House of Commons
Home Affairs Committee

Terrorism and Community Relations

Written evidence

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Home Affairs Committee

The Home Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Home Office and its associated public bodies; and the administration and expenditure of the Attorney General's Office, the Treasury Solicitor's Department, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Serious Fraud Office.

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List of written evidence

Written evidence

1. Memorandum submitted by the Association of Chief Police Officers

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Association of Chief Police Officers recognises the vital importance of good community relations in counter-terrorism. The ACPO business areas of "*Terrorism and Allied Matters*" and "*Race and Diversity*" work closely ensuring that community aspects of counter-terrorism are built into our work both nationally and locally.

1.2 Our overall objective is to ensure counter-terrorist policing is as effective as possible and conducted with the support, trust and confidence of communities. A minute proportion of the population is involved in terrorism, and there is a risk that we will create alienation and disaffection by our own actions. Our work plan seeks to treat the terrorist threat as an opportunity to ensure we have stronger links and support within communities, which will ultimately help deliver better policing services.

1.3 Counter-terrorism does not sit in isolation from other work and the wider themes of community cohesion and reassurance informs our response. We recognise the need to engage communities in our work, a key element of the Police Reform Agenda, and our ambition is to develop meaningful engagement within the context of counter-terrorism.

1.4 This submission outlines the community context we are dealing with, it explains some of the policing response and it describes examples of the specific work being carried out. The final section contains some recommendations for government that we believe will help in responding to community concerns.

2. THE CONTEXT

The Threat

2.1 The threat to the UK from international terrorism has been assessed at a high level since 11 September 2001. It is important to recognise that international terrorism—ie that linked to the methods and ideology of Al Qa'eda—represents a threat we have not seen before. The scale of devastation, death and injury contemplated by international terrorists is truly shocking.

2.2 We believe the threat to be widely recognised in communities of the UK. However, the lack of a delivered terrorist device has led to "alert fatigue" in some quarters and simple disbelief of the threat in others. Countering this scepticism is difficult for two key reasons. Firstly, terrorist intelligence must be carefully managed in order to protect sources. Secondly, good information that might illustrate the reality of the current threat is currently *sub judice*.

3. VULNERABILITY

3.1 Police forces in the UK have been alert to the possibility of increased tension caused by fears of terrorism.

3.2 Muslim communities fear a backlash from those who associate terrorism with Islam. There are few police forces in England and Wales that monitor "Islamophobia" as a specific type of incident. Forces that do record Islamophobic incidents have found very low numbers of reported incidents.

3.3 Specific recording of faith hate crime has been established by ACPO as a minimum standard of service for all forces and will become national practice after the publication of the new Hate Crime Manual. In the meantime we have launched, in partnership with the Muslim Safety Forum, a nation-wide project to encourage third party reporting of Islamophobic incidents, responding to fears that much of this type of crime goes unreported.

3.4 Jewish and Israeli communities feel particularly vulnerable to attack. They have been mentioned repeatedly as a target in messages purportedly recorded by Al Qa'eda leaders and there have been attacks on Jewish targets abroad, for example, Istanbul and Djerba. The Jewish Community Security Trust has recorded an increase in acts of anti-Semitism in the first seven months of 2004.

3.5 Recently a joint CST and ACPO seminar was organised to ensure links and co-ordination with Jewish communities were as strong as possible. A national operational response plan exists in the event of a threat to Jewish premises or gatherings.

3.6 There is particular concern about the vulnerabilities of businesses to terrorist attack. A failure to address the threat could see re-location of key businesses away from the UK. Forces have been circulated a menu of options for working in partnership with businesses under the banner of Operation Rainbow and there are a number of examples of successful preventative measures.

4. Police Operations

4.1 Muslim communities are concerned about what is increasingly seen as unfair targeting by police under counter-terrorism powers. Many Muslims refute the need for arrests under the Terrorism Act where charges have not followed.

4.2 Additionally, many see the increase of Asians stopped and searched under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act, publicised in the recent release of 2001–02 stop and search statistics, as an example of Islamophobia.

4.3 When police activity is combined with the view, held in some quarters, that the threat is exaggerated at best and non-existent at worst, counter-terrorist activity is seen as wholly disproportionate.

4.4 From a police perspective there have been 460 arrests for international terrorism since 11 September 2001 (the widely quoted figure of 609 includes domestic and Irish terrorism) and a significant number are as a result of short-term detention at points of entry into the United Kingdom. 54 of the 460 have been charged with terrorist act offences but over half (236) of all those arrested have been charged with other criminal offences.

4.5 A charge rate of over 50% compares favourably with the rate achieved for similarly complex and difficult investigations. Critics can point to a very low conviction rate for the terrorist charges, but this is not a result of wholesale acquittals, rather the slow progress to court of many cases. We expect to see a number of high profile court cases concluded and reported upon within the next 12–18 months.

4.6 In practice, the number of pre-planned operations has been relatively small and each one the subject of much discussion and consideration. All operations are co-ordinated by an Executive Liaison Group. Community considerations and impact are a critical agenda item that helps steer subsequent police activity.

4.7 It fully recognised that each counter-terrorist operation creates enormous publicity and Muslims are concerned that it has the effect of linking Islam with terrorism. Police press releases avoid reference to heritage or faith of those arrested and they include a reminder for editors not to link Islam and terrorism. We are assiduous in avoiding careless association of Islam with terrorism.

4.8 In 2002–03 there was a 300% rise in the number of Asians stopped and searched under Section 44 Terrorism Act compared to the previous year (744 to 2989). This increase occurred in the calendar year following the 11 September attacks, and the total number of all Section 44 stops increased by 150% (8550 to 21577). The proportion of Asian stops was 16% of the total.

4.9 Given the vast majority of the stops (80%) were in London, where the Asian population is 13%, and take place largely in parts of London surrounded by large Asian populations, then there is not, on the face of it, statistical evidence of heavy targeting of Asians. Stereotyping Muslims as terrorists is simply bad policing and likely to prove counter-productive and our guidance to officers and staff warns against Muslim profiling. Current terrorist methods include extensive reconnaissance of potential targets. The use of Section 44 stop and search to disrupt and deter this activity is of critical importance and should not be underestimated.

5. Strategic Response to Community Concerns

5.1 ACPO has developed a strategic approach that has four key elements. These are:
— Improving links in Muslim communities to develop both community and criminal intelligence.
— Ensuring that forces share best operational practice to deal with the community context of terrorist incidents.
— Addressing wider problems of victimisation, alienation and communication with communities—working towards reassurance and cohesion.
— Enabling our staff to respond with improved knowledge and capability.

5.2 This work is co-ordinated by the ACPO National Communities Tensions Team (NCTT) which was set up permanently earlier this year to help pull together our response. The NCTT has a wider remit than terrorism and is developing a range of work related to race and diversity. The Home Office has supported this work by part-funding the NCTT and working in partnership on key elements.

5.3 The work has been guided by feedback from the Muslim Safety Forum, a group of leaders and significant individuals of Muslim communities that meets monthly with the police. The forum can be very critical and challenging, and they have helped shape and influence our response.

6. Intelligence

6.1 Our intelligence must help identify all criminality, including terrorist criminality, but it must also guide police activity in addressing anxieties and concerns within communities that can lead to tension, disorder, alienation or non-co-operation.
— The NCTT trawls nationally for community intelligence. It is establishing national standards in the collection, analysis and use of community intelligence.

— The demarcation of roles and relationships between community officers, Special Branch and the security services have been established with the use of "Green, Amber and Red" guidance.

— The Metropolitan Police Special Branch established the Muslim Contact Unit two years ago, which is a model of best practice in dealing with sensitive issues that concern Muslim communities. The National Co-ordinator of Special Branch is integrating community considerations and links into the new regional intelligence cells. The NCTT is working with individual force Special Branches to develop their community links and response.

7. Operational Effectiveness

7.1 All terrorist operations now have a separate community operation order and in the event of a significant terrorist incident somewhere in the UK all forces have developed a local community response plan. Additional work includes:

— A good practice guide in respect of community considerations learnt from counter-terrorist operations.

— A "Community Impact Assessment Document and Guidance" circulated to forces for use in terrorist operations.

— A guide to operations in religiously sensitive premises produced and circulated to forces.

— Muslim contacts identified who can provide confidential advice concerning sensitive matters and can be assigned, where appropriate, to operations. For example, visits recently made to high profile prisoners to allay community concerns.

8. Community Reassurance and Cohesion

8.1 ACPO already has key projects in respect of community reassurance and cohesion. We are fast tracking elements of the projects that are likely to have a significant impact upon communities affected by the terrorist threat. Key elements include:

— Faith hate recording and strategies to address higher victimisation within Asian and other minority communities.

— Working with the Home Office on the community cohesion project, focusing activity towards "vulnerable localities", those with high deprivation and high crime.

— The Metropolitan Police leading work on identifying what alienates and radicalises Muslim young people, and the extent to which this is associated, if at all, with support of terrorism.

— Work conducted in partnership with the Prison Service to monitor and mitigate the effects of radicalisation among young offenders.

9. Staff Capability and Skills

9.1 The key aim is to develop the understanding and capability of staff to deal with community issues in respect of counter-terrorism.

— A National Community and Cultural Resource Unit is being developed, initially focusing on Muslim staff. All Muslim officers and staff are being invited to seminars later this year to take this forward.

— All forces have been surveyed to find out what specific training they provide on Muslim matters and the findings are being shared.

— ACPO and practitioner conferences have been held, and briefing documents produced, to raise awareness of the need to engage communities, share strategies for doing so, and ensure our policing is appropriate and sensitive.

— Critical incident training, based on the community issues of terrorist operations, is being developed for ACPO and other senior officers.

10. Recommendations

10.1 The Government's counter-terrorist strategy has been based around the four "P"s, Prevention, Protection, Pursuit and Preparation. The Police service initially, very explicitly, had an additional "C", for "Communities". We have since aligned our strategy to the Government's but believe that an opportunity was missed to ensure the elements of the strategy that involve communities had prominence and priority. We would like to see a specific heading of "Community" in the government strategy.

10.2 We also believe there should be more co-ordination between Government and Police about communicating the nature of the threat and the use of counter-terrorism powers. We can only gain the support of communities when links between the threat, the formulation of powers and the use of powers are clear to see. We also need to make clear that the powers that have been enacted are necessary to address an extraordinary threat for as long as it remains.

10.3 Likewise it is important that Government treats the release of sensitive figures, such as the Section 95 statistics in July, in a more co-ordinated fashion, working in partnership with the service. A failure to do so doesn't just set back community relations with the police, it can reduce co-operation and community support for operations and potentially increases the risk to communities.

10.4 Finally, ACPO has recognised the importance of working to improve community relations in the context of counter-terrorism. It has invested significantly in developing this work and in co-ordinating the response of all forces. The next National Policing plan must recognise the priority of this work and promote and support the significant efforts that all forces must continue to make with communities.

14 September 2004

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2. Memorandum submitted by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

COMMUNITY COHESION AND PARTNERSHIP COMMUNICATIONS

Blackburn with Darwen Council has worked with LSP partners to shape and agree communications, public relations, media management and marketing strategy and activity.

A key objective is to promote community cohesion—pride of place/belonging and a sense of a shared future amongst all stakeholders.

The involvement of local people is seen as a prerequisite for strengthening the accountability of public organisations, citizenship, and community cohesion. Communication methods are appropriately branded and give consistent messages. Key messages have been agreed, for example, on asylum seekers. Communication strategies for regeneration or major resource initiatives, like Housing Market Renewal, directly address community cohesion issues too.

Corporate perception surveys are carried out through a Citizens Panel, focus groups, and the website. Research and consultation data on community cohesion is shared by Members across Portfolios to inform cross-cutting decision-making. Data is also accessed from, and shared with, a range of regional and national organisations and partners.

The Shuttle, the council's community newspaper, is an important vehicle for communicating community cohesion issues. Stories of individual citizens from a variety of backgrounds who are contributing to the borough are featured. The newspaper also directly rebuts misinformation and rumour through a "fact and fiction" column presented by the Chief Executive.

Community newsletters are also produced to give area-specific information and encourage citizen participation in neighbourhood renewal.

THE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP'S COMMUNITY COHESION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION GROUP

Blackburn with Darwen Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) has a thematic sub-group dedicated to enhancing community cohesion and social inclusion in the borough. Blackburn with Darwen is enriched by a diverse population (78% white, 11% Indian heritage, 9% Pakistani heritage, 2% others) but contains some of the most deprived wards in the country. In the past, the focus for strengthening community cohesion has been on celebrating diversity but this emphasis has now changed to highlighting the similarities and the contributions that all people make to life in Blackburn with Darwen.

THE "BELONGING TO BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN" COMMUNITY COHESION CAMPAIGN

The "Belonging" campaign aimed to deliver a new approach—strengthening citizenship by promoting pride of place and a sense of a shared future amongst all citizens. The campaign, initially funded by Government Office for the North West (GONW), was designed to operate through the local print and broadcast media. The objective was to emphasise what communities have in common and to celebrate the contributions individuals from a range of economic and social backgrounds make to the life of the borough.

"Belonging" uses core cohesion messages: citizenship values, pride in the Borough, its history and characteristics, positive images of the main ethnic groups and disabled people, and a sense of belonging/ having a stake in the area.

The campaign steering group, under the chairmanship of the Archdeacon of Blackburn and including representatives from all faith groups and community groups, developed a "Charter of Belonging" which was signed by all partners in the LSP. Blackburn College's basic skills unit reduced this to a simple five point "mini" charter which was easily understandable and this "pledge" formed the heart of the campaign.

Individuals from across the borough featured in the "Belonging" posters under the strapline "Many lives . . . many faces . . . all belonging to Blackburn with Darwen". The posters showed photographs of ordinary—and some extraordinary—citizens explaining why they are proud to belong to the borough and listing some of their achievements. The posters were backed up by stories in *The Shuttle*, the council's flagship monthly newspaper, and through the local media. Graham Liver, a Radio Lancashire presenter, features on one of the posters and has promoted the campaign through his programme. Famous signatories to the "Belonging campaign" include Cilla from Coronation Street and Wayne Hemingway, "Red not Dead" designer.

In addition, existing and planned activities organised by a variety of LSP partners were badged as "Belonging to Blackburn with Darwen," including Arts in the Park, Mela, museum, library and sporting events.

The key to the success of "Belonging" has been the emphasis on strengthening citizenship and the choice of local people to front the campaign. These individuals, whether VIPs or ordinary people going about their lives, have all made positive contributions to life in the borough and have been pleased and proud to stand up and be counted as "icons" of cohesion.

For Sarah, a 22-year-old with Down's Syndrome, her achievement is her first job as a waitress in the council's commercial restaurant, Blakey's. Three war veterans, one white, two Asian, appear on a poster together showing how communities from diverse continents shared some of the horrors of war for a common goal.

And we see nurses and community workers, police officers and business women, radio presenters and Premiership footballers and even two youngsters from different social and cultural backgrounds who are "the best of friends".

The campaign is unique because it has co-ordinated a wide range of public, private, and voluntary organisations to promote a singe and united message of belonging.

NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR THE BELONGING CAMPAIGN

The "Belonging" campaign was launched by Ted Cantle at Ewood Park, home of Premiership side Blackburn Rovers, with support from the club's chief executive and manager. The launch was attended by representatives from all members of the LSP and Foreign Secretary Blackburn MP Jack Straw, sent a video message of support.

The "Belonging" campaign has been heralded as good practice by the Home Office and by Government Office North West. Ted Cantle has promoted the campaign nationally stating that "community cohesion depends on us all having a sense of belonging—I hope other areas will follow Blackburn with Darwen's lead". The campaign has received widespread national media coverage including the *Municipal Journal* and the LGA's *First* magazine.

The "Belonging campaign" is now being adopted by councils across the UK and has just been "highly commended" in the Institute of Public Relations' "successful partnerships" award.

25 October 2004

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3. Memorandum submitted by the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Community Security Trust

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD) and Community Security Trust (CST) welcome the opportunity to respond to the Committee's request for views.

The BOD is the representative body of the Jewish community, and was established in 1760. The CST is the defence agency of the community and was established in 1994. It works closely with the BOD, the police and relevant departments of state.

1.2 The BOD and CST regard Islamist extremism, incitement and terrorism to be among the greatest threats to national security, the security of the Jewish community and community relations generally. This is not to dismiss threats from other areas or extremists, but these generally have a national liberation focus or are reactive, in that they are a response to extremism by others.

1.3 We also believe there to be a growing public perception that stigmatises the Muslim community. In particular it conflates Islam with Islamist terrorism. The two are not the same. This is polarising relations between British Muslims and non-Muslims, damaging communal relations and encouraging Islamist extremists.

The polarisation is enhanced by terrorists' own use of a religious rationale, and by leading British Muslim organisations adopting an ambiguous, sometimes hypocritical, attitude to the use of indiscriminate terrorist violence against civilians, depending on the theatre of conflict, political context and identity of the actors. Terrorism must be opposed as a methodology, irrespective of who uses it and why. The failure of leading Muslim organisations to do this is one factor in the false association that some people make between Islam, Muslims and terrorism.

1.4 In this connection, there is an intense debate within Islam as to what constitutes legitimate violence according to Islamic laws concerning the definition of Jihad. Terrorists who cite Islam as their inspiration often claim a theological justification for their actions. The European Council for Fatwa and Research, headed by Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, devoted its annual conference in Stockholm in 2003 to the topic "Jihad and denying its Connection to Terror". The conference highlighted the premise that any action defined as Jihad by Muslim scholars is compulsory for Muslims and cannot be categorised as terrorism. The conference ruled that "Jihad can by no means be bracketed with terrorism as circulated by some media . . . occupation is the worst form of terrorism, and that is why resisting occupation is not terrorism as stipulated by international law and conventions." It is this approach which seeks to legitimise any action taken by Muslims to end what they regard as the illegitimate occupation in Iraq, the Palestinian territories, Israel and Russia.

1.5 It is this approach which also results in the portrayal by leading British Muslim organisations of recent anti-terror legislation as *de facto* racism against Muslims. The ongoing Iraq crisis has led many Muslims to feel that there is a war against Islam. This perception is fuelled by Islamists who encourage polarisation and division, in the hope that ordinary Muslims will accept their extremist worldview.

2. The Islamist Threat

2.1 We reject any attempt to vilify or denigrate Islam, or indeed any other religion. We recognise our common Abrahamic origins and the closeness between Judaism and Islam. The BOD in particular, on its own or via the activities of some of its members, has long been associated with Jewish/Muslim dialogue. Alif Aleph UK, the Maimonides Foundation, and the Three Faiths Forum are all initiatives that were started by BOD members.

In particular the BOD encourages local "bottom up" initiatives, whereby members of synagogues and mosques have been encouraged to meet and explore religious commonalities. These are generally unpublicised and ongoing, whereas some of the "top down" initiatives have lapsed as a consequence of international tension.

2.2 The BOD is committed to dialogue between Jewish and Muslim community organisations and maintains a liaison with the Muslim Council of Britain. Although this dialogue has on occasions been fractured, continuing initiatives include advice offered by Jewish doctors to Muslim doctors to ensure that male circumcision is carried out to the highest medical standards: advice given to Muslim Halal authorities to ensure that slaughter of meat is carried out to the highest standards; advice given to Muslim educationalists seeking state funding for Muslim day schools.

2.3 However, and despite the foregoing, we remain concerned by increasing anti-Semitism from extremist Islamist influences within the Muslim community.

This is manifest in three ways:

2.3.1 Tension in the Middle East, both between Israel and the Palestinians and in the Middle East generally, inevitably results in an increase in anti-Semitic violence in Britain, and elsewhere in Europe. This is reflected in the analysis of anti-Semitic incidents recorded by the CST, which is discussed below. It has been noted at recent conferences of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and was a feature of the reports by the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) published earlier this year.

2.3.2 The promotion of anti-Semitic propaganda by Arab states is not occasional, but consistent, regular and endemic. It is chronicled by, among others: the BBC Monitoring Service in its coverage of the Arab media (printed and electronic) and the weekly sermons delivered at the main mosques in Arab cities; the Middle East Monitoring and Research Institute (MEMRI); and the recently launched MEMRI TV monitoring service which reproduces and comments on anti-Semitic statements and programmes on Arab TV.

Complaints during the past two years to Arab foreign ministries forced the abandonment of a television series which promoted the Protocols of the Elders of Zion on Egyptian television, a Syrian television series which featured blood libel themes, and a neo-nazi Holocaust denial conference in Beirut. The French media commission now propose the banning of the anti-Semitic Lebanese Hizbollah-linked Al-Manar television broadcasts, and the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission have imposed an editorialising control process for Al-Jazeera television broadcasts.

2.3.3 Much anti-Semitism in the Arab world comes in the guise of anti-Zionism. Zionism is the expression of an age-old aspiration by the Jewish people to return to their Biblical homeland. Zionism is essentially a religious aspiration, and as such is intrinsic to the identity of the great majority of Jews. Anti-Zionism seeks

to deny to Jews what is accepted for other peoples, namely the right to a national homeland (as recognised in the United Nations' vote in 1947 to establish a Jewish state in the former mandatory Palestine). It may well be perfectly legitimate to oppose particular policies of the government of Israel. But anti-Zionism effectively becomes anti-Semitic when it blames Israel for all the problems of the Middle East, denies Israel's right to exist, or holds Israel to a different standard of behaviour than other countries.

Anti-Semitism in the past had at different times a religious basis, a political basis or a racial basis. It now chiefly focuses on a "collective basis", ie it is directed at the principal expression of Jewish group identity, namely the state of Israel.

The word "Zionism" is increasingly used in Arab and Muslim circles to mean anything that can denigrate Islam. For example, the war in Iraq is labelled as a "Zionist" war, whilst recent media coverage of the Darfur crisis has been blamed on "Zionists". In the UK, both the Muslim Council of Britain and the Muslim Association of Britain routinely brand any critics of Islam as "Zionist" and portray Zionism as some kind of demonic force with conspiratorial reach and power. This is detrimental to inter-communal relations. It is also felt by many Jews that Muslim attitudes to "Zionism" are essentially rooted in traditional anti-Semitic charges, tropes and motifs.

2.4 The consequence of the above is that an increasing proportion of anti-Semitic incidents are perpetrated by Muslims, Islamist extremists or sympathisers of the Palestinian cause. This is not to say that all of them are committed by Muslims—they are not—but that tension in the Middle East and Arab states' propaganda act as a "trigger" or "ignition point" for a range of perpetrators of anti-Semitic incidents.

2.5 Islamist ideology is both anti-democratic and anti-Semitic. Its ideological roots lie primarily in the post-war development of the Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan al Islami) under the leadership of Sayid Qutb. He sought to move the Brotherhood away from its original revivalist ideology to one which sought confrontation with existing Muslim states and the West in general. Under the influence of fascism and Nazism, he sought to fuse totalitarian anti-Semitic ideology with the revivalist ideology of the Brotherhood.

The MAB is the primary source of pro-Muslim Brotherhood activity in the UK today. Its slogan, "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally" summarises its pan-Islamist objectives. MAB and its leading spokesmen have persistently promoted the equation of Israel with Nazi Germany; called for Israel's destruction; lauded the leaders of Hamas; justified Palestinian suicide bombing; and invited radical foreign Imams to preach in Britain. They are a perfect example of radical Islamists adopting a position of political leadership in the Muslim community, and then using that position to promote an extreme and divisive agenda, including a dangerous ambiguity towards the use of terrorism and political violence.

2.8 The Islamic Revolution in Iran initiated by the late Ayatollah Khomenei provides a similar ideological basis for extremism. In his aspirations for a state governed by Shariah (religious law) alone, Khomenei sought to establish a theocracy in which governance would be vested in the hands of the supreme religious leader. Khomenei and subsequent Iranian leaders have sought to export the ideas and practices of the Islamic revolution through a range of means which have included providing funds for religious institutions abroad and the funding and training of terrorists.

Although Iranian foreign policy is now less clear cut the government still seeks to export its revolution, to extend its sphere of influence within the Middle East and to eliminate the state of Israel. Khomenei's ideology also contained a violent anti-Semitism.

3. Relations with Other Religious Communities

3.1 Jewish community bodies maintain relationships with other minority religious communities in Britain. They include the Hindu, Sikh and Jain communities, in particular. More generally, the BOD is active within the Inter Faith Network and various government-sponsored interfaith groups.

The BOD and CST have longstanding and close relationships with the Hindu community, which are partly carried out by the Indian Jewish Association UK, which maintains a programme of meetings and cultural events. The BOD has advised the Hindu community on building representative bodies, and the CST maintains a working relationship with the Hindu Forum and a number of Hindu Temples.

The Jewish community also maintains relationships with Sikh community groups, in particular the Sikh Human Rights Group, whilst the Jewish Jain Association was established by leaders of both communities.

3.2 We have long maintained close relationships with the Anglican, Methodist and Catholic churches, particularly through the Council of Christians and Jews. Longstanding relationships exist at local level between synagogue and church members in many places.

4. Anti-Semitism

4.1 Over the past three years the Jewish community has become increasingly sensitised to the growth of anti-Semitism in Britain. There is a feeling that a number of red lines have been crossed in terms of political polemic, following comments such as those from a leading MP pointing at the influence of a so-called Jewish Cabal, and the appearance of imagery suggesting a Jewish conspiracy on the front cover of a major weekly political journal. Such occurrences are often coupled with a failure to recognise the anti-Semitic nature of

the comments by leading public figures. The increasing frequency of such incidents has over a period of time led to a sense of isolation within the community. (This has been helpfully addressed in recent speeches by the Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Home Secretary.)

4.2 Anti-Semitism in contemporary Britain manifests itself in two ways: anti-Semitic incidents, which have been noted above and which will be further discussed below; and intellectual or political anti-Semitism.

4.3 The CST monitors incidents and classifies malicious acts aimed at the Jewish community or Jewish individuals. This can take several forms, including physical attacks on Jewish people or property, verbal or written abuse, threats against Jews or the publication and distribution of anti-Semitic leaflets and posters.

The CST does not include as incidents the general activities of anti-Semitic organisations.

Incidents are reported to the CST in a number of ways, most commonly by the victim or by someone acting on their behalf. In 2001 the CST was accorded third-party reporting status by the police. This allows it to report incidents to the police and to act as a conduit for victims who are unable or unwilling to report to the police directly. The CST works closely with police Community Safety Units in monitoring and investigating anti-Semitic incidents.

Not all incidents will be reported to the CST and it is therefore thought that the true number of incidents may be somewhat higher than their recorded total. No adjustments, however, are made to the figures to account for this.

4.4 The CST recorded a total of 375 anti-Semitic incidents in the UK during 2003. This was the second highest annual total since the CST began its current system of monitoring incidents in 1984, and represented a 7% rise on the 2002 total of 350 incidents.

This increase continues the trend of rising levels of anti-Semitic incidents. From a low point of 219 incidents recorded in 1997 the annual figure has risen steadily to its current level. This rising trend was intensified by the reaction to the start of the current Palestinian-Israeli violence in 2000 when the annual total of 405 incidents was by some margin the highest so far recorded. (Appendix 1)

4.5 The CST is neither qualified, nor does it have information, to discuss the monitoring of racist or homophobic incidents by other groups. But it has now embarked on a training scheme with the Hindu Forum to assist them in monitoring incidents to the same forensic standard as the CST.

4.6 European Union monitoring bodies have notified their intention to use CST categories and monitoring systems following the decision taken by the OSCE to monitor anti-Semitism within the 55 member states, confirmed in the Berlin Declaration. These decisions taken at the Berlin Conference in April 2004 are subject to ratification by the OSCE Foreign Ministerial Conference to be held in Sofia in December 2004. Given the increasingly global nature of the threat posed by anti-Semitism, the Jewish community welcomes the fact that the UK government signed up to the OSCE process. We are looking forward to learning how the Government intends to track progress and report back on compliance with this agreement.

5. Media Coverage

5.1 It is our belief that anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic incidents are covered sympathetically by the British media. Press coverage of a synagogue arson or Jewish cemetery desecration is almost always empathetic and accurate.

However, media coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict is often one-sided and superficial, paying little attention to the underlying causes or its history. As a consequence, the reporting of significant events in the Middle East often appears to trigger anti-Semitic incidents in Britain and elsewhere in Europe.

The attached analysis from the CST Anti-Semitic Incidents Report 2003 provides a case study. (Appendix 2)

6. Civil Liberties/Policing Issues

6.1 Members of the Jewish community report no problems with their civil liberties or policing issues. The close working relationship between the BOD, CST and the police nationally has led to a recognition of the particular terrorist and other threats posed to the Jewish community, and established and rehearsed routines exist to deal with security emergencies.

6.2 The CST regularly provides advice to the police in a number of areas: lectures to police cadets in training; input into police manuals on how to deal with religious communities; training for police CSU officers; training for police constables patrolling areas with large Jewish communities.

As a consequence of the longstanding and close working relationship with the police, the CST is held out as a model for an ethical community security agency. It has frequently been commended by senior police officers to other communities.

6.3 The only area where we would wish to offer a proposal to strengthen police powers relates to terrorist reconnaissance. Terrorists conduct hostile reconnaissance against a range of prospective targets, before selecting one for attack. Such reconnaissance provides a window of opportunity for police and alert

members of the public to foil a prospective attack, as it requires the terrorists actually to visit the planned target and surrounding area. Future legislation should be developed to exploit this unique opportunity by enabling law enforcement agencies to question suspects and seize papers, camera film, etc, where there are reasonable grounds to believe that surveillance is being carried out preparatory to a terrorist attack.

15 September 2004

APPENDIX 1

MONTHLY FIGURES FOR ANTI-SEMITIC INCIDENTS
JANUARY 1996—DECEMBER 2003

	1996	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
January	16	7	14	26	37	16	15	23
February	12	24	16	19	19	14	11	24
March	26	25	20	18	25	20	26	48
April	44	10	23	34	35	33	47	29
May	24	20	22	29	29	32	47	27
June	23	20	38	21	24	30	26	34
July	14	20	18	20	29	28	31	30
August	11	15	18	18	16	20	15	20
September	16	28	14	25	23	50	47	22
October	17	19	20	23	105	48	45	57
November	20	13	11	24	42	14	28	36
December	5	18	22	13	21	5	12	25
TOTAL	**228**	**219**	**236**	**270**	**405**	**310**	**350**	**375**

APPENDIX 2

March 2003:
A case study on the Middle East effect
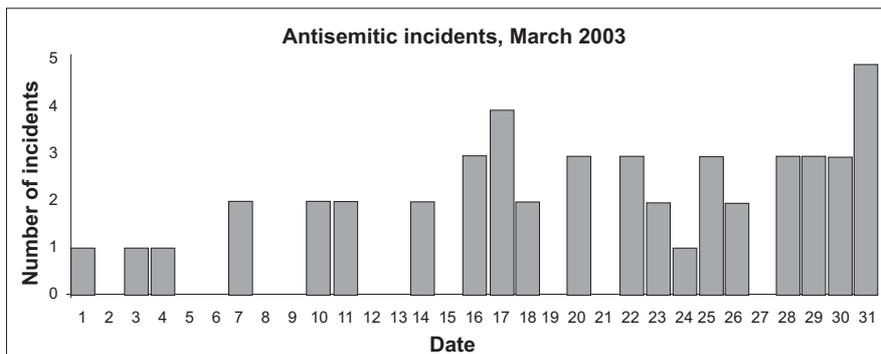
This chart illustrates the way that events in the Middle East influence the number of antisemitic incidents in the UK. In the first half of March 2003 there were 11 incidents, roughly in line with the number of incidents to be expected for that month. But as it became increasingly likely that the UK would go to war, with the backdrop of claims that the war was being fought at the behest of 'Zionist' lobbyists in Washington and for the benefit of Israel, so antisemitic incidents in the UK rose commensurately. In the second half of March there were 37 incidents, over three times as many as in the first half of the month.

Countdown to war
16 March: Azores Summit
17 March: Withdrawal of second resolution at United Nations
18 March: Ultimatum to Saddam Hussein
20 March: War begins

March incident totals, 1999 - 2003
1999 - 18 incidents
2000 - 25 incidents
2001 - 20 incidents
2002 - 26 incidents
2003 - 48 incidents

4. Memorandum submitted by Burnley Borough Council and Chief Superintendent of Lancashire Constabulary (Pennine Division)

1. This submission is made jointly by the Chief Superintendent of the Pennine Division of Lancashire Constabulary and by officers of Burnley Borough Council. The decision to make a joint submission reflects the very close partnership working there has been between the Police and the Council, as well as with other agencies, in working together to manage tensions and risks to community cohesion in the years since Burnley suffered the disturbances which were the subject of the Burnley Task Force Report, chaired by Lord Tony Clarke (2001).

2. In Pennine Division, the Police have established a systematic approach to community intelligence gathering over the recent years, which is recognised as embodying good practice in community engagement. This generates a range of soft and specific intelligence to help identify and manage risks to public order linked to community cohesion. The intelligence is categorised under four broad headings for the issues which could impact on community cohesion : economic, political, racial and criminal.

3. The Police have recently initiated a system of ward panels called "Police and Community Together" (PACT), which meet monthly and are an opportunity for the Community Beat Managers of Lancashire Constabulary to meet with local residents, local ward Members and workers with local agencies in order to identify issues and problems that need addressing in each ward. This is widely seen as a positive initiative, and enjoys the support of many other agencies. It is one of the initiatives on which Burnley's approach to neighbourhood management is building.

4. The Police hold a regular weekly "scanning meeting", which enjoys the participation of many other agencies, including the Borough Council, the Neighbourhood Wardens employed by the Borough Council, the County Council, some community representatives, and others. This is an opportunity for information sharing about a range of current issues that could result in public order or community cohesion breakdowns. The meetings are extremely task-orientated and result in rapid deployment of resources in order to help manage and address the risks that are identified.

5. At a more strategic level, senior managers of District Councils, the Police and other agencies (including the community and voluntary sector) come together on a regular basis as the "East Lancashire Risk Assessment Strategy Group". This is a working group of the East Lancashire Together community cohesion pathfinder, and provides an opportunity for forward planning in respect of community cohesion-related risks to public order, and the promotion of positive messages about community relations. It is also an opportunity to reflect on the practice and interventions that have resulted from the scanning meetings. Home Office colleagues are routinely copied in on the papers and minutes relating to the work of this Group.

6. On the basis of these positive initiatives, the Pennine Division of Lancashire Constabulary is taking part in the CENTREX National Community Cohesion project. Again, this involvement is proceeding with support and participation from representatives of Burnley Borough Council. This project will result in the collation and dissemination of best practice in respect of inter-agency working around the identification and management of risks to public order that have a community cohesion dimension.

7. The Police are working in partnership with Burnley Borough Council and with other agencies, and in collaboration with colleagues from the Civil Service (Government Office for the North West) in order to run a tabletop exercise in December 2004, which relates centrally to the concerns of this Committee Inquiry. The exercise will be opportunity to test the preparedness of the Police, Burnley Borough Council and other agencies to positively manage any rise in racial incidents, "Islamophobia" or other forms of prejudiced and hateful behaviour that may result from any terrorist threat or incident that takes place in the future. The process of working towards this exercise has itself been a vehicle for improving the preparedness of local agencies to work together effectively on these issues.

8. More widely, there are regular opportunities for agencies to work together to promote community cohesion, and to ensure that the principle of building good community relations is built in to all of our work. A key vehicle for this is the Community Cohesion Group of the Local Strategic Partnership, Burnley Action Partnership. The Group is chaired by the Chief Executive of Burnley Borough Council, and enjoys regular participation from the Police, Lancashire County Council, East Lancashire Together community cohesion pathfinder, the community and voluntary sector, the Primary Care Trust, local housing associations and a range of other organisations. Home Office colleagues are routinely copied in on the papers and minutes relating to the work of this Group.

9. A key partner in our work to effectively manage and address the risks of "Islamophobia", racism and other forms of prejudice with which the Committee Inquiry is concerned is the "Building Bridges in Burnley" network. This is our local inter-faith network, which has been created by the initiative of members of every Christian denomination in Burnley, and by representatives of every Mosque in Burnley. Those active in the "Building Bridges in Burnley" project come together regularly to discuss a range of issues, including the commonalities and differences between their religious beliefs, and the social issues facing the town. The project has a strong reputation for implementing a range of positive initiatives to bring people together across the divides of race, ethnicity and faith, and in taking a pro-active approach to promoting positive messages on the importance of good community relations. For example, in the recent period, Christian and

Muslim leaders who are part of "Building Bridges in Burnley" both spoke out very clearly condemning the kidnapping and subsequent murder in Iraq of Kenneth Bigley, thus making clear that such outrages are not representative of Islam.

10. The way in which the media amplified the statements of "Building Bridges in Burnley" during this period is one example of the increasingly positive and responsible approach that has usually been taken by the print media as well as by the broadcast radio media in East Lancashire around issues relating to community cohesion. Through the links which the Police and Burnley Borough Council have built up with the press and the radio over the recent years, and through the initiative of the media themselves, we have increasingly seen how the press and radio can report and comment on issues relating to race, ethnicity, religion and community relations in a helpful and positive way. We are confident that this approach would shape any media reaction to the threat or reality of terrorist attacks in Britain that we may face in the future.

11. Representatives of Burnley Borough Council and the Pennine Division Police would of course be very happy to provide further information and background documents to the Committee Inquiry, or to attend such hearings of the Committee as its members see fit.

8 November 2004

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5. Memorandum submitted by Campaign Against Criminalising Communities (CAMPACC)

Last year CAMPACC compiled a dossier on how UK anti-terror laws have been used to terrorise migrant communities. We submitted this dossier to the Privy Council review of the 2001 legislation. We also submitted a two page summary statement which was signed by groups representing over 100,000 people. Both are available at http://www.cacc.org.uk/ATCSAsummary.htm

We are working with migrant and refugee community groups to update some aspects of that dossier. We would like to present additional information when the Committee holds its hearings. For now we have two additional comments about Parliament's role.

1. The terms of reference for your inquiry are suitably wide-ranging but are also ideological, pre-empting key issues that should be investigated. For example, you assume that community relations are harmed by *the threat of terrorism*. Rather, such problems result from persecution by the state authorities, mass-media scares, institutional racism, etc which use the supposed threat of terrorism as a pretext for political agendas.

2. Regardless of Parliament's intentions in approving anti-terror laws, it is complicit in arbitrary attacks on civil liberties. In particular the High Court accepted the following interpretations of anti-terror powers:

— That the police can carry out stop-and-search exercises simply on the basis of a belief that terrorist acts may be planned in an area ie, needing no specific grounds to target individuals (as in the case of protestors at the DSEI arms fair in September 2003).

— That the Home Secretary may intern a foreign national for an indefinite period, simply on the basis of "hearsay" that the person may have links with "international terrorism" ie, needing no evidence at all.

In both cases the Court rejected legal challenges on grounds that they were challenging the will of Parliament, as expressed in the wording of anti-terror laws. Therefore MPs remain complicit in such injustice until they vote to repeal the special anti-terror powers.

Going beyond interpretation of those specific laws, the High Court also accepted the use of information which may have been obtained from torture, as a basis for interning foreign nationals. Such a prospect effectively encourages torture in various detention centres around the world. Parliament must share responsibility for such effects of the law that it approved.

12 September 2004

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6. Memorandum submitted by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of England and Wales

The Department for Christian Responsibility and Citizenship of the Catholic Bishop's Conference of England and Wales welcomes the invitation to contribute to the Committee's Inquiry into Terrorism and Community Relations.

The Department has a particular concern for the marginalised and vulnerable in society, and as part of this concern we are in touch with priests, religious sisters and lay people who live in and are involved with deprived communities.

In order to get a sense of how international events and terrorism are affecting these local communities, during recent weeks we consulted key Catholics with long experience of active involvement in their communities. We spoke to:

— a director of a community project in Leeds;

— a community organiser in west London;

— a parish priest in Oldham;

— an inter-faith worker in Bradford;

— a parish priest in north London;

— a parish priest in Bristol; and

— a religious sister in the West Midlands.

1. Background

During the spring and summer of 2001 there were disturbances in Oldham (26 May), Burnley (23 June), Bradford (7 July) and other northern towns. It is significant that these disturbances took place prior to the tragic events of 11 September 2001. The timing is important, because it highlights the fact that an alienation and racial antagonism among and between some Asian and white young men had been developing for some time. The BNP saw this and began targeting their racial incitement at Muslim communities. The police were sometimes caught up in the tension and policing was sometimes an issue.

