents have significant institutional constraints that prevent them from radically altering the course of security policy, but the view of a failed desecuritising move gives too much power to structural forces. The president is considered a prisoner of a whole range of actors, factors and interactions and acts merely at the mercy of Congress (Guerlain 2014, 491). This lack of agency is untenable, especially in the case of Obama, who has made drones his ‘weapon of choice’ and generally preferred covert forms of counterterrorism. Obama’s counterterrorism practices have reflected not only more continuity with his predecessor, but a more aggressive foreign policy towards Muslim countries that epitomises a gap between ‘Obama the Orator’ and ‘Obama the Decider’ (Guerlain 2014, 483). Desecuritising involves a return to the ‘normal.’ But Obama has maintained an exceptional logic by orchestrating a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)-led drone programme in territories with which the United States is not at war. As Goldsmith (2009) notes, ‘almost all of the Obama changes have been at the level of packaging, argumentation, symbol, and rhetoric.’ The conciliatory rhetoric, though, abruptly ended in the run up to the 2016 elections and ultimately changed this non-securitising grammar.

1. President Donald J. Trump

On many occasions during his campaign, Trump promised to conduct ‘extreme vetting’ of all Muslims entering the American homeland. On December 7, 2015, Trump termed the extreme screening into a total shutdown of Muslims because the United States has ‘no choice’ (in The telegraph 2016). In the same speech, Trump accused Obama of avoiding using the phrase ‘Islamic terrorism,’ confirming that Obama had been avoiding associating terrorism with Islam. According to Trump (2016), anyone who cannot say the words ‘Islamic terrorism’ or ‘radical Islamic terrorism’ ‘is not fit to lead this country,’ though he himself avoided this term when he spoke in Saudi Arabia on 21 May 2017. Throughout the election campaign, Trump (15/08/2016) referred to radical Islam as a ‘hateful ideology’ and declared that the United States could not let ‘its oppression of women, gays, children and nonbelievers – be allowed to reside or spread within our own countries’ (point of no return). The United States must and ‘will defeat radical Islamic Terrorism’ by adopting a ‘new approach’ and ‘all actions should be oriented around this goal’ (solution of lifting the issue ‘above politics’) (Trump 2016). Here, a clear securitising language is observable, one that points to the existentially threatening nature of ‘radical Islam,’ advances a point of no return (‘we cannot let this ideology’), and a way out requiring extraordinary security measures (‘all actions should be oriented around this goal’).

Yet, once elected, Trump employed less inflammatory language, and even made a *couple* of linguistic U-turns. In his acceptance speech, Trump (2016a) declared that his movement was ‘comprised of Americans from all races, religions, backgrounds and beliefs’ and that it was time to ‘come together as one united people.’ Although this instance was an incident as he returned to a provocative language shortly afterwards, the acceptance speech was remarkably different from earlier speeches, giving a misleading hope of a future administration that would play down campaign rhetoric. Still, after his election victory, the video of Trump about the ‘complete shutdown of Muslims’ of December 7, 2015, disappeared from Trump’s campaign homepage (*Telegraph* 2015). From the Oval Office, Trump then claimed that his executive order banning any individual coming from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen, albeit excepting ‘persecuted Christian minorities’ in the Middle East, was ‘not a Muslim ban.’ While President Trump did not go as far as former President Bush and former President Obama in framing Islam as a religion of peace, Trump reassured his audience that his order was not a discrimination against one religion, a gesture that he had not extended during his campaign.

The purpose of the executive order was instead masked into a language of national security and the protection of the homeland to ‘protect the American people from foreign nationals admitted in the United States,’ as Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly reiterated on January 31, 2017 (Department of Homeland Security 2017). A few days later, a federal court ruled in favour of the restraining order on the ban, putting an immediate halt to what Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson (2017) called ‘President Trump’s unconstitutional and unlawful executive order.’ In the courtroom, Noah Purcell, the Washington Solicitor General, argued that the executive order was in fact a ban based on religious discrimination. New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani (2017) had confessed that Trump had asked him to ‘put a commission together,’ and ‘show [him] the right way to do it legally,’ confirmed that Trump had sought to legitimate and legalise a ‘Muslim ban’ in the name of national security (Purcell 2017). But while the first ban was chaotically rolled out in January and blocked by numerous lower court rulings, a second – streamlined – ban was unfortunately came into effect in the summer 2017 (McCarthy and Laughland 05/12/17).

