

## **Now, I'm not trying to encourage any converts whose name is not being respected to resort to violence (disclaimer)**

new muslim,new muslims,convert to islam,convert to shia

I remember when I converted to Islam I didn't change my name immediately. The name Michael Booth remained the name that people referred to me by for around 3 years until I finally decided to change it. An influential Shia friend, Mujahid Ahmad, selected a few names to choose from and I picked Hamid Hussein Waqar.

I remember afterwards, my Muslim friends immediately started calling me by my new Muslim name. My family also respected my wishes and started using my new name, at least most of them. Some members of the family took a little bit longer than others, but after a few years everyone was using the new name.

There is nothing that states it is compulsory for a new Muslim to change his name. Some converts change their name in order to fit in more with the community that they are now apart of. Others want a holy name, want to be named after one of the holy figures, such as Prophet Muhammad (s), Imam Ali (a), Sayyidah Zahra (s), or Imam Hussayn (a). Others desire to be called a slave/servant of Allah with names such as Abdullah, Abdul-Haqq, Abdur-Raheem, and so on. Finally, others who were named after a Prophet, merely translate the name into Arabic, such as Joseph becomes Yusuf, David becomes Dawud, and Aaron become Harun.

Whether a convert decides to change his complete name, his first name, or decides not to change his name, it is his choice. This choice should be respected. What is unfortunate is when one does change his name and others fail to recognise it. Remember how mad Muhammad Ali, formerly known as Cashus Clay, became when Ernie Terrell did not call him by his new name.

Now, I'm not trying to encourage any converts whose name is not being respected to resort to violence (disclaimer). I do hope that Muslims who refuse to call converts by their new Muslim names will read this and learn that it is considered disrespectful to do that. It hurts the new Muslim's feelings. I know for myself, when people refuse to

use the name Hamid and call me Mike instead I get upset. The police have done that intentionally to see my reaction. Sometimes Muslims born in the east do that for reasons that I am not aware of.

My response has been to call such people Bob. So, I remember, the last person that did that said, How are you Michael (for instance), and I responded just fine Bob. He got confused and did not understand why I was referring to him as Bob. I told him just as my name is not Mike, yours is not Bob – call me by my name! My Name is Hamid Hussein Waqar; I'm a Muslim Now