2. The Negative Impact of Terrorism on Community Relations

Responses from our seven areas were mixed. On the one hand, two contacts reported that international events and terrorism seemed to be having a distinct negative impact on some communities. Others felt that things had changed but that the impact was difficult to measure. The majority did not feel that the international situation and terrorism had had a significant impact on their communities or they felt that the positive initiatives that had taken place had kept this at bay.

The director of a community project in Leeds had consulted Asian colleagues who reported that Asian people feel more vulnerable since 9/11. They feel that there is "permission" for white people to make racist remarks quite openly. This particularly affects people whose dress marks them out as observant of Islam, so women wearing the scarf or the long coat or wearing a burka report that people feel free to be extremely rude. Asian men with beards also report similar behaviour even from work colleagues where remarks may seem to be "jokey". Muslim young men, in particular, feel that they are under scrutiny. A young man wearing a mosque hat went into one of the shops in Leeds and felt that he was under particular scrutiny even though he had often shopped there without the hat. People wonder if they are being paranoid. People report a widespread view in the Muslim community that the war in Iraq is just a front for war against Islam and for oil. The BBC TV programme on the police, in which an undercover journalist joined up and discovered the depth of racism among some recruits, seems to have had a profound impact in confirming the belief that the police are racist. Police going into mosques to search for "terrorists" is seen as breaking down trust and confirms a view that Islam is not respected.

A community organiser in west London mentioned a Moroccan group where people felt stigmatised and alienated from the Government. In her experience, stop and search, which has always been an issue with black young people, is now an issue with young Asians as well. She had also heard the feeling expressed that the police tend to publicise the arrests of young Asians but fail to make it known when the people arrested are released without charge.

A parish priest in Oldham feels it is difficult to measure how much international events have a real impact on community relations. He feels that every time there is a TV report of a major incident, there is general conversation and judgments made about the Muslim community. However, racist attacks in Oldham have actually decreased, probably because of all the positive efforts that are being made.

An inter-faith worker in Bradford reports that his impression is that the impact of terrorism and international events on community relations in Bradford has not been very great. The impact of the disturbances in July 2001, however, was very significant. Some of the potentially violent young men were "clobbered" with harsh prison sentences. They are serving these sentences and will soon be coming back to the community. At the moment, things tend to be quiet in Bradford. The Muslim community were always fairly self-contained. Even the BNP is less visible, perhaps because the Labour Group have been making an effort to expose the deficiencies in their position.

A parish priest in Bristol's inner city reported that he did not feel the international situation and terrorism had had much effect on community relations. He was not aware of any particular deterioration in relations in the inner city. It is possible that those in the suburbs had become more suspicious.

A religious sister, with long experience running a community project in a very poor area of the West Midlands, said she could not point to any particular link between terrorism and community relations. She is aware of significant levels of tension and violence between young people of different cultures (eg between West Indians and Somalians). However, it is mainly directed at people because they are newcomers. There is a lot of racism but there is no obvious link to terrorism.

3. THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF INTER-FAITH INITIATIVES

A number of those we spoke with mentioned the positive impact of inter-faith initiatives which had been taken either as result of the disturbances in northern towns or because communities were aware of the potentially negative impact of international events and terrorism.

A parish priest in north London, reports that every time a high profile international incident takes place, the Islington Faiths Forum issues a joint statement, which represents a shared view from the different faiths represented in the Forum. He feels these joint declarations are very important. They express the common ground between faiths, including their consensus in completely opposing terrorism. The Muslims in the Forum make their opposition to terrorism clear and unambiguous.

Through the Forum, they had employed someone to map the faith groups in the area and had discovered 139 groups. All were invited to a meeting, and only one objected to meeting with people of other faiths. The feedback after the meeting was very positive and those present wanted the meetings to continue.

The Muslim Welfare Association in the area has arranged evening events with speakers and they have invited a cross section of the community to these events. They have also invited representatives of the Churches and other faith communities to a celebration of the breaking of the Ramadan fast.

His parish is currently working with Anglicans in the area to get young people involved in "doing good in the community". He hopes that this work with young people will expand to involve other faith communities.

The parish priest in Oldham mentioned the creation of an inter-faith forum and a women's inter-faith network. Since the Iraq war began, inter-faith prayers have been said in different worship centres—churches, mosques and temples.

The Community Cohesion Partnership in the area organised a five-day course (run by Mediation Northern Ireland). Some 40 leaders from different parts of the community attended the course. People had a chance to tell and listen to one another's stories. An editor, who participated in the course and whose paper had originally been accused of being quite negative (their offices were targeted in the 2001 disturbances), later ran a front page article outlining the vision of a multi-ethnic society.

In education, a pilot project was held involving one Catholic school. The pilot examined how racial identity nurturing and community cohesion could be promoted in schools through every area of the curriculum. This is now being done in other schools.

There have been litter picking days, and a Muslim organisation invited him to join them. During the day they discussed their respective faiths.

The inter-faith worker in Bradford felt that even though the area is relatively quiet, the people from other faith communities whom he meets in his work are still engaged. Efforts to establish an inter-faith forum are continuing and the launch will be on 1 December. The involvement of different communities is as it has always been.

On the 11th of each month, an ecumenical house of prayer still attracts 40–50 people to inter-faith prayer. In June, he had given a talk to head teachers of Catholic schools in the area and found them very receptive to the idea that "we are moving into a new era and a new vision is needed".

The parish priest from Bristol reports that there is an inter-faith group in Bristol but it tends to be a bit more academic. At times of high profile incidents, messages of support are sent between communities.

Last Easter, during Holy Week, during a time of some international tension, he had held an inter-faith service in his church led by himself, an Imam and a Rabbi. Approximately 50 people attended at short notice (mostly Christian, with a small representation from Jewish and Muslim communities).

There had also been an inter-faith service for healing, hope and reconciliation in the Cathedral for those involved in adoption. Some from each of the faith traditions gave a short presentation on how adoption worked in their tradition.

4. BROAD-BASED COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Two of the people we consulted mentioned the importance of broad-based community organisations as one of the most effective ways of building strong working relationships between different groups.

The East London Communities Organisation (TELCO) is an example of such an organisation. TELCO brings together some 40 churches, faith communities, schools and trade union branches to work together for the good of all the people of east London. During the period of tension leading up to the Iraq war, TELCO was able to get its members to support a public statement of mutual concern. Since then the different faith communities involved in the organisation have been able to cooperate constructively and without internal tension. Similar organisations exist or are in the process of being established in South and West London, Sheffield and North Wales. Others have previously existed in Liverpool and Bristol.

5. Summary and Conclusion

In the soundings we have taken, concerning how international events and the threat of terrorism are affecting community relations, we have had diverse responses. Some report that Asian and Muslim communities feel more vulnerable. Some perceive an increase in background racism which is hard to measure. Others report little change in their communities or even an improved atmosphere as a result of community efforts. Even where racism and violence exist, it may be directed at those perceived as "newcomers" rather than at groups who are specifically associated with terrorism.

In some places, the disturbances in the spring and summer of 2001, which preceded 11 September, had considerable impact. The issues raised by those disturbances have been reinforced by international events and terrorism during the intervening years. This may have had a significant negative effect in some communities. It has also inspired positive efforts by local people to build and strengthen relationships between cultural and faith communities.

We are very aware of the partial and impressionistic nature of this submission. However, it represents a kaleidoscope of perceptions from Catholics of considerable experience, from different parts of the country, each of whom has been working for some years to improve community relations in their local areas.

8 November 2004

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7. Memorandum submitted by the Church of England

General Considerations

1. The Church of England shares the widespread public concern about the impact of the threat of terrorism on our national life. We are conscious that we are now living in a world in which—as Lord Newton has put it—we would not choose, and did not expect, to live, and that as a result governments face unenviable dilemmas in seeking to reconcile security and liberty.

2. We also share the widespread concern about the consequent aggravation of tensions between different ethnic and religious groups within our nation. Through its network of parishes across the country the Church of England has a presence in every local community; clergy and churches are often key players in building bridges of inter-faith understanding and cooperation between different groups. This makes us aware of the day-to-day effects of governmental policies.

3. The major threat to community relations in the present situation arises from the self-identification of Al-Qaeda as an Islamic organisation claiming to defend and pursue Islamic interests. This may encourage misrepresentation by some people of Muslims and Muslim communities as supportive of terrorism, and conversely misrepresentation of counter-terrorist measures as essentially anti-Islamic. Over the past two years, the office of the Archbishop of Canterbury has organised a series of local "listening exercises" designed to hear the concerns of a wide range of voices from Muslim individuals and groups across England. It has become clear from these that many in the Muslim community feel isolated, anxious, and misunderstood within wider society as a result of the current situation.

4. The danger to community relations posed by the threat of terrorism lies partly in its potential to exacerbate existing tensions in the United Kingdom. These tensions are affected both by the position of Muslims in our society, and by the overflow of international conflicts into the domestic scene. Terrorism itself is one form of overflow, and responses to geopolitical events such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the war in Iraq profoundly condition communal attitudes and behaviour.

5. The Act of 2000 defines terrorism in terms of its objectives, and of its effects. First, it is stipulated that "the use or threat [of action] is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, and. . .the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause." [Section 1(1)] Second, that the action involves "serious violence against a person...serious damage to property. . .endangers a person's life. . .creates a serious risk to the health and safety of the public, or. . .is designed seriously to interfere with or disrupt an electronic system." [Section 1(2)]. Governments whose societies are threatened by terrorism understandably treat it primarily as a criminal act, in terms of its effects, and only secondarily as a political act, in terms of its objectives.

6. Part of effective counter-terrorist policy must therefore be to reassure those who may share certain political sympathies or goals with terrorists that the policy is directed against the violent methods of the terrorists rather than against political objectives which would be legitimate if pursued by non-violent means. Equally, to act against terrorists without sensitivity towards the legitimate political interests and aspirations of significant sections of society is likely to damage community relations. British governments have long struggled with these quandaries in Northern Ireland.

LEGISLATION AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

7. Our concerns about counter-terrorist legislation centre on the operation of the Terrorism Act 2000 and the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (ATCSA) 2001. Such evidence as we have suggests that the power of arrest under the 2000 Act has been used disproportionately against Muslims. A number of case studies, most recently that from the Institute of Race Relations, suggest that while the great majority of those arrested under the Act have been Muslim, the majority of those convicted (a relatively low number) have been non-Muslim. Furthermore, most of those arrested have either been released without charge, or have seen charges dropped or thrown out of court.

8. Part 4 of ATCSA has been discussed intensively on account of the power given to detain indefinitely foreign nationals suspected of terrorism, subject to authorisation and review by the Special Immigration Appeals Commission. This has necessitated derogation from Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights (the right to liberty) on grounds of national emergency. The seriousness of this action means that its justification must be subject to regular and careful review, since it now appears that the emergency will be prolonged.

9. In the context of community relations, we draw attention particularly to the differential treatment of British and foreign nationals. Part 4 has created, with great sophistication and care, an enclave of the criminal justice system targeted on foreign nationals, with enhanced powers for the State and weaker safeguards for suspects. The Government itself has described these provisions as too draconian to be applied to British citizens, but judges them necessary to deal with terrorist suspects who cannot be deported. In addition to sharing doubts about its compatibility with Article 14 of ECHR, we believe that Part 4 contributes powerfully to a sense of double standards of justice, liberty and dignity as between British citizens and others, most of whom are Muslims, and indirectly to a sense of injustice among British Muslims. We support the recommendation of both the Newton Committee and the Joint Committee on Human Rights that new efforts should be made to frame legislation which deals with all terrorism regardless of the nationality of suspects and that such legislation should not require a derogation from ECHR.

POLICING

10. The perception of discrimination between Muslims and others extends from the operation of counter-terrorist legislation to more general policing strategy. Both anecdotal and statistical evidence suggest that in recent years stop and search powers have been employed disproportionately against Muslims (eg the Metropolitan Police District stop and search rates for Asian and white people respectively between 2001 and 2002). While this situation is not the same as that facing black communities in earlier times, confrontational methods of policing are likely to prove counter-productive, as they risk increasing radicalisation of young Muslims, in particular. The operation of such policing strategies needs also to be set against a social background of under-achievement, deprivation and consequent alienation among many Muslim communities.

11. There is concern that Muslims involved in credit card fraud or forgery have been treated as suspected terrorists, so that extra powers available under counter-terrorist legislation have been extended to routine criminal investigations. While it is true that routine offences could be committed "preparatory to terrorism", this is a disturbing trend which merits scrutiny. It also appears that some arrested under anti-terrorist legislation have subsequently been re-arrested by the immigration service and held in custody as security risks despite the absence of criminal charges.

12. There is admittedly a problem when interpreting statistics which show differential treatment, in knowing whether factors other than discrimination could explain them. It can be argued that counter-terrorist operations directed against Al-Qaeda could be expected to affect the Muslim population disproportionately, but the scale of the disparity in a number of areas and the lack of objective justifications for it suggest that the explanation is unlikely to be reassuring. That Muslim communities experience counter-terrorist policy as discriminatory and threatening is a serious cause for concern.

MEDIA REPORTING AND STIGMATISATION OF MINORITY GROUPS

13. In a situation where perceptions on all sides are crucial, the role of the media is of great significance. It is to be regretted that reporting, particularly in the national press, frequently seems to reinforce prejudices and stereotypes. Such phrases as "Islamic terrorism" encourage the misrepresentations mentioned in paragraph 3 above, while comment is often shaped by unsympathetic portrayals of all Muslims as unreasonable, violent or (applying a misleading word drawn from Christian use) "fundamentalist". We believe it is incumbent on politicians to speak with care and sensitivity on these matters, especially in the period leading up to a general election.

14. We believe that media reporting needs to be more aware of the diversity of opinion and practice within the Muslim community, and more responsible in seeking the views of leading figures within that community who can speak with credibility and understanding. It is very unfortunate that the opinions of a handful of unrepresentatively extreme figures are regularly given prominence. We sympathise with the position of

Muslim community leaders who are firm in their repudiation of terrorism but find themselves outflanked in the media on one side by mavericks from their own ranks and on the other by criticism from those who equate Islam with "militancy". We regard it as vital that their voices are heard and reported.

15. It is also unsatisfactory that reporting tends to concentrate upon dramatic incidents of arrest, carrying implications of guilt and dangerousness, while failing to report with the same prominence subsequent dropping or dismissal of charges. Thus the impression is given that Muslims are being arrested and convicted of terrorism in large numbers, whereas the truth is quite opposite, and the outcome is to increase public fear and prejudice.

16. While we recognise that it is the Muslim community which has most strongly expressed its sense of stigmatisation and isolation in the present climate, we recognise that others too feel under pressure. The Jewish community has experienced both an increase in attacks, against both individuals and property, and also a degree of hostility, resulting from the Middle Eastern situation, unprecedented since 1945. Recognising the need for people to be able to engage in robust criticism of the policies of the Israeli—or any other—government, we are concerned that this sometimes crosses the line into public expression of anti-Semitic views, whether openly or implicitly.

17. We recognise that other visible minorities have felt exposed and vulnerable. Because of their appearance, Sikhs have been abused as accomplices of, or sympathisers with, Osama bin Laden. Hindus, Christians and others from minority ethnic backgrounds have all experienced increased levels of hostility and suspicion.

18. Recently the tense national and international situation has inhibited the trust and patience on which constructive inter-faith relationships are built; consequently, community relations are in danger of fragmentation in many places. In these circumstances, a renewed commitment to the support of constructive inter-faith engagement through adequate education and positive reporting is crucial.

19. The incidence of hostility and discrimination towards minority religious groups in Britain makes it necessary to protect their rights and safeguard their interests as members of society. The unequal legal protection offered to different religions is a cause of discontent, particularly among Muslims, and good community relations require this to be rectified. The Government has favoured the creation of a new offence of "incitement to religious hatred" and in 2002 the Church of England expressed qualified support for such a measure.

20. We continue to support the proposal, along with representatives of other faith communities, believing that this would also provide a check on hateful and inflammatory rhetoric emanating from the margins of the Muslim community. We note, however, anxieties that the offence would inhibit freedom of speech, and we emphasise the importance of ensuring that legislation penalises the religiously-motivated incitement of harm against people, rather than robust argument (whether in promotion or criticism of religious beliefs and practices) which some may find divisive or offensive.

CONCLUSION

21. Religions are frequently censured for their contribution to human conflict and division. While there is some justice in these criticisms, the religions also possess in their traditions resources for evoking trust, making peace and living with danger while resisting panic, despair or violence. These resources are potentially a gift to our society as it wrestles with the threat of terrorism, but the potential will be fulfilled only if the various faith communities are able to work together in the cause of peace and justice. The Church of England is committed to making a constructive and wholehearted contribution to that process.

14 September 2004

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8. Memorandum submitted by the City of London Police

1. The City of London Police has a strong commitment to protecting the interests of the financial district of London. It is a specialist Force with extensive counter terrorism experience, technology and resources. The unique and diverse environment of the City presents continuous challenges in ensuring that the financial and business district remains a welcoming global finance centre in which to work, reside and socialise and continues to make a significant contribution to the economy of the United Kingdom.

1.1 In presenting the unique position of the City of London may I remind you of the national and international importance of the Square Mile, which is illustrated by the following statistics:

— The City of London is the world's leading international financial and business centre—a global powerhouse at the heart of the UK's financial services.

— A significant amount of the UK's current account of over £13 billion is generated within the Square Mile.

— The Square Mile contributes 3% to the UK's GDP and 13% to London's GDP.

— The City of London is a vital asset to the British and European economies. Its markets are innovative, competitive and internationally focused.

— The best companies in the world do business in the City of London.

— $504 billion foreign exchange turnover each day in London.

— 56% of the global foreign equity market.

— 70% of eurobonds traded in London.

— $2,500 billion per annum traded on metals in London.

— London is the world's leading market for international insurance. UK world-wide premium income reached £157 billion in 2001.

— £2,829 billion total assets under management in the UK in 2000.

— Nearly £1 billion in overseas earnings generated by the maritime industry.

— 463 foreign banks.

— 19% of international bank lending arranged in the UK (largest single market).

— 429 foreign companies listed on the London Stock Exchange.

— 75% of Fortune 500 companies have London offices.

— 375,000 jobs.

1.2 The financial district of the City of London is particularly "target rich" and therefore an attractive environment for terrorists. Over the last 35 years the Square Mile has been subject to terrorist attack on thirty occasions, many of these have been by Irish terror groups, though other groups have also carried out actions against targets in the City with devastating effect. Such attacks in the City of London have enormous impact nationally, internationally and on the world's financial markets.

1.3 The area is densely populated by banks and financial institutions, which means it remains the financial heartland for Europe. In addition to these sites the City is also host to a number of key economic and iconic sites such as the Bank of England, St Paul's Cathedral, Tower Bridge and the Central Criminal Court. The utilities infrastructure is extensive and supports a substantial amount of the business activity.

1.4 As a global economic capital, the City is considered to be a prime target for international terrorists. This view is borne out by the fact that such groups have targeted international financial locations in the recent past, ie New York on 11 September 2001 and the Istanbul attack against HSBC on 20 November 2003.

1.5 Policing the City of London presents constant challenges for the Force. During a working day the population increases to over 350,000 people of an estimated 189 different nationalities. A densely populated area, target rich environment and home to internationally recognised iconic sites are key elements in make the City an attractive target for a spectacular terrorist atrocity.

1.6 Stop and Search powers under the Terrorism Act are an integral part of the Force's counter terrorism training programme. All officers joining the Force receive this training and refresher training is also key to ensure that all operational officers have a sound understanding of their responsibilities.

1.7 The City of London Police has extensively used Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000 as part of its ongoing counter-terrorist initiatives. This power is renewed on a 28-day basis, and each renewal has to be ratified by a Secretary of State, the Force has not encountered any problems with this renewal in recent months. The community feedback about the exercise of the powers has been particularly positive. Issues of human rights, cultural diversity, and integrity are given high consideration when using these powers.

1.8 Between April 2003 and March 2004 the Force conducted 8,813 stops on members of the public under the Terrorism Act of whom 68.5% were subject to search. Intervention by City officers exercising this power resulted in 183 arrests and one arrested for terrorist offences. Exercising this power has the potential for conflict with members of the public, it is therefore to the credit of the professionalism, courtesy and the respect shown by City officers for the diverse population they police that during this period the City of London Police received just six complaints arising out of these stops, of which:

— four were informally resolved.

— one became subject of a Police Complaints Authority Dispensation Order (no further action to be taken as the complainant could not be traced).

— one not pursued by the complainant, once the reasons for the stop had been fully explained.

1.9 The London Metropolitan University has recently completed and independent study of the City's application of powers to stop and search. This included direct observation of officers behaviour by independent researchers. The research has shown that there is no evidence of disproportionality in the actions of officers.

1.10 Intelligence led high visibility public reassurance policing is a constant feature in the financial district. Counter terrorism operations, often in partnership with other agencies are targeting key locations. These operations and other counter terrorism tactics lead to the gathering of valuable intelligence has resulted in positive feedback from the Security Services.

1.11 The Force is committed to full accountability in exercising powers under the Terrorism Act whilst paying due regard to civil liberties of the public. It is paramount that the powers are used in line with agreed strategy and tactics and the Force has robust and established monitoring systems to ensure that no communities or individuals are being unfairly targeted.

1.12 The National Policing Plan demands the promotion of community cohesion, which is central to the work of the Force in providing a quality service to the diverse residential, business and transient population of the Square Mile. This is one of the key aims of the City of London Police in underpinning its aims in sustaining and improving good relations with the local community. The Force values the community it serves and a wide range of officers who are easily accessible regularly engage in dialogue with Chief Executives, Security managers and other key stakeholders. The introduction of wards policing where named ward constables are responsible for day to day liaison between the Force, business community and the elected Alderman and Common Council Members for that ward has extended our pro-active involvement with all communities.

1.13 The Force has pioneered Project Griffin, an initiative that engages the Force with security professionals in the fight against terrorism. A structure has been introduced whereby the Force run counter terrorism awareness days for security staff, weekly intelligence and information briefings and a commitment that in the event of a major incident security guards will assist the police. To date, 500 security guards are involved in the initiative which is an excellent illustration of the Force working in partnership with the community to make the City a hostile environment for anyone prepared to be involved in terrorism. Particular emphasis was placed on hostile reconnaissance.

1.14 The Square Mile has an increasingly diverse community and the City of London Police has continued to adopt an approach, which has helped it recognise the expectations of the community, which has led to a forging of closer links. As a result the inaugural City of London Independent Advisory Group (IAG) was formed in late 2003. The unique demographic nature of the City, has dictated the composition of the IAG, hence opportunities for making links with the voluntary and private sector have been maximised by approaching agencies throughout the City and Greater London.

1.15 The group has ensured that the City of London Police is benefiting from independent critical advice, which is constructive and provides a guide for the Force, linking into strategic aims, such as policy consultation, emphasising the City of London Police's commitment to greater accountability.

1.16 The Force enjoys a healthy relationship with members of the Jewish community. Patrolling and specialist officers regularly visit businesses and religious buildings to offer security advice and provide valuable reassurance to this vulnerable section of the community. Our understanding of the needs, concerns and safety of the Jewish community is illustrated by the resources that the Force deploy daily in providing valuable reassurance. During Jewish High Holy Days the Force works in partnership with the Community Safety Trust to provide additional reassurance during this period of tension. The Force is currently exploring ways of greater involvement with the Muslim community. For example, the Counter Terrorism Section and Race and Diversity Unit are currently progressing an initiative that will improve our links with the Muslim business community.

1.17 The City of London does not underestimate its enormous responsibility in protecting the financial district. The business community quite rightly demands a quality counter terrorism response, of which public consultation is a key factor. In response to the security fears of the community armed foot patrols have been introduced to reassure diverse sections of the business and religious community. Through consultation with the community during the planning phase and communicating our intentions this major change in our counter terrorism tactics was readily accepted.

1.18 The City has always prided itself on being at the cutting edge of technology and is in the process of researching, evaluating and deploying new technologies suitable for the continued role of detecting, disrupting and deterring terrorist activities. These initiatives are supplementary to the existing CCTV coverage, which capitalises on police and community technology to provide the highest concentration of coverage in the United Kingdom. The force pioneered Automatic Number Plate Reader in 1997 and the application of both static and mobile technology has been successful.

1.19 The City of London is one of the safest cities in the world enjoying a low level of crime. This has not happened by chance. The Force recognises the importance of the Square Mile to the economy of the United Kingdom. It constantly works in partnership with the Corporation of London in providing a quality service to ensure that the City remains an attractive venue for global companies to carry out their business in a safe and secure environment.

1.20 The Force has an excellent record on the quality of service it delivers to all sections of the community. Our officers are dedicated, professional and energetic in their approach to ensure that those working, visiting and residing in the Square Mile are safe.

1.21 The experience of the City of London Police is therefore one of extensive, but careful use of the legislation in a balanced, proportionate and accountable way. The City has many potential targets and the appropriate use of legislation is essential in reassuring those who live and work in the City and to secure an important UK strategic asset, and the international financial community as whole.

16 September 2004

9. Memorandum submitted by the Council of Christians and Jews

1. The Council of Christians and Jews was founded as a response to the Holocaust, during the darkest days of the Second World War, and it has an historic and ongoing concern with anti-Semitism and also with the creation of better and fuller understanding between Christians and Jews. We note that in the immediate aftermath of the last election two London synagogues were savagely desecrated, and the number of anti-Semitic incidents continues to be very disturbing. Terrorist threats, particularly from Al Qaida, have explicitly focused on Jewish communities around the world and high-level security is a constant fact of Jewish life. In CCJ we visit both churches and synagogues, and the contrast in terms of the quite extraordinary precautions that are taken for granted in synagogues and other communal buildings is very noticeable.

Jews around the world have been profoundly shocked by indiscriminate suicide bombings in Israel that have taken the lives of the very young and the very old and, sadly, several doctors with ties to the British Jewish community who had made major contributions to the medical care of both Israelis and Palestinians. The attacks on the Istanbul synagogues in November 2003 were likewise very shocking and indicated the vulnerability of Jews wherever they may be. Jews have many very different responses to the politics of the Israel-Palestine conflict, but these are not registered by Al Qaida, those who are responsible for suicide bombings, or the small number of Muslims and others in this country who are responsible for anti-Jewish abusive behaviour.

2. As our major submission we have enclosed a copy of the Joint Statement on Anti-Semitism issued by the Presidents of the Council of Christians and Jews at the beginning of the year, which expresses the depth of concern felt by both Christian and Jewish leaders at the current situation.

3. CCJ was also very concerned that in the June elections, 800,000 people voted for a far right party whose sole platform was hostility to different ethnic and religious groups in our society. This was a seven-fold increase in the number of votes cast for that particular party since the last European election, and represents a trend that is deeply alarming for all who are involved with community relations. In the current environment it is vital for community leaders to challenge negative stereotyping: political conflict and terrorism harden perceptions very rapidly, especially among those who have personal experience of tragedy, and on-going communication between different communities at all levels is of the greatest importance.

14 September 2004

Attachment

Joint Statement on Anti-Semitism by the Presidents of the Council of Christians and Jews

From:

The Archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace The Most Revd Dr Rowan Williams
The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, The Rt Revd Prof Iain Torrance
The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, His Eminence Cardinal Cormac M Murphy-O'Connor
The Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain, His Eminence Archbishop Gregorios
The Free Churches' Moderator, The Revd David Coffey
The Chief Rabbi of The United Hebrew Congregations of Great Britain & Commonwealth, Dr Jonathan Sacks
Rabbi Dr Albert Friedlander OBE PhD DD MHL PhB

Since its inception 60 years ago during the darkest days of World War Two, the Council of Christians and Jews has continued to confront the evil of anti-Semitism with a message of healing and mutual respect between our communities.

We believe the warm friendship between Britain's Christian and Jewish leaders—nourished by the work of CCJ at local level—has had an influence that extends beyond our two faiths. It has helped to set a tone for tolerance and respectful diversity across religious and ethnic boundaries in Britain.

Today, however, anti-Semitism is resurfacing as a phenomenon in many parts of the world. There have been fatal attacks on Jewish people, destruction and desecration of synagogues and cemeteries and the firebombing of Jewish schools. Incitement to hatred and violence against Jewish people has increased.

Britain has been less affected than many other countries but has certainly not been immune. We recognise that many in the Jewish community feel vulnerable and afraid. They seek and deserve the support that we as religious leaders can offer.

It is against this background that, as the Presidents of CCJ, we agree the following:

— Anti-Semitism is abhorrent. It is an attempt to dehumanise a part of humanity by making it a scapegoat for shared ills. We reject utterly the politics of hate and we pledge ourselves once more to combat anti-Semitism and all forms of racism, prejudice and xenophobia.

— We celebrate the fact that Jewish people have made a vast contribution to humanity; that Judaism is a valued voice in the conversation of mankind; and that, along with people of other faiths, Jews and Christians are called by God to work for peace, human dignity and respect for all people.

— We recognise that the suffering of the Jewish people is a stain on the history of Europe. Today, our total rejection of anti-Semitism, amid evidence of its resurgence, is a signal that we will not permit it to stain our continent's future as it has its past. This is our common pledge and one we call on others to join.

— We acknowledge that criticism of government policy in Israel, as elsewhere, is a legitimate part of democratic debate. However, such criticism should never be inspired by anti-Semitic attitudes, extend to a denial of Israel's right to exist or serve as justification for attacks against Jewish people around the world.

— We share with so many others a deep longing for peace, justice and reconciliation in the Holy Land and we believe that achieving this would help to make it harder for anti-Semitism to flourish.

— As religious leaders we reject the misuse of religion and religious language in seeking to address political challenges. We seek instead to speak and be heard together in our shared confidence that, in the mercy of God, the wounds of the world can be healed.

27 January 2004

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10. Memorandum submitted by the Crown Prosecution Service

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) welcomes the announcement by the Home Affairs Committee (21 July 2004) that it will inquire into terrorism and community relations.

1.2 The CPS also welcomes the opportunity to make a written submission as part of this inquiry. This submission has been prepared specifically for this committee.

2. CPS ROLE, STRUCTURE AND OVERALL VISION

2.1 The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) provides an independent public prosecution service for most criminal cases in England and Wales. Cases are referred to CPS by the Police. The CPS is headed by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) supported by the Chief Executive. The Service is superintended by the Attorney General. The Service is organised on the basis of 42 areas coterminous with police forces. Each area is headed by a Chief Crown Prosecutor who report directly to the DPP on area performance. Whilst independent the CPS increasingly works in partnership both nationally and locally with a range of CJS partners. This is reflected in CPS involvement in the National Criminal Justice Board (NCJB) and in Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJBs). Through LCJBs, the CPS together with Criminal Justice System (CJS) partner agencies are responsible for the local delivery of the governments criminal justice objectives and targets including those in relation to bringing offenders to justice and increasing public confidence.

2.2 A new vision for the CPS has been developed—a vision which is shared between the DPP and Attorney General and strongly supported in implementation by the Attorney General. It states that:

— The CPS aims to become a world class prosecuting authority that delivers a valued public service. This is a service that:
   — Drives change and delivery in the CJS.
   — Strengthens the prosecution process to bring offenders to justice.
   — Is a champion for justice and the rights of victims.
   — Inspires the confidence of the communities it serves.
   — Is renowned for fairness, excellent career opportunities and the commitment and skills of all its people.

2.3 Delivery of this vision is underwritten by incorporating the core values of fairness, impartiality and integrity into everything we do. It is also underwritten by an absolute attachment to issues of equality and diversity.

3. CPS KEY COMMITMENTS TO EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

3.1 The CPS has a longstanding commitment to furthering equality and respecting diversity. The Service has recently reviewed and renewed its commitments on this agenda and has an increasingly positive reputation as a considerable achiever on equality and diversity issues.

3.2 The CPS recognises that it is central to success that the prosecution service holds public trust and is seen by all communities as their prosecution service acting fairly in the interests of justice and staffed by valued employees from across all communities.

Throughout our work we are committed to taking into account the diversity of the population we serve and the staff we employ, and to promoting equality of opportunity for everyone.

In accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors we will work to ensure that our prosecution decisions are free from bias or discrimination and that all defendants, victims and witnesses are treated fairly and with respect. We will work to provide our services in a manner that is appropriate to the individual whatever their background.

We are committed to achieving equality and respecting diversity in employment. We will work to achieve a workforce at all levels that reflects the communities we serve.

We are committed to consulting with the communities we serve and the people we employ in order that the policies we develop and implement are appropriate in a diverse society. We are committed to informing the public and employees about what we do as a result of the consultations we undertake.

3.3 Through our work on equality and diversity we are aiming to build community cohesion through creating a public prosecution service trusted and valued by all as their prosecution service. We recognise that continued inequality and lack of respect for diversity can fundamentally threaten cohesion and trust in public services such as CPS.

Relevant recent achievements

3.4 These commitments are not simply that—they are matched by significant achievements in recent years relevant to this committee Inquiry. Key recent achievements include:

— Some extensive community engagement and policy development on hate crimes including racially and religiously aggravated crimes. Over 120 community organisations were consulted in framing this policy, which was launched in July 2003 including both Jewish and Muslim community organisations.

— Engaging key critical stakeholders in framing our first statutory Race Equality Scheme—a first for Whitehall and an initiative commended by the CRE.

— A workforce that is globally representative of the population CPS serves in terms of disability, ethnicity and gender—with approximately 14% of the workforce from Black Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds.

— Equality impact assessment of the prosecution decision-making process.

— Establishing effective dialogue between the new DPP and faith communities, including the Jewish and Muslim communities.

— Robustly and successfully prosecuting racially aggravated crime for which CPS brought cases against 3,116 defendants in 2002–03, and for which secured an overall conviction rate of 85%.

— Robustly dealt with religiously aggravated offences which came into effect under Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 and for which first data became available at the end of 2003 covering 2002–03—18 cases were finalised by March 2003 resulting in eight convictions on a religiously aggravated charge and two convictions on a non-aggravated charge. Given the small numbers it is difficult to identify trends but the predominant offence appear to be public order and harassment. This mirrors the trend in relation to racially aggravated offences. Given the seriousness attached to such offences all such cases are overseen by the DPP directly and prosecutions are consulted on with the Attorney General.

4. PROSECUTING TERRORISM

4.1 Terrorism constitutes a fundamental danger for open societies, such as our own. This is not least because of the suspicion and mistrust, which it can sow among different communities living together in diversity. A key challenge for public prosecutors is to play our part by firmly upholding the rule of law whilst safeguarding basic fair trial principles. Public prosecutors must above all, aim always for safe convictions in which the community can have confidence.

4.2 This issue of safe convictions in which the community can have confidence is of increasing importance. The nature and complexity of anti-terrorism investigations requires prosecutors to work very closely with the police and sometimes with authorities in other countries. These relationships are entirely proper for a public prosecutor but can pose challenges. The CPS best meets them by jealously guarding its independence. It is this independence, which the DPP has recently re-emphasised to all CPS staff, which forms the basis of public trust in CPS decision making.

4.3 Following the introduction of statutory charging it is no longer the police but CPS who decide on a review of material gathered by investigators who shall be charged and with what offences. This is the new CPS role in all but the most minor offences. It is the CPS role in relation to prosecuting terrorism.

4.4 The CPS approach in these cases is always the same as it is in any other—applying the two basic tests in the Code for Crown Prosecutors that is the evidential test and the public interest test. Proceedings are only brought and maintained where based on evidence that there is a realistic prospect of conviction and where the prosecution is in the public interest. If these basic tests are not met, the CPS decides there is no case.

4.5 Legislation in the area of terrorism has developed rapidly in recent times with the Terrorism Act 2000 and the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001. As legislation develops and as the role of law seeks to protect society from terror it must also safeguard the fundamental rights of the accused. Public prosecutors have a key role to play in this regard. Public prosecutors and the wider public expect convictions that we can all believe in. Article 6 of the ECHR provides an overarching safeguard balancing the rights of the accused in the terrorism case with the public interest whilst recognising the special nature of this threat to our democratic state. Public prosecutors should not only make decisions that are compatible with article 6 but also to anticipate the ways in which convention rights may be interpreted by the courts.

5. PROTECTING DIVERSITY

5.1 Alongside its role in prosecuting terrorism the CPS also plays a significant role in protecting diversity through its responsibilities in prosecuting hate crimes including racially and religiously aggravated crimes.

5.2 It is increasingly recognised that the terrorist attacks in New York (11 September 2001) and the subsequent international response to the threat of terrorism has had an impact on the range of communities including the Muslim community living in Britain. In recent years, the CPS has seen a significant decline in terrorist cases related to Irish terrorism and a significant increase in international terrorist cases often involving people of Muslim origin. There are increasing reports of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment. This creates a significant challenge for public prosecutors and for the wider criminal justice system. In this context it is essential that public prosecutors hold firmly to values of fairness, impartiality and integrity. Public prosecutors should be a bulwark against unfairness and injustice in society, prosecuting diversity and targeting hate crime robustly and successfully.

5.3 Increasing CPS is developing a positive reputation for engaging with a wider range of communities and consulting with them on the development of prosecution policy, including a policy on prosecuting racist and religiously aggravated crime. Jewish and Muslim community groups were consulted as part of this. In 2001–02, the CPS brought cases against 2,674 defendants for racially aggravated offences and in 2002–03 brought cases against 3,116 defendants for such offences.

5.4 The available data shows a year on year increase in the number of racist incident type cases received by CPS and the number of defendants and charges prosecuted. This probably reflects both improvements in data capture as well as any increase in criminality. The predominant offence is racially aggravated public order followed by racially aggravated assault with racially aggravated harassment and criminal damage roughly equal forth.

5.5 With regard to religiously aggravated offences there is limited information available. Information for 2002–03 was cited earlier. The 2003–04 figures are still being compiled but are likely to show less than 50 defendant cases were finalised in this period (as at mid July 2004, only 92 such cases had been referred to CPS since December 2001). However, the finalised cases show the victim is predominantly Muslim. Other victims include people of Jewish, Christian, Sikh and Hindu faiths. There is little currently available information on the faith of the defendant.

5.6 Alongside racially and religiously aggravated offences there are also cases of incitement to racial hatred referred to CPS. Whilst these cases are few in number they are often high profile and their handling can have an impact on community perceptions and confidence in the CPS. Such cases are referred to the Casework Directorate in CPS HQ reflecting the seriousness with which the Service considers such cases. Furthermore the DPP takes an active role in the consideration of such cases and the Attorney General has to consent to such cases being prosecuted.

5.7 In the past three years 84 incitement to hatred cases were referred to CPS. Out of these there were only two successful convictions. Such cases prove very difficult to prosecute and raise a number of key issues around free speech and the evidence threshold required. Most crucially in terms of community relations these cases can create an expectations gap between communities' understandable concerns to see cases brought to justice and the limitations on what can be prosecuted. Communities can become frustrated with decisions not to prosecute and CPS is often criticised as incompetent or discriminatory in its handling of such cases. Given the seriousness attached to handling such cases CPS is confident that this is not an area of service underperformance—rather the challenge lies in prosecuting the cases referred.

5.8 At the time of making this submission there is a proposal to extend the incitement to racial hatred provisions to cover religious hatred. It seems appropriate to consider and learn from the experience in relation to racial hatred in this context.

5.9 As stated previously CPS takes its responsibilities in protecting diversity and prosecuting such hate crimes very seriously. The CPS expects to be judged against what we say in our policy statements on prosecuting hate crimes and what we do in prosecuting such crimes.

5.10 In recognition of the current specific issues facing the Muslim community the CPS has taken on a number of steps to engage with Muslim community including:

— The new DPP held a first meeting with a range of Muslim community representatives at the end of June last to listen to community concerns.

— Based on this meeting, the Service is creating a key contacts list for future consultation on significant policy and service developments, and as a basis for future engagement.

— Planning a specific training programme for key CPS staff on Muslim community issues, so that staff can better understand the community context in which they undertake their work. We have done similarly in other areas of hate crime.

— Planning future visits by senior management to Muslim community projects.

— Local engagement by CCPs with Muslim communities in particular in areas of the country with significant Muslim populations.