There are wider implications about rules of language beyond the legal framework that are worth exploring. Once elected, speakers such as Bush, Obama and to some extent, even Trump, are limited in what they can say out loud, that is, with a direct security grammar like Trump’s call for a ‘total shutdown on Muslims,’ which has since been removed from his official campaign website. The examples indicating a lack of direct securitising move do not mean an absence of securitisation overall. On the contrary, the next section demonstrates that these speakers are informed by rules of appropriate language, supported by what Tali Mendelberg has called the ‘Norm of Racial Equality,’ when securitising minority groups. As president(s) of the United States, these elite speakers therefore resort to a covert securitising grammar, indirect securitising speech acts, to comply with the Norm of Racial Equality. To understand how indirect speech acts works, this article turns to John Searle’s philosophy of language and lays the groundwork for situating the presidents’ speech acts as indirect securitising speech acts.

**Searle’s indirect speech act theory**

1. Indirect speech act theory

The philosophy of Searle is situated in the philosophy of ordinary language. It echoes parts of Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigation*, in the sense that saying something engages in a rule-governed form of behaviour in ways that are similar to the rules of chess or football (Searle 1971, 40). This view challenges the logocentric view of the world in which language offers enough distance from the world that it can represent reality as it is, including our own selves in this world (Onuf 1989, 43). Drawing on ordinary philosophy of language, when Bush and Obama assert that Islam is peaceful or when Trump utters that ‘it is not a Muslim ban,’ specific rules of appropriate saying govern the ways in which these actors speak (even in the case of Trump). It is these rules and the practice they create that is of interest here.

Searle’s philosophy of language sets him apart from other philosophers such as Wittgenstein because meaning is constituted in part by the *intention* of the speaker to produce certain effects in the hearer (Searle 1979, 31). In doing so, Searle distinguishes between ‘speaker meaning’ and ‘literal utterance meaning.’ This distinction allows Searle to differentiate between simple cases of speech acts and more complex ones like metaphors or indirect speech acts. In simple cases, ‘the speaker utters a sentence and mean exactly and literally what he says’ (Searle 1979, 30). A standard speech act situation is performed when the speaker utters something and believes that what she says is ‘true’ and intends to communicate this belief to the hearer. For example, if I say to a student, ‘I have this book in my office,’ for this utterance to be ‘true’ – meaning that the hearer understands my utterance – the book must be, in fact, in my office. However, if I say, ‘I have a brother,’ and on the contrary, I only have sisters, my utterance would have made sense grammatically, but would not have been ‘true’ in the sense of representing a ‘true’ state of affairs. Yet, my intent there was perhaps not to ‘truly’ communicate my genealogical tree, but to do something else. Perhaps I was singing the lyrics of a song I heard on the radio, perhaps I was learning English on an audiotape, etc. In this case, the meaning of the speaker and the meaning of the literal utterance are different, and for Searle, it is only by dissociating the two that one can make sense of indirect speech acts. In everyday life, not all cases of speech acts are as simple as the ‘I have this book in my office’ case. On many occasions, the speaker may mean what she utters, but also mean something more, which is not conveyed in the literal utterance meaning (Searle 1979, 30).

In cases of indirect speech acts, the speaker means what she utters, but also means another illocution with a different propositional content. Indeed, an indirect speech act is an act in which ‘the speaker may utter a sentence and mean what he says and also mean another illocution with a different propositional content’ (1979, 30). In other words, while the speaker means what he says (‘Islam is not a threat’), he/she means something more (‘but the only way to tackle the threat of terrorism is to securitise the Muslim population’), which is not communicated in the first illocution. A much-celebrated example offered by Searle is the dinner table situation. When someone asks: ‘Can you reach the salt?’ Searle argues that the speaker’s meaning is a request to pass the salt, rather than a mere question about whether he or she can indeed reach the salt (Searle 1979, 30). What is interesting, or what constitutes a puzzle for Searle (1979, 31), is that the hearer understands the indirect request of passing the salt when what he hears is literally about something else. Indeed, the hearer passes the salt without answering the literal question that he or she can in fact reach the salt, without passing the salt. The literal sentence meaning here is one’s ability to reach the salt, yet the speaker’s sentence meaning is a *request* to pass the salt (Bertolet 2001, 335). The question about the ability to reach the salt is direct, but represents the second illocutionary act, serving the primary, indirect illocutionary act of requesting that the salt be passed (Bertolet 2001, 336). Searle’s (1979, 31-2) hypothesis about the success of the indirect speech act is that ‘the speaker communicates to the hearer more than he actually says by way of relying on their mutually shared background information, both linguistic and non-linguistic, together with the general powers of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer.’