5.11 This community engagement has a range of benefits—it helps educate CPS management and staff; it also helps to build community trust and confidence. It informs the development of policies and helps ensure appropriate service provision.

Concluding Points

5.12 As stated at the outset the CPS welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to this Home Affairs Committee Inquiry. Such an inquiry into terrorism and community relations goes to the heart of our commitment to build a public prosecution service which is embedded in society, in touch with the people we serve, doing the public's business in the Criminal Justice System and which has respect for human rights and diversity at its core.

23 September 2004

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11. Memorandum submitted by Paul Donovan

As a journalist who has covered issues relating to human rights abuses in the context of the Irish in Britain and Northern Ireland I have been struck by the parallels of the present approach to terrorism with that of the past. The focus of much of my work over the past year has been on parallels between the way the Muslim community are now being treated compared to the Irish before them. A second focus has been on the way the media cover terrorist issues, specifically the arrest of suspects.

I have written on the parallels between the Muslim and Irish experiences regarding anti-terrorism law in the *Independent* newspaper, the *Irish Post*, *Irish World*, *Red Pepper*, the *Morning Star*, *Universe* and *Muslim News*. The work on media coverage of terrorism has appeared in the *Press Gazette*, the *Journalist* and *Morning Star*.

The present approach to anti-terror legislation appears to be to offer security in return for citizen's rights. What has never been credibly established is what the real threat amounts to. So far there has, thank God, not been a major terrorist attack in Britain, yet civil liberties have been reduced to the point where under the Anti Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 foreign nationals can be detained indefinitely without the evidence ever being tested before a court. This has extended the ambit of anti-terrorism law far beyond anything that was in place during 30 years of conflict in Northern Ireland when there were actual bombs going off in London on a regular basis (see *Independent*: "Fear, terrorism and the erosion of our civil liberties" 28/2/2004).

The anti-terror law as enshrined in the Terrorism Act 2000 and the Anti Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 does though build on the laws brought in relating to terrorism in Northern Ireland. The most prominent of these was the Prevention of Terrorism Act which came onto the statute book as a temporary measure following the Birmingham pub bombings in 1974. Significantly, Paul Hill, who was convicted and later cleared of involvement in the Guildford Pub bombings, was one of the first to be picked up under the PTA.

Over the years that followed millions of Irish people were stopped at ports and airports under the PTA—this could be for anything from a few minutes to up to seven days. The uncertainty bred much distress. Between November 1974 and December 1991, some 7,052 people were detained under the PTA. Of these 6,097 (86%) were subsequently released without charge. Further details of how the operation of the PTA created a suspect community of the Irish appears in Professor Paddy Hillyard's book *Suspect Community*. The operation of the Act sent the Irish community back into itself, creating resentment toward the state and its various agencies. Little if any evidence has ever been produced to suggest that the anti-terror law actually stopped or helped prevent terrorism. Much of the terrorism that was prevented came about as a result of routine policing which caught terrorists in the act.

A similar pattern is now occurring with the Muslim community. Of 500 Muslims arrested between 11 September 2001 and December 2002, only 77 resulted in charges being brought and just two convictions (see *Irish Post*: "Muslims: the new terrorist bogeymen" 7/8/2004 and *Red Pepper*: "Are Muslims the new Irish" August 2004).

Further evidence of victimisation came with the recent publication of police stop and search figures which showed a 300% increase in the number of Asians being stopped and searched.

There is every sign of growing resentment amongst the Muslim community in Britain at being targeted in this way. As happened with the Irish there is a closing down of the Muslim community on itself—in almost ghetto style. The police have used a technique known as disruption to unsettle Muslim communities. This and the constant attempts of the police and security services to sign up informers are helping to further foster the sense of alienation among Muslims.

Media coverage has also played its part in alienating the Muslim community. The media appear to be tipped off before raids that involve hundreds of police officers. There may be a few arrests at the end of the day but the approach seems to be stage managed to guarantee maximum media profile. One example was the arrests in Manchester and surrounding areas in April. The *Daily Mail* headline was typical telling of how an "Al Qa'eda strike at Man United match is foiled." Not to be outdone the *Financial Times* told how "after the arrest of 10 people in the Manchester area on Monday under the terrorism act, reports raised fears that the premiership football club was the target of a planned suicide attack". Some of the individuals were found to have tickets for a match at Manchester United, raising hysteria about planned suicide bomb attacks on the ground the following Saturday. After days of questioning it emerged that those detained were Iraqi Kurds, some of whom were devoted Manchester United supporters. The tickets were old ones kept as souvenirs of an earlier match. All 10 arrested were later released without charge.

The Manchester story was one of a number of high profile stories surrounding arrests and terror that occurred during a three week period between March and April. On 30 March, there were the arrests of eight suspects in southern England. The arrests were high profile involving 700 police, eight men and a bag of fertilizer. Five of the men were eventually charged with conspiracy to cause explosion offences, and three with possession of 600kg of fertilizer.

These arrests came just two days after the Home Secretary had rebuked the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Sir John Stevens in the *Sunday Telegraph* over his warnings that a terrorist attack on London was inevitable. The Home Secretary said it would unsettle people and make them unnecessarily "jumpy."

A week after the eight arrests there was another terrorist scare with what the *Independent* reported to be "a planned poison gas attack, with the London underground system as a likely target." The story continued alleging "the plot, by British based supporters of Al Qa'eda, allegedly involved detonating a combined chemical and explosive "dirty bomb", producing fumes which can choke victims in a confined place." The reality amounted to some persons speaking about such a substance in a conversation that had been intercepted by GCHQ—the rest was spin.

Days after the phoney gas threat came the company offering a survival kit in the event of a terrorist attack on the London Underground system. The price: £30 for some water and hand wipes. The representative of the company selling the product talked it up on the basis that people now believe a terrorist attack inevitable. Then a few days later came the Manchester operation involving 400 police.

Former *Sunday Express* editor Amanda Platell believes that there could be some manipulation of the agenda going on by government. She points out that the raids on 30 March managed to knock the resignation of Home Office immigration minister Beverley Hughes down the news agenda. The poison gas story came at a time of a real upsurge of violence in Iraq and the Manchester arrests coincided with Tony Blair's U-turn over a referendum on the European constitution. Platell believes using terror alerts as diversionary tactics from some major political event has now become quite routine. "There were the tanks at Heathrow just days before the biggest anti-war march this country had ever seen—even I couldn't believe that but now I've seen the pattern I do believe it is happening," said Platell (see *Press Gazette*: "Tales of Terrorism" 4/6/2004).

My concerns centre on the use of anti-terror law, the repeating of the mistakes of the past and manipulation of the media. The Muslim community is visibly retreating in on itself. The constant linking of terrorism with Muslims and Islam will increase racial tension in the country and work counter productively for those seeking to prevent terrorism.

13 September 2004

12. Memorandum submitted by the Evangelical Alliance UK

INTRODUCTION TO THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

The Evangelical Alliance welcomes the opportunity to participate in the consultation relating to issues involving terrorism and community relations.

The Evangelical Alliance, which was founded in 1846, is the umbrella body that brings together a majority of Britain's 1.39 million Evangelicals. Included in Alliance membership are over 7,000 organisations and churches whose views we aim to represent in this submission. The 1998 English Church Attendance Survey revealed that 35% of Anglicans, 87% of Baptists, 78% of Independents, 35% of Methodists, 93% of New Churches, 93% of Pentecostals, 21% of United Reform Church (URC) members, 63% of those attending other churches identified themselves as Evangelicals.

The Alliance exists to promote unity and truth amongst these churches, individuals and evangelical organisations and to represent their concerns to the wider Church, State and society. We seek to work with and through our members rather than to duplicate or compete with them. Thus, this response seeks to represent the Alliance in its widest sense and is the product of ongoing consultation amongst specialist member societies.

This submission has benefited from consultation with member and partner organisations and individuals with expertise in race issues, policing and community relations. Specifically, these include representatives from the African and Caribbean Evangelical Alliance, the Peace Alliance, the Churches Commission for Racial Justice, and of course Evangelical Alliance General Director Joel Edwards, who was a member of the National Policing Forum and Independent Advisory Group to the Metropolitan Police.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT

1. *Terrorism*

The Evangelical Alliance deplores and condemns unequivocally the use of terror in the pursuit of any cause, political or otherwise.

2. *Community Relations*

Political, police and community leaders need to interface well together and there is some evidence that this is working well in a number of cases. However, there is room for communities to engage more meaningfully and purposefully with each other, especially at grassroots level. Effective management of freedom of expression within a pluralistic society is a crucial need.

3. *The stigmatisation of minority groups publicly associated with terrorism*

Christians are concerned that not enough is being done to protect the Muslim community from potential backlash if there was an Al Qa'eda terrorist attack on the United Kingdom. Evangelical Christians are concerned both about being wrongly associated with terrorists by injudicious comments proceeding from the Home Office and being sidelined by Government over community matters.

4. *The incidence of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other forms of prejudice*

Politicians and faith and community leaders have a responsibility to speak out against prejudice even if it makes them unpopular. We must openly debate and deal with the attitudes and ignorance that cause sectarianism. But care should be taken to ensure that we do not restrict fundamental human rights such as freedom of speech, which strike at the very foundation of civil liberties.

5. *Media coverage of the issues*

The media need to approach such issues with sensitivity, responsibility and restraint to avoid inflaming passions.

6. *Civil liberties/policing issues*

The police have a difficult task. Stop and search is an issue of huge community concern. We need to promote a climate of public trust, engagement and watchfulness to enable active and empowered citizenship that will emphasise provision of evidence and intelligence about crime and terrorism.

8. *Conclusion*

Terrorism constitutes a grave potential threat to community, not simply due to any material damage or tragic loss of life that it can inflict. Perhaps its most insidious threat is to cause mistrust of Government, to be suspicious of difference, and to force people to take the law into their own hands. Instead, we must build strong communities resilient to such potential fracturing. Faith groups are well placed to assist in the overall challenging but nevertheless essential task.

RESPONSE

1. *Introduction*

The Evangelical Alliance welcomes the opportunity provided by the Home Affairs Committee to comment on the vitally important issues surrounding terrorism and community relations. The Alliance previously outlined its concerns to the Government on the issues of terrorism during debate in Parliament relating to the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Bill. Whilst welcoming proposals to outlaw religious hatred, we were concerned that issues surrounding religious liberties were being caught up in anti-terrorism legislation without full and independent consideration. The Home Secretary has now announced his desire to reintroduce legislation around the area of religious hatred and the Alliance has written to the Home Secretary separately in this regard. The Alliance also made written and oral submissions to the House of Lords Select Committee on Religious Offences.

2. *Terrorism*

The Evangelical Alliance deplores and condemns unequivocally the use of terror in the pursuit of any cause, political or otherwise.

While never wanting to excuse terrorism we must be careful in its definition and in the use of the term. We must be mindful that while terrorism is a totally unacceptable form of response, its causal factors can include genuine grievance and injustice. We must be on the lookout for any evidence of a breakdown in community or democratic trust, which could, if left to fester, breed violence. This observation must include concern over continued violence and alienation particularly among the urban youth in our inner cities, which owes its origin to a number of wide-ranging sources. Security policy must not be a "sticking plaster" solution to deeper social and political problems. The foundation to any solution must inevitably involve a holistic approach including community policing and active citizenship, not forgetting marriage and family support.

3. *Community Relations*

Political, police, faith and community leaders crucially need to interface well together and there is some evidence that this is working well in a number of cases. However, it is imperative that communities be encouraged to engage with each other in ever more meaningful and purposeful ways, especially at grassroots level. Faith groups are well placed to assist in this process.

The importance of vigilant and strong communities is vital for the effective countering of terrorism. This can only happen by building trust and consent between communities. Mao Tse-Tung's metaphor that the terrorist "swims like a fish" in a "sea" of humanity is perhaps not quite accurate in relation to today's highly autonomous and cell-based terrorist structures. But it remains the case that if a community knows itself, builds effective civil society, and people seek to know their neighbours, then it is much more difficult for terrorism or crime to take root or develop undetected. Restoration of a neighbourly society should be a direct Government responsibility—again, working closely with community-based faith groups and others.

The Evangelical Alliance does not support the French approach of banning Muslim headscarves or Christian crosses in schools. For community relations to develop and flourish diversity and different traditions and religions need to be respected and their civil and religious liberties maintained. Our experience is that fear of conflict belongs more to the ideas of secular thinking and institutional correctness than between the vast majority of adherents of the major religions. The Evangelical Alliance has previously expressed similar concerns with regard to the Government's proposals regarding religious hatred.

In December 2001, the Alliance guardedly welcomed the principle of protecting faith groups from incitement to religious hatred. However, in the aftermath of September 11 it warned that a knee-jerk reaction to tack hasty proposals onto the Anti-Terrorism Bill risked jeopardising fundamental freedoms. The Home Secretary explicitly acknowledged the Alliance's concerns on the floor of House of Commons. When the proposals were ultimately defeated in Parliament the Alliance offered to consult with the Home Office in an endeavour to explore ways of outlawing religious hatred without compromising religious liberties. If consulted, we still have a number of potential suggestions to offer in this regard.

There can be a difficult balance to be found between integration into a pluralistic society run on largely secular lines and freedom to practice and express one's own beliefs. Many faith groups share similar concerns regarding religious liberty, notwithstanding Home Office fears now expressed in legislative

intentions. Nevertheless, minority groups of all faiths need to be prepared to speak out unequivocally against injustice and prejudice emanating from their own communities. Silence is not an option. In this regard, we believe that Muslim representatives in the UK could do much more to condemn publicly terrorist outrages perpetrated by Islamic groups, and also to denounce the frequent denials of the same liberty they enjoy in the UK to Christians and members of non-Islamic faiths in countries where Islam is the dominant religion.

Communities also have a responsibility to encourage their members to become active citizens. To some extent communities are responsible for how they are perceived. For example, both Christians and Muslims must take account of often distorted public perception and work to tackle unhelpful stereotypes about their respective communities.

4. *The stigmatisation of minority groups publicly associated with terrorism*

There is understandable alarm about what might happen if there was an Al Qa'eda outrage in the United Kingdom. In a climate of ignorance and fear whole communities could well feel ostracised and victimised. The Government and community leaders have a huge responsibility to ensure that all communities understand each other better and that ignorance or fear are not allowed to breed the prejudice that might lead to sectarianism and civil violence.

The Government itself needs to be careful that it does not, even unintentionally, stigmatise minority groups. For example, evangelical Christians are concerned both about being wrongly associated with terrorists by injudicious comments proceeding recently from the Home Office, as well as the perception of being sidelined by Government over genuine community matters.

In this regard, we must be careful that balance is maintained in dealing with minority groups. Christian groups, for example, do not want to feel left out of discussions in respect of community issues. An enduring perception of a range of other faiths is that following September 11 and associated sensitivities, Islam is receiving special treatment. If this perception is attributed to the fact that Islam has a lower tolerance threshold for violence, the wrong message could be sent out if other groups sense that threats and violence are the way to attract Government attention.

5. *The incidence of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other forms of prejudice*

We re-emphasise that there is a huge weight of responsibility on community, faith and political leaders, as well as the media, to speak out against any racial or religious prejudice and deal with and debate resentments. Political parties, individual MPs, and newspapers and broadcasters who stir up prejudice should be held to account morally and legally for distortions and untruths. However, we are unafraid of healthy, robust debate and would strongly resist any suggestion that freedom of speech should be curtailed. Evangelical Christians themselves are the regular recipients of highly critical treatment in every dimension of public debate, and though there is often frustration at the lack of right of reply, Christians are noticeably not actually calling for special protection. In this regard, Islam seems to suffer from a lower threshold of critical tolerance, and such sensitivities evidently need to be addressed by both sides in such a way that recourse to restriction of fundamental civil liberties for all is not necessary.

We have already mentioned that there is a wide perception that Muslim leaders need to be more vocal about the persecution of Christians and others in predominantly Islamic countries. The recent French example of Muslims protesting against the capture of two French journalists in Iraq is a helpful and hopeful example of plural public solidarity. All faiths, including Christians and Muslims, need to champion each others' communities and bring out the best from our diversity which should be celebrated and enjoyed in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

We need to ensure that in seeking out evidence of prejudice we do not slip into the trap of stifling debate and allowing resentments and bigotry to fester. Issues need to be debated openly in a respectful spirit, which allows others, and their views, to exist, even though there may be disagreement.

We must as communities articulate our concerns adequately now so that they do not boil over in the future. We need to overtly value, look after and look out for the UK Muslim community and assure them of our concern. Nevertheless, understanding of what it means to live in a pluralistic society in a spirit of tolerance and respect for each other is something that Government could do much more to encourage by increasing opportunities for dialogue, whilst at the same time preserving and encouraging diversity and not lumping all faiths together under lowest common denominators.

6. *Media coverage of the issues*

The media have a huge responsibility in this area and one that they do not always live up to. The media should deal more in facts and less in innuendoes and political or religious point scoring. They must realise that their words have the power to either divide or unite society, to sow seeds of mistrust or promote civic good. Whilst mindful of the risks relating to potential censorship, the media should nevertheless be encouraged to maintain and constantly review editorial self-regulation.

The public should be urged to confront instances of media prejudice or sloppy journalism—with Government also playing its part to encourage beleaguered minorities to have a voice as well as to ensure that differing perspectives receive fair and balanced airtime and press coverage.

7. *Civil liberties/policing issues*

The police have a difficult task to perform in relation to terrorism. After the experience of September 11 high levels of surveillance and searching seem to be a common experience of many, especially those of Middle Eastern origin. Airport screening enjoys a very high level of public acceptance.

Issues around stop and search and parallels with the old "suss" laws continue to cause controversy and concern. The number of Muslims who have been stopped and searched has increased in the period since September 11. Some African-Caribbean community leaders have indicated that they support stop and search on the grounds that if there is a high proportion of "black on black" violence, then it can be a valuable tool in curbing offenders. Some might argue that Muslim communities need to declare stronger support for policing and intelligence activity. Any alleged terrorist activities are as much crimes against the overwhelmingly law-abiding Muslim community as they are against any other group. However, we must always be mindful that security policy should be conducted in the most sensitive manner possible. There is widespread support within society for the continuation of the recording of stop and search though understandably there is deep concern within the Muslim community regarding any feeling of their being targeted for stop and search.

The public's consent and support in this area is vital. The main component of any anti-terrorism strategy, whether that be the threat of international terror or the menace of anti-social behaviour, has to be the co-operation and support of the general public. The most effective way to prevent crime and terror is to encourage vigilant and strong communities.

Police presence is important, but it must be proportionate. To have too many police in a particular area or community can send out a signal of mistrust.

One of the most important aspects of terrorism is that it seeks to disempower, to render the security services impotent and blind in the face of carnage. This psychological technique of hitting hard and not allowing either the public or the security forces to hit back is key to terrorist strategy. It makes them feel in control, and it weakens and damages society and democratic structures. This is why terrorism can be effective in sapping public morale even when casualties are light and damage is small.

Part of the solution to this may be to trust the public with as much relevant information as possible, so that the potential shock value is reduced and they are better prepared to deal with nasty surprises. The "Blitz Spirit" showed how civilian communities could harden and co-operate against attack through community spirit and unity even if they could not directly "hit back".

A classic contemporary example of empowerment would be the bag-watching campaign on public transport, urging members of the public to report suspect packages. This gives the public a level of responsibility for their own safety and also assists the security forces by providing extra eyes and ears.

The other side of the security coin is high-tech surveillance, but this cannot be a total substitute for "humint" (human intelligence) which probably instils higher levels of trust. However, professional and highly technological surveillance and eavesdropping practices have saved many lives in this country. We must, however, remain ever mindful of the threats to civil liberties and the risk of conceding ground to terrorists who seek to disrupt our way of life by undermining societal principles and trust between Government and public.

The police are perhaps the most high profile interface between the community and terrorism and crime. It could be argued that the police therefore hold the key to forming public perceptions and helping to build a trusting civil society in which communities can thrive and terrorism can be rooted out.

8. *Conclusion*

Terrorism represents a potential massive threat to community, not simply due to any material damage or tragic loss of life that it can inflict. Perhaps its most insidious threat is to cause mistrust of Government, to be suspicious of difference, and to force people to take the law into their own hands. Instead, we must build strong communities resilient to such potential fracturing. The media have a huge responsibility in this area and one that they do not always live up to. While protecting communities from abuse we must not restrict freedom of speech. Dialogue and debate strengthen community relations and the sense of personal freedom.

The police and security services deserve our support and respect, but they have to earn it as well, with thoughtful and community-enhancing anti-terrorist measures that emphasise community participation in dealing with external threats and internal tensions.

Faith groups are well placed to assist in this overall challenging but nevertheless essential task.

17 September 2004

13. Memorandum submitted by the Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR)

About the Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism

The Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR)[1] is an independent charitable organisation which believes in a multi-faith, multi-cultural Britain, where all people, are valued for the positive contributions they make to today's society whilst simultaneously being protected from all forms of stereotypes, discrimination, harassment and violence.

FAIR strives, in particular, to promote a more balanced understanding of the contributions and concerns of the Muslim community in Britain. It seeks to challenge Islamophobia at all levels of British society by monitoring Islamophobia, challenging discrimination, lobbying for policy and legislative change, and encouraging good relations amongst all communities.

FAIR has submitted responses in the past on issues of immigration and asylum (Secure Borders, Safe Haven), equality and diversity (implementing the Race and Employment Directives), employment, (Employment Status in relation to Statutory Employment Rights), religion (The Religious Offences Bill 2002) and to anti-terrorism (FAIR submission on the Review of the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 and Counter-Terrorism Powers: Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society—Discussion paper—A Muslim response, July 2004).

Executive Summary

The response from FAIR to the Home Affairs Committee's (HAC) enquiry into the impact of terrorism on community relations and social cohesion, aims to highlight the impact of the anti-terrorism legislation on Muslim communities in the UK. FAIR's response also looks at the subsequent rise in Islamophobia, the role of the media, Muslim community leadership, and representation of positive achievements made by Muslims to British society.

In compiling our response to the HAC, FAIR designed and distributed a community survey to a cross section of both the Muslim and non-Muslim communities across the UK.[2] The Survey was sent to 400 people, of which a total of 60 people responded. These responses are used as evidence to support the arguments in FAIR's response.

Results of the survey indicate that the September 11 attacks in the United States have left Britain's Muslim community feeling "under siege" and increasingly the target of racist incidents. This has been exacerbated by high profile media reports of the continued sweeping arrests and house raids of innocent Muslims under the counter-terrorism legislation.

To prevent the stigmatisation of Muslims we wish to call upon the Government to invest in the Muslim community in order to afford Muslims a better level of housing, education, healthcare, and employment. In addition, to overturn the negative perception and victimisation of the Muslim community, we recommend the Government introduce measures which will bind and unify all communities in order to better counter the perceived threat of terrorism. Cohesive measures taken by the Government would allow communities to resolve collective problem more effectively.

Introduction

In July 2004, the Home Affairs Committee (HAC) announced it would inquire into the impact of terrorism and community relations. As part of its enquiry, the HAC would consider evidence on the impact the threat of terrorism is having on community relations and social cohesion, including public concerns about the terrorist threat, the impact on relations between different sections of the community, any rise in and exploitation of racial tension, and the consequences of anti-terrorist measures.[3]

In compiling our response to the HAC, FAIR distributed its Survey to 400 people across the UK.[4] The survey was designed to allow participants to express their views on terrorism, Islamophobia, community and leadership, media and representation and Muslim achievements. Results from the survey are used as evidence to support the arguments in this submission.

Terrorism

In response to the attacks of 11 September 2001 on the United States, the UK Government passed the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (ATCSA 2001). The Act which was subjected to little scrutiny in parliament continues to receive widespread condemnation from civil liberties and human rights organisations, and grass-root communities who have expressed their reservations about the negative impact the ATCSA 2001 and the Terrorism Act 2000 (TA 2000) is having on Britain's Muslim community.

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[1] www.fairuk.org
[2] FAIR HAC Survey, see appendix 1.
[3] Home Affairs Committee Press Notice, 21 July 2004.
[4] FAIR HAC Survey, see appendix 1.

A new perceived threat of terrorism has prompted the Government to take tougher anti-terrorism measures. The enforcement of these measures has led to the victimisation and stigmatisation of the Muslim community. The power to indefinitely detain foreign individuals the Home Secretary "suspects" to be involved in terrorism,[5] is the most draconian of measures taken under the anti-terrorism legislation where the UK has derogated from fundamental human rights.

This power has been used against mostly Muslim foreign nationals. HRW[6] has argued that;

> "this has harmed race and community relations and undermined the willingness of Muslims in the United Kingdom to cooperate with the police and security services."[7]

Home Office statistics reveal that since 11 September 2001 until 30 June 2004, 609 people were arrested under the TA 2000, 99 people were charged under the Act and 15 people convicted.[8] With an exception of a few, nearly all those arrested under the anti-terrorism legislation have been Muslim and most of those convicted have been non-Muslim. 25% of the survey's participants expressed that these statistics proved Muslims were being criminalised under the legislation. 20% of the participants noted that the continuous arrests across the country have exaggerated the threat of terrorism and led to the Muslim community being perceived as the "enemy within".

10% of respondents to a previous survey conducted by FAIR,[9] cited that they have had their homes raided by anti-terrorism police. Responses to the survey show that these police raids often appear to be conducted on the basis of speculation, rather than prima facie evidence. The repercussions of such raids have been long-lasting, severely damaging the reputation of Muslims within their community. One respondent stated;

> "my house was raided, I was then detained at the station for a week, my property confiscated, my home cordoned-off by the police, and after all this I was charged with no crime, but still punishment was executed on my family who were humiliated at being perceived as criminals."[10]

40% of participants felt that the threat of terrorism in the UK had increased after the war in Iraq, 55% thought that it was difficult to determine the actual threat because arrests made under the anti-terrorism Acts were being sensationalised in order to get citizens to abide by repressive laws. Furthermore, many of the participants had never heard of Al Qa'eda until 9/11.

ISLAMOPHOBIA

Muslims welcome measures the Government takes to protect its citizens from acts of terrorism, equally, such measures must be proportionate to the actual threat citizens' face. The enforcement of current measures has lead to the profiling of Muslims and misuse of police powers has only served to discredit the Government's attempts to counter the perceived threat of terrorism. As a consequence, this has resulted in alienating many in the Muslim community who have consequently suffered from Islamophobia.[11]

Victimisation of Muslims under the anti-terrorism legislation has lead to increased incidences of Islamophobia and racism against Muslims. This has manifested itself in the form of vandalism of mosques, Muslim graves, and homes.[12] The increased hostility towards Muslims has also seen an increase in hate campaigns against Islam and Muslims from far-right groups.[13] Sections of the British press have also used this opportunity to demonise Muslims and slander Islam only to enforce their own agendas.[14]

Islamophobia is a reality which faces Britain today. As part of the Government's community and social cohesion initiatives, the Government must provide Muslims the necessary legal protection in all areas. "The worm of Islamophobia," as described by Bunting,"has now entered the very heart of a quintessential British institution," and thus must not be ignored.[15]

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[5] See Part 4 ATCSA 2001.

[6] Human Rights Watch is an international human rights organisation.

[7] Human Rights Watch: U.K.: detention policy undermines anti-terrorism aims, June 2004.
http://www.muslimnews.co.uk/news/news.php?sub=1228

[8] http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs3/tatc__arrest__stats.html

[9] FAIR community Survey, see FAIR's response the Government's Counter-Terrorism Discussion Paper, July 2004, Appendix 1.

[10] Quote from FAIR Community Survey.

[11] Islamophobia can be described as dread, hatred and hostility towards Islam and Muslims perpetuated by views that attribute negative and derogatory stereotypes to Muslims.

[12] FAIR Islamophobia log.

[13] For example, see the British National Party's political broadcast aired in June 2004, http://www.bnp.org.uk/

[14] For example, see the string of articles written in the *Sunday Telegraph* by "Will" Cummins; "Muslims are a threat to our way of life"
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/main.jhtml;sessionid=D5P01UD5EORIDQFIQMGSM54AVCBQWJVC?xml=/ opinion/2004/07/25/do2504.xml&secureRefresh=true& requestid=133718

[15] Bunting, referring to the British Council's decision to terminate the employment of Islamophobe Harry aka Will Cummins. "Cummins & Co", by Madeleine Bunting, *The Guardian*, 4/09/2004
http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,1297063,00.html

A significant cause and source of Islamophobia is ignorance, in the words of one participant:

> "an inability (and in some cases, intention) to disregard the poverty, lack of opportunity, and feeling of exclusion amongst young British Muslims, as well as the failure of local bodies to engage with Muslim youth, all contribute to a feeling of alienation of and amongst British Muslims."[16]

40% of Survey's participants felt that any backlash towards Muslims in the event of a terrorist attack would be determined by how Muslims are represented in all areas of British society. There was also a consensus amongst the participants for building stronger relationships with the non-Muslim community in order to mitigate the chances of a backlash.

Media Portrayal of Islam and Muslim

The inflammatory and derogatory language used by the media has itself promoted a climate of fear in the community. Key phrases such as, "radical Muslim cleric" or "Islamic extremists" consistently used by the Government are also then adopted by the media and, in some cases by public authorities. Language which is insensitive towards the Muslim community and stereotypes used in the media will inevitably raise anxiety levels amongst all communities across the UK, making Muslims vulnerable to Islamophobia.

Press reporting is frequently unbalanced and uses sensational language, this can be seen in the reporting of stops and searches and arrests of Muslims under the anti-terror laws which frequently make headlines, yet those who are subsequently released without charge receive little or no media coverage. Images which vilify and portray Muslims in a negative light can also exacerbate increased hostility towards the Muslim community.

Answers to the Survey revealed that some respondents were annoyed that radical figures such as Abu Hamza and Omar Bakri were given a great deal of press coverage. One respondent said:

> "The media always highlight radical elements to corner a whole group of people they use these characters and groups to discredit Islam."[17]

55% of participants said it was important to have a British Muslim mainstream media source, and that *The Sun* and more recently *The Telegraph* were deemed to be the most Islamophobic of British media sources.

Community and Leadership

Participants of the survey were asked who they look to for leadership in their immediate community for building and maintaining community relations. 30% of participants said that they were engaged in community work for Muslims. 40% stated leadership from an imam and/or mosque. 30% of participants stated they were forced to look to their mosque for leadership on community issues because there was "no one else around".

Evidence would suggest that imams and mosques are unable to deal with many community cohesion issues due to a lack of resources and funding.

30% said they look for leadership from Muslim organisations, whilst 10% of respondents said that they look to leadership from people who are active in their local community, eg doctor, teacher. 15% of participants said that they look up to their local council or MP but, according to one individual, "[their local council or MP] had failed to deliver on initiating projects which are aimed at building positive relations between different faith communities."

Over 50% of participants said they would look to their community leader to take a principled stance against Islamophobia, racism and other forms of prejudice, to improve community cohesion, and increase the levels of education and housing. One participant suggested that a "key way to unite all faith communities was to help the Muslim community move out of isolation, provide stronger political leadership, and effectively tackle serious issues threatening the community such as drug misuse and domestic violence." 65% of participants thought that the most essential quality for a community leader to have was that he/she be a good public speaker since clear communication was paramount.

Participants were asked if they knew of any measures taken by their council to build multi-faith and multi-ethnic bridges amongst communities. Participants included doctors and lawyers. 60% stated that that they offered their skills in the voluntary sector, only one individual knew of an interfaith dialogue group and an action group tackling crime, and improving health and education levels in their area. 40% stated they would engage in projects that pulled various communities together to tackle common issues, but felt this was impossible since Muslim dominated areas were severely under-funded.

Of the British Muslim personalities, only four individuals were named by participants. When asked to state an "influential" British Muslim only two names were mentioned. Participants felt there is an urgent need for a positive Muslim "voice" on Muslim achievements as well as issues affecting the Muslim community. 35% of the participants stated this "voice" must come from Muslim organisations, whilst 10% felt this voice should come from one individual, 50% favoured a Muslim voice though the media.

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[16] Quote from HAC Survey.
[17] Quote from FAIR HAC Survey.

CONCLUSION

Results from the survey indicate that the change in the perception of the Muslim community has been greatly influenced by their negative representation by both the media and Government. Sweeping arrests and house raids of innocent Muslims under the counter-terrorism legislation, accompanied by high profile media reports continue to criminalise Muslims and represent them as "the enemy within". As a consequence this has given rise to a culture of fear and insecurity within an already vulnerable community.

Cohesive measures will allow the people to resolve social issues efficiently and effectively, and increase public awareness of the commonalities shared between communities from different cultures and faiths. The current anti-terrorism laws are having a negative effect on the Muslim community and pose as an obstacle in bringing different communities together. The enforcement of the anti-terror laws must be urgently reformed, in order to ensure Muslims are not stigmatised and represented as a "suspect community".

There is a clear need for community representatives to engage in community cohesion projects which effectively tackle social issues. Muslims feel the way they are perceived is negative. With a lack of strong leadership this perception may not change in the near future. It is imperative that adequate funding and resources are afforded to individuals and/or organisations who can work with their local council to improve community and social cohesion.

Adequate investments need to be made by the Government into Muslim-dominated areas to ensure Muslims are afforded appropriate housing, education, healthcare and protection and thus increase their chances of gaining sound jobs. Muslims need to feel empowered, so that they feel their voice is heard and acted upon. The threat of terrorism and the constant vilifying of Muslims has tarnished their self-esteem, and undermined their belief that Britain really is tolerant of its Muslim population.

The Government must regain the trust and support of the Muslim community to better counter the perceived threat of terrorism, and in-turn build positive relations with the community whereby they can jointly challenge social issues.

14 September 2004

APPENDIX 1

HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SURVEY

Personal Details (This section is optional)	
Full Name:	Title:
Date of Birth:	Nationality:
Gender:	Ethnic origin:
Occupation:	Religion:
Email Address:	Telephone:

Defining Islamophobia

Islamophobia must be separated from genuine criticism of Islam. Islamophobia can be characterised as the fear, hatred or hostility directed towards Islam and Muslims. Islamophobia affects all aspects of Muslim life and can be expressed in several ways, including:
— attacks, abuse and violence against Muslims
— attacks on mosques, Islamic centres and Muslim cemeteries
— discrimination in education, employment, housing, and delivery of goods and services
— lack of provisions and respect for Muslims in public institutions

Please answer the following questions YES or NO, or with a corresponding letter, unless indicated otherwise.

Islamophobia and related prejudices	
Question	*Answer*

1. Do you believe that you been subjected to Islamophobic or anti-Muslim sentiment since 11 September 2001?

2. If yes, please specify in what areas you have suffered Islamophobia or racial discrimination: (write the letter opposite, select all those that apply).

(a) Education
(b) Employment
(c) Verbal/physical abuse/attack
(d) Attack on home or Muslim buildings
(e) Housing/other state benefits
(f) Healthcare
(g) Police
(h) Local Government
(i) Delivery of services
(j) Other (please specify opposite)

3. Have you experienced any change in the way you have been treated or perceived by your community or neighbourhood? (If yes, state whether the change has been positive or negative).

4. Has your physical appearance, (such as observing hijab, beard or wearing traditional Muslim dress) made you a target for Islamophobia since 11 September 2001?

5. Have you experienced Islamophobia when travelling on public transport since 11 September 2001?

6. Have you been subjected to Islamophobia at airports when travelling to and from the UK?

7. Have you had to change your appearance since September 11 2001? (eg remove hijab, beard etc)

8. Have you had to change your lifestyle since 11 September, 2001? (eg move home, change job, change school etc)

9. Have you seen a change of attitude towards Islam from members of your family, colleagues, or local authorities?

Community and Leadership	*Answer*

10. Communities often look for leadership usually from one source or figure in their community. Who do you look to as a leader in your immediate community?

(a) Imam/local mosque
(b) Church leader
(c) Rabbi/synagogue
(d) Councillor/council
(e) Local MP
(f) Racial body
(g) None
(h) Other (please specify opposite)

11. How active is this leader in your community?

(a) very pro-active
(b) fairly pro-active
(c) not proactive enough

12. What issues does the leader deal with?

(a) Political
(b) Social (inc, health and educational)
(c) Religious
(d) All of the above
(e) Other (Please specify opposite)
(f) Don't know

13. What do you want from your community leaders? (Write the letter opposite, select all those that apply).

(a) Strong representation of your community and its views.
(b) Principled stance against anti-racism, Islamophobia and other forms of prejudice
(c) Promoting equality and diversity within the community.
(d) Greater concentration on funding for regeneration and community programmes to improve community cohesion and standards of living
(e) All of the above
(f) Other (please specify opposite)
(g) Don't know

14. Which one key quality do you think every community leader should have?

(a) A good sense of politics
(b) Sound religious awareness
(c) A good public speaker
(d) Other (please specify opposite)
(e) Don't know

15. If asked, how would you contribute to community projects?

(a) Provide funding
(b) I would practically volunteer
(c) Raise public awareness of the project
(d) Other (please specify opposite)
(e) I would not contribute

16. Have you or do you work with the non-Muslim community on any community-related projects? If yes, please specify what you do in the box opposite.
(*Eg taking on community leadership roles or responsibility, engaging in faith dialogue, working with your local council or school or police on community projects, etc*).

17. As a Muslim which one of the following is the most important to you? (state the letter opposite)

(a) Better representation in media
(b) Stronger representation in politics
(c) Better protection from police and Government legislation
(d) Better employment for Muslims
(e) Access to adequate healthcare
(f) Access to better education
(g) Access to better community facilities eg libraries, youth centres etc.
(h) Other (please specify opposite)

18. Do you think there should be one body to represent the views of all British Muslims? (Please state the letter of the statement you most agree with).

(a) No—this is impossible, because there are many different views
(b) Yes—we need one body to represent the views of all British Muslims
(c) No, we need more then one body to represent the views of British Muslims and they should all work in active consultation with each other to do what is right for British Muslims
(d) Don't know

19. Which one of the following parties are you most likely to vote for in the next General elections?

(a) Labour
(b) Conservative
(c) Liberal Democratic
(d) Green Party
(e) Other—(please specify opposite)
(f) Don't know
(g) Not voting
(h) Prefer not to say

20. Do you believe that there has been enough regeneration in your area? (Eg Improving housing, education, access to healthcare and chances of employment, etc).

21. How important is regeneration to you?

(a) Very—it will give us a better standing of living
(b) Reasonably—it will not make significant change
(c) Not at all—I live in a generated area where facilities and access to services are plentiful.

22. Do you know of any measures taken by the council or other non-governmental body, to build bridges between different faith/race communities in your area? If yes please specify what these are).

23. If you are working, are you happy with your current job?

Terrorism	*Answer*

24. Why do you think Muslims are being associated with terrorism? (Write the corresponding letter in the opposite box, select all that apply).

(a) That is the way the media and politicians represent Muslims
(b) Because of the threat from Al Qa'eda
(c) Because many arrested under counter terrorism legislation
have been Muslim
(d) Because Muslims are terrorists
(e) Other (please specify opposite)
(f) Don't know

25. In the event of a terrorist attack, what do you think would be the reaction towards Muslims?

(a) Muslims will not be affected at all
(b) Increased Islamophobia and hostility towards Muslims and segregation of the Muslims community
(c) It depends how Muslims will be represented
(d) Other (please specify opposite)
(e) Don't know

26. How do you think the Muslim community can avoid a backlash? (Write the letter opposite, select all those that apply).

(a) Build stronger relationships with non-Muslim communities,
(b) Stronger representation of Muslims in senior positions in the police, media and politics
(c) Increased understanding of Islam and Muslims
(d) Muslims standing up against the terrorist attacks and condemning them
(e) It will be impossible to avoid a backlash

27. Muslims have been criticised for not condemning some acts of terror carried out by Al Qa'eda, even though some Muslims have argued they have done little else since 11 September 2001, do you think Muslims in Britain are doing enough to condemn the acts? (Please select one of the following)

(a) Yes—more then enough
(b) Yes they are doing all they can reasonable be expected to do
(c) No—they are not doing enough
(d) No—they have done nothing
(e) Muslims should only have to condemn these acts to the same degree as other faith communities.
(f) Muslims should not have to condemn these terrorist attacks

28. On a scale of 1–5 how serious do you believe the terrorist threat facing Britain to be? (1 = Low, 5 = extremely high)

29. It has been widely assumed that a group called Al Qa'eda was behind the attacks of 11 September 2001, what is your view of Al Qa'eda?

(a) A Muslim group terrorising humanity

(b) A non-Muslim group terrorising humanity
(c) A Muslim group with good motives but bad methods
(d) A non-Muslim group with good motives but bad methods
(e) A network of people with their own personals agendas
(f) Al Qa'eda is a term used to fabricate the terrorist threat.
(g) Other (please specify)
(h) Don't know

30. What do you believe the motive of Al Qa'eda to be?

(a) To suppress freedom and democracy.
(b) To highlight the injustices suffered by Muslims
(c) To conquer the world
(d) No such thing as Al Qa'eda/Have no motive
(e) Other (please specify)
(f) Don't know

31. Why do you think that figures like Abu Hamza and Al-Muhajiroun are given greater media representation?

(a) Because they genuinely represent all British Muslims
(b) They make entertaining news
(c) The media are adamant in representing Muslims as extreme and radical
(d) Other (please specify)
(e) Don't know

32. Have you been affected by the powers under the anti-terrorism legislation? If yes, please provide further information in the box opposite.

Media and Representation	*Answer*

33. How satisfied are you with the representation of Muslims in national and local government, in business and public sectors, and in the media, particularly at senior level?

(a) Very satisfied—there is a strong representation of Muslims in the above fields
(b) Satisfied—there is reasonable representation of Muslims in the above fields.
(c) Dissatisfied—there is a disproportionate representation of Muslims within the above mentioned fields.

34. After September 11 2001, some people have decided to learn more about Islam, have you been questioned to explain certain issues on Islam by friends, colleagues or community members?

35. Muslims need representation in all areas. How important are the following to you? (Please put the following options in order of importance with the most importance first and the least important last).

(a) A British Muslim mainstream media source
(b) Senior Muslim professionals (including politicians, policeman, judges)
(c) More Muslim faith schools for increased learning of Islam
(d) Better employment opportunities, thus hope for the future
(e) Increased standard of living in highly Muslim populated areas

36. Which of the following British Media sources are in your opinion highly Islamophobic? (Write the letter opposite, select all those that apply).

(a) The Telegraph
(b) The Guardian/The Observer
(c) The Times
(d) The Evening Standard/The Metro
(e) The Scotsman
(f) The Sun
(g) Daily Express
(h) Daily Mail
(i) BBC
(j) ITN

(k) Channel4
(l) Channel 5
(m) Sky News
(n) Other (specify opposite)

Muslim achievements	*Answer*

37. Can you name a famous British Muslim personality?
(If yes, please state the name of the personality opposite)

38. Who do you believe to be the most influential British Muslim? (specify opposite)

Other Information

Please insert any other relevant information here:

_____

14. Memorandum submitted by the Friends of Israel Educational Foundation

BACKGROUND

Personal perspective

I was raised in a rabbinic household, my father ministering to a large, inner suburban Jewish community in North West London. Our orthodox Jewish home was immeasurably enriched by the visits of countless guests drawn from other nationalities and a range of other faith groups.

For many years, Father served too as Senior Jewish Chaplain to HM Forces. (He had been the Senior Jewish Chaplain in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp for the first six months after its liberation.) He worked tirelessly with his clerical colleagues from other faith communities; and was an ardent advocate of inter-faith dialogue, active in the Council of Christians and Jews and a number of other national organisations.

Unqualified respect for "difference" was therefore affirmed daily in our home and my siblings and I hold fast to that ethos in our own households.

Professional perspective

As my job, and vocation, I direct a British educational charity whose rationale is to throw light on the richly diverse geographies, histories and cultures of the peoples of Israel and the Arab World. In schools, colleges, churches and Adult Ed centres, we reflect on the achievements, hopes and problems of the peoples of the Middle East. Our primary focus is the brilliant tapestry of cultures and confessional groups in that area. We in no way highlight Judaism and Jewry's "narrative" at the expense of others.

In the course of our work, we cannot avoid reflecting on the conflicts which bedevil the region. Collaboration and mutual support across ethnic and confessional lines is one authentic and significant side of the picture. Tribal and inter-state rivalries and religious intolerance provoke the polar opposite condition—cruel and self-justifying violence and conflict; and these Middle East tensions impact grimly, not just on the immediate region but on populations worldwide.

In late 2004 there is no escaping the huge crisis stirred by the re-emergence of triumphalist religiosity in the Middle East. The area has produced a strident Jewish fundamentalism, a minority outlook which is vocal, inflexible in outlook, but broadly unreflective of Israeli or Jewish grassroots or Establishment opinion; and an equally impassioned yet far more fanatical Islamism.

Both believe in the certitude of "election" but the Islamist camp is singularly terrifying in its belief in the benightedness of the "kaffir" and its eagerness to impose Islam on mankind globally by revolutionary violence. Today Islamist voices dominate debate in most Muslim communities, and this is increasingly the position internationally. With unblinking intensity and a measure of coercion, radicals have now largely taken control of Moslem communal institutions.

The impact of Islamism on the UK

Addressing audiences across the country, we encounter a genuine cross-section of views.

It is depressingly clear today that Bin Laden, Al Qa'eda and the Islamist men of violence now define the identity of many Muslims in the UK. Their social and political "weltanschaung" and the approval of the use of violent tactics to impose that world-view is now accepted by many British Muslims. Inevitably this is souring and unsettling the very fabric of community relations in the UK.

A series of anecdotes reflects this situation.

In late September 2001, a young Muslim sixth former in Milton Keynes asked to stay on for a chat at the end of an FOI presentation in his school. It transpired that his local mosque, where he was an irregular attender, was about to debate the topic: "September 11 was a glorious event". This secularised adolescent was horrified by the approval of the attacks on America by the elders of his mosque and some of his community.

In the course of the last academic year, we have heard young Muslims in discussions in our lectures applaud the actions of al Zarkawi, the Jordanian militant at large in Iraq; we have heard the canard repeated that Jews and Israelis were responsible for the September 11 conspiracy; youngsters have walked out of sessions or capriciously invoked the charge of Islamophobia to censure serious, analytic debate; and in one school in Staffordshire we were informed that a number of Muslim Year 9 students, all born in the UK, chose Saddam Hussain and Osama Bin Laden as their "all-time contemporary heroes". "We hate the West, we want Britons and Americans to die" was the blunt message to their teaching staff. That this would offend the bulk of the local population and provide ammunition to an active local BNP cell was utterly dismissed by these youngsters.

I suspect the silent Muslim majority probably disapproves of Islamist terrorism and of the stances mentioned above. However a distinct and vocal minority now aggressively espouses religious militancy and the use of violence. They dismiss Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism and other faith groups. Some are beginning to voice publicly the view that legislation passed by Parliament in Westminster is of no import as Sharia alone remains immutably the only legislation by which they intend to live. A savage antagonism towards Jews—to which I am particularly sensitive—is now barely disguised; and all anti-terror measures or any public criticism of the failure of Muslim community leaders to control their communities is immediately condemned as racist Islamophobia. This is arrant nonsense.

The popular press may write of these issues in "purple prose", but we now live with the concrete reality that men are openly preaching inciteful, murderous sermons in the UK. Young British Muslims are being recruited to the ranks of fighters in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq and some have blood-on-their-hands. Explosives have been discovered by the Security Services; and Hounslow, Redbridge, Derby, Manchester, Gloucester and other parts of the UK are now firmly associated in the public mind with active Islamist terror cells.

Secondary Impacts

In response to this, we now witness two responses, both of which are profoundly disturbing.

(a) There is a new strand of "appeasement" in the response of some in Britain to the Islamist "camp".

(b) There is significant deterioration in the vitality and quality of dialogue work in Great Britain.

1. *Appeasement*

In areas where there is a sizeable Muslim population, teachers in schools, Christian clergy—particularly those responsible for developing diocesan inter-faith work—and local politicians are frequently responding to local demographics in timid, placatory fashion.

Many teachers now effectively deny "platforms" to the presentation of any ideas which are deemed controversial or which might offend local sensibilities. This is particularly impacting on Jewish/Zionist organisations. Purely out of fear, "balance" is being lost.

Diocesan Christian staff and a number of Christian clergyman with strong Arabist leanings now appear regularly on the platforms of militantly Islamist groups around the country. Given the well-documented persecution of Christians in Pakistan, Nigeria, Egypt, Saudi, the Spice Islands etc—and the overt disparagement of the "Judeo-Crusader world" by Islamists, this is nothing less than a classic case study in intellectual denial!

Local politicians, clearly sensitive to local demographics and understandably responsive to local sentiment, rarely seem willing to confront the profound problems created by moral and political differences of outlook. Few are ready to address contentious local issues as courageously as Anne Cryer MP, for example.

2. *Impact on the wider inter-faith debate*

Suspicion, fear and a physical distancing between the faith communities now increasingly characterises the community relations scene.

Most Jews of my generation are completely comfortable with the process of inter-faith work—confident in their own beliefs, open to encounter with "the other". The Jewish community has been largely pro-active in seeking opportunities to build dialogue programmes with Christians, with Hindus/Sikhs and with Muslims. In recent times however, the dialogue with Islam—and with Christianity for that matter—has faltered badly. This is not for lack of passionate commitment on the Jewish side. On issues like Kosovo, denominational schools in Britain (to the evident discomfort of Yusuf Islam/Cat Stevens) and ritual slaughter methods we have stood in solidarity with the Moslem community.

Issues of religious belief and ethical responsibilities are rarely the stumbling block. By definition those who enter into inter-faith dialogue are willing to "hear" the passions of the other.

Dialogue today is disrupted by overtly political issues with origins in the Middle East—by often unbridgeable differences of political outlook; by an inherent suspicion of the others' violent modus operandi; and by the well-meaning but facile judgementalism of third parties.

Israel-Palestine as a case study

It is clear that zero-sum ideologues simply will not concede that the Holy Land has spiritual importance to other faith groups. The sheer volume of Muslim—and occasional Christian—voices in Britain denying any valid Jewish claim to the area has shocked Jews eager for dialogue. The Muslim Association of Britain, Al Muhajiroun, Hizb Ut Tahrir, Friends of Al Aqsa and the late Father Michael Prior of Living Stones are but a few exemplars of groups uncompromising in their savage critique of Israel, openly calling for violent attacks on Israel and, in some cases, calling for violent attacks against Jews worldwide. The necessity for British Jewish organisations to reinforce their physical security merely confirms the seriousness with which these threats are taken.

The issuing of facile public judgements by individual Christian clergymen and by leading prelates of the Catholic and Protestant churches has merely compounded problems in the dialogue field. No doubt in a spirit of genuine liberal concern, churches now echo the received view that Israel-Palestine is *the* key to resolving Islam and the Middle East's problems—an intellectually absurd proposition. Many of us, who adopt a rigorously critical stance on Israeli government actions, are appalled by the exclusive critique of Israel and the total failure of the churches to offer trenchant analysis of the huge internal problems within the Islamic family which so imperil us today.

British Christian clergy and laity are drip-fed a continuous stream of exclusively one-sided criticism. This is having the most profound and deleterious impact on participation levels at inter-faith activities. Our faith partners have retreated and withdrawn from public encounters. In real terms, relatively few Christian clergy now accept invitations to inter-faith activities.

Purely Jewish-Muslim initiatives are infinitely harder to launch today.

Suspicion and mistrust prevail. Overall in recent years there has been a tangible deterioration in the healthy network of community ties in this country.

Tragically, terror tactics are beginning to take effect.

John D A Levy
Director

7 September 2004

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15. Memorandum submitted by the Hindu Forum of Britain

1. Introduction to the Hindu Forum of Britain

1.1. The Hindu Forum of Britain (HFB) is the largest representative body for British Hindus with over 230 Hindu organisations formally affiliated to it.

1.2. HFB works closely with government departments, service providers and other stakeholders to consult the Hindu community on service delivery and policy issues affecting British Hindus. HFB also works closely with other faith communities to engage in constructive dialogue and nation building.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. There are over 700,000 Hindus living in Britain. The Hindu population has integrated into British society with high levels of employment and education, a very low rate of crime and substantial economic and cultural contributions to this country.

2.2. The Hindu population is concentrated in London, Leicester, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Bradford and elsewhere. It is perhaps the most dispersed population among the ethnic minorities.

2.3. The Hindu religion is inclusive and actively promotes the values of non-violence, peaceful co-existence and respect for other religions.

3. THE THREAT OF TERRORISM

3.1. Extremist ideologies arising from religious or political beliefs have become a cause of concern for the HFB and its member organisations. Such ideologies have been the breeding ground for incitement to hatred and terrorism. The threat of religious terrorism is the greatest danger for the security of Britain.

3.2. The threat arising from international terrorism remains real and serious. International terrorists have in several statements specifically named the United Kingdom and British interests as targets, and encouraged attacks to be carried out against the country. International terrorists and supporters of affiliated groups or those that share such ideologies are known to be active in the UK.

3.3. International terrorist groups are known to raise funds in the UK and often under the cover of charities.

3.4. The public perception of faith communities has been affected by some of the more visible and vocal groups of religious extremists. They have created negative stereotypes of entire communities. Religious terrorism is different from the religion it purports to represent, and many of these groups are not always supported by a majority of the people from those faith communities.

3.5. Violent events outside Britain, in particular in the Indian sub-continent, have often resulted in increasing polarisation between Hindu and Muslim communities in Britain.

3.6. The Home Secretary has given assurances in Parliament that the Government is aware of concerns in all communities about the threat from terrorism to the UK and its interests. The Home Secretary has had regular meetings with the leaders of some faith and ethnic minority communities to discuss their concerns and ensure that they receive the support and protection that they need.

3.7. Unfortunately the level of consultation and support has been inconsistent, and specifically, the Hindu communities have not been consulted nor provided an opportunity to discuss our concerns as much as other communities. This is mirrored at London level.

3.8. We welcome the Government's further plans to tackle the threat of terrorism by strengthening the law against racially and religiously motivated crime, the recent announcement to outlaw religious discrimination in the provision of goods and services and the proposal to create an offence of incitement to religious hatred.

4. PUBLIC CONCERN ABOUT TERRORIST THREAT

4.1. The general British public has grown increasingly concerned about terrorism since September 11.

4.2. The Hindu community of Britain has suffered various attacks on their places of worship, particularly during festivals as well as on individuals and property. Many believe that the extreme viewpoints expressed by fundamentalist groups, including unacceptable conversion tactics and verbal and written abuse, have led to increased levels of violence against the Hindu community—particularly in West Yorkshire, West Midlands, East Midlands and parts of London.

4.3. Major terrorist attacks on temples and places of worship in India usually lead to higher levels of security concerns in the UK. For instance, the explosions that killed Hindu monks and worshippers at the Swaminaryan temple at Akshardham in Gandhinagar by terrorist Islamic groups in September 2002 and the terrorist attack on Raghunath temple in Jammu and Kashmir in March 2002 resulted in increased fear within the Hindu community and security measures in British temples being tightened and overhauled.

4.4. There is a growing concern in the Hindu community that security issues involving the Hindu community are not treated as seriously as other communities. The community infrastructure to deal with security issues is only recently being identified and built with the help of outside agencies like the Community Security Trust (CST).

5. Relations between Communities

5.1. The Hindu community is a part of the Indic traditions comprising the four faiths of Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism. The four faiths have a special relationship in that the religions have common traditions and cultural values originating from the Indian sub-continent. The Hindu Forum of Britain maintains good relationships with the main umbrella bodies of the Sikh, Jain and Buddhist traditions, and with other organisations from each of these faiths.

5.2. The Hindu Forum of Britain also has a warm working relationship with the Jewish community through the Board of Deputies (BOD) and the CST. The community has been advised by the BOD and CST on building community and security infrastructure as well as collecting and analysing security information. The two communities have also had cordial relationships through the meetings and cultural events of the Indian Jewish Association UK. The student bodies of the two communities, the National Hindu Students Forum and the Union of Jewish Students have maintained close relationships on university campuses, where students from both communities have faced similar threats from religious fundamentalists. The two groups will hold their first joint event later this year.

5.3. The Hindu-Christian dialogue initiated by various Hindu and Christian organisations has helped maintain close relationships with representatives of the Church of England, the Catholic Church and the Free Churches.

5.4. The Muslim Council of Britain and the Hindu Forum have recently held high-level meetings to explore means by which the two communities could work together in Britain. Of particular importance has been the consensus that both organisations should focus on areas of co-operation rather than areas of debate.

5.5. The Hindu community also play an active role in inter-faith dialogue through the Interfaith Network and various local inter-faith initiatives.

5.6. Recently, the Hindu Forum of Britain has initiated a faith community consultation programme for identity cards, where representatives of the Hindu Forum of Britain, the Board of Deputies, the Muslim Council of Britain, the Network of Sikh Organisations, the Jain Samaj Europe and the Bahai community agreed to work together to understand issues surrounding the enrolment and verification processes surrounding identity cards. This is an example of how faith communities came together to deliver a project-specific deliverable. It illustrates how well the Hindu community has integrated into British life and is able to proactively lead on a matter of national importance.

6. Anti-terrorist Measures

6.1. The Hindu Forum of Britain have welcomed anti-terror measures by the Government through the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001.

6.2. While endorsing the need to balance national security and safety of British citizens, the HFB however, urge diligent use of the powers conferred on the police in the hope that the human rights of detainees, including the right to a fair trial, are upheld.

7. Xenophobia and Antihind-ism

7.1. While British parliamentarians, service providers, the CRE and others have become increasingly and rightly become aware of the dangers of Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, there is rarely any mention of Antihind-ism, its historical context, and how it applies to Britain.

7.2. Over the last 1,000 years in the Indian subcontinent, Antihind-ism has historically taken the form of violent attacks, including killings of Hindus; forced conversions; misinformation campaigns aimed at denigrating Hindu beliefs; the marginalisation of Hindu communities through denial opportunities in education and employment; seizure and destruction of property and temples; and the intellectual subjugation of its belief system by means of Antihindic propaganda aimed at undermining the theological and spiritual basis of Hinduism. Antihind-ism continues to this day and is active in Britain.

7.3. Contemporary Antihindic incidents follow a systematic historic pattern but take several forms, both here in Britain and internationally. Examples of recent Antihindic behaviour in Britain are included in Appendix 1 of this document, while examples of Antihindic behaviour outside Britain are listed in Appendix 2.

7.4. Over the past 10 years, the Hindu community in Britain has been subject to a visible and increasing growth of Antihind-ism. This has taken the form of:

    (i)   Attacks on temples and properties.

    (ii)   Attacks on individuals.

    (iii)   Attacks on students at universities.

    (iv)   Inciteful leaflets and publications.

    (v)   Verbal abuse.

(vi) Misinformation campaigns.

Examples of such incidents are attached in Appendix 1.

7.5. On many occasions, Antihind-ism has taken the form of misrepresentation and misinformation in institutions like the British Parliament. On 16 November 2004, Mr Jagdeesh Singh, from the Sikh Community Action Network (an organisation that many Sikh leaders claimed did not represent their community's views) submitted oral evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee on Terrorism and Community Relations and made unsubstantiated and untrue claims that the Swaminarayan temple in Neasden was a base for terrorist activities. This claim has angered both Hindu and Sikh communities since the Swaminarayan Temple teaches the Hindu values of peace; has never supported extremism or fundamentalism in any form; does not have any other organisation operating from its temple premises; has inspired millions to a peaceful way of life; and has itself been a victim of Kashmiri extremists who attacked and killed monks and worshippers at the Gandhinagar Akshardham temple. Reactions from community leaders are attached in Appendix 3 of this document.

7.6. Mr Jagdeesh Singh has also made allegations against the VHP, but has not produced any evidence to support his claims. Most Hindus in this country regard the VHP as a peaceful organisation that has contributed to social and moral development within the community. The VHP has issued a public statement in 2002 condemning all forms of terrorism.

7.7. The Hindu Forum of Britain requests that selection procedures for candidates giving oral evidence be scrutinised thoroughly. If a faith community is allowed only one chance to submit its oral evidence, care should be taken to choose organisations that represent the community through broad-ranging membership and consultation.

7.8. The internet has provided a new tool for Antihindic propaganda, and there are innumerable sites that either ridicule or vilify Hindu beliefs and customs. While many of these sites may not be classified as incitement to religious hatred, they do nevertheless, affect community relations at the grassroots.

7.9. HFB has sought the help of the CST to help monitor Antihindic incidents including physical attacks on Hindus and property, verbal or written abuse, threats against Hindus, and distribution of Antihindic leaflets, posters, and material through print, broadcasting and electronic means. The Hindu Forum hopes to monitor Antihindic incidents in Britain to the same forensic standard as the CST.

8. Media and Antihind-ism

8.1. The national British media has been largely indifferent to Antihindic incidents and does not give them the same prominence as other forms of racism and xenophobia. Antihindic incidents, particularly those of desecration of Hindu temples, have been rarely reported in the national media, although the ethnic and regional media covered these incidents to some extent. Desecration of places of worship or cemeteries of other faith communities have been reported sympathetically in the media, and correctly so.

8.2. While loss of lives through terrorism in Palestine and Israel always gets media attention in the West, loss of human life through terror attacks on the Hindu community in India do not get the same attention. A list of terrorist killings in India that had little or no mention in the western media is attached in Appendix 4.

8.3. Use of Hindu images, Hindu icons in a degrading manner often considered insulting to the Hindu tradition and distortion of Hindu beliefs in the media has been widespread and has often angered and offended Hindus.

9. Civil Liberties and Policing of Antihindic Incidents

9.1. Hindu communities have reported a lack of adequate response from certain police forces in reporting, recording and investigating racially or religiously aggravated crime against Hindus. In West Yorkshire, for instance, documented incidents have shown that due to the lack of adequate response and follow-up from the Police, the community are feeling increasingly insecure and are losing confidence in the police.

9.2. The Hindu Forum have established a working relationship with the Diversity Unit at ACPO and other police units, including the Metropolitan Police, to offer advice, training and input on Hindu issues, publishing literature on religious and race crime, acting as third party reporting centres and visits to Hindu temples for familiarisation lectures.

9.3. The number of Hindu victims of race or religious crime who report crimes against them is very low. The Hindu Forum is seeking a partnership with the Police to promote awareness amongst the Hindu community to report crimes of this nature and help to increase the feeling of security within the community. It is anticipated that this partnership will lead to faster response times and increased confidence.

13 December 2004

APPENDIX 1

EXAMPLES OF ANTIHINDIC INCIDENTS IN BRITAIN

This is not a complete list of attacks on Hindu temples, festivals or individuals, but only provides an indication of the type of attacks being carried out.

Date	City	Incident
1992	Wembley	Sanatan Hindu Mandir destroyed and razed to the ground by arsonists allegedly in retaliation to the destruction of a disputed mosque in India.
1992	Bolton	Hindu Temple damaged by arsonists.
1992	Derby	Hindu Temple damaged by arsonists.
1992	West Bromwich	Shri Krishna Temple destroyed by arsonists.
1992	Birmingham	Hindu Temple damaged by arsonists.
1992	Coventry	Hindu Temple damaged by arsonists.
1993	London	Snaresbrook Crown Court finds Ahmed Raza guilty of causing damage to the Hindu temple in Forest Gate, London that caused it to be set on fire.
1994	Wembley	8,000 attend a conference by extreme Islamic group, Hizb ul Tahrir, at Wembley Area. Muslim leaders call for intensification of campus campaign to bring Hindu and Sikh women to Islam.
1994	London	Hindu student threatened with death at University of London meeting. Islamic group, Hizb ul Tahrir subsequently banned at some London colleges for extremist activities.
1995	Luton	Hindu student in Luton threatened with death for initiating campus campaign against religious fundamentalism and harassment.
1995	London	Hizb ul Tahrir widely believed to be behind religiously motivated attacks on Hindu and Sikh students at West Thames college.
1995	Slough	Letter circulated to parents of Hindu and Sikh students at Slough and Eton school. "This is more or less an Islamic school. We Muslims don't want 'Kafirs' such as Sikh and Hindu children in this school to mix with our children . . . If your children come to this school we will bully you boys like the way we did to the boy who committed suicide, and we will make your daughters pregnant and change them into Islam." The letter was signed by "The Chalvey Muslim Boys". To date, there has been no action taken or an inquiry conducted against the Antihindic letter that clearly incited religious hatred.
1999	Loughborough	Nayan Panchmatia, 29, a student in Loughborough, was with a cousin and friends in Leicester on Diwali day. After leaving a nightclub, the group was chatting at St Margaret's bus station when two young white men in their mid-20s approached them but then left and returned with a companion to make racist remarks of an abusive nature and smash a bottle over Nayan's head and then repeatedly punched and kicked him while he lay on the ground.
2000	Winchester	Pravin Patel, his wife and two children of Kingsworthy village, near Winchester were returning home when they saw the charred remains of a wooden cross near the entrance to his shop, Springvale Stores which he bought 13 years ago.
2001	Bradford	Hindu businesses burned down during the "Asian" riots. Elderly day centres for Hindus attacked. Initial indications are that both of these and other related incidents are considered to have been carried out by local Muslim youth.
2001	Bradford	Temple on Laistridge Lane firebombed at night. The police responded after an inexcusable delay of three hours.
2001	Leeds	50 caucasians disrupt engagement party of businessman, Maji Thia's daughter Joioti to Gareth Williams by hurling racist insults. Blows exchanged and trouble spilled into the street.
2001	Bradford	Pharmacist owned by local Hindu torched by Muslim mob.

Date	City	Incident
2001	The North	Hindu festival Janmashtami scaled down all over the North as a result of intimidation and threats from local Muslims. Police do not respond to calls from Hindu leaders, leaving the Hindu community feeling vulnerable.
2001	Bradford	Diwali lights damaged by vandals. Repeat attacks every year. Local politicians make statements of support for vandals.
2002	Birmingham Sparkbrook	After the religious ceremony called "arati", where 500 Hindus had gathered to celebrate Holi, a Muslim gang with 50 youths carried out religiously motivated Antihindic verbal abuse, threw bottles, stones and eggs into the crown. Many people, including children, were hit by these missiles. Police and Council requested for better protection and security. As a result of police and community support, no incidents occurred during 2003.
2002	Bradford	Hindus celebrating Navratri festival attacked by Muslim youth who hurl Antihindic abuse and ram five or six cars into other cars and pedestrians leaving festival. Repeat attacks every year. Police arrived within five minutes of attack but culprits are not caught.
2003	Swindon	A community centre at the Sikh temple in Swindon was allegedly doused with a flammable liquid and set on fire in October. Man questioned but no one is arrested.
2003	Wembley	Two Christian fundamentalists enter Ealing Road Temple, grab microphone, shout religiously abusive Antihindic slogans and break the Deity of Lord Rama to widespread concern and hurt in the Hindu community in all areas in Britain. The culprits: Toby Champney is sentenced to two months in prison (and is released after one month), while Benjamin Lloyd Jones is fined £400. Hindu community protest the lack of community consultation by the Police and CPS, and slam the Criminal Justice System for the inordinately light sentences passed on the culprits by rushing the case through in three weeks without proper investigations.
2003	Edgware	Newly opened Swaminarayan Temple subjected to repeat attacks: racist graffiti, fireworks thrown at worshippers, defecation thrown at volunteers, lamp damaged and theft of shoes.
2004	Leicester	The "Get Connected" festival organised by Hindu Youth UK receives an anonymous letter informing them they will be "watched" if they do not stop what the author described as a "pornographic festival". Police inquiry leads to no indication of culprits.
2004	Birmingham, Leeds and Bradford	Sporadic attacks on Hindu festivals like Navratri and Diwali at community centres and temples continues. Hindus celebrating Diwali at home verbally abused and/or subject to religiously aggravated criminal damage and threatening behaviour.
2004	Leeds	Bhagwandas Battecha of Leeds and his family are subject to religiously aggravated abuse for celebrating Diwali at their home. Later their cars are darted and punctured. Despite calling the police a number of times, the police operator informs them that "they should not waste police time". Valuable forensic evidence near the cars is not gathered since the police did not arrive on the scene of the crime even after three days.

APPENDIX 2

EXAMPLES OF RECENT ANTIHIND-ISM OUTSIDE BRITAIN

1. Separatist terrorists have forcibly driven nearly 350,000 Hindus out of the Kashmir valley by harassing them, illegally occupying their houses and issuing death threats. These displaced Hindus have been turned into refugees in their own country, living in squalid conditions with little aid from outside. Very little is written or reported in the western media about these victims of separatist terrorism in India.

2. The continued attacks on Hindus including destruction and confiscation of property, rape and killings in Bangladesh by religious and political extremists has resulted in a systematic decline of the Hindu population. Amnesty International has requested the Bangladeshi government to "take urgent action to protect the country's Hindu minority following weeks of grave human rights abuses." Reports of human rights abuse of Hindu minorities in Bangladesh can be found at: www.hrcbm.org

3. The oppressive treatment and systematic discrimination of Hindus in Pakistan has resulted in the denial of basic human rights, employment and education on grounds of religion. This has happened to such an extent that what constituted well over 10% of the population at partition has now been reduced to an insignificant minority of less than 1%.

4. The oppressive treatment of Hindus under the Taliban regime in Afghanistan is well known and documented. The decade-long civil war and particularly the six years of Taliban rule saw the numbers of Hindus and Sikhs plummet from a few hundred thousand to only 30,000. As relatively well-off minorities, they were the first to be targeted with looting when Mujahedin in-fighting broke out in 1992 after the fall of the Communist-backed regime. All eight Sikh and Hindu temples in the capital Kabul were ransacked and destroyed. The Taliban, who won international notoriety, forced them to wear yellow badges to distinguish them from the Muslim majority.

APPENDIX 3

REACTIONS TO THE ALLEGATIONS MADE BY JAGDEESH SINGH TO THE HOME AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE ON 16 NOVEMBER 2004

EDM 212   *29.11.04*

Terrorism and Community Relations

That this House notes with deep regret the testimony given to the Home Affairs Select Committee investigation into terrorism and community relations by Mr Jagdeesh Singh in which he suggested that the Swaminarayan Temple in Neasden allowed itself to be used as a base for violent and terrorist activities; considers this allegation to be totally without foundation and abhorrent to a community which has itself suffered a terrorist attack on its mother temple in Gandhinagar, India where many monks and two British citizens were shot and killed; and further considers that this allegation has caused profound offence to the wider Hindu community in the UK and is damaging to good community relations and urges the Select committee to invite representatives of the Swaminarayan community to give testimony before the Committee that will establish a more accurate picture of the work for positive community relations that the Swaminarayan Temple is engaged in.

Extract of letter from Superintendent Steve Brown, Operational Commander North, Brent Borough sent to Rt Hon John Denham MP, Chairman of the Home Affairs Committee on Friday 3 December 2004:

I fully appreciate that Mr Singh's comments are part of a transcript of evidence given to the committee on 16 November 2004. However, I feel that such comments could provoke religious or political tensions within the wider population and could discredit the excellent work, which the leaders of this mission are currently doing within the community . . . I would urge you and your committee to disassociate yourselves from this statement at your earliest opportunity as it may be perceived by website visitors that there is either credence to this allegation or Home Office backing for Mr Singh's assertions.

Extract of letter from Cllr Ann John, Leader of Brent Council sent to Rt Hon John Denham MP, Chairman of the Home Affairs Committee on Friday 3 December 2004:

I know the temple is an exclusively religious organisation that is not affiliated in any way shape or form to any political organisation . . . Its very existence is a beautiful, living monument to the Hindu principles of peace and harmony. I know that the trustees and devotees, in common with most religious people, are committed to peace, tolerance and love of humankind. It is inconceivable that they would advocate terrorism or allow their premises to be used by those who do. The accusations made in Mr Singh's "evidence" is deeply wounding to all associated with the temple . . .

APPENDIX 4

EXAMPLES OF ANTIHINDIC INCIDENTS IN INDIA THAT HAVE NOT BEEN REPORTED IN THE WESTERN MEDIA

Courtesy: Press Trust of India

Following is the chronology of major killings of Hindus in Jammu and Kashmir since the return of popular governments in the border state after nearly seven years of central rule promulgated in the wake of eruption of militancy in 1990:

Jan 25/26,1997: 25 Kashmiri Hindus killed at Wandhama-Ganderbal Srinagar.

Mar 20: Seven Kashmiri Hindus killed in Sangrampura (Budgam).

April 18 1998: 27 Hindus killed in Prankote in Udhampur district in Jammu region.

June 19: 25 Hindus killed in Chapnari area of Doda district in Jammu region.

July 28: 16 Hindus killed in two villages of Doda District in Jammu region.

August 8: 35 Hindus killed in Kalaban on Jammu-Himachal Pradesh border.

Feb 20, 1999: Four Hindus killed at Muraputta-Rajouri, nine at Barlyara-Udhampur and seven at Bllala-Rajouri in Jammu.

June 30: 15 Hindu labourers killed in Anantnag district of south Kashmir.

July 19: 15 Hindus killed at Layata in Doda district of Jammu.

February 28, 2000: Five Hindu drivers killed near Qazigund in Anantnag district of Kashmir.

Mar 20, 2000: 35 Sikhs massacred at Chatisinghpora in Anantnag.

August 1: 31 Hindus including pilgrims to the holy shrine of Amarnath killed at Pahalgam in Anantnag.

August 1-2: 27 Hindus gunned down in Qazigund and Achabal in Anantnag.

August 2: Seven Hindus killed in frontier District of Kupwara in North Kashmir.

August 2: 11 Hindus killed in Doda district of Jammu.

February 3, 2001: Six Sikhs gunned down in Mahjoornagar in Srinagar.

Feb 11: 15 Hindus massacred in Kot-Chadwal in Rajouri district of Jammu.

Mar 2: 15 Hindu policemen and two medical assistants killed in Manjkote area of Rajouri.

March 17: Eight Hindus massacred near Atholi in Doda.

July 21: 13 Hindus, including seven Amarnath pilgrims killed at Sheshnag in Anantnag.

July 22: 12 Hindus massacred in Cheerji and Tagood in Doda district of Jammu.

August 4: 15 Hindus killed in Ludder-Sharotid Har area of Doda.

August 6, 2002: Nine Amarnath pilgrims killed and 29 others injured at Nunwan base camp in Pahalgam area of Anantnag district in south Kashmir.

March 24 2003: 24 Kashmiri Hindus massacred by terrorists in Nandimarg in Shopian area of Pulwama district in south Kashmir.

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16. Memorandum submitted by the Home Office

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Government understands that a balance needs to be struck between ensuring the security of the United Kingdom and all its citizens and protecting the rights of individuals. In striking this balance, the Government recognises that community engagement is essential, firstly to ensure that all our communities feel safe and secure in their residence in the UK and also to ensure that they are in fact secure, by allowing the police and security services access to all possible sources of knowledge and intelligence.

1.2 The Committee has expressed a particular interest in four topics, and we address these below.

2. THE THREAT AND THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

2.1 We currently assess that the main threat to the United Kingdom comes from international terrorists who are foreign nationals. Nevertheless there are also British nationals who contribute to the threat. We believe that the threat is real and serious. Osama bin Laden has in several statements publicly named Britain and British interests as a target, and encouraged attacks against them.

2.2 In March 2004, the events in Madrid demonstrated the capability of an Al Qa'eda inspired terrorist group to carry out an attack without warning against a civilian target in Western Europe. There is a continuing high threat of terrorism against Western interests throughout the world, as other recent attacks

in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere have demonstrated. Closer to home, there have been a series of high profile operations which have led to the disruption of potentially deadly terrorist operations in the United Kingdom. As the Director General of the Security Service, Eliza Manningham-Buller succinctly put it in October 2003;

2.3 "I see no prospect of a significant reduction in the threat posed to the UK and its interests from international terrorism over the next five years, and I fear for a considerable number of years thereafter."

2.4. The Terrorism Act (2000) has proved to be a vital tool in the fight against terrorism. The powers are reviewed annually by an independent reviewer, currently Lord Carlile. In his recent report published on the 26 April on the workings of the Act, Lord Carlile concluded that subject to some reservations in connection with the use of the stop and search powers in section 44, he considered the provisions in the Act to be necessary and fit for purpose.

2.5 In response to the tragic events of 11 September 2001, the Government introduced further counter terrorism powers under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. This Act provides additional powers relating to the disruption of terrorist funding and the freezing of terrorist assets. It also allows the Home Secretary to certify and detain suspected international terrorists pending their deportation. The Government believes that these measures, along with the measures included in the Terrorism Act, are a necessary and proportionate response to the threat we face from all forms of terrorism.

3. The Stigmatisation of Minority Groups "Associated with Terrorism"

3.1 The Government condemns the stigmatisation of any community within the UK. People throughout the United Kingdom are vulnerable to stigmatisation because of the activities of minority elements. Many experience this to varying degrees and for various reasons, but the Government is of the view that this is currently experienced most acutely by British Muslims.

3.2 The religious and racial diversity of the UK strengthens and enriches our society, and Islam's place within that as a religion of peace, tolerance and understanding is welcomed and valued by the Government. The vast majority of British Muslims are law-abiding and have no sympathy with the actions and statements of extremists. A clear distinction between extremist individuals and the faith they might claim to be associated with or represent must be made. Allowing the false impression that Islam or Muslims support terror puts the whole community at risk of unfair stigmatisation.

3.3 In particular the use of phrases such as "Islamic terrorist" and "Muslim terrorism" is misleading and unhelpful. Indeed the extremists who falsely argue for support for acts of terrorism in the name of Islam present a grave threat to Muslim communities in the UK, as they propagate false perceptions about the values and beliefs of Islam that are difficult to counter and lead to increased stigmatisation of minority communities. Government ministers have committed to avoiding the use of these terms in favour of "international terrorism" which accurately captures the international ramifications of terrorist networks inspired by Al Qa'eda.

3.4 The Government is committed to ensuring that Muslim and other faith groups are protected from violence, unfair discrimination and from any stigmatisation from false association with terrorism. The Home Office has established the Faith Communities Unit as a resource to provide advice and build capacity across Whitehall to deal with these sensitive areas and it has championed many issues particularly important to faith communities. Home Office ministers have expressed unequivocal support for the right to wear the head scarf and the Home Office is also working to build recognition that faith-based organisations are a part of the wider Voluntary and Community Sector.

4. The Incidence of Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and Other Forms of Prejudice

4.1 The UK has a long and cherished tradition of free speech. Unfortunately, certain individuals use these freedoms to express views that the vast majority of people in this country find offensive. The Government is aware of extremist views such as these and shares the concerns of communities in the UK that these pronouncements generate. Where these pronouncements incite racial hatred, the Public Order Act 1986 provides an effective remedy but the Government does not believe that the current legislative framework is sufficient to counter the Islamophobia and prejudice that some Muslim people experience.

4.2 The Government believes that the right course of action is to create a new offence, prohibiting the incitement of hatred towards members of a religious group. The offence of incitement to racial hatred only protects religious groups insofar as they are co-terminous with ethnicity—principally Judaism and Sikhism. It does not protect Muslims or other non-ethnic religious groups. The Government's proposals (upon which we will legislate as soon as Parliamentary time allows) will end that anomaly and extend protection to all religious groups.

4.3 These proposals will not restrict people's legitimate rights to criticise religions or religious practices. But we need to balance the rights of free speech with the right to lead a life in which one can peacefully practice one's own religion without fear of assault. There is a clear difference between criticism of a religion or members of a religious group and the criminal act of inciting hatred against members of a religious group.

4.4 Religious groups are already protected to a certain extent within the criminal law—the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 extended the existing racially aggravated offences to cover crimes motivated by religious hatred. Offences including assault, criminal damage and harassment now carry higher maximum penalties where there is evidence of a racist or religious motive or racial/religious hostility in connection with the offence. The CPS published their prosecution policy on racist and religious crime in July 2003 in which they undertook to prosecute this type of crime robustly, firmly and fairly.

4.5 The CPS also monitors the progress of religiously aggravated offences through the criminal justice system. Of those finalised between 14 December 2001 and 31 March 2003, the actual or perceived religion of the victim was Islam in 10 of the 18 cases. However the religion of the defendant was not identifiable in all cases and, in six cases, the victim and the defendant were of the same religion (Muslim). The low number of fully finished cases makes it difficult to draw any firm conclusions with regard to religiously-aggravated offences.

4.6 Although Muslim organisations monitor incidents of Islamophobia, there is no independent or central data collection organisation.