Indirect speech acts explain how powerful actors such as Bush, Obama and President Trump can maintain that ‘Islam is peace’ or that the executive order is ‘not a Muslim ban’ in public and simultaneously target Muslim communities domestically and internationally. While they mean what they utter – ‘Islam and America are not exclusive’ – they also mean something more, ‘securitising Islam is inevitable in times of war,’ which is understood by the audience because they share background knowledge and are able to make inferences respective of this background. The leaders of the ‘free world’ convey a securitising message that is not literally spelt out in the literal utterance. Instead, a second illocutionary logic with a different propositional content – here securitising Islam – is communicated indirectly, in the same way passing the salt in a dinner situation is requested through a second illocution if one can *reach* the salt. The utterances ‘Islam is peace,’ ‘our Muslim friends,’ or ‘it is not a Muslim ban’ and all the reassurances that former and current president of the United States have repeatedly uttered are thus direct illocution but serve the primary and indirect illocutionary act of requesting to securitise Islam. In this case, the audience understands the indirect request of securitising the Muslim population without having to acquiesce to the direct illocution that posits the peaceful essence of Islam. The direct and indirect illocution seem not contradictory within the postulate of a war on terrorism that has at its heart an Orientalist and exceptionalist logic. To understand the steps by which the audience infers the indirect but primary request to securitise Islam, let us reconstruct Bush’s speech to Congress following 9/11 in the same way Searle reconstructs the dinner situation.

B. Reconstruction of G.W. Bush’s speech

According to Bush (11/09/2001):

Tonight, we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. [….] Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done […] [Terrorists] are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction [….] The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself […] The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends. It is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists and every government that supports them […] The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources for our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbour them.

By following Searle’s indirect speech act method, this quote above can be reconstructed as such:

*Step 1: G.W. Bush told the hearers of Bush’s address (the American public including the security practitioners and functional actors) that the nation has awakened to danger because of a radical network of terrorists that hijack Islam, and that justice will be done.*

*Step2: Bush is cooperating with ‘us’ and therefore his utterance has some aim or point (principles of cooperative conversation).*

*Step 3: The setting of the speech is not such as to only indicate that the country has awakened to danger, which is obvious (factual background information).*

*Step 4: Therefore, his utterance is probably not just factual information. It probably has some ulterior illocutionary point (inference from Steps 1,2,3, and 4). What can it be?*

*Step 5: A preparatory condition for any directive illocutionary act is the ability of the hearers to perform the act predicated in the propositional content condition (theory of speech acts).*

*Step 6: Therefore, Bush has told us something to which the preparatory conditions for how justice will be done will be satisfied (inference from Steps 1 and 6).*

*Step 7: The hearers are now listening to a speech by the president after the 9/11 attacks; they know that the search for terrorists is underway and that full resources have been given to the intelligence and law-enforcement agencies (background information). The hearers have also been prepared for the discourse of exceptionalism. In exceptional times like the attacks of September 11, exceptional measures are required.*

*Step 8: Bush has therefore alluded to the satisfaction of a preparatory condition. Bush wants to bring the end of terrorism, and this will be done through a consideration of all background information (inference from Steps 7 and 8).*

*Step 9: The security professionals have identified a category of individuals at risk of being radicalised, the Muslim population (background information).*

*Steps 10: Therefore, in the absence of any other plausible illocutionary point, Bush is probably saying that ‘to give full resources to the law-enforcement and intelligence community’ means that the security professionals are free to conduct surveillance operations on the population identified ‘at risk’ and that this means religious minorities can be targeted (inference from Steps 5 and 10).*

*Step 12: Bush is therefore asking to securitise the Muslim population (action)*.