4.7 The number of anti-Semitic incidents reported to the Community Security Trust (CST) in the UK last year rose from 350 to 375—an increase of 7% compared with 2002. The total of 375 is the second highest after 2000. CST figures correlate closely with those of the Police.

4.8 While the Government's proposals will help to prevent some stigmatisation of minority religious groups and reduce Islamophobia, further work remains to be done. For example, specific legislation on religious discrimination only covers discrimination in employment and vocational training through the Equal Employment Regulations on Religion and Belief (2003). The Home Office is currently considering how best to ensure that religious groups are protected from unwarranted discrimination in wider society and are working closely with the Department for Trade and Industry and other organisations on the way forward.

4.9 Media Coverage of These Issues

4.10 The media have a key role to play in community relations. References to "Islamic" or "Muslim terrorism" are not, as noted above, accurate and continue to risk the stigmatisation of minority communities. The Government also understands the extreme concern within Muslim communities that the extensive coverage of the views of extremists by some newspapers offers a misleading image of Islam that is not countered by positive coverage of the support that Muslim communities have given to the Police service in the fight against terrorism or the contribution which our Muslim citizens make to the UK.

4.11 The Home Office is working with the Society of Editors and The Media Trust to ensure that editors and journalists are aware of the grave risks to community cohesion caused by irresponsible or damaging media reporting and that they have advice on the legal framework surrounding these issues. The media have an opportunity afforded no other group in society to help reduce the polarisation of attitudes to religious, ethnic and national identity, as evidenced by Islamophobia and other forms of discrimination and we must work closely with them to ensure that this is fully achieved.

4.12 The Government has a role to play as well and we continue to ensure that when dealing with media interest in international terrorism, we make clear that the Muslim community is not a threat. We understand that there is a legitimate public interest in the conduct of counter-terrorism operations and we provide the press and the public with as much information as is appropriate. When issuing press notices regarding arrests for suspected offences connected to terrorism we do not refer to the actual or perceived religion of arrestees. We do not regard the religion of a suspect as relevant to the offence for which they have been arrested.

5. Civil Liberties/Policing Issues

5.1 The Government believes that a fine balance must be struck between the protection of the individual rights of citizens and the security of the nation. While we believe our current powers strike the right balance, they are not always understood by members of our communities and therefore the Government has recently expanded our dialogue with the community on these issues. The Home Secretary and other Ministers regularly meet and speak with members of the Muslim communities and senior officials have recently met with young people and imams to discuss their concerns.

5.2 These concerns have included, for example, the perception that the Muslim community may have been or is particularly targeted when stop and search powers are used. Counter terrorism stop and stop (s44) data divided by ethnicity was published for the first time in July 2004 and showed that 21,557 searches were made under section 44(1) and (2) in 2002–03 compared with 8,550 in 2001–02, with the number of searches of Asian people up from 744 to 2,989 (up 302%).

5.3 The increase in use of the power can be attributed to the heightened threat from international terrorism since the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, and the subsequent rise in the number and scale of police counter-terrorism investigations. However we are also concerned about any issues of disproportionality and have responded to community concerns with the creation of a Stop and Search Action Team to look at these issues in relation to stop and search powers generally. We have also revised our guidance to Police forces on the authorisation of the Section 44 powers.

5.4 The Home Office and the National Co-ordinator of Ports Policing, in response to the concerns of members of the community have developed a strategy to reduce any perceived negative impact on the Muslim community in the use of Schedule 7 stop and search powers at ports and border areas. The strategy includes a critical assessment of the information and intelligence used by officers at ports to select passengers for examination, a stock take of current diversity training delivered to officers at ports (including improved Islamic awareness briefing) and increased community involvement, to improve officers' awareness and understanding of the issues raised by the Muslim community. This strategy includes "on the ground" visits by members of the Muslim communities to special branches at ports to enable them to see first hand how ports are policed.

5.5 This open and constructive dialogue is highly valued by the Home Office and we continue to expand opportunities to be able to promote greater understanding about counter terrorism and policing.

5.6 The Government is keen to see the work of the Muslim Contact Unit (MCU) of the Metropolitan Police Special Branch rolled out across the UK. It is engaged in a productive and challenging reciprocal partnership with Muslim community leaders in London and beyond and is staffed by experienced MPSB officers and Muslim police officers. Its strategy is to build and maintain partnerships with those community leaders and representatives best equipped and located to counter the threat of terrorist and extremist propaganda. The MCU is valued by members of the community, who, through its work, understand more about the powers that the police work under and play an important role in protecting their communities.

5.7 MCU partnership activity includes input to the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) led Muslim Safety Forum (MSF) where terrorism and its community impact is the key agenda item. The Home Office is pleased to support the work of the MCU and continues to encourage its role of spreading best practice on engagement with the Muslim community throughout the UK.

5.8 We are currently reviewing our counter terrorism powers following the publication in February 2004 by the Home Secretary of a discussion paper "Counter-Terrorism Powers: reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society". This launched a public consultation process on the future of counter-terrorist powers that closed on 31 August 2004. During the six month consultation period representatives of faith communities and civil rights organisations participated in a number of consultation events which provided an open forum for discussion of existing legislation, the operation of current powers and possible options for the future. In addition several faith organisations have submitted written responses to the consultation process. Contributions to the consultation process are currently under consideration.

16 September 2004

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17. Memorandum submitted by Human Rights Watch

I am writing in relation to the Home Affairs Committee's request for written submissions for its forthcoming inquiry into terrorism and community relations. Human Rights Watch welcomes the Committee's decision to hold the inquiry.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) is an international human rights research and advocacy organisation, which conducts research on more than 70 countries around the world. Founded in 1978, the organisation is independent and accepts no government funding. It prides itself on the accurate and impartial reporting of human rights abuses wherever they occur.

Human Rights Watch has been conducting detailed research into the human rights impact of counter-terrorism measures introduced throughout the world since the September 11 attacks. In that context, Human Rights Watch issued a briefing paper on 24 June 2004, examining the human rights implications of the indefinite detention of foreign terrorism suspects in the United Kingdom. Copies of the paper, *Neither Just, Nor Effective*, were sent to your Committee, and to the Joint Committee on Human Rights.

The briefing paper includes a discussion of the impact on community relations of the indefinite detention regime. The relevant paragraphs are appended to this letter. It is evident that the measures are having an adverse impact on community relations, and that by undermining the confidence of the Muslim community in the police and security services, the regime may be undermining counter-terrorism efforts in the United Kingdom.

Rachel Denber
Acting Executive Director, Europe and Asia Division

Steve Crawshaw
London Director

10 September 2004

Attachment

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

NEITHER JUST NOR EFFECTIVE: INDEFINITE DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL IN THE UNITED KINGDOM UNDER THE ANTI-TERRORISM CRIME AND SECURITY ACT 2001

Extract:

. . .[T]he internment of foreign nationals under Part 4 has had an adverse impact on race and community relations in the UK. The ATCSA detainees are predominantly (if not exclusively) Muslims who are being held indefinitely and have not been charged with any crime. A number of the detainees have alleged ill-treatment in detention, and groups such as Amnesty International have challenged the conditions of detention as cruel and degrading.[18] The ATCSA detentions are regarded by some observers as an injustice suggestive of the detentions at Guantanamo Bay. The concern among British Muslims, in particular, over the treatment of the detainees is linked to a perception that the UK government and security services regard all Muslims as potential terrorists. The Newton Committee commented that "we have heard evidence that the existence of these powers, and uncertainty about them, has led to understandable disquiet among some parts of the Muslim population."[19] Speaking of seven men arrested during a January 2003 raid on a mosque in London, Inayat Bunglawala, who is the Secretary of the Muslim Council of Britain's Media Committee, argued "[t]o detain them indefinitely—as is already the case with several suspected terrorists in Belmarsh prison—will only undermine the trust of Muslims in our judicial system and the rule of law."[20]

The practical consequence is that British Muslims are less likely to have confidence in the actions of the security services, courts and police, and are thus less likely to co-operate with those institutions.[21] The spokesman for Muslim issues at the Commission for Racial Equality, who has noted the "tremendous disquiet within the [Muslim] community," argues that "[t]he community has the responsibility to co-operate with security agencies to ensure our own safety—but the way to get that co-operation is not by terrorising people."[22] The UK-based Islamic Human Rights Commission has made a similar argument: "The targeting of Muslims in the war against terrorism has served no purpose but to alienate the Muslim community, increasing fears that the security forces and the judiciary are not serving them equally. The danger is that it makes policing with consent difficult."[23]

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18. Memorandum submitted by the Independent Police Complaints Commission

The IPCC recognise that the police must give the highest priority to protecting the public from the threat of terrorism, but there is no doubt that the use of the exceptional powers the police have been given under the terrorism act has undermined confidence in the police amongst the Muslim community.

We have held a number of meetings with representatives within the Muslim Community at national and local levels to open up channels of communication and to listen to any concerns that the community has about policing.

The media has reported a number of allegations of misconduct by police which have resulted from some of these arrests. The IPCC already has a role in a number of these cases.

As a result of these concerns the IPCC has very recently asked the Metropolitan Police to refer to the IPCC any complaints or conduct matters that arise from arrests under the Terrorism Act. The IPCC would like to implement this within all forces in England and Wales and would liaise with ACPO to implement this measure.

This serves two purposes

— Helps to reassure the public (specific communities) that there is independent scrutiny of the police. We could decide to investigate the complaint ourselves.

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[18] Amnesty International, "United Kingdom: Cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment/Medical concern: Algerian former torture victim, known as 'G,'" 9 March 2004; Amnesty International, "Justice Perverted."; Amnesty International, "Rights Denied: the UK's Response to 11 September 2001," 5 September 2002.

[19] Privy Counsellor Review Committee, "Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 Review," para 196.

[20] Inayat Bunglawala, "We Muslims are also the victims of terror," *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 January 2003.

[21] A widely praised March 2004 letter from the Muslim Council of Britain sent to Mosques, religious and community leaders throughout the UK which called upon British Muslims to co-operate with the police against terrorism, expressed concern about "hasty pronouncements of guilt" and underscored that "[e]very person is to be considered innocent unless proved guilty." Muslim Council of Britain, MCB Guidelines to Imams and British Muslim Organisations, 31 March 2004 [online], http://www.mcb.org.uk/ (retrieved 27 April 2004).

[22] Domimic Casciani, "UK extremism threat 'growing,'" BBC News Online, 20 April 2004, [online], http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/3649137.stm (retrieved 23 April 2004).

[23] Islamic Human Rights Commission, "The Hidden Victims of September 11: Prisoners of UK Law," (September 2002), [online], http://www.ihrc.org/ (retrieved 19 April 2004).

— IPCC involvement should reassure the community about working with the police against terrorism.

While we would be specifically monitoring complaints or conduct matters that arise from arrests under the Terrorism Act we recognise that there is a broader issue with regard to the perceived misuse of stop and search powers and its tenuous connection to countering terrorism.

23 September 2004

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19. Memorandum submitted by the International Centre for Security Analysis

The following submission seeks to inform policy-makers and emergency-planners of the significant lessons to be learnt from the growing body of literature examining human behaviour in a disaster. These point to the paramount need for professionals to incorporate community responses to particular crises within their actions, rather than seeking to supplant them as ill-informed or less productive. This is because emergencies offer society an important means to reaffirm fundamental human bonds that have been particularly corroded over recent times. Actions that enhance the benefits of spontaneous association, as well as developing a sense of purpose and trust across society are, at such times, of equivalent if not greater importance than effective, technical responses.

AFFILIATIONS

The lead-author to this contribution is currently the Director of the International Centre for Security Analysis (ICSA) based in the War Studies Group of King's College London (KCL). This is a 5* research assessment exercise accredited department within one of the UK's leading research institutions.

Much of the analysis derives from a two-year study into the "*Domestic Management of Terrorist Attacks*", which was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), as part of its "*New Security Challenges*" programme. A final report on the research undertaken is due to be delivered to the ESRC by the end of October 2004.

The specific aspects explored in this submission derive largely from the work of Professor Frank Furedi, of the University of Kent, into the sociological aspects of human resilience within contemporary society, as well as that of Professor Simon Wessely, of the Institute of Psychiatry at KCL, into the psychological consequences of terrorism.

CULTURAL MEANING AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE

How we, as a society, respond to a crisis, depends only in part on the nature of that crisis or the agent causing it. This cultural or social element is what explains our different and evolving attitudes to disaster across time and in different societies.

Why is it, that at certain times and in certain societies, a widespread loss of life—such as that which occurred in the London smog of 1952, or that which happens on an annual basis upon our roads—can fail to become a point of discussion, whilst at others, even a very limited loss—such as the loss of only seven lives aboard the Challenger spacecraft in 1986, or the four lives lost as a consequence of the Hatfield train crash in 2000—can become key cultural reference points?

In his work, Furedi has pointed to the evolving context and framework of cultural meanings to explain such variation. Broadly, this suggests that emergencies take on a differing role dependent upon what they represent to particular societies at particular times, rather than solely on the basis of more objective indicators, such as real costs and lives lost.

The loss of the Challenger spacecraft represented a low-point in our cultural assessment of our own technological capabilities. It was a blow for the assumption of steady scientific progress that no number of everyday car accidents could replicate. On the other hand, Hatfield became represented as the paradigmatic example of why we were right to mistrust politicians and "profit-seeking" corporations.

In their own ways, both these examples point to the growing disconnection of ordinary people in the contemporary world from the professional elite, whether political, corporate or scientific. In turn, this reveals the extent to which once taken-for-granted, core social bonds and affiliations have been eroded in the course of little more than a single generation.

It is this incoherent cultural outlook that represents by far the greatest problem in developing our responses to the possibility of terrorist attack. How the public would respond, is shaped far more by its underlying assumptions and allegiances prior to, and subsequent to, any emergency, than the specific aspects of that emergency itself.

Yet, the standard way of dealing with disaster, is one that prioritises pushing the public out, beyond the yellow-tape perimeter, and subsuming their initial actions to those of the professionally-trained emergency services. This is despite the fact that the public themselves are the true first responders in any such situation.

Effectively, we deny people any role, responsibility or even insight into their own situation at such times. Yet, any examination of the existing historical literature on human behaviour in a disaster, readily points to the central importance of ordinary human action. People are at their most social and rational at such times and this behaviour should be encouraged and developed rather than subsumed.

Disasters, including terrorist attacks, destroy physical and economic capital. On the other hand, they present a tremendous opportunity for the creation and enhancement of social capital. It is this that the authorities and professionals should be alert to and wary of displacing, in their haste to put forward more meticulous and technically competent solutions.

In the aftermath of the Sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway in 1995, many of those affected were ferried to hospital in private cars. As a chemical attack, professionals might argue that this presented a risk of further contamination, but in the eventuality it did not, and only 11 people lost their lives due, in part, to the spontaneous actions of concerned citizens who acted when ambulances were not available.

A similar scenario was witnessed at the recent and terrible hostage crisis in Northern Ossetia in Russia. When the siege was eventually broken, the authorities were largely unprepared. Most of the injured were taken to hospital by car.

After the recent episode of flooding in Boscastle, Cornwall, as with the Lynmouth flood disaster in Devon of 1952, it was inevitably ordinary people who were both first on the scene and first to take appropriate and supportive action.

After the Bali bombing of October 2002, many steps were taken by local responders on the ground to deal with the injured and indeed, begin the process of organising to have them flown to special burns units in Australian hospitals. By the time the professional emergency responders arrived much of this work was well in hand. Indeed, the disaster plan that these latter then worked to created new problems that had already been addressed. Scrapping the actions of local responders, many of the injured were ferried to hospitals where there were no specialist units to help.

The point here, is to identify the extent to which pushing people out at such times may appear logical and professional, but in actuality it can be counter-productive, failing to capitalise upon the spontaneous social bonds and behaviour that emerges in these situations.

Technical Focus Versus Cultural Resilience

Many of the counter-terrorist measures put in place since 11 September 2001 can, at best, be described as largely technical in character. Apart from specific, security service related actions, these have included discussion about the need for greater surveillance, better intelligence, new protective clothing for the so-called "first responders", along with new gadgets to detect chemical, biological or radiological agents, concrete blocks and fences around many public buildings, endless checks at airports and stockpiles of vaccines, amongst many others.

The problem with all of these, is that by seeking to secure society from the outside by such means, we fail simultaneously to engage society from the inside with a view to winning a debate as to what we are actually for as a society.

Much research points to the fact that, in addition to the need for technical means to protect oneself in an emergency, by far the most useful tool is a clear sense of mission, purpose and direction. If we were to broadly caricature resilience as the ability to pick oneself up after a shock or emergency, and to keep on going, then the primary task is surely to have a clarity as to who we are, what we are for and where it is exactly that we are heading.

Yet, such political debate as to cultural values and direction, is most noticeable by its absence. Instead, as indicated above we seek to secure ourselves from the outside. Ironically, this preponderance of technical means and purported solutions—for we have yet to see whether many of them truly work—simply encourages an already existing sense of social suspicion and mistrust.

We are encouraged to be "alert" as to the activity of our neighbours, or those sat opposite us on any public transport. But rather than bringing people together as the times demand, such approaches simply serve to push people further apart. In that regards at least, we truly are "doing the terrorists' job for them".

Solutions

Handling social concerns as to the possibility of a terrorist attack is no easy feat. In part, this is because social fears today have little to do with the actuality or even possibility of the presumed threats that confront us. Rather, they are an expression of social isolation, cynicism and mistrust.

In that regards, any real solution needs to be conscious of the need to build up social bonds, rather than undermining these. The public need to be included and engaged. But they need to be included and engaged well before the emergence of any particular crisis, and they need to be included and engaged in matters pertaining to far broader social issues than merely fears about terrorism, or indeed any fears.

The starting point for any effective solution is to put the actual threat posed by terrorism into an appropriate context. Outside of the events in New York, Washington and Madrid, there have been no terrorist attacks in the developed world. To suggest otherwise is both alarmist and disingenuous.

What's more, what attacks there have been consistently fail to point to any serious capabilities amongst terrorists in the specific area of chemical, biological and radiological weaponry the public fear most. Yet, to read the debate over the last three years one would be forgiven for thinking otherwise. Certain terrorists may wish to develop and deploy such weapons but, given their current capabilities, this remains very much an aspiration rather than a possibility.

Above all, if as a society, we are to ascribe an appropriate meaning to the events of 11 September 2001—one that does not enhance fear domestically, encouraging us to become even more dependent on a limited number of expert professionals, who will tell the public how to lead their lives at such times—then we need to promote a far more significant political debate as to our aims and purposes as a society.

Surely, those who risk their lives fighting fires or fighting wars do so, not so that their children can in turn go on to do the same in the future, but rather because they believe that there is something more to life worth fighting for. It is that "something more" that contemporary society appears to have lost sight of. And it is a loss we ignore at our peril.

Bill Durodié
International Centre for Security Analysis
King's College London

6 September 2004

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20. Memorandum submitted by the Jewish Council for Racial Equality

1. The impact of terrorism on community relations is negative and damaging. Levels of fearfulness and anxiety are high; all those who are different from ourselves are liable to be seen as potentially hostile. Life-threatening conflict alters our most elementary perceptions: our views become hardened and oversimplified and the "other" is personified in terms of the most prominent perpetrators and identified accordingly. A society that believes itself to be threatened from without, especially when such threat is reinforced by daily experience—armed policemen, warnings of suspect packages, periodic swoops by anti-terrorist officers etc.—is not a rational society. Many of us are no longer inclined to extend the hand of friendship to those whom we do not know; if we are seen to identify with those who are perceived as threatening then our own communal loyalties can be put into question.

2. In Britain today, fear of terrorism should be seen in the context of different political trends. These include popular press campaigns against immigrants and asylum seekers, a decline in political involvement, a sense of being distant from the centres of power, and a lack of trust in the political process. All of these cause communities to draw in upon themselves, rather than taking national responsibilities. Unlike previous wars, the war against terror is uncertain and defies definition; we do not know who precisely "the enemy" is, or where and when he or she is likely to strike. This intensifies anxiety, uncertainty and aggression.

3. The bottom line is that in the European and local government elections in June of this year more than 800,000 people voted for a party whose sole platform was hostility to immigrants, particularly Muslims. This was a seven-fold increase in the number of votes cast for that party; it did not only represent a protest vote against the major parties as there were alternatives for those who wished to register such a protest. People effectively voted for a single-issue party that had no coherent economic or social policies apart from the single issue that it focused upon, but this did not deter nearly a million voters from supporting it. We are profoundly alarmed by this development.

4. We are further alarmed by the prospective impact of terrorist incidents in towns and cities where different communities co-exist uneasily, living parallel lives with minimal interaction. We have first hand experience of the work being done by both churches and mosques in the Lancashire towns to counter political exploitation of communal tensions rooted in poverty, unemployment and cultural difference. In these towns, more than 100,000 votes went to the BNP in the June elections. Although the party did not get a seat, the gravity of the situation was made clear to us, and we noted the great importance of the work of local Christian and Muslim leaders in maintaining the fabric of the community. This vital contribution is rarely brought to the attention of the general public. It is important to note that what we saw was not a multi-cultural society, but rather two communities living in circumstances that can reasonably be described as segregated. Clearly the threat of terrorism greatly exacerbates already existing tensions in areas where local cultures seem unable to accommodate different forms of communal identity.

5. The Israeli-Palestinian situation has led to considerable tensions between Muslims and Jews, although these are by no means universal, and there have also been very heartening inter-communal developments. In the current environment it is vital for community workers to challenge negative stereotyping among both Muslims and Jews; political conflict and terrorism harden perceptions very rapidly, especially among those who have personal experience of tragedy, and on-going personal communication between both communities at all levels are of the greatest importance.

14 September 2004

21. Memorandum submitted by Leicester City Council

INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee's inquiry is timely and relevant in an arena where hard evidence is in short supply and national policy inadequately developed to respond to new realities. The scope of the inquiry is potentially a vast canvas and this paper is no more than a focus on a small corner of the whole. The remarks represent the personal views of the author. As Britain's most diverse city, the lessons from Leicester may be of interest elsewhere. Three issues are tackled. They concern the potential impact on community relations arising from terrorism in terms of perceptions, problems and possible responses.

PERCEPTIONS OF BLAME

2. The assassination in Holland of Theo van Gogh on 1 November 04 was reported to have produced a public demonstration against violence by 10,000 people. I am not aware of a significant backlash against the Muslim community. It seems to be the case therefore that it is possible to respond, or fail to respond, to the shock of terrorism in such a way that the community's anger is directed either at the violence, or at the community from which the perpetrator comes. We need to understand the causal links between these different scenarios better than we do.

3. The role of community leaders—formal, informal, civic, faith, the media—is critical. The Leicester Multi cultural Advisory Group is an informal gathering of such leaders to discuss on a regular basis potential sensitivities and how best they should be reported and communicated by all leaders. It is a model of off-the-record briefing and trust between different stakeholders in the interests of community cohesion. It has produced exceptionally constructive outputs time again. A key principle at work in the group is that any particular community that is facing current criticism or hatred should be supported publicly by the other community leaders and not left to defend themselves.

4. Our understanding of this and other mechanisms for managing public perceptions needs to be developed further. Common to all approaches must be a commitment to engaging in continuing dialogue respectfully with the moderate majority of goodwill in all communities. Dialogue in times of crisis only is of limited value.

PROBLEMS OF REACTION

5. A core problem for community relations that arises from terrorism is the potential trigger for fearful backlashes. This applies both to the immediate cause of the atrocity and to the administrative response in the aftermath. Recent experience in Leicester relates mainly to the latter and I shall illustrate the problems by reference to the migration of Dutch Somalis to Leicester since 2001 and its impact in Education in particular.

6. Evidence is notoriously difficult to come by and therefore the data below should be regarded as indicative. Some 10,000 Dutch Somalis—EU citizens—migrated to Leicester from 2001 for reasons, which appear to include:

— a sense that Dutch policies required the assimilation of other cultures, rather than integration;

— perceived political extremism symbolised by the activities and assassination of Pim Fortuyn;

— an educational assessment at 11+ conducted in Dutch only that determined later progression opportunities to university;

— a perception of permissiveness in Dutch culture regarding eg sex and alcohol;

— an established and thriving Muslim community in Leicester with faith and cultural infrastructure; and

— Leicester's reputation for welcoming persons from abroad and offering them scope for economic and political leadership.

7. Little systematic research has been undertaken to identify what works well in integrating sudden new migrations to a city, nor what are the key danger areas. We do know, however, that EU enlargement in 2004 creates 75 million new EU citizens, with 99 million additional citizens in the four candidate countries. The additional rights of mobility throughout Europe now include some countries whose economic and political stability is less assured than others. There is a need for a clearer national policy to address problems of significant migration that may occur in the aftermath of terrorist acts, or for that matter environmental, economic, social and political upheaval.

8. Evidence in Leicester suggests approximately 700 new arrivals in secondary school numbers per annum and a similar additional number in primary schools. There is virtually no school in Leicester that does not have to make provision for children who use English as an additional language. The major languages are supplemented by a growing list of some 90+ other language groups.

9. The impact of unannounced arrivals on this scale and complexity has obvious implications for educational standards, but almost no recognition in inspections and league tables. The impacts are felt in staff management and planning, teaching methods, curriculum adaptation, oral and written translation and interpretation and home/school liaison. These professional challenges are compounded by:

— turbulence, as families move around or between cities to seek better arrangements for housing and jobs than their first assignment;

— emotional trauma, particularly from asylum seekers, with consequent pressures on the educational psychological service; and

— racism, most notably in communities that feel that scarce resources are diverted to new arrivals at the expense of the settled communities.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES

10. The responses available to manage mass migration are as many and varied as the circumstances that arise. Clearly, it is for Government to determine the extent to which it permits migration of persons from abroad to the UK. Thereafter, it is incumbent on the whole community to give a proper welcome to new communities and recognise them as an asset: we estimate that there are now 42 Somali-run businesses in Leicester. Once admitted to the UK it is in everyone's interests to give practical support through public, private and voluntary sectors and assist the rapid acceptance and integration of new communities for the benefit of all. This leads to the issue of costs.

11. The absence of any mechanism to provide assistance in the occasional circumstances where a community, usually a city, is expected to cope with mass migration is a potential crisis in waiting. The pressure put on settled communities by large sums being diverted from agreed budgets is unreasonable. Given that no specific funds have been earmarked to support the manifest transition needs arising from mass migration to Leicester, the figures given below may be regarded as a conservative response to the actual needs. Fiona Mactaggart MP, Home Office Parliamentary Under Secretary, has recently been reported as acknowledging that traditional funding regimes have not been fleet of foot enough, and that Government strategies are under review. The evidence below is intended to be helpful to any such review.

12. Costs of new arrivals are mainly felt in education, social services, housing and other public services such as health and the police. Under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 Social Services were obliged to cover the daily living costs of Somalis families until they could claim benefit. Delays in DWP over issuing National Insurance numbers to new arrivals prevented them from obtaining work and compounded costs for the City Council. These were estimated to be £3–400,000 per annum. In addition, the estimated cost of providing community support eg youth work, adult education, was around £200,00. The need for supporting new tenancies in an unfamiliar environment is critical to family stability. The main funding stream for this work, Supporting People, is liable to be reduced and this would be most unhelpful. No increase in the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant has occurred to reflect these major changes and stresses. Even the modest £500 per pupil identified by the Home Office for asylum seeker children (for which EU citizens are generally ineligible) would have generated £700,00 for our estimate of new arrivals in the current year alone.

13. The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 now means that local authorities are not obliged to provide support to families arriving in their areas. Arrivals therefore rely for support on friends and families already in Leicester. This generates additional turbulence costs, which are estimated to be £364,000 in the current year, and is funded from existing budgets, as DfES does not recognise turbulence at present. Current funding formulas mean that new arrivals are not funded even in their own right for up to 26 months.

15 November 2004

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22. Memorandum submitted by the Mayor of London

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Mayor welcomes this opportunity to submit evidence to the Home Affairs Committee Inquiry into Terrorism & Community Relations. The Mayor recognises that it has been necessary for the Government to introduce powers to tackle the potential threat posed by international terrorism. However, the Mayor believes that the measures must be proportionate, tightly focussed and effective. With this in mind, the Mayor's submission concentrates on:

— the impact of terrorism legislation on community relations in Britain;

— the need for comprehensive data monitoring;

— the need for a race impact assessment;

— media coverage.

2. THE IMPACT OF TERRORISM LEGISLATION

2.1 The Mayor recognises the rationale behind Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000. Whilst the Mayor believes that it is important that police officers have the use of this power in order that they can prevent and deter terrorist activity, he has a number of concerns about how it is being implemented and its impact on community relations.

2.2 An authorisation under s44 may be given only if the person giving it considers it expedient for the prevention of acts of terrorism. In London, it may be given where the specified area or place is the whole or part of the Metropolitan Police District, by a police officer for the district that is at least the rank of commander of the Metropolitan Police. The authorisation must be confirmed by the Secretary of State; must be given for a specific period of time; regularly renewed and set out the precise purpose for which the power may only be exercised ie terrorism.

2.3 Since s44 came force on 19 February 2001, there has been a rolling programme of successive authorisations that have been renewed every 28 days throughout the Metropolitan Police District (MPD).

2.4 The Mayor would argue that Parliament intended s44 authorisations to be given and confirmed only in response to "an imminent terrorist threat to a specific location in respect of which normal police powers of stop and search were inadequate." The Mayor is, therefore, concerned that the "rolling" s44 authorisations across the MPD have become part of day-to-day policing and as such are not in accordance with Parliament's intentions. The Mayor notes the Divisional Court and Court of Appeal judgements that Parliament had envisaged that an anti-terrorist authorisation might encompass an entire police area or district. He is persuaded that it is not the existence of the s44 power that could cause civil liberties infringements but the exercise of that power.

2.5 The effect of s44 is that after an authorisation, a police officer in uniform is able to stop and search vehicles and persons without there being any precondition of reasonable grounds for suspicion. Representations have been to the Mayor by the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) that the use of s44 is damaging community relations and confidence in policing. Given the sweeping nature of the s44 powers, the Mayor believes that the police need to take care that such powers are not used arbitrarily or capriciously. Given that s44 confers an extremely wide power to intrude on the privacy of members of the public, the Mayor considers that a "reasonable suspicion" precondition should be attached to s44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, along the same lines as currently operates under the stop and search powers of the Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE).

2.6 Recent statistics published by the Home Office show a consistent rise in the number of s44 stop and searches across all London's communities for the period 2001–02 to 2002–03 but disproportionate use against London's Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. 61% of all s44 stops and searches conducted in England and Wales during 2002–03 were carried out in the MPD and 21% in the City of London. Very few arrests for terrorism offences have occurred as a result of s44 stops and searches in London. Out of a combined total of 16,206 s44 stops and searches carried out during 2001–02 and 2002–03, only 13 arrests were terrorist related.[24] These figures could give the impression that s44 does not appear to be an effective weapon against terrorism. Concerns have been expressed by BME community groups in London that the use of these powers is having an increasing corrosive effect on community confidence that undermines policing by consent in the fight against terrorism.

2.7 It is important that the stop and searches carried out under s44 of the Terrorism Act 2000 should not be looked at in isolation from stop and searches carried out under s1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and s60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. There is anecdotal evidence that BME individuals are sometimes initially being stopped and searched by police under s44 of the Terrorism Act and subsequently the action is justified by police officers under PACE or s60 provisions of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act and recorded as such.

2.8 Furthermore, very few individuals stopped and searched will know the distinction between the range of legislation. If they have been informed by a police officer that they were stopped and searched under terrorism suspicions, or they themselves perceive that they have been stopped and searched for this, then the cumulative negative impact on BME communities is that they feel they are being targeted, labelled and criminalised as terrorist suspects. Indeed Home Office statistics reveal that during 2002–03 per 1,000 population, London's black and Asian populations were stopped and searched almost four times and nearly 1.5 times more often than "white" people under PACE. In 2001–02, more Asians were stopped than black people.

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[24] Statistics on Race & the Criminal Justice System—2003: A Home Office Publication under Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 (2004)

Detention

2.9 The Mayor is aware that some BME community group representatives point to instances where members of their community have been detained under s41 of the Terrorism Act and released immediately prior to the expiry times. Time in detention under s41 of the Terrorism Act without charge can range from an initial maximum period of 48 hours to 14 days. Some of the detainees may have been released without charge, bailed to return, cautioned, charged under other legislation not connected with terrorism offences, or dealt with under immigration legislation.

2.10 This is further exacerbated by detention of a number of Muslim men under Part 4 of the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 (ATCSA). The Mayor, in his recent submission to the Home Secretary stated that he considers Part 4 of the ATCSA to contain controversial and draconian provisions, which are not appropriate to the extent of the threat from international terrorism, and are indefensible. He is concerned that:

— such suspects face no specific charge and are not presented with, and given the opportunity to refute, all the evidence against them;

— detention under Part 4 is for a potentially indefinite period;

— Part 4 only tackles the threat from foreigners suspected of having links with Al Qa'eda or its associated networks. It does not address threats from British nationals with similar links; or from anyone in the UK with links to other foreign terrorist causes. The Mayor believes that the UK response to the threat from international terrorism should not be confined to measures, which target foreign nationals, but should consist of measures that apply equally to nationals and non-nationals;

— Part 4 seeks to deport terrorist suspects. The Mayor does not consider this a satisfactory response, given the risk of exporting terrorism. If there is evidence that people in the UK are contributing to terrorist activity both here or abroad, the Mayor believes that they should be dealt with in this country.

2.11 The Mayor considers the combined effect of these detention powers is counter-productive, with many Muslims citing examples of how they are being treated in a discriminatory and unequal manner by the law.

3. Data Collection

3.1 The Mayor is concerned that the data collected and analysed by the Home Office is deficient.

It refers only to persons who were searched by the police following an initial stop and therefore excludes persons stopped by the police without a search. Such data excludes, for example, occasions where persons are stopped with a view to a search but where the officer has had their suspicions allayed after a conversation. This could include instances where a person has been initially stopped by police on suspicion of terrorist involvement/activities. A number of BME organisations and individuals have provided anecdotal evidence to the Mayor that individuals are being stopped, with the incident not being recorded.

3.2 Recommendation 61 of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report requires police officers to record all stops where they ask a person to give an account of themselves. The record should include the reason for the stop, the outcome and the self-defined ethnicity of the person stopped. A copy will be given to the person. It is commendable that the Home Secretary has instructed that Recommendation 61—"Stop and Account"—will be implemented nationally by 1 April 2005. In London, the Borough Operational Command Units of Hackney and Tower Hamlets have already fully implemented "Stop and Account". October 1 is the beginning of force-wide implementation across the MPD. It is anticipated that the roll out will take approximately six weeks, with training for patrol-based police officers and police community support officers.

3.3 The Mayor welcomes the Government's commitment to roll out the documenting of all stops and searches encountered in the police forces of England and Wales. However, the Mayor wishes to emphasise that this must be accompanied by police force managers improving officer skills in handling encounters. The MPS have authorised the development of a 30-minute interactive computer-based training package, mandatory for all patrol-based officers up to and including the rank of Inspector, Special Constables and Police Community Support Officers. Once complete the CBT will be available to all police forces in England and Wales. The training will assist police officers in understanding Recommendation 61; using and explaining the stop and search forms and when to record the stop. Tutor-led supervisor training is being progressed in the MPS. While commendable, the Mayor is minded that this must also include training on how to treat the public fairly and with respect. Police officers should also be made aware of the risks to legitimacy and strategies for managing or minimising them. Training should also include the types of evidential factors needed to effect a stop and search both specifically under the Terrorism Act and other stop and search legislation. It is important to spell out to police officers whether and to what extent generalisations can be used. The Mayor recommends that such police training be subject to accreditation.

3.4 The Mayor wants to highlight that since September 11 there has been an increase in racially motivated crime/incidents. He recommends that the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) conduct an analysis of verbal and physical attacks, criminal damage and threats perpetrated towards ethnic, cultural and religious communities (especially Asian, Arabic, Muslim/Islamic, Sikh, Hindu and new types of victims) and policy implications assessed. The Mayor notes that reported incidents do not give a full picture of the sense of threat and fear, which has been engendered in the BME and Muslim community and other minority populations by the growth in racist and xenophobic attitudes.

3.5 The Mayor believes there is a need to collect data on faith in relation to anti-terrorist legislation and stop and search provisions, so as to assure the Muslim and other affected communities that they are not being unfairly profiled and targeted as terrorists. At present the police do not specifically monitor faith-hate crimes. Accordingly the Mayor recommends that the Government consider the issue of religious monitoring, which warrants careful and sensitive examination. At a pan-London level the Mayor has proposed to the MPS Commissioner that a policy on religious monitoring of all stops and searches be developed in partnership with all relevant stakeholders. The MPS has also begun to collate such faith-hate incidents as a sub-set of racial incidents, which is to be welcomed.

3.6 The Mayor believes that violence based on religious hatred is unacceptable, and all offences aggravated by religious hatred should be covered under mainstream legislation designed to protect individuals from hate crime rather then within anti-terrorism legislation. The Mayor welcomes the announcement by the Home Secretary in July 2004 that the Government intends to introduce an offence of incitement to religious hatred as soon as possible to help tackle extremists who use religion to stir up hatred in our society. He hopes that this will be analogous to the existing offence of incitement to racial hatred, and likewise, it too will be included in broader legislation as opposed to anti-terrorist legislation.

4. Race Impact Assessments

4.1 The Mayor recommends that a race impact assessment be carried out, alongside its current review, of anti-terrorist legislation, to identify whether existing measures are having a different and/or adverse impact on some racial groups or harming race equality.

5. Media Reporting

5.1 The Mayor is sympathetic to complaints, primarily made by members of the Muslim community, regarding media reporting following arrests and detentions of suspects under terrorism legislation. Concerns have been expressed that initial arrests often attract immense media coverage, yet when suspects have been released without charge this has not received a commensurate level of coverage. Frequently reference is made to the ethnicity or religion of arrested suspects. There is also concern that significant coverage is given to hard-line extremist Islamic groups and their supporters, when compared with mainstream Muslim groups. Such extremists have been referred to as "the enemy within" and "a fifth column", with some journalists arguing that the opinions of these young Muslim men expose the failure of Britain's current approach to multiculturalism. There have also been newspaper calls for expulsion and treason charges to be brought against Muslim men who volunteered to fight for the Taliban and against British Forces. The Mayor views this as disproportionate.

5.2 Whilst the Mayor recognises that media interest in counter-terrorism is valid, he believes this must be balanced by fair, accurate and sensitive reporting. The Mayor recommends that the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) should be invited to issue guidance on the use of accurate terminology and sensitivity in reporting on anti-terrorism issues. The guidance should remind editors that pejorative or irrelevant reference to a person's race, religion, or nationality is already prohibited under Clause 13 (Discrimination) of the PCC Code. Similarly, the PCC under Clause One (Accuracy) of its Code must underline the danger that inaccurate, misleading or distorted reporting may generate an atmosphere of fear and hostility.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The Mayor is of the view that the fight against terrorism is paramount. However, the implementation of anti-terrorist legislation and negative media reporting is undermining community relations and confidence in the police by London's BME communities. London's BME communities must be fully engaged in the process of tackling terrorism and crime. In order to achieve this the Government and public authorities must ensure that they have the confidence that the legislative powers are being used fairly and with good reason; that they are used within the guidelines designed to regulate their practice; and that they are effective in that they are targeted in a way that maximises interventions with active offenders and minimise those with law-abiding members of the public. Improving data monitoring will assist in taking informed decisions. A race impact assessment should also be conducted on existing terrorist legislation to identify where remedial action is required and help enhance legitimacy.

6.2 Finally, the involvement of the community in partnership with police forces, police authorities and key stakeholders at both strategic and operational levels is paramount in the fight against terrorism. Such involvement should have a clear purpose and specific agenda, and aim to win the consent of the public by responding to their concerns regarding terrorism issues.

21 September 2004

BACKGROUND NOTE

1.1. The Greater London Authority is the strategic body for London and is constituted through the Greater London Authority Act 1999. The Authority has a democratically elected executive Mayor, Ken Livingstone, and an Assembly comprising 25 members that are responsible for scrutinising the policies and decisions of the Mayor.