The success of the indirect speech act securitising Islam is, of course, contingent on the background knowledge shared by the speaker and the audience, as well as on the powers of rationality and conversational implicatures demonstrated throughout this reconstruction. When G.W. Bush utters ‘the enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends,’ the sentence only makes sense in relation to a set of assumptions about the world order, the role of religion in society and the role of Muslims in the fight against terrorism. Equally, when Donald Trump retorts to journalists: ‘this is not a Muslim ban,’ this utterance activates old Orientalist myths about Islam which have been reinforced since 9/11 with the war against al-Qaeda and ISIS. Kumar (2012, 42-59) points to five different myths about Islam that have prolonged this discourse in the US. She argues that common Orientalist myths have created and maintained the idea of an unchanging *homo Islamicus*, a ‘Muslim mind’ incapable of reason, rationality and self-rule, and thus antithetical to the ‘Western way of life.’ Kumar also notes that Islam is portrayed a sexist religion that subjugates and oppresses women, even when those who perpetuate this myth have a poor track record in gender equality. Lastly, Muslims are assumed to be ticking time bombs determined by their religion to inevitably act violently, now or in the future (Kumar 2012, 52). What is important for this article is that those myths constitute the shared background knowledge that will be activated when the words ‘Islam’ or ‘Muslim’ are uttered. Sentences pointing to the peaceful nature of Islam and the contribution that Muslims make to American society can coexist with descriptions such as ‘Islamic terrorism,’ which ‘restick the words together and constitute their coincidence as more than simply temporal’ (Ahmed 2014, 76).

Hence, the phrase ‘Islam is peace’ or, again, ‘Muslims friends’, acts as a dog-whistle, a coded word or formulation that will be invoked during a speech and that will resonate with the audience to mean something else. Such an indirect securitising move would appear on its face to be not securitising and innocuous, ‘lending deniability if confronted with racism accusations’ (Saul Forthcoming, 9). Still, the dog-whistle ‘Islam is peace’ actualizes a series of social conventions that implicate the audience’s pre-existing knowledge in the same way that saying, ‘Could you reach the salt?’ in the dinner situation actualizes a web of meaning produced before the request is uttered, which, in turn, is necessary for the hearer to pass the salt. The utterance ‘Islam is peace’, thus, does not create new meaning ex nihilo. Instead, the dog-whistle of the indirect speech serves to (re)mobilise particular framings about Islam and the role of Muslims in the war on terrorism, framings that precede the speech act and are articulated elsewhere, for instance, by functional actors like the media, counterterrorism agencies, or/and by Trump himself, during the 2016 campaign. Dog-whistles, as Saul (Forthcoming, 2) observes, ‘are one of the most powerful forms of political speech, allowing for people to be manipulated in ways that they would resist if the manipulation was carried out more openly — often drawing on racist attitudes that are consciously rejected.’ Securitising actors thus rely on a more complex repertoire of securitising language than the overt security grammar originally developed by the Copenhagen School, one that may lend itself better to research in non-Western contexts. The next section demonstrates the strategic advantages, or ‘benefits’, in indirectly securitising, and argues that indirect securitising speech acts are a significant tool in elites’ securitising playbook.

**Strategic advantages of indirect securitising speech acts**

After unpacking Searle’s indirect speech act theory and applying it to Bush’s speech, this section highlights the strategic benefits of using indirectness in securitising processes. One reason for using indirect speech is that human beings are social animals, and as such, are often driven to explain *why* they have chosen certain path of actions, rather than simply describing them (Goddard and Krebs 2015, 13-4). As social animals and meaning-making beings, human beings care about the reception of their proposition and about the impression they make on others (Goddard and Krebs 2015, 379; Pinker 2007). In cases where saying certain things could offend the hearer, jeopardise the speaker’s social status, or incriminate her or him (in the case of a bribe for instance), speakers will likely avoid direct speech. Avoiding direct speech may be a conscious move on the part of the speaker, or it may be a semi-conscious response of self-regulation. This is the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu, who argues that speakers often euphemise speech to shape utterances according to what is positively sanctioned in a field of practice. For Bourdieu, euphemisation is a form of ‘censorship’ that does not operate at the conscious level. Instead, these strategies are ‘more or less conscious,’ governed by the field of practice in which the utterance is placed (Bourdieu 2001, 119). Moreover, they are embedded in the speaker’s ‘linguistic habitus’ in the sense that speakers become socialised into speaking in a certain way (with indirect speech for instance). Presidents may first use indirect speech intentionally, but the repetitive use of indirect speech makes these strategies become habits rather than deliberate acts of rhetorical manipulation. The problem is that proving strategic intentions or knowing the ‘true’ motives of actors is methodologically intractable. Indeed, this would require having access to people’s minds (Krebs and Jackson 2007, 40). In any case, whether indirect speech acts are intentional or unconscious, using them has clear strategic *effects.* This article thus places greater emphasis on the effects of indirect speech in securitisation and thus on the perlocution of the speech act, rather than on the motivations of political leaders in employing indirect speech, and thus on the illocutionary act.

The reasons for using indirect speech have been explained by Lee and Pinker, who draw on Strategic Speech Theory. Strategic Speech Theory seeks to maximise the chances of success and avoid worst possible outcomes for each player in the game. Upon hearing the indirect speech act, the hearer has two choices: she can cooperate and accept the request or she can react adversarially and be uncooperative (Pinker S et al. 2008, 833). Cooperating with the speaker when she/he directly securitises leads to the success of securitisation, yet not cooperating with the speaker, meaning that the audience has rejected the securitising move, leads not only to a failure of securitisation, but to the breaking of Mendelberg’s ‘Norm of Racial Equality’ and accusations of racism. However, the case of indirect speech offers a range of strategic benefits for: a) implementing security measures, which we will term ‘benefits for the securitisation’; b) the speaker; and c) the audience.

1. Benefits for the securitisation

Indirect speech has a positive function insofar as it achieves better securitising effects, for instance, the ability to maintain two contradictory agendas, by explicitly supporting one idea – Islam is a peaceful religion – and indirectly conveying a request to increase the development of security technologies and surveillance operations on ‘suspect’ Muslim communities (Eroukhmanoff 2015), security measures that are outside the normal political framework. Legitimacy matters not only for the speaker, but also for the issue or policy at stake. Indeed, legitimacy constitutes an essential part of how policy options are created and mobilised (Goddard and Krebs 2015, 9). The greater the capacity of political leaders to maintain the legitimacy of security practices, as Balzacq (2015, 3) notes, the less resistance these will engender in the future. Viewed in this light, using indirect speech helps pave the way for security practices that would otherwise have been rejected. Indirect securitising speech thus heralds a change of policy, by setting the scene for future security practices. They are thus precursors and indicators of security practices.

1. Benefits for the speaker

Pinker (2010, 795) points out that:

A speaker resorts to indirect speech when the relational model assumed by the speech act clashes with the model that currently holds between the speaker and hearer, avoiding the risk of awkwardness or shame in the same way that a briber avoids the risk of an arrest.

In the event the hearer is hesitant or antagonistic to a proposal (a securitising move), a direct securitising move can backfire and lead to serious repercussions for the speaker, one of which will be to acknowledge or even apologise for saying something gauche, or socially unacceptable. Since the civil rights and the counter-culture movement of the 1960s, Mendelberg (2001) argues that a ‘Norm of Racial Equality’ has been established. The racial equality norm has guided how everyday Americans talk about racial issues as well as how politicians address the subject of minority groups and race in public. To put it differently, the Norm of Racial Equality has made overt forms of racism and hate speech unacceptable. Of course, the boundaries of the permissible in the Trump era have been pushed significantly (Saul 2017), but Trump’s denial that his executive order is a ‘Muslim ban’ victimising individuals of Islamic faith and his persistent claim that he is ‘the least racist person’ indicate that the Norm of Racial equality still plays a significant role in shaping how elite speakers speak. By using indirect speech, politicians avoid breaking the Norm of Racial Equality and the risks associated with doing so (embarrassment, the accusation of being racist, and a loss of legitimacy). This is because the speaker can claim she never ‘meant’ to securitise since the request (a form of hate speech) was not literally spelt out. According to Lee and Pinker (2010, 787), indirect speech ‘allows plausible deniability of a breach of a relationship type and thus avoids the aversive social and emotional consequences that would be triggered by such a breach.’ In other words, being able to deny the intention of a securitising act protects the securitising actor; it provides a convenient alibi that the securitisation was not ‘his or her intention.’ As newly elected Trump declared, his executive order is ‘not a Muslim ban.’ Bush, Obama and Trump can thus ‘save face,’ avoid a backlash with the population for attempting to securitise a religious minority.