1.2 The Mayor sets the budget for the Metropolitan Police, London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority, Transport for London, and also approves the budget and business plans of the London Development Agency. Through this power, the Mayor steers the direction of the services delivered by the police, fire and transport, and shapes regional approaches to economic development and regeneration.

MAYOR'S MANIFESTO COMMITMENT

1.3 The Mayor is committed to tackling terrorism. His manifesto for London's states that:

"Like many capital cities London is a target for terrorist attacks. So we have given the highest priority to maintaining public vigilance against terrorism and ensuring that the police and the emergency services have all of the resources they need to counter this terrible threat. With support from the Labour government 1,000 extra officers have been deployed on counter terrorism duties. We have fundamentally reviewed London's ability to respond to, and recover from, a major terrorist attack. We continue with a comprehensive programme of exercises and testing. We have met all the requests for extra resources to fight terrorism. This has included 200 extra fire-fighters to respond to major incidents and we have provided the advanced equipment they need." [25]

1.4 He further goes on to state that over the next four years during his term in office:

"He will continue to provide the police and emergency services with all of the resources they need to protect London against terrorist attack. He will maintain the strength of the specialist operations units, which are in the front line against terrorism, building on the 1,000 extra officers already deployed. He will maintain the highest level of public vigilance against terrorism and actively engage London's diverse communities in working together with the police to keep London safe. He will ensure London's fire and rescue services have sufficient resources and equipment to deal with whatever threats London faces."[26]

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23. Memorandum submitted by Tony McNulty MP, Harrow East

RESPONSE TO Q164 OF EVIDENCE ON "TERRORISM AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS" BY JAGDEESH SINGH

I have just read the above extract from your Committee's proceedings of the 16th November 2004 on "Terrorism and Community Relations" and would draw to your attention the following elements of Mr Singh's response to Q164:

". . . One thing that we would add, and add very forcefully, is that in this country while the British Government see fit to do what it has done in terms of anti-terrorism—banning various organisations and so forth—one thing very puzzlingly it consistently has done is allow a prominent organisation, the VHP, to continue to function from North London from a promininent location ie the Neasden Hindu Temple . . . It functions from premises and not just any premises but the most prominent Hindu premises you could find in the whole of London—the Neasden Temple in London."

I know that it is not the Committee's job to correct or ascertain the veracity of witness statements, but rather to publish them verbatim, but these two references to the Swaminarayan Hindu Temple in Neasden are irresponsible, inflammatory and incorrect. I hope that your Committee would agree that potentially increasing rather than understanding any potential for inter-community conflict should not be one of the outcomes of a study into "Terrorism and Community Relations". If the above comments stand uncorrected, I fear that this is exactly what may prevail. I have been involved with the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission and the Neasden Mandir, in one way or another since about 1986 and can state categorically that no organisation other than the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission and its associated bodies, have ever organised,

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[25] A Manifesto 4 London / London Mayoral & London Assembly Elections 2004, p13.
[26] A Manifesto 4 London / London Mayoral & London Assembly Elections 2004, p14.

operated from, been based at or conducted any action from Neasden. This includes the VHP and any other such organisation. The impression given in such an irresponsible way by Mr Singh that either the Neasden Mandir condones sectarian violence or allows any organisation to function out of the Mandir is completely and utterly without foundation.

The Trustees are rightly concerned that the appearence of the minutes of evidence, unchallenged, on the Committee's website could, albeit, erroneously, lend credence to such a falsehood—which, without doubt, could cause some difficulties between communities.

I am writing to you, and your fellow Committee members, to ask how this factual inaccuracy can be challenged and corrected. I would ask that this e-mail be taken as part of your evidence and used to counter Mr Singh's false claim and seek your advice as to how the wider impression, falsely rendered, of the work of the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission's work can be contested, challenged and ultimately corrected.

16 November 2004

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24. Memorandum submitted by the Metropolitan Police Diversity Directorate

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The terrorist attacks on September 11 2001 have significantly impacted on the way communities are policed. The challenge in London is to balance policing the threat from terrorism with the obligation and commitment to deliver our service fairly and within the requirements and the spirit of human rights legislation to the diverse communities of London. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) through the Steven Lawrence Inquiry had already learned invaluable lessons on how to engage community and other agencies in the policing process. Within these parameters and in the context of changing legislation, the MPS has led the way in terms of policing diverse communities.

1.2 This report, from the perspective of the MPS Diversity Directorate (DCC4), considers a range of issues including rates of recorded race/faith crime within London, Global issues/events, community concerns, right-wing and religious extremism, media focus and organisational issues.

2. BRIEF CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OF MPS COMMUNITY LINKS

2.1 In 2000 the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Religion and Sectarian Sub-Group began to link with various faith communities at a strategic level. The initial tentative steps proved to be welcome across the board. The MPS already had a strong relationship with the Jewish community and the Anglican church, however except for local level involvement there was little communication with opinion formers from other faith groups.

2.3 As the issues of September 11 developed there was a clear move by the MPS to link in with the Islamic communities. The Special Branch Muslim Contact Unit was created as a result. Emergency meetings grew to regular meetings under the auspices of the Muslim Safety Forum (MSF) chaired by ACPO. Members of the Sikh and Hindu community have more recently developed stronger relationships with the MPS in relation to community reassurance, cohesion and specific tension issues. These faith groups are represented on the MPS Independent Advisory Group whose principal task is to bridge the gap between MPS services and communities. Discussions are under way between MPS senior officers and representatives of the Hindu Council and Hindu Forum to create a platform for regular consultation at senior level.

2.4 There is a three-way communication protocol in respect of community intelligence being received through DCC4, the MPS Public Order Branch and Borough Operational Command Units whereby community tensions and/or concerns are identified and advice is provided to boroughs on visiting places of worship, contacting community representatives and initiating pro-active responses. Boroughs provide a weekly community impact assessment following the MPS community threat level model (see overleaf). This MPS model has been adopted by ACPO and the National Community Tensions Team (NCTT).

2.5 Within the Muslim communities there is a deal of suspicion and uncertainty in respect of arrests for terrorism and the detention of Muslims without charge at Belmarsh. The combined work of the MPS and the Home Office using independent advice from the MSF has helped to prevent some escalation of tensions. What must not be forgotten is that Hindu and Sikh communities feel equally threatened when Muslims are targeted by hate crimes or are the perpetrators of what is perceived to be extremist activity. Such tensions also require careful management and prevention strategies.

2.6 A recent call to demonstrate against the religious extremist organisation Al-Muhajiroun could have brought 10,000 Sikhs and Hindus demonstrating in partnership. Effective communication between the MPS and community representatives (including the Hindu Forum of Britain, representing 150 organisations, and the MPS Sikh Association) prevented a mass demonstration.

3. MPS Organisational Structure

3.1 MPS SO12 has the lead for political/right wing organised extremist activity. Crossovers with DCC4 business in terms of these subjects who are also involved in general hate crime activity are formally progressed and tasked.

3.2 Community cohesion, community engagement and reassurance strategies are progressed and often co-ordinated across business groups/partner agencies by DCC4. DCC4 also identify, co-ordinate and address overlap issues.

3.3. In terms of localised hate/faith crime, the investigative focus remains the responsibility of Territorial Policing (TP) based Community Safety Units (CSU's) supported by various strands of DCC4.

3.4 Community links are best developed locally, thus community contacts are generally borough based. DCC4 has significantly assisted the development of central strategic (community) links and encourage/ promote local tactical links.

4. MPS Recorded Race/Faith Crime

4.1 A total of 10,883 racist incidents were recorded during 1998–99 increasing by 110% to 22,875 during 1999–00. Yearly totals have declined since financial year 1999–2000, The yearly 2002–03 total of 15,453 remains 47% above levels five years prior and current totals suggest that recorded incidents have stabilised over the period. High profile internal and external strategies have been implemented in order to encourage victims to report crime and ensure better internal recording over the six-year period.

4.2 Over this period there has been a decrease in anti-Semitic allegations from a peak of 435 in the financial year 2000–01 to the current full financial year (2003–04) totals of 301. Generally between 22 and 35 anti-Semitic incidents are recorded by the MPS per month.

4.3 Since January 2002, the MPS has embedded a crime flagging system to enable faith crimes to be monitored with a sub-flag pertaining to each religion. During 2003–04 there were 327 recorded offences of faith hate crime. Whilst the majority of these offences are anti-Semitic, there has been a recent increase in reporting of "other faith" incidents although numbers remain low. Numerically the introduction of the faith crime field appears to have had negligible impact on the overall number of recorded racist crime offences, with faith crime accounting for 1.9% of all racist offences.

4.4 However the community impact precipitated by an incident in isolation is significantly disproportionate, as a high number of these incidents may often be classified as critical thus there are real trust an confidence issues and organisational risks that are often addressed by the initiation of a formal command structure.

5. Moving beyond Crime Data

5.1 It is evident that certain sections of the community within London are at risk of targeting in relation to the changes in global stability and international security issues since Sept 11. The MPS must monitor and challenge its data/intelligence in terms of such hate targeting from three distinct standpoints.

5.2 Experienced (how do communities feel).

Evidenced (what does our information tell us is happening).

Potential (what might happen).

5.3 These areas may be influenced by a plethora of factors including:

— domestic and international terrorism;

— specific hate crime;

— sustained and often negative media focus and precipitating potential repercussions;

— the activity of extremist groups within distinct religious communities (eg right wing extremism, religious extremism);

— the activities of the police/criminal justice agencies;

— Government policy both national and international;

— any forthcoming dates of interest (eg religious festivals, political demonstrations) with relevance to specific political/ethnic/religious groups.

5.4 The Jewish and Muslim communities within London have been identified as being at the greatest risk from terrorist activity and related hate crime. This is not to understate risks held by other ethnic groups all of which are monitored by the MPS as a matter of course.

6. Anti-Semitism

6.1 In terms of anti-Semitic crime, the trend is that boroughs with higher Jewish populations consistently record higher incident levels. Anti-Semitic allegations within the Metropolitan Police District (MPD) average below 30 per month. They generally take the form of abuse, hate-mail, criminal damage in the form of graffiti and minor assaults.

6.2 Generally when such crimes are motivated or aggravated by "hate" they take on a more sinister dimension in terms of individual and community impact. In the case of anti-Semitic crime this distinction is pronounced because of the potential terror aspect of targeting and the associated community concerns. The Jewish communities consciousness to domestic and international security issues has been heightened for a significant amount of time. There is potential that this increased awareness has lead to any rise in reporting of anti-Semitic crimes.

6.3 Global events have significant implications and potential for faith crimes within London. Significantly the Community Security Trust (CST) has linked increased tensions and violence in the Middle East with anti-Semitic targeting within the UK. The Jewish community's primary concern is the continuing threat of terror attack from Al Qa'eda and its supporters; following attacks against Jewish communities in Africa and Europe. Palestinian terror groups have support and propaganda networks in the UK, these groups are anti-Jewish in nature and not merely anti-Israeli, this has created a strong perception of fear within the Jewish community in the UK.

6.4 Linked to the actual and perceived risk of targeting is the heightened awareness of suspicious activity within and around Jewish premises. The community is also more vulnerable during High Holy Days when they are more visible.

6.5 There is also a perceived and sometimes real threat to Jewish premises, places of worship and cemeteries. Damage includes stones being thrown through windows, anti-Semitic graffiti and also threatening phone calls. Soft targets including schools in general have been highlighted by the community as being a potential risk.

6.6 One example of targeting within the MPD that caused a high level of concern was the desecration of 500 Jewish graves in 2003; eight Muslim youths were arrested in connection with this incident. DCC4 progressed a number of reassurance initiatives in liaison with the CST and local police units.

6.7 There is specific concern around the activities of religious extremist groups and political/organised right wing groups within the UK. Specific activity of religious extremist groups such as Al-Muhajiroun and Hizb-ut Tahrir typically takes the form of promoting their specific religion/politics, which may include anti-Semitic/anti-Western content.

6.8 Their message is conveyed via demonstrations, leafleting, stickering and via e-posting. Jewish community groups have expressed concern to the MPS around issues of inciting racial hatred on the Internet. SO13 have the remit for investigation of incitement offences

7. Islamophobia and the Stigmatisation of the Islamic Community

7.1 Recorded Islamophobic allegations pan-London have been consistently low since the inception of the "Faith" flag in January 2002. Conversely community concerns have remained high since 9/11. Again a number of "risk factors" have been identified in relation to this community, which relate to actual, perceived and potential threats.

7.2 These include domestic and international security related issues, instability within the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent eg disputes within Kashmir/Gujarat regions. Recent political successes of the right wing and their anti-asylum/immigration and anti-Muslim stance and sustained negative media focus has had an adverse impact and precipitated a number of community concerns.

7.3 Despite these threats generally specific Islamophobic targeting has been consigned to a few localised incidents that have been racially motivated but appear to assume an Islamophobic stance.

7.4 It should be reiterated that the nature and seriousness of the crime is only one dimension. When certain crimes specifically target this community they take on a more sinister aspect. An example of a critical incident in relation to Islamophobic crime relates to bacon placed on the deceased body of a Muslim female at a West London Hospital. Such issues if not managed professionally and sensitively by the MPS could lead to disaffection, a possible loss of confidence, increased targeting and repercussions from the Muslim community overall.

8. Inter-ethnic/Intra-religious Issues

8.1 Monitoring initiated post-September 11 has revealed some evidence of internal Muslim tensions, for example between Moroccan and Algerian groups, and between groups of Somali Muslims resulting in, for example, an ongoing turf war in the Lewisham area. Hostilities between Muslims and Hindus have also been evidenced. An incident includes pro-Hindu graffiti and vandalism of a Muslim Society building.

8.2 The motivation for a number of incidents in London including serious assaults and threats to kill appears to be motivated by anti-Israeli sentiment, with a number of assaults making reference to Palestine. It should be noted that a number of public order events/demonstrations relate specifically to boycotting Israeli goods therefore these incidents are not considered to be anti-Semitic. Similarly, a separate example will also include the extensive distribution of a number of flyers across London during 2002 marked "fascist nation", Zionist related issues are often perceived as anti-Jewish.

9. Civil Liberties/Policing Issues

9.1 The balance between policing terrorism and human rights is challenging. The recent arrests under Section 44 of the Terrorist Act 2000 have caused concerns voiced by members of the Muslim community not least in respect to the proportion of individuals charged who were arrested under this legislation. There are also human rights issues in relation to the British Nationals held at Guantanamo Bay and a comprehensive risk assessment has been completed by the MPS in relation to the repatriation of a number of British nationals to this country.

10. Media Issues

10.1 It is probable that the media whilst genuinely reporting terrorist issues may precipitate sensationalism, exaggeration and stereotyping. This is most pronounced in the portrayal of illegal asylum seekers/refugees. This group appears to have assumed the role of "social pariah". More dangerous is the right wing manipulation of this status and attempt to link this negative stereotyping to terrorism. This not only ostracises this community but may precipitate the misconception of a link between particular racial or religious groups and terrorist activity.

11. Conclusion

11.1 It has been vital that the MPS forge community links and engage in reassurance strategies where appropriate. Challenges with regard to community cohesion issues have been identified in a number of areas of this report.

11.2 Prior to the terrorist attacks in New York, the MPS had engaged in consultation with specific communities in accordance with statutory obligations.[27] It was however this specific event that precipitated a corporate pro-active community engagement strategy. This strategy continues across MPS business groups and our partner agencies and is being enhanced and embedded within service policy. This supports any immediate demand issues and resource allocation engaging all members of the community in relation to concerns, threats and cohesion.

11.3 Whilst the Diversity Directorate maintains a significant focus addressing hate crime, this focus has been broadened to accommodate emerging issues as appropriate. Thus our continued commitment to addressing faith-related targeting such as anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and the overall maintenance of community cohesion in the context of domestic and international security issues.

14 September 2004

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25. Memorandum submitted by the Ministry of Defence

1. The Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency (MDPGA) is responsible for both the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) and the MOD Guard Service (MGS). This submission refers to the MDP because MGS officers rarely come into contact with the community. The MDP provides armed security, uniform policing and the investigation of serious crime at some locations within the Ministry of Defence Estate.

Use of Stop and Search Powers

2. The authority to conduct a "stop and search" is granted by Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000. Between 1 April 2003 and March 2004 a total of 198 "stop and searches" were carried out by MDP. All stop and searches made by MDP officers were carried out under authorisations made by local Home Department Police Forces (HDPF). The MDP have not requested authorisation to stop and search independently of HDPF, though it may be necessary to do so in the future.

3. Currently, the training and briefing of officers who may be involved in stop and search is under review following the issue of Home Office Circular 38/2004. The review is to ensure both propriety and that the standard of each officer's training is sufficient to counter any potential criticism either of individual use or of general procedures.

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[27] Crime and Disorder Act 1988.

4. Although the MDP has not yet requested any authorisations to stop and search we do consider it prudent to identify the implications of the guidance and ensure compliance with the recommendations should the necessity arise.

5. The annex to the circular is used to document the information given to the Home Secretary, on which ministerial approval is sought. In addition to the details of start/expiry times and geographical extent, the form encourages attention to providing a detailed account of the justification for using the powers, and information on their prospective use, in order to assist Ministers in the decision of whether to confirm the authorisation.

6. The circular also suggests that "all authorising officers should give a brief outline of how officers involved in the use of the powers are instructed in the parameters of the legislation". The training should address diversity issues and it should be clear how these issues are communicated to officers. The circular recommends that written information to officers on the extent and use of Section 44 powers should, where practicable, be included as an annex to the authorisation. It also suggests that "officers should expect to explain the use of the powers and why they are being used".

7. Lord Carlile in his recent report on the operation of the Terrorism Act 2000, voiced concerns about the lack of guidance to police officers in enforcing the provisions. On that occasion the recommendation urged the Home Office and ACPO (Terrorism and Allied Matters) to produce new, short, clear and preferably nationally accepted guidelines for issue to all officers in Section 44 authorisation areas. The Home Office circular directs that forces requiring support for authorisation should be prepared to outline the training and briefing given to officers who are likely to be involved in enforcing it.

8. The Home Office circular directs that statistical data relating to the period of previous authorisation be provided to the Home Office. It also advises on the necessity to consider the community impact on the use of such powers and their strategic relevance.

9. Arrangements are in place whereby, when the Section 44 powers are exercised by MDP officers in support of authorisations made by their respective Home Department Police Forces, the details are reported directly to that force for inclusion in their statistics. MDP procedure is that the incident is also reported, via the Central Communications Room for inclusion in totals of "assistance provided" to other police forces under the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 provisions. This procedure ensures that the statistical information is captured in the most appropriate manner to ensure against duplicate reporting and there is nothing in the Home Office circular to necessitate any change to the system. However, a template form for recording summary use of Section 44 powers and the suggested format for request of authorisation is to be included on the force network so as to be readily available in the event of an MDP authorisation.

POLICING OF DEMONSTRATIONS

10. MDP officers when policing incidents involving protesters, utilise their powers according to their statutory office of constable. MDP policies and procedures have been formulated to support this role in accordance with UK Law and the European Convention on Human Rights.

11. In accordance with the manual of guidance on planning and preparation for demonstrations, an appropriate series of operational planning meetings are held between MDP, the local HDPF, and where applicable the RAF and United States Armed Forces (USAF) authorities. The meetings are held in advance of the known demonstration to establish the overall policing strategy, the numbers and specialisation of officers required to police the event, communication and vehicle requirements. A command chain is formed and the intelligence on demonstrator numbers and associated groups are assessed. The local intelligence officer works closely, with the local HDPF, MDP Special Branch as well as the American Office of Special Investigations (OSI) (where the demonstration is to be held at a USAF Base such as RAF Menwith Hill).

12. Immediately prior to the demonstration, further meetings are held with MOD Base Commanders, and other interested parties are invited, so that operational matters can be finalised.

13. The command structure for both MDP and the relevant HDPF is usually a Bronze Commander of Inspector or Chief Inspector rank "on the ground", a Silver Commander of Chief Inspector or Superintendent rank in the area and a Gold Commander usually of Assistant Chief Constable rank.

14. The event organisers are contacted to establish a communication link, to discuss the event programme, car parking, and establishing safe areas where persons may demonstrate peacefully.

15. Operation orders are produced in advance of the event. A final planning meeting is held to confirm the policing requirements and strategy. On the day of the demonstration, all officers policing the event attend operational briefings.

16. Many of the demonstrations policed by MDP are peaceful. However, some activist groups attach themselves to gates (lock-ons) or cause criminal damage. It is in these circumstances that most arrests are made. The major incidents are those of trespass, both civil and aggravated, on MOD land. Trespass is usually dealt with by issuing a five-step appeal to individuals and groups to leave the area voluntarily. Should the appeal fail, persons are either removed from MOD land by MDP acting as agents for the Crown, issued

with a Section 69 notice or arrested under Section 68 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, depending on the circumstances. PACE stop and search powers for items that could be used to commit criminal damage are now used in the policing of demonstrations.

17. Persons arrested at major demonstrations are moved to the nearest police station in batches, usually by means of a mobile custody unit. This releases officers back to the demonstration area.

18. MDP policed demonstrations most frequently occur at five UK bases made available to the United States visiting forces.

19. The safety and security of defence assets rely on officers policing anti-war and anti-US demonstrations. However, it is a small part of the wider MDP role in the MOD.

10 September 2004

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26. Memorandum submitted by the Muslim Council of Britain

INTRODUCTION

1. This response is submitted by the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB). The MCB is the leading umbrella organisation representing the interests of Muslims in Britain, whilst working for the common good of society as a whole. In its short history, the MCB has built a reputation for consultation, co-operation and co-ordination amongst British Muslims, and a step change in contact between them and the wider society. The MCB has over 400 active affiliate organisations, some of them being umbrella organisations themselves.

2. The MCB have been extremely concerned about the terrorist threat posed to the UK and have acted as far as its power and influence allow in trying to undermine that threat. We have sent letters to all our members and mosques, produced sermons and recently we have produced a booklet; all of these measures have emphasized the need for the Muslim community to be vigilant and cooperate fully with the authorities in identifying and defeating terrorism. This should not however be seen as an acceptance that a threat exists from the Muslim community.

3. In preparing this response paper the MCB have included the results of an extensive consultation process and survey with all of its affiliate members. The submissions cover the issues which the Committee is specifically considering in light of the concerns and issues facing the Muslim community in Britain.

ANTI-TERRORISM CRIME AND SECURITY ACT 2001

4. The Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 (hereinafter referred to as ATCSA) was introduced as a reaction to the tragic events of September 11 2001. The legislation has created a twin-track criminal justice system, whereby suspects falling within the ambit of "special anti-terrorism legislation" have fewer rights than other suspected criminals. It has given police almost unlimited powers for stop and search. The powers of stop and search as well as the process leading to and including detention under the Act are manifestly draconian and fall far short of the well known and greatly cherished values of British justice and the recognised civilised international norms.

5. Anti-terror measures always compete with and threaten the states obligations to respect the human rights of all within its jurisdiction. The very fact that anti-terror measures will be proactive means that there is an inevitable danger that they may be applied in a way discriminatory to those who are already vulnerable ie certain nationalities (or non-nationalities, races and religions). While public life has not changed, there has been a clear readjustment in some sections of society. Traditional right wing enemies of democracies that prey on vulnerable minorities have shifted their focus of aggression upon minorities whom they perceive to be targeted by the pro-active anti-terror measures.

6. It has been stated by the Government that the threat is from members of the Islamic faith. Police practice of targeting Muslims for raids and arrests have also reflected this assumption. Large sections of mainstream media and extreme right elements have mirrored this campaign by also focusing their attention on the aforementioned phenomenon and concluding that there is a broader security threat posed by Muslims in the UK. The result is an unprecedented boost to Islamophobia which members of the public now recognise as a legitimate and acceptable form of discrimination.

7. Targeting Muslims and leaving a right wing media to explain and justify such official discrimination results in a circular argument giving the very justification required to maintain a state of emergency. However this can only prove counter-productive to meeting our security needs by diverting increased resources on policing an increasingly marginalised community and alienating the very community whose cooperation is the most vital.

8. It is of the utmost importance that the challenges facing Muslim community in the UK are properly understood and considered before decisions affecting its future are made. We therefore specifically request the Secretary of State take on board the conclusions and recommendations of the Report on Islamophobia published by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (CBMI).

ANTI-TERRORISM CRIME AND SECURITY ACT 2001 PART 4

9. Part 4 of the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act of 2001, provides for indefinite detention of non-nationals suspected of links to a terrorist organization, but against whom there are no criminal charges. The UK has found it necessary to derogate from Article 5 ECHR. This represents perhaps in Europe today the single most serious violation of human rights linked to the adoption of counter terrorism measures. The UK is the only country in the Council of Europe to have considered it necessary to derogate from Article 5 of the Convention and the only country in the world to have derogated from Article 9 ICCPR.

10. The fact that only non-British nationals may be interned indefinitely sends alarming signals to British society that foreigners can and should be treated in a way that we cannot treat British nationals. The Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has expressed deep concern about this provision and has recommended to the Government that it seek to balance the security concerns with the protection of human rights and its international obligations.

11. Part 4 exemplifies the typical excesses of counter-terror legislation. Lord Justice Laws in the Court of Appeal accepted the Secretary of State's argument that the act is not discriminatory, as it could not justifiably apply such extreme measures to UK nationals and that to do so would only increase the aggregate human rights abuses committed. The absurdity of that argument is self-evident and brings not only the Government but also the Judiciary into disrepute. But the very point that detaining British citizens indefinitely on the same basis cannot be justified compromises the proposition that derogation from ECHR was necessary. It is the security threat alone that must justify derogation and not nationality; such arguments show that the security threat itself actually does not warrant derogation. The law requires the government to respect the human rights of all within its jurisdiction without discrimination. There is no justification for a law that targets only non-nationals if nationals are perfectly capable of carrying out the proscribed act. Current practice gives the perception that the Government is playing fast and loose with civil liberties and her international obligations and brings into question the sacredness of the values that we are supposed to be protecting from terrorists.

12. It must be recognized that states of emergencies can procure pressures on intelligence and enforcement agencies that are not in the interests of national security and rooted in prejudice. These realities combined with unchecked powers have resulted in grave human rights violations against vulnerable minorities in the not too distant past. The miscarriages of justice involving the Birmingham Six, Judith Ward, the Guildford Four and the Maguire's are examples of the results that flow from pressures being brought on the police, security services and the government. The MCB is concerned that the current environment is making the possibility of similar miscarriages more possible.

13. Another social effect of excessive legislation is to make acceptable what was once unacceptable when it comes to people who are perceived as being of a different race or religion. The recent judgement of the Court of Appeal making acceptable the use of evidence extracted by torture marks a retrogressive turning point in the British civil culture as repugnant as the reintroduction of slavery. None of the other 44 states that have incorporated the European convention on human rights has introduced detention without charge or trial, let alone allowed evidence generated by torture. Similarly, none of the 150 states of the UN convention have publicly taken such a position.

14. The effect of unjust laws directed at a distinguishable minority because of a threat they are purported to pose to the majority will mean that the majority will inevitably internalise that relationship and manifest that relationship in the form of prejudice. We draw attention to Paddy Hillyard's study (*Suspect Community—People's Experience of the Prevention of Terrorism Acts in Britain*), which noted that one of the results of the police treating the Irish as a suspect community is that the public are encouraged to do the same.[28]

15. All those detained under Part 4 are Muslim. In line with the observations of the Newton Committee, Lord Carlile and the JCHR, the MCB, as a result of the Muslim Communities experience, express deep concern as to the way the ATCSA has been applied exclusively to members of the Muslim community. It is noteworthy that no consideration appears to have been given to the carrying out of community/race or religious impact assessments prior to the passing of the legislation discussed in this submission. No qualitative surveys have been carried out as to the implantation of these new powers.

16. Traditionally racist entities over the past two years have pointed to the fact that all detained under Part 4 are Muslims as a major limb in their argument that all belonging to the Islamic faith should be removed from the UK. Recent research, such as that undertaken by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and xenophobia,[29] has revealed a huge increase in anti-Islamic feeling since 11th September 2001. The backlash has manifested itself in various forms. The number of reported verbal and physical assaults against Muslims has risen sharply and mosques across the country have been vandalised and Muslim cemeteries desecrated.

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[28] *Suspect Community—People's Experience of the Prevention of Terrorism Acts in Britain*, Paddy Hillyard, Pluto Press (1993).
[29] Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, May 2002.

17. The recent report by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (CBMI), has warned that more and more Muslims feel excluded from society and simmering tensions, especially in northern English towns, are in danger of boiling over and that there is a real danger of Britain becoming "institutionally Islamophobic".

Stop and Search

18. The pervasive nature of xenophobia is not restricted to extreme elements in society. When xenophobia is not challenged effectively by the state it quickly takes root in the higher echelons of society. Recent history tells us that it takes its most repugnant and powerful form when it is adopted by officialdom. It is difficult to pass a day without an aggressive tabloid and broadsheet newspaper piece that seeks to persuade its enthralled readership that Islam and Muslims present a threat to the UK. It is inevitable that decision-makers and enforcement agents will internalise prejudice and manifest this in their practice. According to the Home Office's own press release of 2 July 2004, Stops and searches under s 44 of TACT for Asians has risen by 302% from 744 to 2,989. The MCB believes the Muslim community is vindicated in its view that they are being targeted and victimised by this Act.

19. From data released by the MPS, out of 23,441 stops and searches by the Metropolitan police using Section 44 (1&2) only 199 arrests were made in 2002–03. This is only 0.85%, which is a staggering low success rate. The MCB endorses fully recommendation 5, 6, 16 to 19 of the MPA scrutiny panel's recommendation on this matter and asks the Secretary of the State to expedite the critical review of the use of stops and searches powers under s 44.

20. The community's distrust of the use of stops and searches is further fuelled by the lack of clarity as to why they are being stopped. This confusion is further compounded in the MPS itself as officers are under trained and not clear as to how, why and when they should be using these powers. There are many officers who believe the use of stops and searches is not, and should not be, based on intelligence; rather the power is there to be a "disruptive" element against terrorist cells. The MCB endorses the MPA scrutiny panel's recommendation 6, 16 to 19 and 29.

21. The fact that there is no accurate measurements of how many Muslims are being affected by this Act, in terms of Stop and Search, charge and the changes of those charges, is of great concern and adds to the alienation felt by the community. The respondents to MCB's survey have indicated that "the lack of official record keeping and publishing is adding to the suspicion that Muslims are being profiled and targeted by this Act." The MCB endorses the MPA scrutiny panel's recommendation 14, 20 and 27 and strongly believes that recording faith together with ethnicity will be one of the foremost solutions addressing this problem.

22. In this regard the Secretary of State is directed to the written and oral evidence (8 July 2004) the MCB gave to the Home Affairs Select Committee on our concerns about the impact of anti-terrorist legislation on the Muslim community.

Accountability

23. Khurshid Ahmed, a commissioner at the Commission for Racial Equality, recently highlighted the impact that the operation of anti-terrorism law has had:

> ". . . there is tremendous disquiet within the community . . . it has given licence to racist and religious bigots employed within the security services to unleash a form of terror on innocent people up and down the country . . . the community has the responsibility to co-operate with security agencies to ensure our own safety—but the way to get that co-operation is not by terrorising people and by allowing, without accountability, some within agencies to peddle their race hate among the communities."[30]

24. Of those surveyed by the MCB, 52% did not have a need to make a complaint to the police, 9% had complained and were satisfied with the response, but 39% felt that there would be no benefit in complaining to the police. Although recent statistics show a 300% rise in stop-and-search of Asians, predominantly Muslims, there has been no corresponding rise in complaints, the Independent Police Complaints Commission say this indicates that many people have lost confidence in the authorities.[31]

25. For many the case of Babar Ahmed is symbolic of police attitudes towards complaints from a suspect community. Early in 2004 a police officer was immediately suspended pending investigation when a complaint was brought that he had beaten a black man in Manchester. It had taken the IPCC nine months to investigate the claim by Babar Ahmed that he had been beaten during a terror raid and forced to prostrate and told by a police officer "where is your God now!" It is alleged that Mr Ahmed suffered over 40 injuries including a black eye and severe bruising.[32] During the latter investigation the police officer in question was free to continue policing. The difference in the two approaches speaks volumes to members of the public. We are concerned how rare the use of an apology is when the police/authorities have clearly acted wrongly.

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[30] *UK Extremism Threat Growing,* BBC News Online, 23 April 2004.
[31] Victims of police are urged to speak out, *Eastern Eye,* http://www.easterneyeuk.co.uk/iframe__story.asp?NID=793.
[32] Taken from www.stoppoliceterror.com December 2003.

26. When 10 Manchester Muslims were arrested in dawn raids in April 2004 by over 400 officers the Sun stated "Intelligence chiefs believe Al Qa'eda fanatics planned to blow themselves up amid 67,000 unsuspecting supporters. A source said: 'The target was Old Trafford.'"[33] The same paper also stated "a police source said: 'The plot involved several individual bombers in separate parts of the stadium. If successful, any such attack would have caused absolute carnage. Thousands of people could have been killed.'" The newspaper also had access to detailed information regarding the evidence collected by the police that day—specific football tickets. There can be little doubt that members of the Police force improperly disclosed confidential information contrary to existing police disciplinary code. It was also felt that the police source would have known the very serious and damning consequences of the leak and the fact that it's only possible purpose could have been to feed anti Muslim hysteria.

27. The Muslim Safety Forum[34] requested the Chief Constable Greater Manchester Police to carry out an investigation into the improper disclosure of information.[35] The Chief Constable's office acknowledged that the source of the newspaper article may well have been members of his force but concluded that it was "impractical" to investigate.

28. The blithe manner in which complaints from the Muslim community are dealt with give the strong impression that they are being discriminated against and that their rights can and will be breached with impunity.

PROSCRIBING LEGITIMATE POLITICAL THOUGHT—CRIMINALISING COMMUNITIES

29. From the 25 proscribed international organizations under the Terrorism Act 2000, 20 are of Muslim background and most, barring the obvious few whose prime objective is violence, are associated with liberation movements that have never posed a threat to mainland national security.

30. Most of the Belmarsh detainees are held because they support the Chechen cause for self-determination and from the publicly available information there is no evidence that they either planned or intended to bring harm to the UK. They are certified as non-UK nationals whom the Secretary of State reasonably believes as being "suspected international terrorists". Serious as those allegations are, on the facts of the cases, it still does not amount to "a threat to national security". Article 15 of the ECHR, permits derogation from Convention rights, "to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation".

31. There is a danger that struggles for the right to self-determination (Article 1 of the UN Charter) recognised by many as legitimate can be deemed as unlawful, under the Act. Bosnian attempts to resist Serbian ethnic cleansing in 1992 was deemed by many in the Ministry of Defence to be unjustified aggression and support for that could have been proscribed under the present act; however the Government today accepts that a campaign of crimes against humanity had been perpetrated against the Muslims then.

32. Domination, discrimination and denigration of groups and individuals are causes and sometime justifications for terrorism and its proponents. It also the case that certain groupings of people may be vulnerable to oppression because they are powerless and marginalised in international politics and therefore unable to exert political influence in any given state or to express themselves to a sophisticated media in a modern democracy. However there are categories of persons in a modern democracy that will support voiceless oppressed minorities, either those with specific interest in international events or those with a link to those people through geography or cultural and religious interest. Far more often then not a beleaguered and sometimes unfair response by leading international powers will result in international terrorist groups filling in the void left by the lack of political will to ensure compliance with international law.

33. A disproportionate number of the world's population that are oppressed are Muslims, either as minorities, as in Chechnya, or as majorities, as in Algeria. Regardless of nationality and ethnicity Muslims tend to have considerable sympathy with these causes and if "terrorist" organisations also assist in these causes then there is a danger of criminalising specific communities. Even if the Government is restricted from positively influencing the affairs of another nation there is much that could be done to allow citizens to express support for causes without feeling they need to go underground. In this regard we adopt the observations and recommendations of Ben Majekodunmi, Assistant to the Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary General:

> Many terrorist groups seek legitimacy by claiming to be defending human rights and to have resorted to terrorism as a last resort to address human rights concerns. If there were genuine human rights defenders actively, visibly and effectively addressing those same human rights concerns, this would help to reduce any claim to legitimacy that these terrorist groups are making. In many instances there are human rights defenders addressing many issues that terrorist groups are also claiming to support but the problem is the perception that those human rights defenders

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[33] *The Sun,* 20 April 2004.

[34] The Muslim Safety Forum is an independent body made up of major Islamic organisations. It sits regularly with the MPS to help build better police and community relations.

[35] Letter to Michael J. Todd, Chief Constable Greater Manchester Police, Re Request for investigation into disclosure of confidential information, 1 June 2004.

are not being successful in their efforts. My second recommendation would be that supporting human rights defenders and seeking implementation of the Declaration on Human Rights defenders could be included as a key strategy in counter-terrorism and human rights efforts.[36]

34. The divisive political culture that surrounds anti-terrorist legislation can all too easily be manipulated by countries that practice oppression and their supporters to silence genuine voices of peace and moderation. An example of this was the fiasco whereby Sir John Stevens was misled by a pro-Israeli member of the MPA and the media to publicly state that he did not wish members of the police to share the same stage as Yusuf Al-Qardawi, a sentiment he later retracted. Mr Al-Qardawi is one of the world's most influential Islamic scholars whose consistent condemnation of 9/11 and his practical efforts to assist its victims have earned him global praise as the leading Muslim figure for peace. Similarly in the US the Swiss Professor Tariq Ramadan, listed by *Time* magazine as one of the world's most influential figures who has also advised the British police and has been identified by Sir John Turnbull as a necessary figure in the fight against extremism, has had his visa revoked preventing him from taking up his teaching position at a university there on the basis that he poses a threat to national security. The State Department acted on the basis of information given to it by pro-Israeli groups based in France.[37]

35. It is not difficult for powerful political interests to tar peacemakers with the brush of terrorism and there exists little or no institutional safeguards to prevent this. If political interests can influence the actual decision makers then the lack of due process in anti-terror legal regimes means that it is an instrument that can be easily manipulated for interests entirely irrelevant to the nation's security or interest. This represents an enormous abuse of authority and trust that can be used in a manner contrary to the national interest. A prime example of this is in the United States. Currently, a Pentagon analyst from the office of Douglas J. Feith, Under Secretary of Defence for Policy, is under investigation for spying for Israel. Feith oversaw the Pentagon's defunct Office of Special Plans, which critics said fed policy-makers uncorroborated pre-war intelligence on President Saddam Hussein's Iraq, involving purported ties with the al-Qaeda terror network.[38]

36. Another factor that leads many to perceive that current anti-terrorist legislation is unfair is the fact that well-known terrorist organizations with anti-Muslim ideologies are not proscribed. Kach Kahane, a Zionist organization proscribed both in the US and Israel, the VHP which is responsible for coordinating the massacre of over 2,000 Gujarati Muslims; both are freely able to collect funds for overseas terrorist activities. A failure to fairly administer these overwhelming powers may lead to the perception that legislation is a political tool to suppress political dissent and this bites at its very public legitimacy and therefore efficacy.

37. It is in the interest of national security and justice that space which allows citizens to express support for legitimate human rights causes, even though they may coincide with causes pursued by "terrorist" organisations, be jealously guarded and even supported by the state in order that its supporters be not driven underground as was the case with the Irish population in England over a decade ago. The need to differentiate between terrorism and political acts of violence has recently been touched upon in the representations made by the ICJ to the UN:

> There is also a growing tendency to eliminate or restrict the concept of "political offence" in domestic legislation and to consider violent forms of political opposition as terrorist acts. Armed opposition groups may certainly commit terrorist acts forbidden by international law, for which they must be prosecuted and tried. This does not mean, however, that all violent acts carried out for political purposes amount to terrorist acts. Political offences and terrorism are two categories, governed by different legal regimes, especially with regard to extradition, amnesty and asylum.[39]

38. Paramount is the need for the decision maker to take counsel in regards to international affairs from objective experts whose credentials are properly tested and measured in their field. Decision makers must be wary of impartial sources of information which will always be readily and attractively available but in the long term will be detrimental to national security and interests. The process whereby organisations are proscribed must be more transparent and according to strict criteria that are not subject to political influences or led by non-national security concerns.