Moreover, reacting unfavourably to an *indirect* request avoids the worst possible outcome, that is, the securitisation fails *and* the speaker pays the price of saying something maladroit or offensive. For the president of the United States, the risks of securitising directly the Muslim population by asserting that ‘Islam itself is a threat’ can not only be considered as discriminatory, but also lead to a possible loss of legitimacy, credibility and authority. Political leaders are in constant need of support, or ‘political capital,’ according to sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Since political capital rests on symbolic power, political leaders such as Bush, Obama and Trump must constantly nurture their support by appealing to the electorate and the general population (Vuori 2008, 70). Drawing on Wiberg, Vuori (2008, 68) contends that ‘legitimacy is perhaps the most significant element in the survival of any social institution and all governments must exercise a minimum of both persuasion and coercion in order to survive.’ The use of indirect speech in circumventing the Norm of Racial Equality is an integral part of maintaining legitimacy as an elite speaker, even for Trump, who has to constantly backtrack from the offensive statements he has made at a prior time. Continuous coercive ruling is simply unsustainable, even in non-democratic contexts (Vuori 2008). Likewise, direct securitisations that overtly discriminate against minority groups cannot be a long-term strategy for elite speakers, who are informed by the Norm of Racial Equality and can lose legitimacy if they repeatedly break it. In addition, indirect speech maximises the chances of success of a securitisation.

1. Benefits for the audience

Lastly, indirect speech is also advantageous for the audience, for they can accept or reject an indirect request without feeling embarrassed about their choice. Indeed, as Lee and Pinker (2010, 802) note, a ‘gauche direct request can embarrass a hearer.’ This is because the hearer is backed into responding to a request that will limit his or her options in the future and accepting a proposal that is distasteful. By increasing uncertainty, indirectness provides an‘out’ for both the speaker, whose second illocution may be rejected, and for the hearer, who can simply respond to the direct illocution and pretend she did not understand the indirect request. In the same way as the dinner situation in which the hearer simply passes the salt when asked if she can *reach* it, the audience of Bush, Obama and Trump’s indirect speech acts do not have to explicitly acquiesce to the indirect request to securitise Islam, but can simply do the deed, without having to spell out or consciously reflect on the deed. To a certain extent, indirect securitisations remove the audience from feeling that there is a securitisation taking place, since a language of amity rather than enmity is used.

The strategic advantages can thus be summarised as:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Cooperation/  Speech acts | **Cooperative** | **Uncooperative** |
| **Direct** | * Success of securitisation * Security practices in place | * Failure of securitisation * Breaking the Norm of Racial Equality * Accusations of discriminating against a minority group and of racism * Loss of credibility and authority for the speaker |
| **Indirect** | * Success of securitisation * Securitising actor paves the way for security practices that would otherwise not be accepted. * Audience is removed from *feeling* the securitising work | * Failure of securitisation * Securitising actor ‘saves face’ and avoids accusations of racism and a loss of credibility and authority |

1. Problematizing the negotiation between securitising actor and audience in indirect securitisation

Indirect securitisation calls into question the process of negotiation between securitising actors and the audience. The goal of the ‘total speech act’ and the success or failure of a securitisation depends upon the persuasive competencies and authority of the speaker and the context in which the speech is enunciated. The securitising actor must argue the necessity of extraordinary measures by employing the ‘right grammar of security.’ In this case, the persuasion seeks to lift the normal political framework and introduce extraordinary security measures. This process often relies on a language of existential threats, point of no return and an (often militarised) way out (Buzan et al. 1998). However, with indirectness, the negotiation is sought on different grounds. With indirect speech, the securitising actor does not attempt to negotiate the breaking of normal procedure to tackle an issue, as the analysis of Bush, Obama and Trump indicated. On the contrary, these actors seek to reassure the audience that the securitised issue is ‘not a security issue’, thereby mobilising a grammar grounded in solidarity, pacifism and inclusiveness.

Hence, *indirect securitising moves* are not so much about magnifying the dangerous nature of a threat to persuade an audience, but about negotiating the cooperation of the audience in accepting an indirect request that is not literally uttered (and that both speaker and hearer know cannot be spelt out). The success and failure of securitisation depend not so much on the arguments put forward in the construction of new emergent threats. Rather, it is how well speakers use covert forms of speech (with the use of rhetorical devices, gestures, power and emotions) and how elite speakers can dog-whistle key phrases that will bring into play pre-existing knowledge about the falsely ‘dangerous nature of Islam.’ Indirect securitisations thus call into question the type of cooperation negotiated between speaker and audience and highlight a different kind of negotiation, one that is less about the *content* of the securitisation than about the skills required of the speaker to obtain the cooperation of the audience. Indirect securitisations also call into question the honesty and accountability of the speaker and of the audience who, by expressing and agreeing to an indirect message, are removed from the securitising work. Concomitantly, the use of indirect securitising moves by actors such as Trump does not indicate an absence of securitisation altogether, nor that Trump is effectively ‘the least racist person,’ but merely that the securitisation of minority groups and racism have reinvented themselves in the post-9/11 landscape in more covert forms.

**Conclusion**

This article inquired into the strategic use of indirect speech and applied this theoretical framework to the securitisation of Islam in the United States, though more research could explore the securitisation of minority groups using indirect language in the non-Western world. This article is explorative in nature and recognises that many questions are still unanswered. Still, the notion of indirect securitisation opens space to more robust conceptualisation of a strategic security practice in which the audience and context are key, and to how the nexus between covert construction of security threats and racism play out in non-Western contexts. Some caution needs to be exercised with indirect securitisations. The intent of this article was not to find ways by which securitising actors can securitise better, nor does it view indirect securitisations as a positive act. This article agrees with Waever (1995) that securitisations represent a failure to deal with issues democratically and are thus normatively negative, especially in the case of the war on terrorism, which has normalised an exceptionalist logic (Neal 2012). What this article hoped to show is that security actors do not always need to invoke a security language of enmity to securitise. On the contrary, securitisations can be successful by mobilising a language of amity.

This has international significance in a context where far-right populism is rising across Europe, the United States, and beyond the Western world, and where leaders of those parties claim that they are ‘not racist,’ or not ‘xenophobes’. When actors claim ‘not to be securitising’ in the same way Trump declared ‘it is not a Muslim ban,’ this article demonstrated that these utterances do not preclude a securitising move. Subversive politics of desecuritisation thus need to turn attention to instances where both speaker and audience can maintain that ‘Islam is peace’ and decipher covert forms of hate speech and securitisation. Moreover, since the request to securitise is indirect and the response does not need to be spelt out, speakers and audience are also prevented from *feeling* that they are part of a securitisation and remain comfortable in the idea that they are ‘not racist.’ Securitising indirectly thus provide an emotional cover that supresses any sense of responsibility and accountability in securitisation processes. While the Copenhagen School argued that the securitisation approach serves to underline ‘the responsibility of talking security’ (Buzan, Weaver, de Wilde 1998: 34), this article shows that indirect securitisations do just the opposite; they remove the securitising *act* from securitising actors and audiences. This unemotional type of politics of security intertwines with the idea that the Trump administration and moves to ban Muslims from entering the United States are about national security and not about race or religion, which permeates American politics since 9/11.

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1. The first Executive Order banned individuals from seven predominantly Muslim countries but was suspended by a federal judge’s order on in February 2017. A second was quickly issued, exempting green card holders and dual citizens. In June most of the second iteration of the ban was in effect. This second order was replaced in late September 2017, adding non-Muslim countries such as North Korea (BBC News 2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2 See the 2008 special issue of *Security Dialogue* on security, technologies of risk and the political [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See for example, Dick Cheney’s (2009) assertion that Guantanamo prisoners are ‘the worst of the worst’ and that the only alternative to the Guantanamo naval prison was to kill terror suspects incarcerated there; see also his defence of waterboarding and torture at Guantanamo (Cheney 2014). See also Bush’s (11/09/2011 and 20/09/2001) reference to terrorists as ‘evil’ and as ‘the worst of human nature.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)