39. If the Secretary of State does have a wide definition of international terrorism that possibly includes liberation movements it is essential that such terrorism be differentiated from a terrorist threat to national security which may attract extraordinary measures such as ECHR derogation. A failure to treat the two differently may compromise national security as the state may be acting unjustly in the international arena by preventing struggles against oppression, for example organisations that partake in terrorist violence because they are have no alternative, such as was the case with the ANC.

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[36] Ben Majekodunmi, Assistant to the Special Representative of the Secretary General; ICJ Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism: International Monitoring Systems, October 23 (afternoon) Palais des Nations (Room XVI), Geneva.

[37] Muslim Scholar Loses US Visa As Query is Raised, Stephen Kinzer, *New York Times*, 8/26/04.

[38] 11 FBI Probes if Official Spied for Israel, Curt Anderson, AP 28/08/2004.

[39] ICJ representations to the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, 56th Session, 26 July to 13 August 2004, Agenda Item 2.

40. But the need to differentiate and focus specifically on defeating terrorism posing a threat to the UK carries it's own weight and logic, and surely to act otherwise while using the language of national security is an abuse of authority.

41. The Secretary of State has indicated that he does intend to replace Part 4 with legislation that will criminalise UK citizens who associate with "terrorist" organizations as well as to allow the use of intercept evidence. Greater attention needs to be paid to ensuring proscription is limited to defeating threats facing the UK and that it is administered impartially. The MCB have serious concerns as to the impartiality of the current proscription process and feel widening the net may entrench an already unfair position. There have been three years since 9/11, it is time a more comprehensive and considered anti-terrorist strategy was thought up rather then simply building on emergency provisions.

COUNTER-TERRORISM AND THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

42. The Director-General of the Security Service, Eliza Manningham-Buller, has informed the public "it is clear that the threat from Islamist terrorism will be with us for a long time. I see no prospect of a significant reduction in the threat posed to the UK and its interests from Islamist terrorism over the next five years, and I fear for a considerable number of years thereafter."[40] The Home Secretary has stated that the threat to national security was self-evident from information already in the public domain.[41]

43. In January 2003 the Secretary of State told the *Today* program that the police had "actually picked up those who, actually were planning to set up a cell to threaten our country". It has been reported that both lawyers and journalists believed that the Government had given the media the "green light" to disregard provisions of The 1981 Contempt of Court Act and provide sensationalist coverage of such arrests.[42]

44. The earlier practice of the Government to draw media attention to anti-terror campaigns mirrored US practice, as indeed did the decision to administer indefinite administrative detention without trial. Recently there has been widespread criticism that the US administration is using counter terror campaigns to foster a climate of fear for the purpose of political expedience, this has also has coincided with the growing unacceptability expressed by American civil society and jurisprudence with their practice of indefinite detention. There is a perception that the UK government had not only followed the US in foreign policy but also in domestic policy re derogation and legislation. It is inevitable also that the public will view domestic anti-terror policy through the prism of international policy, and this does little to inspire confidence, especially in terms of the intelligence that leads the government to act.

45. More recently the Secretary of State has refused to elaborate on the terrorist threat facing the UK as to do so "would prejudice any trial" and also because the inevitable scrutiny that follows may "invite ridicule". The first concern is a laudable one but the second can only raise more searching questions about whether a state of emergency justifying derogation actually exists.

46. Concerns from our affiliates varied according to race, age and background, but the one factor that each rated as primarily instrumental in stoking Islamophobia was the impact of how the practice of counter-terror measures were portrayed to the public. While many of those wrongfully targeted under the act are released or acquitted, they can never recover from the stigma attached to them and their community. High profile, extravagant and untruthful media attention on arrests under the Act coupled with relative silence on acquittals and releases have left a devastating impression of the Muslim UK community being a fifth column. Over 76% of our members felt that the attitude of the general public towards Muslims had changed for the worse over the past three years. Islamophobia is increasingly becoming acceptable and already is a legitimate form of discrimination.

47. As identified in the CBMI report the current wave of Islamophobia gains oxygen from the domestic and international counter terror measures taken by the Government and the way these are reported in the media. The government has been sensitive to Muslim concerns via institutionally defined media and public relations protocol. The MCB commend the sensitive language used in official press releases.

48. The Secretary of State has repeatedly informed the public that he is not against Muslims but he is against "terrorists". This makes little difference to the public who are fed a consistent stream of images of Muslims being dragged from their beds and arrested as suspected terrorists coupled with officialdom warning against Islamic terror. Below is the text of an email recently sent to the MCB, it is typical of the many regularly received by the MCB:

Sent: Thursday, August 26, 2004 10:42 AM

Subject: more

Do I need to say more?

"Dirty bomb" 8 at Bailey

EIGHT men accused of a "dirty bomb" plot appeared at the Old Bailey yesterday for the first time.

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[40] James Smart lecture, 16 October 2003.
[41] 14 March 2004 (HC 417-i).
[42] *The Observer*, "How to stitch up a terror suspect", Nick Cohen, Sunday 12 January 2003.

O! Look all Muslims!!

They are charged with conspiracy to murder and commit public nuisance with radioactive materials, gases, chemicals or explosives.

49. From our survey many members of the Muslim community feel that the high profile arrests of Muslim terror suspects and the relative silence that follows is part of a campaign to tarnish the community. The wide scale raids against members of the Muslim are in line with the infamous national anti-terrorist strategy of "disruption" which had such counter-productive effects on the Irish community. The controversial policy is designed to unsettle terror cells working within immigrant communities in Britain by carrying out sweeps of arrests which are not necessarily designed to lead to charges. It follows that if as the Director-General of Security Services believes the threat is an "Islamic" one then the strategy needs to target that community. Many Muslim leaders now believe disruption is beginning to severely alienate communities from the police. There is a wealth of information available bearing testimony to the way the anti-terror regime in the 80s forced the Irish community in England underground providing a fertile ground for the cultivation of terrorism. It is astonishing that there have been no measures in place to counter the discriminatory effects of current counter-terrorist legislation.

50. The earlier practice of the Secretary of State to draw spectacular attention to "Islamic terror" arrests has whetted the appetite of many of the right wing press who are now unable to present a picture other then that there is a threat from the Muslim community for fear of losing credibility. There are many measures that should be considered to buffer the negative public perception.

51. There must be a determined approach to prosecuting breaches under the Contempt of Court Act 1981. The serious way in which leaks to the press are considered when Government interests are at stake, such as in the David Kelly affair and the leaking of the Hutton report, stands in contrast to the unconcern expressed when it comes to rights to a fair trial of a suspect or the Muslims communities right to be free from discrimination. When the Attorney General was presented evidence that members of the Government, Intelligence services and media had colluded not only in contempt of court but also that the published information was simply not true, his reaction was merely to send notes to editors reminding them of the 1981 provisions. The Race Relations Act makes it obligatory for the government to legislate and carry out its affairs in a manner conducive to race relations.

52. The long standing practice of the authorities to neither confirm nor deny media speculation into ongoing investigations warrant departure when fabricated stories could cause in the public unwarranted hysteria and distress not to mention fostering racial and religious discrimination. The Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith, was aware that *The Sun* was planning to run a fabricated story claiming that Old Trafford was an "Islamic bomb target", but decided against issuing an injunction against the paper as he decided it "would not be appropriate".[43] If the Government can intrude into individual human rights because of exceptional circumstances surely the very real threat posed to the Muslim community and race relations would justify limited press interference to ensure that the public is not falsely misled to such an extent that it may threaten public security or race relations.

53. Members of the Muslim community feel the Government should take more steps to attempt to reverse the negative image that has resulted from its counter-terror campaign. When critics point to the fact that of the 500 plus arrests of Muslims most have been released it is common to hear the reply from Government sources that there have been 15 convictions and that this was worth it. Despite long-standing calls by the MCB and the Muslim Safety Forum to give details of those arrests none were forthcoming from the Government. It has taken a report from the Institute of Race Relations (IRR) published in August 2004 to inform the public that only three of the 15 were Muslims and of these two have been given leave to appeal against their convictions; the other convictions were of racists and loyalists.[44] This type of information should be more readily produced and promoted by the Government to counter wide public misconceptions and prejudice.

54. An individual arrested under counter-terror measures suffers a public humiliation the stigma of which is long-lasting. Steps can be taken to redress the grievances of those who are wrongfully arrested and the wider Muslim community who are disaffected by such measures. Such measures would reverse the negative impact of "disruption" and ensure that rightwing elements cannot manipulate anti-terror arrests to promote racial discord.

55. The level of disinformation about Islam that has dominated the media on the back of the anti-terror coverage is unprecedented. Greater promotion of Islam Awareness Week, anti-discrimination posters that promote tolerance of both different religions and races, anti-terror posters that warn that most terror attacks have come from right wing elements—these are all practical steps that can and should be taken to reduce the fast growing phenomenon of Islamophobia.

56. The MCB are extremely concerned with lack of protection that is afforded to the Muslim community per se. The lack of legislation protecting followers of multi-ethnic faiths such as Islam and the failure to outlaw incitement to religious hatred exposes one of the most vulnerable and marginalized minorities in the UK to further harm and contributes to the ensemble of factors that lead many to conclude that Muslims

[43] "Man U bomb plot probe ends in farce", *The Observer,* 2 May 2004.
[44] http://www.muslimnews.co.uk/paper/index.php?article=1640.

are discriminated and victimized by the current spate of anti-terror measures. Our democracy is deficient for its want of protection for a minority actively discriminated against and mainstream legislation is clearly its proper place. But in the short-term absence of parliamentary will to pass such legislation the MCB would welcome its legislative introduction via counter-terror measures. The arguments for such a provision are strong, because minorities are the most affected by such legislation it is important that all minorities are equally protected, not least the one that is most disaffected.[45]

57. The MCB firmly believes that instead of fulfilling its declared objective of improving and enhancing security, the Act has in reality, by its strong focus on the Muslim community, caused it further alienation and disillusionment. As Lord Carlile in his February 2003 report on the review of Sections 21–23 acknowledged that the Act had "a significant impact upon a particular group of the resident community . . ." Some police have expressed misgivings about a law that in practice has only applied to Muslims (because all those currently detained are Muslim): there is a sense that it causes real resentment among parts of the Muslim community who are both "residents and nationals of the United Kingdom, and possibly makes some aspects of policing more difficult".

58. The ways in which anti-terror powers are being used has led to feelings of isolation amongst the 1.6 million Muslims in the UK. In the Muslim Community there is disillusionment with the Government which, rather than protecting them from the evil of Islamophobia, is effectively criminalising them as a community by discriminate and disproportionate use of the Act. Muslims feel as if they are under siege. The MCB relies on and fully supports the conclusions and recommendations of the Newton Committee and the Joint Committee on Human Rights. We also request the Secretary of State specifically take on board the conclusions and recommendations of the Report on Islamophobia so as to give its relevant recommendations the official authority that they currently lack.

23 September 2004

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27. Memorandum submitted by Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK

The Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK campaigns against Islamophobia and aims to encourage Muslim participation in mainstream British politics. MPACUK runs a website (www.mpacuk.org) and an e-group.

THE STIGMATISATION OF MINORITY GROUPS PUBLICLY "ASSOCIATED" WITH TERRORISM—ISLAMOPHOBIA AND MEDIA COVERAGE

British Muslims are equally as at risk as our non-Muslim neighbours from any terrorist threats to our country. Muslims are however also subjected to stigmatisation and discrimination as a result of political and media responses to terrorism.

Terrorism is unfairly associated with Islam in media and political discourse. Atrocities such as 11 September are routinely referred to as "Islamic terrorism" whereas IRA bombings were not similarly termed "Catholic terrorism". Media coverage often portrays British Muslims as a threat: "You've heard of al-Qa'eda, but it simply means 'the base'. Built on the base are hundreds of shifting, amoebic grouplets who may, for all you know, be living next door to you in Luton or Burnley." (Charles Moore, *The Daily Telegraph,* 11/9/04). A particularly vociferous example of using terrorism to stigmatise Muslims is the recent series of articles by "Will Cummins" in *The Sunday Telegraph:* eg ". . .the menacing behaviour we have come to expect from the Muslims who have forced themselves on Christendom, a bullying ingratitude that culminates in a terrorist threat to their unconsulted hosts". (4 July 2004).

Arrests of Muslims under anti-terrorism legislation receive very prominent media coverage. However when these same individuals are released without charge, as has often been the case, this receives little or no media coverage. The public is therefore given the distorted perception that many Muslims are guilty of terrorist offences when the reality is that many innocent Muslims are being arrested and the majority of those convicted under anti-terrorism legislation are non-Muslims (see report by the Institute of Race Relations http://www.irr.org.uk/2004/september/ak000004.html).

The British National Party have focused their rhetoric specifically against Muslims, as was witnessed in their party political broadcasts in the recent European elections and of course the BBC documentary "The Secret Agent", (BBC1, 15/7/04). The BNP are exploiting media Islamophobia—for example leader Nick Griffin cites mainstream journalists such as Peter Hitchens, Richard Littlejohn and Polly Toynbee as justifying his views on Muslims (eg *Newsnight* interview BBC2 15/7/04). The BNP are also cynically exploiting the legal loop-hole that results from a lack of protection of Muslims compared to groups that are protected under the Race Relations Act, such as Jews and Sikhs.

Mainstream politicians need to be especially aware of the need for responsible political discourse in relation to statements regarding the Muslim community. For example in November/ December 2003 Denis McShane MP was reported to have said in a speech that Muslims in Britain must choose between the

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[45] See Response from MCB to government white paper—*Fairness for All—A New Commission For Equality and Human Rights.*

"British way and the terrorist way". Although he later apologised for the offence caused his original words did great damage to the Muslim community whose loyalty and morals were once again unfairly called into question.

Rising Islamophobia impacts on all aspects of the everyday lives of British Muslims. (eg Muslim names harm job chances, Hugh Muir, *The Guardian*, 12/7/04 http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk—news/story/0,,1258919,00.html). Yet there does not appear to be any serious effort on behalf of the government to tackle the growing problem of Islamophobia in our society.

CIVIL LIBERTIES/POLICING ISSUES

The huge gap between the numbers arrested or stopped and searched under anti-terrorism legislation and the tiny number of convictions raises serious questions as to how the police are using these powers. The statistics point to the conclusion that the police are targeting Muslims rather than working on the basis of effective intelligence. Such can only serve to erode trust in the police within the Muslim community. This is especially so when the police are not seen to be effectively tackling Islamophobic crime suffered by Muslims. Furthermore there is little confidence that cases of Islamophobic abuse by police are adequately dealt with (eg Muslim held in terror raid "suffered 50 injuries", Vikram Dodd, *The Guardian* 11/9/04). The impression that the human rights of Muslims are being sacrificed in the "war on terror" is particularly difficult to avoid given the fact that it is also Muslims who are being indefinitely detained without charge or trial at Belmarsh Prison. In addition the mistreatment of British Muslims detained at Guantanamo Bay by Britain's closest ally appears to have been tolerated and even colluded in by the British government and security services.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION:

— Legislate to provide Muslims with equal protection to other minority groups who are already protected under the Race Relations Act—including protection from incitement to hatred. (Extending this protection to Muslims would be consistent with the inclusion of Jews as a group protected under the Race Relations Act who, like Muslims, are a group with diverse geographical origins but sharing a common religious heritage).

— End the use of indefinite detention without trial currently being implemented under the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 and end the derogation from Britain's human rights commitments.

— Ensure media regulation effectively combats Islamophobia. For example the Press Complaints Commission Code of Practice currently offers British Muslims no effective redress in relation to inaccurate, distorted and inflammatory articles as the code does not apply to statements about a group, rather than a specific individual and is not applied in the case of opinion pieces.

— Introduce measures to tackle police Islamophobia. Review use of anti-terrorism powers by police and implement plans to ensure they are not used in a way that discriminates against or targets Muslims or other groups.

— Examine the role of the Police in media coverage of arrests under anti-terrorist legislation and implement plans to minimise the impact on the Muslim community.

We feel it is particularly important that the committee should consider a wide range of relevant independent research and information—we have therefore included additional references below.

12 September 2004

REFERENCES:

— Stop Police Terror Campaign: www.stoppoliceterror.com

— Islamic Human Rights Commission: www.ihrc.org

— Institute of Race Relations www.irr.org.uk
http://www.irr.org.uk/pdf/terror—arrests—study.pdf

— Campaign against Criminalising Communities: www.cacc.org.uk

— Islamophobia: issues, challenges and action. A report by the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, 2004, Trentham Books.

28. Memorandum submitted by Namdhari Sangat UK

RESPONSE TO Q-164 OF EVIDENCE AT HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SESSION ON 16 NOVEMBER 2004 ON "TERRORISM AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS" BY JAGDEESH SINGH

The Namdhari Sikh community has forged close links with the Swaminarayan Mandir before the Mandir's inauguration in 1995. By working with the organisation and its members for over a decade, we confirm that we know not of any organisation other than the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission and its associated bodies, have ever organised, operated from, been based at or conducted any action from the Neasden Temple.

The unfounded allegations of the alleged activities goes against the ethos promoted by the Temple. The baseless nature of the comments is deemed as slanderous to the Swaminarayan Mandir, its members and the wider Hindu community.

In today's volatile race relations climate it is vital that comments such as the one the Temple has become victim of do not make it to the public domain without its authenticity and creditability being verified. The Namdhari Sikh community collectively considers the testimony given to the Committee to be utterly baseless and false.

We note that the minutes of evidence goes unchallenged. In this state, such an unchallenged allegation may wrongly infer credibility to the notion put forward to the Committee. We kindly request, on behalf of the Namdhari Sikh community that the factual inaccuracy be corrected. We should therefore be grateful if the response from the Swaminarayan Temple were publicly known, in the interests of community relations.

Please let it be known that the Namdhari Sikh community are not part of and do not agree with the derogatory views expressed by Mr Jagdeesh Singh of the Sikh Community Action Network.

Harvinder Singh Sian
Jeetej Singh
Daljit Kaur Ryatt
on behalf of the Executive Committee

5 December 2004

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29. Memorandum submitted by the National Secular Society

SECTION A—INTRODUCTION

WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1866 by radical MP Charles Bradlaugh, the National Secular Society is the most prominent organisation in Britain supporting the rights of the non-religious and campaigning for an end to religious privilege and the separation of church and state.

OUR INTEREST IN THIS CONSULTATION

The NSS has, since its foundation, been in the forefront of the battle to protect the right of free speech and expression. This concern was originally prompted by the existence of blasphemy laws but has since been directed at wider protection of free speech from threats by growing religious pressure.

We would be keen to give oral evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee on legislative proposals on "religious incitement" and religious discrimination, as well as the blasphemy laws and the operation of the recently introduced higher maximum sentences for religiously aggravated offences (more details of which are shown below).

The Society worked closely with the House of Lords Religious Offences Select Committee (ROC) in 2002 and 2003 as well as submitting oral and written evidence.[46] The Committee was set up following the defeat of the Government's measure included in the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 (A-TCSA) to add "religious hatred" to the incitement to racial hatred provisions.

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[46] Oral 18 July 2002
http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200203/ldselect/ldrelof/95/2071804.htm (around question 223.)
Written http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200203/ldselect/ldrelof/95/2071810.htm
2nd Written http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200203/ldselect/ldrelof/95/2071811.htm

The Society and several unions also opposed extensive religious exemptions in the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 and Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, discussing the matter with two ministers. Our intervention resulted in a successful amendment in the EU Parliament to the original Directive. The UK Regulations have been the subject of a judicial review and a complaint to the EU Commission by the Society backed by an all-party group of MEPs.

We were called to give our views in person on the proposed religious incitement law to the Community Cohesion Unit (CCU) of the Home Office on 7 October and it was thought appropriate there that we should also submit our views to the Home Affairs Select Committee.

THE HOME OFFICE

The Government has established a Faith Communities unit which assures us that it also represents those without faith, yet there is no formal representation for those without faith. The non-religious have received just tokenistic mention in: "Working Together: Co-operation between Government and Faith Communities" published on 29 March and not even that in the Home Office's citizenship survey (Home Office Research Study 274); it almost entirely ignores the non-religious, even as a control group. Both these Home Office publications were published in March 2004. We recommend a formal acknowledgement by the Home Office that the non-religious community be equally catered for, including in publications.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

In the Australian Newspaper *The Age* on 4 June 2004, Amir Butler, executive director of the Australian Muslim Public Affairs Committee criticised the reasoning behind the religious vilification laws and we hope the Committee will bear these in mind in its deliberations on related issues in the UK:

> "The problem is that as long as religions articulate a sense of what is right, they cannot avoid also defining—whether explicitly or implicitly—what is wrong. If we love God, then it requires us to hate idolatry. If we believe there is such a thing as goodness, then we must also recognise the presence of evil. If we believe our religion is the only way to Heaven, then we must also affirm that all other paths lead to Hell. If we believe our religion is true, then it requires us to believe others are false. Yet, this is exactly what this law serves to outlaw and curtail . . .

> All these anti-vilification laws have achieved is to provide a legalistic weapon by which religious groups can silence their ideological opponents, rather than engaging in debate and discussion. In doing so, people who otherwise might have been ignored as on the fringes of reality will be made martyrs, and their ideas given an airing far beyond anything they might have hoped for. And at the same time as extremist ideas are strengthened and given legitimacy by attempts to silence them, the position in our society of the religions themselves is weakened and undermined. Who, after all, would give credence to a religion that appears so fragile it can only exist if protected by a bodyguard of lawyers?"

1. We also have grave misgivings about the deterioration in freedom of expression in recent years and cited the failure to prosecute those threatening Salman Rushdie with violence or death. Several of our honorary associates have been intimidated for expressing views that impinge on Islam. Polly Toynbee has been the subject of pressure from the Islamic Human Rights Commission, in the form of an "award", for (they claimed) being the most Islamophobic journalist. She had written about the right of the French government to run their secular state as they wished. As a result of which she received hate mail that she found threatening. For articulating the same view, another honorary associate, Dr Evan Harris MP, has been named by the Islamic Human Rights Commission as a "Islamophobic" politician and has been the subject of attacks by Muslims both in the press and through leaflets which have been distributed, and which were sufficiently threatening for him to report the matter to the police. We fear that public pressure brought by the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) on those with which they disagree (including open letters to editors, shown on their website) had resulted in widespread self-censorship in the media. We are convinced that this is already operating more generally to restrict healthy open debate and is being reinforced because of fear of the draconian maximum penalties of Section 39 ATCSA and would be increased with any religious incitement law.

2. We believe some religious people will consider any criticism of their religion as part of free debate to be an insult to them personally, and will therefore press for the criminal law to be used by pressing for religiously aggravated insult charges. We believe there is a growing expectation among minority religious groups that the law should to be applied to stifle such free debate, and that Section 29 ATCSA has fuelled such expectations and any introduction of a religious incitement law would do so even more. The MCB have specifically indicated their expectation that the proposed religious incitement law will be used to protect Islam from insult (referred to in Section B 9 below). This significant potential threat to freedom of expression and to a whole new area of "religious" litigation might not be confined to criticism by the non-religious.

3. Both the proposed incitement law and the existing Section 39 ATCSA can also be expected to result in cases being taken out against religious defendants, and not just non-religious defendants, as religions are generally antithetical to each other and also therefore potentially insulting to all others. A further objection to laws that protect religions themselves from insult is that they discriminate in favour of the religious while

the non-religious are unlikely to receive equivalent protection. We note that, following what we understand to be a concerted campaign by the Roman Catholic church, the BBC has decided against broadcasting a satirical cartoon about the RC's pontiff that cost the taxpayer millions of pounds.

4. We emphasise that freedom of expression is not just an ideal (which we strive to defend)—we are convinced that free expression helps to control such excesses by exposing them to rational argument through the rigours of public debate.

Section B. Proposed Incitement to Religious Hatred Law

1. We believe that the existing law is adequate to deal with the problem of incitement such as resorted to by, for example, racist groups. Much of the justification for adding "religious" to "race" related to such groups using religion as a proxy. In particular, however, we note that the CPS Guidance on prosecuting racial and religious crime referring to the current absence of a religious incitement law noted that: "the courts have yet to decide if behaviour that is aimed ostensibly at a religious group is capable of amounting to an incitement to racial hatred where the members of a group are also members of a racial group". It can be concluded that the courts have not ruled out wider use of the racial incitement law as a possible solution, and one which we feel should be examined further.

We accept that our proposals would not protect for example white Muslims, but we doubt whether the scale of this problem of them alone being singled out for hatred justifies the major risks such legislation runs in terms of freedom of expression or self-censorship.

2. Other measures open to prosecutors include anti-social behaviour orders, Criminal Sentencing Act 2000 s 153 (extending the sentencing duty) and Crime and Disorder Act 1998 s 28 and the provisions against conspiracy are also likely to be of use. It is often the case that other offences will have been committed at the same time as alleged incitement to hatred.

3. The Lords' Religious Offences Committee (ROC), with whom we worked closely, had started out by trying to replicate the Home Secretary's previous attempt to introduce religious incitement law. Some of the opposition was partly about the procedure: that the proposals (a) had been formulated without sufficient time for due consideration; and (b) an anti-terrorism bill was not an appropriate legislative vehicle. Although the ROC set out by intending to reintroduce the Government's 2001 Incitement to Religious Hatred proposals in a more timely manner and with a draft ad hoc Bill, after taking a great deal of evidence over many months it later abandoned this approach as being unsustainable, which was also the position the Society had advocated, and felt unable to recommend a satisfactory alternative.

4. The ROC specifically concluded that the racial incitement law did not work satisfactorily. It is rarely used, difficult to obtain convictions and there is a great concern that failure to secure a conviction could result in "victorious" publicity for the acquitted. There seems even less prospect for it working for religious hatred than it has for race hatred.

5. There was extensive opposition drawn from a wide political, cultural and even religious spectrum to Government's previous attempt to introduce this law, and opposition is mounting on a similar scale against the current attempt. We cannot see what grounds the Home Secretary has to be confident that all the opponents of his previous attempt and the ROC were misguided and that he is justified in attempting to take the same broad approach once more.

6. We were concerned about the Attorney General's draft guidelines published in 2001 by David Blunkett in a last ditch attempt to secure more support for his previous attempt to introduce a religious incitement law. In our view, they would have provided for more lenient treatment of the religious than the non-religious in terms of the prosecution of offences under the proposed religious incitement provisions. (Extract of 5.13: Legitimate expressions of religious belief which, taken within their context, time and the wider national and international arena, could not be construed as anything other than the expression of a religious tenet are, similarly, not likely to amount to an offence of incitement to religious hatred.). No provision was made for "legitimate expressions of lack of religious belief", as we believe should have been the case.

We warn against equivalent religious privileges being introduced as part of the current attempt to reintroduce the law.

7. We note from CPS statistics that of religiously aggravated cases (by virtue of Section 39 of the A-TCSA) finalised between 14 December 2001 and 31 March 2003 around 60% of the perceived victims were Muslims, and of these Muslim victim cases, 60% of the defendants were also Muslim. We think that these proportions are very high and recommend further close scrutiny.[47]

8. A further unwelcome aspect of a religious incitement law would be that it would draw the Crown and the courts into judging on subjective and imprecise religious matters. Difficulties can be expected in establishing what constitutes a religious group. While it is convenient from the legislator's perspective to leave this to the courts, this would not offer the certainty the public is entitled to expect. A religious incitement law would draw the Crown and the courts into highly charged religious matters. Regardless of

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[47] CPS Racist Incident Monitoring Annual Report 2002–2003 Para 15.5
http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/rims02-03.pdf

the evidence, verdicts will be interpreted by religious groups as supporting or failing to support them. Even the failure to bring charges—a highly likely scenario—would be seen by those who perceived themselves to be victims as the State's failure to support their particular group: the law would therefore introduce a new and avoidable political risk. Such tensions between religion and justice are a familiar problem in theocratic countries.

9. We are disturbed about the expectations raised among religious minorities (many of which have rather different traditions about freedom of expression) about the proposed law being able to be a major restriction on freedom of expression. This concern has turned into alarm after influential figures have reportedly publicly advocated such restrictions. According to Will Cummins in *The Daily Telegraph* on 12 July 2004:[48]

"In a recent television panel, Iqbal Sacranie explained why the Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), had pushed for this legislation. The British should . . . not be permitted to 'criticise' [Islam]".

(Similarly, according to the Christian charity the Barnabas Fund,[49] Iqbal Sacranie, speaking on BBC Radio 4's The Moral Maze on 14 July 2004 stated that any "defamation in the character of the Prophet Muhammad" would be "a direct insult and abuse on the Muslim community". He indicated that this should be made illegal under the new law.)

Mr Cummins continued: "Ken Livingstone has gone even further . . . The Mayor of London welcomed . . . Dr Yusuf al-Qaradawi. "Basing his teaching on Islam's holiest texts, Dr al-Qaradawi has urged his fellow Muslims to beat their wives; to use child suicide bombers to kill female and infant civilians; to murder Jews, homosexuals and British servicemen; and to colonise, desecrate and usurp Christian Rome".

"Mr Livingstone said that the newspapers that had condemned Dr al-Qaradawi for such views 'showed why this legislation [Blunkett's] is necessary'. It was the critics of Dr al-Qaradawi's beliefs, Mr Livingstone insisted, who were, as the Muslim Association of Britain put it, 'the image of evil'. Dr al-Qaradawi, a mainstream figure in a major religion, had endorsed Jew lynching and wife beating: Mr Livingstone seemed to imply that, like Islam, such activities should therefore be above criticism."

10. We largely share the following concerns of the Barnabas Trust. They opine "that if such a law had been in place 15 years ago, instead of protecting Salman Rushdie from extremist Muslims who sought his life for writing *The Satanic Verses* the government could have prosecuted him themselves. If the law is drafted as Mr Sacranie wants, it would ban all criticism of the founder of Islam irrespective of whether the speaker intended to incite hatred to Muslims. Thus it would prevent legitimate criticism and free speech". (http://www.barnabasfund.org/News/ITRHC/ITRHC.pdf) "But the religion Mohammed taught is based on specific rejection of Christianity," Barnabas Fund said in a document. "It is impossible to protect both these belief systems from 'insult' simultaneously". The charity said the law could be used against modernist Muslims who called for reforms to Islam. [See also potentially related statistical point in B.7.] It could also hinder efforts to work for greater rights and equality for Muslim women. The law could furthermore be used to silence those who campaign against injustices endured by non-Muslims living under Islam.

(The breadth of opposition to the proposed incitement law is further demonstrated by our sharing the concerns of a Christian charity.)

11. Our biggest worry about the proposals on religious incitement, and it has been expressed in several quarters, is that they could result in religious extremists silencing critics, even if the law did not directly enable this, simply because of self censorship borne out of fear of prosecution. (This effectively happened over Section 28 of the Local Government Act over what was described as the promotion of homosexuality in schools.)

12. We welcome the reported desire of the Home Secretary for the law to move away from protection of religion, in favour of protecting people, especially from a public order perspective. We acknowledge that Section 39 ATCSA takes a similar approach, but it has serious flaws on grounds of freedom of expression, referred to below.

13. We draw attention to experiences of the religious vilification law enacted in the state of Victoria in Australia. It was brought in at the request of Muslims, but the problems it has brought have been on such a scale that we now understand many of those who called for the law would now like it to be repealed.

We recognise that incitement proposals are much narrower than the Victoria law. They would be constrained be by the ECHR freedom of expression on the one hand, and other law on incitement to commit a criminal offence, on the other, and will presumably be subject to the Attorney General's guidelines. The Victoria law also appears to lack clarity. (It includes, for example, the phrase "On the ground of the religious belief", which appears to confuse the beliefs with the people who hold them.)

Nevertheless, having observed the large extent of unforeseen problems caused by the Victoria law, we have given a detailed account of it in the Appendix, written by a barrister.

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[48] http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/main.jhtml;sessionid=W20Y0EG3GJWL1QFIQMGCM5OAVCBQUJVC?xml=/opinion/2004/07/11/do1102.xml

[49] http://www.barnabasfund.org/News/ITRHC/ITRHC.pdf

SECTION C. RELIGIOUSLY AGGRAVATED SENTENCES AND BLASPHEMY

1. One of our greatest concerns, however, relates to religiously aggravated sentences under Public Order offences as a result of s 39 of the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 (A-TCSA). (Where racially aggravated sentences had been established under the Crime And Disorder Act 1998 to a list of offences, Section 39 provides for religiously aggravated sentences to also be applicable to these offences.) We are particularly concerned about adverse freedom of expression implications, in particular from the insulting behaviour provisions of s 39 of the A-TCSA.

2. We signal our alarm formally about both the excessive breadth and the application of Section 39 of the A-TCSA. Some of the offences, such as insulting behaviour, covered by Section 39 are (in relative terms) not serious in nature, yet it introduced increased (typically seven years maximum) aggravated sentences on grounds of religion in line with the aggravated sentences introduced in 1986 for race, to the Public Order Act and other offences.

As to application, we cite the case teacher Hazel Dick in Peterborough (acquitted in March 2004). The view was expressed in several newspapers that she should not have been charged and there was a suspicion that justice had appeared to be operated unevenly in favour of Muslims. We are aware of another Section 39 case with disturbing similarities. We are happy to provide details.

3. Blasphemy. We further recommend, as we have repeatedly called for over a century, for the blasphemy law to be abolished as recommended by the Law Commission Law in 1985. We welcome the Home Secretary's announcement that he plans to review this rarely used law (*The Guardian,* 18 October 2004, page 1). The Society would, however find any extension to an "all religions" blasphemy law deeply objectionable and it would stifle freedom of expression to an outrageous extent and is beset with practical problems. These would include deciding which religions' tenets should be protected, and whether this should this include cults/new religious movements with a reputation for coercion or mass suicide. Such movements tend to be litigious and generously resourced. Such a law would also involve protecting mutually incompatible beliefs and enmesh the courts in having to conclude on which of competing doctrines is the authoritative one, but we are adamant that such judgments should be entirely outside the competence of a secular court. The restrictions on freedom of expression that such a law would entail would be unprecedented in modern times in severely restricting criticism of ideas and constitute gross discrimination against the non-religious.

SECTION D. RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION LAW

We are not sure whether the Committee is actively considering this, but offer it in case it might be of use.

1. We understand that that this legislation is at an earlier stage of formulation than incitement and that the Home Office CCU has informed us it is seeking views on it widely.

2. We are most concerned that despite the widespread calls for a Single Equality Act and for an avoidance of a hierarchy/pecking order of minorities—a call echoed by Minister Patricia Hewitt—one specific strand has been chosen to be the subject of an individually tailored act to be introduced years before a single equality act.

3. We call for a single equality act to be introduced first rather than, as is now proposed, Parliament adopting a piecemeal approach.

4. That religion is the chosen first strand is no surprise to the National Secular Society as it is yet a further example of religion having favoured treatment. This was the case on the employment regulations where not only had organisations with a religious ethos been granted protection, but they had secured massive exemptions—in some instances evading the consultation process—from following the regulations that applied to others, despite the fact they were the very organisations most likely to want to discriminate.

5. A further example of the excessive importance afforded to religion is revealed by the Home Secretary's opening words in the press release announcing this legislative proposal: "Faith plays a vital role in people's lives—even those that are not overtly religious". This is completely at odds with the Home Office's own recently published 2001 Citizenship survey which showed religion ninth of "things [that] would say something important about you, if you were describing yourself". The NSS had been disappointed but sadly not surprised that there had been no reference in press release to the implications for the non-religious, albeit we now understand, as is essential, that the non-religious would be protected.

6. We welcome the proposal in the Home Office Press release that the law would not "normally" require providers to provide "a wider range of goods or services in order to meet a customer's religious needs". We consider it essential that the Government stands firm on this. We accept however it is reasonable for a requirement to apply in locations where consumers have restricted choice of providers, such as in prisons or hospitals. Conversely, we draw the Committee's attention to objections, from Sikhs and those concerned with animal welfare, for example, to ritually slaughtered meat. We abhor the growing practice in some canteens of serving exclusively such meat, even where not all students are Muslim or Jewish.

7. We understand that it is proposed to make an exception and permit discrimination in the unusual event of a charity giving away goods or services etc or selling them at heavily subsidised prices.

We formally urge great caution in the wording for any legislative exemption covering this aspect, urging for it to be as restricted as possible. We suggest that any exemption to permit discrimination should be restricted to a charity's distribution of goods or services without cost or their sale at substantially less than full value and even then only the exemption should be limited to extent necessary to comply with the charity's deeds.

We formally express our total opposition to the religious exemptions proposed for "faith based charities to discriminate in favour of that faith in the provision of services on the grounds of religion or belief"—especially where public funds are provided for "faith based welfare". We do not see why taxpayers should be funding discrimination against themselves. We also oppose the exemption to allow "faith based schools to allow them to continue to discriminate in favour of that faith in selection policy", although we realise that this latter simply formalises the current discrimination.

8. A major concern has been raised by barrister Neil Addison who is concerned about the potential for the discrimination law to be misused to restrict freedom of expression. He is "convinced that such a case could also be brought under anti religious discrimination legislation if it covered the provision of 'services'. The provision of a lecture or seminar would classify as a 'service' and so could provide the basis for a claim in damages on the grounds of harassment. Similarly if we had another Salman Rushdie case then the publishers and the author could also be sued." It is essential that the drafting of the law precludes such possibilities. He is not alone in holding this view; the Barnabas Trust does too.

9. Another area of potential difficulty which we raise formally relates to those who provide goods or services who decline because of religious objections. The CCU indicated that this was the first time this had been raised with them. We cite an actual case of a pharmacist (in Preston) who had refused to dispense a prescription for emergency contraception. The pharmacist had claimed to suggest an alternative supplier, but the customer denied this. Clearly time is of the essence in such circumstances and the implications of delay potentially enormous.

The CCU asked how this differed from a doctor or nurse being excused from taking part in an abortion. We suggested that it was a very much more remote involvement, and that—taken to an extreme—the pharmacists' acknowledged duty to give an alternative source of supply was only slightly less of an involvement than dispensing.

We observed that the rural areas were the very ones most likely to be religiously "conservative", yet these remote areas where alternatives were most difficult to provide and indeed may not exist.

We urge that the law should be revised to impose a duty on pharmacists not to refuse to dispense anything which was legal, although currently the RPS guidelines contain a conscience clause, and they had declined to review this in the light of our representations.

Until the law is so changed, pharmacies which reserved the "right" not to supply any product should be required to place a notice prominently listing products potentially affected and giving full details of alternative sources of supply.

10. According to the latest census, the non-religious constitute three to five times the numbers of all the minority religions added together. Although the non-religious were not referred to in the press release over the discrimination legislation proposals, we have been assured that the non-religious will be equally protected under "religion and belief". We urge that the protection of the non-religious be specifically made clear in the anti-discrimination legislation.

25 October 2004

APPENDIX

"Religious Vilification" law in Victoria, Australia

The dangers in the Government's approach are demonstrated by a case taking place in Australia. The Australian case involves an allegation of "Religious Vilification" brought by the Islamic Council of Victoria (ICV) against Catch the Fire Ministries (CTFM) and two of its Pastors, Daniel Scot and Daniel Nalliah. It relates to a seminar which they presented in March 2002. The seminar lasted an entire day and dealt with the Muslim concept of jihad, the history of Islam, the future of Islam in Australia and whether the practice of Islam was compatible with western concepts of Democracy. The seminar involved quotations from the Koran and references to the life of Mohamed and the Hadith (traditions) of the prophet which together form the basis of Islamic Sharia law.

Present during various parts of the seminar were three Australian converts to Islam who reported back to the ICV who subsequently brought the case against CTFM under s8 of the Victoria "Racial and Religious Toleration Act 2001" which had come into effect in 2002. That section says:

> "(1) A person must not, on the ground of the religious belief or activity of another person or class of persons, engage in conduct that incites hatred against, serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule of, that other person or class of persons."

The claim asked for damages and also that the defendants be ordered to "acknowledge" that remarks at the seminar were inaccurate, "retract" the statements, "sincerely apologise" for the offence caused and be prohibited from "further publication or distribution, directly or indirectly of any material containing statements, suggestions and implications to the same or similar effect". If such an order was made any breach would be a contempt of court punishable with imprisonment.

In their defence CTFM not surprisingly argued that the seminar accurately reflected Islamic teaching and history, it was an exercise in free speech and reflected their personal religious beliefs. During the case it became apparent that the Muslim converts had been deliberately sent to the seminar by ICV with a view to bringing a case. Both pastors were known to have strong views regarding Islam and Sharia but their views were based on knowledge and experience. Scot is a Christian from Pakistan who had gone to Australia to escape persecution whilst Nalliah had worked in Saudi Arabia where the practice of Christianity is a criminal offence. Much of the case revolved around interpretations of the Koran and incidents in the life of Mohammed. At one point Scot was asked whether he believed that Muslims and Christians prayed to the same God and the question was allowed by the judge.

The trial took place in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal and was originally scheduled to last for three days. It actually extended over seven months and the judgement is still awaited. Whilst the verdicts are awaited in that case another case has been launched by a witch who claims that her religious beliefs have been vilified by the christian mayor of her town and relationships between Muslim and Christian groups in Australia have been damaged. If the two are cleared, Muslim groups will claim that the law is not protecting them and if they are convicted they will be regarded as martyrs on the altar of political correctness.

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30. Memorandum submitted by the Network of Sikh Organisations

1. While Sikhs understand the very real danger of terrorist activity, we are also only too aware that governments around the world have repeatedly used words like "terrorist" and "extremist" to smear and denigrate those who oppose their policies or threaten their hold on power.

2. Sikh concern about the smearing of vulnerable communities and its tragic consequences was heightened when, in June 1984, the Indian army attacked and destroyed much of the Golden Temple complex, on one of the holiest days in the Sikh calendar, the martyrdom anniversary of Guru Arjan, the founder of the Golden Temple. The Temple was full to overflowing with pilgrims, and thousands lost their lives. The Indian government said that some "separatists" were "holed up" in the temple, but failed to explain the deliberately insensitive timing, or why other major gurdwaras in Punjab were attacked at the same time. The Indian army newspaper "Baath Chit", in an article at the time, described all practising Sikhs as "potential terrorists", to be dealt with as such.

3. The words "Sikh", and "terrorist", were linked together not only in India, but also in other parts of the world, eager to show support for the "world's largest democracy" (and an important trading partner). Anyone who dared criticise the Indian governments action was termed an extremist; a threat to security at home and abroad.

4. The personal experience of the writer of this note, illustrates the absurdity of an unthinking response, and its potential to alienate besieged minorities. Early one Sunday morning there was a loud knock on the door. I opened it to find two embarrassed looking Scotland Yard officers on the doorstep. I invited them in. They said that they were concerned about repercussions of events in India, on Sikhs in this country. They asked, if I was an "extremist" or a "moderate". I replied that I was extremely moderate. We talked about extremist teachings of Sikhism, like respect for other religions and gender equality. They gave me some Scotland Yard literature, and then they left.

5. On the other hand, Sikhs are all too aware that real terrorist activity is often linked to professed religious belief. It does not help in the fight against terrorism to ignore this truth. When violence against innocents takes place on supposedly religious grounds, the onus should be more firmly placed on the leaders of the religion concerned to condemn such atrocities. It is primarily their responsibility to say to those responsible, "where does it say in our religious texts that it is permissible to spill the blood of the innocent?"

6. It is difficult to see an alternative to the detention of people from abroad, who are perceived as a threat to wider society, but can't be returned to their own country for fear of death or torture. There is however real concern that the phrase "terrorist suspect" is open to a number of different interpretations along a whole continuum from the mildly suspicious to the almost certain hardened terrorist. Powers like the SIAC (Special Immigration Appeals Commission) procedures should allow for the recognition of these different categories of people detained under Part 4, with the need for different conditions of detention, linked to an increasing onus on government to justify continued detention of less serious cases.

7. While appreciating the threat of terrorist activity, we believe that a minimum gain in combating such a threat by non jury trials, the use of evidence gained by torture abroad, or any action on the grounds of undisclosed evidence, against those who might do something wrong, would be greatly outweighed by real harm to civil liberties and community relations.

8. There is real concern that terrorist activity from within the Arab world, is leading to an unfair reflex response against Muslims in the West, including the UK. However, when a threat comes from a particular direction, it is natural to look in that direction, as has happened with the arrest of a number of people of Pakistani origin. If a threat to security were thought to come from the Sikh community, it would be unsurprising if proportionately, more Sikhs than others were stopped and searched in sensitive areas like airports, and the same holds for members of the Muslim community. What is totally unacceptable, and there seems to be some evidence of this, is for members of the Muslim community to be harassed or targeted without cause. Such action fuels resentment that can all too easily lead to active hatred. It can be an important recruiting agent for terrorism and seriously damage good community relations.

Dr Indarjit Singh, Editor, Sikh Messenger
Director Network of Sikh Organisations

22 November 2004

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31. Memorandum submitted by the Parliamentary Committee Against Anti-Semitism

ABOUT THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM

1. The Parliamentary Committee Against Anti-Semitism is a Westminster-based All Party Group that was set up in 1991 in response to increasing levels of anti-Semitism triggered by the first Gulf War. Towards the end of the 1990s the work of the PCAA reduced in proportion with the reduction in the number of recorded incidents. However, the beginning of the second *intifada*, followed by the war on terror has led to a notable increase in anti-Semitic acts in the United Kingdom and across the world and a consequent increase in the level of activity of this All Party Group.

The committee's purposes are to monitor and survey anti-Semitism wherever it arises, to take action to prevent further anti-Semitism, to help relieve the distress of the victims of anti-Semitism, to promote inter-faith contact, dialogue and co-operation, and to organise conferences, seminars, visits and other activities as may assist in achieving these purposes.

The Parliamentary Committee Against Anti-Semitism also provides parliamentarians, academics, journalists and members of the public with up-to-date information on anti-Semitism, anti-Semitic incidents and the efforts being made to combat them in the United Kingdom and abroad. The PCAA commissions research, arranges briefings, publishes bulletins and provides a forum for debate and discussion on the subject.

Membership of the committee is restricted to members of parliament, and associate membership to both ex-members of Parliament and distinguished individuals involved in the life of parliamentary and government institutions. At present there are around 100 parliamentary members in the UK.

The Parliamentary Committee is a constituent member of the Inter-Parliamentary Council Against Anti-Semitism, whose members include Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany, Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel of Austria and HRH Crown Prince Hassan Bin Talal of Jordan.

INTRODUCTION

2. The primary purpose of this submission is not to present the facts and figures associated with the rise of anti-Semitic incidents in the UK over the past four years. That there has been an increase is clear and can be corroborated by the Police, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia and other recognised reporting bodies. Rather, it is to discuss some of the reasons behind this escalation, to evaluate its effect and bring to the Committee's attention some of the concerns of the Parliamentary Committee Against Anti-Semitism.

3. After a period of remission owing to the horror of the Holocaust, the ancient prejudice of anti-Semitism has recently resurfaced, catalysed by the onset of the second *intifada* in Israel and the Palestinian territories (beginning in October 2000), the terrorist attacks on the United States (September 2001) and the US-led coalition's invasion (and current occupation) of Iraq (Spring 2003 onwards). These three events have had a very significant effect on the number and degree of anti-Semitic incidents and sentiment in the UK and across the world. Since the autumn of 2000, numerous synagogues have been attacked, tens of cemeteries have been desecrated, and individual Jews have been regularly subjected to serious violence.

4. In addition to this rise in incidents, there has been a parallel development in the intellectual and public arenas, which has seen previously taboo anti-Semitic sentiments attain acceptability in some quarters and even political capital in others. It is perhaps this element that causes the greatest concern. Some experts fear that there is considerable intellectual resistance to acknowledging this threat, and most political analysts still treat anti-Semitism "like a hiccup that will soon give way to regular breathing".[1] However, the gravity, quantity and frequency of such occurrences justify the concern of all right-minded people.

5. The three aforementioned events in particular have led to an atmosphere in which Jews, both in the UK and abroad are once again held responsible by certain sections of the population for the current instability in the Middle East which in turn has increased the perceived (or actual) threat of terrorism felt at home. The writer, Howard Jacobson recently remarked that, "suddenly it doesn't feel safe to be a Jew again". In the words of an (anonymous) opinion leader, polled as part of research commissioned by the Parliamentary Committee Against Anti-Semitism, "anti-Semitism has become an issue again since 9/11. In the Post 9/11 world anti-Semitism is acceptable again".[2]

The New Anti-Semitism

6. What is the essence of this new, latest wave of what has been termed "the longest hatred"? At its core, this new version of this old prejudice has mutated to accommodate a significant shift in public opinion. The strength of overtly racist philosophies was dealt a fatal blow by the horrors of the Holocaust. This new form of prejudice is much more in tune with the themes of the new millennium. Ironically, it is based on anti-racism. The sin of the Jews is no longer deicide, nor are they are accused of possessing sinister racial traits. In the modern world, the methods of the anti-Semite are far subtler. It is anti-Semitism with a "social conscience", often based on human rights and the demand of a homeland for the Palestinian people. Today's Jewish "collective crime" is Israel. The Jews stand accused of supporting a racist state, and as such, they are collectively deserving of reproach. These people are using the veil of criticism of the state of Israel to mask their anti-Semitic sentiment.

7. After the Second World War, it became unacceptable to admit to hatred of Jews. However, professing to hating the Prime Minister of Israel or claiming that "Israelis behave like Nazis" is far from being out of bounds. Whilst not everyone who dislikes Ariel Sharon is guilty of anti-Semitism, condemning an Israeli politician does not risk the raised eyebrows that demonising Israelis, or Jews, would do in this post-racist age. Employing emotive language is often used in this context. In our era, the word "Nazi" itself stands for limitless evil. An example of this is the now debunked myth of the Jenin "massacre" (April 2002). Words like "*blitzkrieg*" were used[3] with the obvious, if subtle, intention of comparing the actions of modern day Israel to Hitler's Germany. Recently, a former German government minister referred to Israel's anti-terror strategy as "*Vernichtungsfeldzug*" against the Palestinians, "a war of annihilation", using a term normally applied to the Nazi war against the Jews.[4] This comparison suggests a moral equivalence between Hitler's Nazis and Sharon's Jews. According to Chief Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks, "the mutation is this: that the worst crimes of anti-Semites in the past—racism, ethnic cleansing, attempted genocide, crimes against humanity—are now attributed to Jews and the State of Israel, so that if you are against Nazism, you must ipso facto be utterly opposed to Jews".[5] Drawing analogies between Jews and the ultimate symbols of evil, is preparing the groundwork for a justification of their destruction.

8. In addition to the demonisation and deligitimisation of the Jewish State and its policies, another familiar anti-Semitic tactic is being employed to blame the Jews for the current global instability, namely their ability to manipulate world events to their own advantage. Conspiracy theories abound regarding "Zionist" involvement in the attack on the World Trade Center. The War in Iraq is attributed to bellicose Jews in the White House and Pentagon. It is suggested that Britain's involvement in the Iraq war is a result of the undue influence of a British "Jewish cabal" that surrounds the Prime Minister, which is tied to the even more influential and powerful cabal of Jewish hawks in Washington. Anti-Semitism feeds on the notion of Jewish power—the myth of a vast, sinister power exercised through financial clout, control of the media and shadowy political connections. The popular fabrication that the "Jews run America" is becoming more and more widespread in Britain (on the Right and Left). This myth is equally common in Spain, Italy, France, Germany and many other countries in Europe today. This supposed clique of powerful, influential, wealthy Jews are all connected with Israel, because these Jewish hawks, so we are told, are all *Likudniks*—supporters of Ariel Sharon. The lines between the Jewish and the Israeli lobby are constantly blurred and the connotations can be sinister. This is a discourse already rampant in the Middle East where it often assumes the ugly contours of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion. A significant difference between the Western and the Middle Eastern versions is that the former is not government-sponsored whilst the latter is.

Key Developments

9. One purpose of this submission is to identify some key episodes that have, over the past four years either contributed to, or are indicative of, the current situation. One watershed came in January 2002 with the publication of *The New Statesman* cover that depicted a golden star of David piercing a supine Union flag under the caption "*A Kosher Conspiracy*?" The imagery was unmistakably anti-Semitic—that dominant, wealthy Jews constitute a sinister Fifth Column. Perhaps the most recent crossed red line was the welcome given to one of the world's most radical Islamist leaders, infamous for his links to outlawed terror organisations, hateful rhetoric towards Jews, homosexuals, Sikhs and Hindus, and a supporter of domestic violence.

10. Other recent watershed moments further a field that have contributed to the increased threat have been: the murder of the Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl, masterminded by British-born Omar Sheikh, and who was forced to state that he was Jewish before his throat was slit by his captors in Pakistan;

large scale attacks against Jewish targets in Tunisia, Turkey, Morocco, France, that have all claimed lives; and the notorious "*Jews run the world by proxy*" speech by the outgoing Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Mohammed.

11. The content of Dr Mahathir's address to mark the opening of the OIC (Organisation of Islamic Countries) conference in October 2003 did not contain any accusations that the Jews have not been subjected to over the past 2 millennia (most notably in the mediaeval Blood Libels or the infamous Tsarist Russian forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*). However, it can be seen as a modern defining moment for three reasons. Firstly, the purveyor of outbursts of this kind was, until this point, expected to be a white supremacist or other extremist individual at the very edge of political and social life. Secondly, the forum for this address was one of the most significant assemblies in the Muslim world (indeed, the OIC conference in Putrajaya, Malaysia was the first major gathering of Islamic countries after 9/11) rather than an obscure Internet chat-room. Thirdly, and almost certainly most significantly, the global response to this invective was muted and much of the Muslim world even welcomed Dr Mahathir's contribution. Such a turn of events was unimaginable up until this recent upturn in global anti-Semitism.

12. The modern, globalised world has ensured that anti-Semitism is spread faster and further than ever before. In this era of mass media, instant communication and cable television, there is no longer a need for holding mass rallies to spread the sort of genocidal anti-Jewish propaganda that Egyptian and Syrian television broadcasts to millions of homes. Such rhetoric is overflowing in the Middle East and is now easily available in homes in this country. According to the Police and other reporting bodies, there is a direct correlation between an increase in such rhetoric and increases in violent incidents.[6]

The Effect on British Jews

13. Having discussed some of what this group believes to be the causes and manifestations of current anti-Semitism, it is necessary to consider how it is affecting the lives of British Jews.

14. The visits paid by Stephen Byers as incoming chairman of the parliamentary group illustrated many of the key issues. On one occasion, Mr Byers was approached by a Sixth-Former in Manchester who confessed that she was unlikely to go onto university because she was scared of what would await her as an identifying Jew. Her concern came as a result of the reports she had heard from various friends and family members of the hostility that some Jewish students were experiencing because of their faith and sympathy towards Israel. It became apparent that she was far from the only young person being deterred from university or apprehensive in what they termed "the current climate". Evidence was garnered during this and other trips that this particular age-range was not the only one to be affected by such disquiet. Attacks on synagogues, cemeteries and individuals, in addition to the perceived hostility in the national press have all combined to make British Jews feel increasingly under siege.

15. However, according to the research conducted by Populus, it is not widely understood that Jews are victims of racism. The research suggests that the perceived success and wealth of British Jews, combined with a difficulty in identifying them from the wider population means that many do not recognise that anti-Semitism exists and that it is a form of racism. It is also suggested that vigilance against other forms of racism is a widely accepted concept in the UK, and yet when Jews are the subject of racism, they are accused of paranoia or overstatement. It should be accepted by all right-minded people that anti-Semitism is a human rights issue. Slandering, defaming, attacking, oppressing or intimidating a Jewish person, is to commit an anti-Semitic act as well as a racist one.

16. A complicating factor in this equation is the part played by the state of Israel. However, ethnically and religiously motivated hatred, violence and prejudice, wherever it occurs, should earn unconditional condemnation; sympathy and support for the victims should not be conditional on their behaviour or political convictions. It is increasingly the case that, because rage over Israel's policies can provide the pretext, condemnation is often too slow and increasingly conditional. Regardless of the expressed motive, Jewish people and Jewish institutions are being targeted.

Conclusions

17. The mutation of anti-Semitism now evident in the Western world (especially Western Europe) is very different from the state-sponsored anti-Semitism encountered a generation ago in Hitler's Germany or Stalin's Soviet Union. Today's anti-Semitism in the West is not nurtured by systematic, government-imposed discrimination against Jews. Moreover, national governments and multi-national organisations (OSCE, EU and most recently, the UN) are taking the first steps towards addressing the problem. However, there is an urgent need to acknowledge that the traditional sources of anti-Semitism have been supplanted by new ones that are more nuanced about expressing their prejudices. The new anti-Semitism is coming simultaneously from three different directions: first, a radicalised Islamic youth inflamed by extremist rhetoric; second, a left-wing anti-American cognitive elite with strong representation in the European media; third, a resurgent far right, as anti-Muslim as it is anti-Jewish. And, as Jonathan Sacks suggests, "it is being fed by the instability of globalisation, the insecurity of the post-Cold War international arena, and the still-undischarged trauma of 11 September".[7]

18. After the horrific car bombs in Istanbul and the burning of a Jewish school in Paris in November 2003, *The Guardian* conceded that "a new wave of anti-Semitism is on the march across the globe". Its leader article acknowledged that the Anglo-Jewish community had good reason to feel "unsettled, uncomfortable and fearful", following random attacks on schools, synagogues and cemeteries"[8]. Anti-Semites feel emboldened again. Their prejudice, suppressed out of guilt but lying latent for the past 50 years, is finding its way back to the mainstream.

September 2004

ALL PARTY GROUP—ELECTED OFFICERS:

Rt Hon Stephen Byers MP	Chairman
Rt Hon the Lord Merlyn-Rees	President
Rt Hon the Lord Hunt of Wirral MBE	President
Rt Hon the Lord Campbell of Croy MC	Vice President
Rt Hon the Lord Archer of Sandwell QC	Vice President
James Clappison MP	Vice Chair
Louise Ellman MP	Vice Chair
Andrew Dismore MP	Treasurer
The Lord Janner of Braunstone QC	Secretary

REFERENCES:

[1] Prof Ruth Wisse: *Commentary* Magazine, "On Ignoring Anti-Semitism"—Oct 2002.

[2] Populus report on Anti-Semitism (March 2004).

[3] *Daily Mail*, "Bombshell as Bush turns his anger on Israelis"—5 April 2002.

[4] Norbert Blüm: "Der deutsche Tonfall", *Die Zeit*, 11 April 2002.

[5] and [7] Pre-amble to lecture delivered by Chief Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks to the Parliamentary Committee Against Anti-Semitism—January 2002.

[6] *See* Community Security Trust (CST) incident figures 2000–04.

[8] *The Guardian*, "Our Dulled Nerve" (Leader)—18 November 2003.

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32. Memorandum submitted by the Police Federation of England and Wales

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Police Federation of England and Wales—the voice of the operational police officer—is the staff association for over 95% of police officers. Established by statute, we are responsible for the welfare of officers and the provision of an efficient police service.

1.2 The Police Federation welcomes the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Committee. This memorandum has been prepared specifically for the inquiry and is enumerated broadly in accordance with the Committee's call for evidence (21 July 2004). We would be happy to provide oral evidence or additional memoranda on request.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The tragedies of 9/11, Istanbul and Madrid graphically demonstrated not only the shocking barbarity of international terrorism, but also the very real nature of the threat facing the UK and other Western states. We consider the views expressed in the Home Office discussion paper *Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society* entirely realistic and legitimate in this regard.

2.2 Whilst the UK security services and police have, to date, been successful in preventing such an atrocity on UK soil, the threat faced by the UK is likely to remain elevated for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately minority ethnic communities in the UK can be unsuspecting hosts to would be terrorists as they can provide both the anonymity and camouflage that terrorists seek. It is therefore critical the police maintain the support of minority ethnic groups in order to glean all possible intelligence threads.

2.3 The police service plays a key role in the promotion and protection of community cohesion. Each and every community must have faith in its police service and be confident that it will respond to its special needs and demands. In recent months, the police have received a considerable degree of public and media criticism for the use and interpretation of powers under terrorism legislation—particularly in respect of ethnic minorities—but continue to operate in an environment where their overriding concern must always be to be the prevention of terrorism.

3. The Stigmatisation of Minority Groups Publicly "Associated" with Terrorism; and Media Coverage of These Issues

3.1 We fully understand that many Muslims, but particularly those of North African, Middle Eastern or Asian ethnicity, may feel stigmatised due to a public "association" with terrorism. The Police Federation represents police officers of all religions, cultures and ethnic backgrounds, and we fervently oppose any comments or actions, be it intentional or unintentional, which serve to stigmatise any minority group or cause racial tension.

3.2 Over the course of the last year there has been an increase in the number of reported stops and searches amongst Asian people, particularly young men. This has fuelled criticism that the police have been overzealous, acting disproportionately and/or discriminately in a knee-jerk reaction to the increased terrorist threat. We strongly refute any such accusations. First and foremost, stops and searches are conducted on the basis of intelligence information. Secondly, given the common demographic backgrounds shared by the majority of Muslim fundamentalist terrorists, it would be perverse if there had been no such increase in the number of stops and searches amongst specific minority ethnic groups. The service must do all that it can to regain the support of the whole Muslim community, thus replicating Project Trident; a pertinent example of a police initiative that overcame initial scepticism to win the broad support of the Afro-Caribbean community.

3.3 We do not believe the increased number of stops and searches, or the arrest of a number of individuals under terrorism legislation should be cited for stigmatising minority groups. Far more significant is how minority ethnic groups are negatively portrayed in the media. The conflation of the patently distinct issues of asylum, immigration and international terrorism, combined with latent racism and inaccurate sensationalist reporting (for instance stating the percentage increase in stops and searches as opposed to far less "dramatic" statements with the real numerical figure) evoke strong feelings and can contribute to both stigmatisation and a feeling of stigmatisation of minority groups, especially amongst more impressionable readerships. The fact remains that the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (ACTS Act) powers have been used sparingly.

3.4 Far greater efforts must be made to elucidate to minority groups how and why anti-terrorist measures such as stop and search and arrests have been conducted. The media should be a willing partner in this process by paying closer attention to the veracity and interpretation of stop and search figures and ensuring issues relating to race or religion are reported accurately, thus avoiding the use of inflammatory language.

4. The Incidence of Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and Other Forms of Prejudice

4.1 Post 9-11 there has been a recorded increase in anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other forms of prejudice, ranging from racial abuse and defacement of religious entities, to serious acts of violence against the person.

4.2 Convicting those responsible for these crimes requires the cooperation of communities. For their part, the police must both protect, and be seen to protect, all communities, especially those at greatest risk. This requires a return of policing in the community.

5. Civil Liberties/Policing Issues

5.1 In written evidence to the Home Affairs Committee's inquiry into the use of police powers under terrorism legislation (29 June 2004) we stated:

> "Debates exploring where the delicate balance between freedom and security should lie are an inevitable consequence of introducing new measures to combat terrorism. In the main we believe it is for public debate, not the police, to determine where this equilibrium-point should be . . . there are times, however, when it is abundantly clear—at least from an operational policing perspective—that added security measures are imperative in order to preserve the freedoms we enjoy."

5.2 These issues vis-à-vis civil liberties understandably have even greater saliency in the context of community relations or minority ethnic groups. As we have stated in relation to stop and search figures, we believe it would be unrepresentative if, in the current climate, certain ethnic groups were not more likely to be stopped. Moreover, it is disingenuous when elected representatives are unwilling to convey these rather unpalatable truths to the public at large.

5.3 The current simplistic collection of monitoring data does not enable a proper analysis of the reasons and groups for stops and searches. No data is collected on issues other than race thus obscuring issues of sexuality, age, religion or disability. The Police Federation is a partner in the Home Office Stop and Search Action Team and we are keen to see the adoption of a multi-variant activity that shows a complete picture of police stop and search activity that can be fed back to local communities. This system should be able to identify whether all searches are conducted on the basis of a policing and community need using valid and justifiable reasons. The reality is that discrimination may be occurring but we are not looking in the right places.

5.4 We do not support the Newton Report's assertion that stop and search is ineffectual as an anti-terrorist tool. Whilst no accurate means of assessing whether stop and search has directly prevented a terrorist strike exists, this in no way detracts from its value to police, for instance as a preventative tool. Furthermore, authorisation may only be given: "if the person giving it considers it expedient for the prevention of acts of terrorism" and this is coupled with due transparency provided by the newly formed Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

5.5 Stop and search is widely misunderstood. The fact remains that those who would wish to carry a knife or firearm are less likely to do so if they know they might be stopped and searched. The same principle of disrupting perpetrators applies equally to terrorists. By dealing with individuals on the street police officers avoid the need to make and arrest and go to the police station. Stop and search is therefore a far less onerous procedure and a lesser infringement on the individual's liberty.

5.6 Officers may have genuine fears of criticism of litigation in respect of human rights legislation when using ACTS powers. It is vital that these fears do not effect their work, and by extension the efficacy of the police and security services to thwart would be terrorists.

12 November 2004

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33. Memorandum submitted by Tariq Saied

BACKGROUND

My name is Tariq Saied and I was born in Manchester in January 1965. My Parents came to the UK in 1963 and both have worked hard to make a life here for themselves and their three children. I am married now with three children of my own and I see no improvement in community relations from when I grew up as the only coloured person in most of the areas of Manchester I lived in while growing up.

I wanted to write in to the Committee on the subject of terrorism and community relations because I have strong feelings on how government and the UK media have stigmatised and blamed Muslims for all the worlds' ills since the September 11 2001 atrocities. This has played into the hands of those who would divide communities on both sides and they have prospered in the climate of fear that has been created.

I do not speak for the whole Muslim community in the UK, I don't actually believe anyone can, however I believe my views are shared by the majority of British born Muslims.

I have concluded with some recommendations which I believe the committee should consider as I believe these would make Britain a "fairer" place.

PARLIAMENTARY STIGMATISATION

The Muslim community in the UK has failed in its duty to explain Islam to non-Muslims in the UK. I believe that this is a product of shyness (the keep yourself to yourself mentality), of laziness and of a lack of organisation. This is something the community has always wanted to do but never got round to or expected someone else to do.

Since September 11 2001, it seems that the UK Muslim community have been shown to have sympathy to a man, woman and child for the WTC attacks. We have had politicians of all parties condemning the lack of condemnation by Muslim leaders. These being the very same Muslim leaders that have employed the ostrich theory for most of their lives ie "bury your head in the sand and it will all go away".

The public condemnation demanded was never going to happen, the people expected to condemn had never made a public statement in their lives. They did however at Friday sermons condemn the atrocity, the problem was that these sermons are never broadcast or explained to the outside world.

So with no condemnation, politicians started to believe that Muslims must condone or sympathise with this outrage. Many of them said so in no uncertain terms. Since this time we have had some "infamously" memorable statements.

Denis MacShane's "British Muslims must choose the terrorist way or the British way!" I find this a ridiculous statement on so many levels.

David Blunketts "they should speak English in their houses!" could have come straight from a BNP training manual.

Tony Blair's "the biggest threat we face in the 21st century is from those that misrepresent the message of Islam for their own ends". I'm struggling to understand why Islam had to be mentioned here as most Muslims do not consider people that crash aeroplanes into buildings to be Muslims at all.

There are many other examples both public and private which have been reported that have worked to reinforce the stigmatisation of Muslims as terrorists or terrorist sympathisers by elected UK officials. I believe a little more sensitivity should have been employed here by UK politicians.

POLICE AND OTHER OFFICIAL STIGMATISATION

The charity commission announced a freezing of the assets of Interpal on the basis that Interpal was donating money to terror groups in the occupied territories. The charity commission concluded their "investigation" in what must be record time and gave Interpal a clean bill of health.

I understand that at the time of writing, many Mosques are under charity commission investigation or scrutiny. We need to understand what the grounds are for the investigation and who made the complaint. This is not always made clear when charity commission investigations are initiated. I believe that all this talk and "debate" on terrorism has made these sorts of complaints more prevalent with a guilty till proven innocent stance taken by the investigating commissions.

The Police, for some strange reason, have it in their heads that the more outwardly religious someone looks the more likely they are to be a terrorist. Having seen pictures of the September 11 hijackers this assumption looks highly flawed. None of them had beards; none wore turbans or small knitted caps. We still persist though on concentrating time and resources rounding up religious people to hold them in Belmarsh and Woodhill with no charge. There is a real feeling in the Muslim community on this, which I share, that the terrorists have won just as the IRA won. Internment without trial plays into the hands of the "war on Islam" brigade who point to this as an abandonment of the core democratic values only where Muslims are concerned. It is also seen as activists and people of strong faith are locked up because the British government need to shut them up.

Harassment at airports also borders on the stupid now. I went to Barcelona for a family holiday during the second week of Easter this year. Now we as a family don't look outwardly Muslim but when my 10 year old son had his plastic scissors confiscated from his pencil case even he thought it was because he was Muslim. I fail to understand what threat anyone poses with a pair of child's plastic scissors?

There are well documented cases of people missing flights and being generally harassed at airports on suspicion of being a terrorist. Again it represents a victimisation and stigmatisation of people which could have been handled far more delicately. We seem to blindly follow the US paranoia on this.

MEDIA STIGMATISATION

Since September 11 2001, the press have had a field day. The attacks on Islam have stepped up and now three years on seem to have intensified. The attacks seem well co-ordinated with at least one newspaper having a negative story on Islam every day for the last three years.

The biggest issue for Muslims is that Islam has no legal protection in the way other religions have under the race relations act and the press complaints commission is a toothless body that hides behind the excuse that an article, no matter how slanderous, is "someone's opinion" and therefore not regulated by the code. I can't believe to this day that anyone thought a voluntary code of conduct would suffice for press regulation.

It is now fashionable to have an Islam hating journalist on the staff and Muslims have no right of reply. I find their pontificating most disturbing as all of a sudden these people are experts on Islam and Muslims. I can't believe that these journalists know any Muslims let alone anything about my faith, and here they are explaining that Muslims are getting ready to take over the World/Britain etc and what Islam stands for and what all Muslims want. How can they know?

Famous Islamophobic journalists parading as experts on Islam are:

Carol Sarler—*Daily Mail*

Polly Toynbee—*The Guardian*

Peter Hitchen—*Daily Mail*

Richard Littlejohn—*The Sun*

Tony Parsons—*Daily Mirror*

Will Cummins—*The Daily Telegraph*

Charles Moore—*The Daily Telegraph*

All of the above (except for Will Cummins) would purport to hate the BNP; however they do not accept their part in creating the climate where the BNP spreads its hate.

The airtime and mouthpiece given to groups like Al-Mahajiroun by the UK media is reprehensible. This group no more represents Islam than the BNP represents Christianity and yet they are presented as the voice of Islam.

REPORTING OF "TERROR ARRESTS"

I have read the headlines about 10 people arrested here, eight people there etc. I understand that the governments own figures are that there have been around 600 arrests on terror related charges with 15 convictions of which three have been Muslim. I understand that 12 have been Loyalists/fascists ergo all Christians must be terrorists!

I follow and watch Manchester United and the terror alert at United bought it home to me. You ask anyone about the Kurdish guys who were arrested in Manchester, the truth about them was, they were doing gardens for people hence they had to buy large quantities of fertiliser and a couple of them were football fans hence they had tickets to the United vs Liverpool game. Now there was a big fanfare of publicity when the arrests were made and stony silence on the release.

The recent arrests in Blackburn seem to follow the same pattern with an interesting new twist in that now activists are being picked up. You can imagine the conspiracy theories circulating about this.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The issues above have given radical groups like Al-Mahajiroun and the BNP the perfect climate for recruitment. The climate of fear created has criminalised a whole community and created hatred of Muslims within the wider community. There is also a mistrust of authority from the Muslim community in the UK and if this continues we will have a generation of Muslim youth that will have a loathing of Britain and the USA. I don't believe this is in the wider interests of the UK or Muslims themselves.

My recommendations to counter this are:

1. Extend the current Race Relations act to cover Muslims as a race. I know that there is no single race that are Muslims but the same is true of Christians and Jews, there are black and white Christians and Jews, yet Muslims are not afforded the same protection because of this supposed loophole. Islam deserves the same respect and dignity as is afforded other religions.

2. Have the courage of conviction to fine and or prosecute anyone who tries the new law. There are too many journalists that have made a living insulting Islam; they will not be able to stop just like that. Make sure the new law is not made a sham.

3. Stop internment without trial. If you have real worries about an individual tag them, but you shouldn't lock someone up just because you think they might commit a crime. If this is not to be implemented you should round up a load of BNP sympathisers because at some point they will commit a racial harassment crime.

4. The Press Complaints Commission Code must be extended to cover individual opinion columns as well as news. People should not be able to rubbish Islam and hide behind the fact that it is only their opinion.

5. It would be good to also include that if the media report on a case they must report right through to its conclusion with equal prominence. I'm not sure how this would be enforced but I know that at present the press are abusing privilege.

6. There has been a lot of press unfairly marginalising and rubbishing Muslim groups; I believe that if a group is mentioned they should have a prominent right of reply. I believe at present it is only individuals that have a right of reply.

13 September 2004

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34. Memorandum submitted by the Sikh Community Action Network (S.C.A.N.)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

SCAN (Sikh Community Action Network) is a voluntary organisation; a small yet highly dedicated network of Sikh activists who share the following aims:

— To proactively represent Sikh-related issues where relevant and appropriate.

— To encourage and further the already positive integration of British Sikhs into mainstream British society through Spiritual, Social and Political awareness.

A. REGARDING THE "ACTUAL TERRORIST THREAT"

1. Ideologically speaking, Sikhs are strongly against any person(s) who cause the death of innocent individuals; therefore 9/11 and the recent Chechen incident are obviously cases of clear-cut terrorism. Any such causes that such individuals/groups wish to progress, from a Sikh perspective, lose validity when the senseless murder and maiming of fellow human-beings is used as a threat or is actioned. There can be no justification for such actions whatsoever; such means can never justify any ends.

2. However, any nation which is suffering at the hands of terrorists ie America, the former Soviet Union, must also ask honest and piercing questions of itself. It is for these nations to accept that many such terrorist actions, although absolutely beyond the pale, are in many cases, reactions. Therefore, future peace will only prevail if both sides, having accepted their actions, agree to negotiate and prevent future bloodshed. Such a mature and spiritually-motivated approach would be in keeping with Sikh philosophy, whereby the good of all is the central aspiration (Sikhs refer to the good of all as *sarbat da bhalla*).

B. The Stigmatisation of Minority Groups Publicly Associated with Terrorism

1. The first person killed by an American in retaliation for the events that took place on 11 September was a visible Sikh; a turban-wearing, bearded male. His name was Balbir Singh Sodhi. It appears he was "associated with terrorism" simply because of his *de facto* Sikh appearance.

Please refer to: http://cfrterrorism.org/policy/hatecrimes.html

2. Sikhs with their visible Dastaar, (turban) which signifies spiritual sovereignty and keeps their long uncut Kesh (hair) manageably intact, have been given special attention by those who have a grudge against Bin Laden and other Muslim extremists associated with him or his cause. The fact that these extremists wear turbans and have beards seem to be the main reasons.

3. Sikhs get called "terrorist" and other such names very occasionally; terms such as "terrorist", "rag-head", "Bin Laden" etc are the ones most frequently used. Before September 11, SCAN (which has detailed anecdotal evidence) cannot recall British Sikhs being called such names or being stared at so much as they walk about and conducted their daily affairs.

4. Most of the many Sikhs that SCAN regularly communicates with have been through similar experiences regardless of where they live in the United Kingdom. Therefore this issue is endemic and not localised geographically speaking. Violent acts and assaults have also taken place both against Sikh persons and Sikh Gurdwaras (Sikh place of worship).

C. The Incidence of Anti-Semitism, Islamaphobia and Other Forms of Prejudice

1. Islamaphobia and attacks upon Sikhs should be tackled via awareness-raising through positive media representations.

2. Extremist fascist groups such as Al Muhajiroun should be kept in check and prosecuted where possible because of their vitriolic, unashamed and ideological attacks upon all non-Muslims. It is SCAN's opinion that along with ignorance, it is groups such as this who unwittingly create a climate where Islamaphobia flourishes. Their perverted interpretation of Islam, blatant anti-Semitism, homophobia and general prejudices against all non-Muslim British communities makes them no different to the BNP.

3. Community cohesion is suffering because of groups such as the BNP and Al Muhajiroun; just as impressionable angry, young, white men are targeted by the BNP for recruitment, so too does Al Muhajiroun target angry, young British Muslims with a potent admixture of "religious" fanaticism and extremist socio-political doctrines.

Please refer to: http://www.webster-dictionary.org/definition/al-Muhajiroun

http://www.sikhlionz.com/almuhajiroun.htm

D. Media Coverage of These Issues

1. There was not enough media coverage related to the specific issues facing the visible, turban-wearing Sikh community in the UK.

2. Also, at the Ministerial level, there was a conspicuous lack of comment or representation made regarding the "Sikh experience" during the period after September 11; this was evident from the lack of such representation projected by the mainstream media. This has left the sizeable British Sikh community with the feeling that they are ignored and not noticed; even when they are being persecuted.

E. Civil Liberties/Policing Issues

1. Due to terrorist-profiling and general lack of information about the Sikhs, turban-wearing, bearded Sikhs have faced more scrutiny generally speaking. This has led to civil liberties being encroached upon.

2. A Sikh was arrested in New York after September 11 and his picture, depicting the arrest, was splashed across the pages of the US and British press throughout the following day. The crime: he was visibly wearing a Kirpaan (short sword), which is an obligatory article of uniform representing Sikhs' duty to defend those who are oppressed, which is worn by both male and female practising Sikhs. Although Sikhs are legally able to do so, ignorance, short-sightedness and perhaps an element of misplaced fear meant that he was dramatically arrested for no good reason whatsoever. His arrest and the subsequent media representation gave the direct inference that: "all people who look like this are potential terrorists and may be linked with the September 11 terrorist actions" (he being, and therefore "looking like", one of the many tens of thousands of law-abiding Sikhs who live in the UK).

3. Security personnel (both private and public sector) as well as airport staff etc should receive cultural awareness training which specifically focuses upon Sikhs for these reasons. It is for these reasons that SCAN provides cultural awareness training to Thames Valley Police.

4. In this post-September 11 environment, it is worth noting that the Indian authorities have much to gain by not only linking the indigenous Sikh population but also linking the overseas Sikh diaspora with terrorism and acts of terrorism. The post-1984 era saw civil liberties in Punjab (which has an overwhelming Sikh majority population) suspended and whole-scale state-sponsored atrocities carried out against Sikh men, women and children. Sikhs also feel that they were politically and economically marginalised by a centrally-run government which wished to oppress them in every which manner it could do so; both legally and illegally.

5. As a response, this era saw the rise of several Sikh militant groups who, feeling they as Sikhs had tried every lawful method to obtain justice but had been prevented from receiving it, assassinated key figures within the Indian government/policing authorities who were directly linked to these abuses. Consequently, the general Sikh movement for the self-determination of Punjab, not only militant but also non-militant (the non-militant movement being by far the most prominent of the two) was halted through mass human rights abuses. In a country where human rights agencies such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are not allowed to enter, such occurrences are committed outside of the view of the international community.

Please refer to: http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/engASA200032003?OpenDocument&of =countries%5cindia

http://www.sikhcoalition.org/HumanRights.asp

6. The upshot is that India has since used every imaginable opportunity to declare Sikhs as both a potential and active "terrorist community". A current case of which involves a British Sikh resident, is a perfect example of such blind hatred expressed through vilification. In June 1999, this individual was falsely arrested, incarcerated, tortured and held for over three years before his case saw the light of day. He had been arrested for allegedly conspiring to carry out terrorist actions against the Indian State. The case was swiftly quashed by a Judge who declared it "a balloon of falsehoods". A consequent government inquiry proved that the explosives recovered from "upon his person" were in fact planted upon him and taken for this specific and clandestine purpose from the Indian authorities' own recovered store! This individual is currently involved in a court case against the Indian authorities and will soon be arriving back home to his family, friends and supporters after his five-year ordeal. Substantial details can be provided upon request.

7. Although the Indian authorities' attempt to paint Sikhs as instigators of terrorism in the Indian mainland failed miserably as in this case, it is clear that their motivation to do so remains intact to this present day. The British Sikh community, especially in the aftermath of September 11, is keen to ensure that the British authorities have a balanced understanding of the period of Sikh militancy in Punjab. That is to say that any analysis must consider the "forces" and complex socio-political environment which gave birth to it and sustained it. As law-abiding British Sikh citizens, who enjoy residency in a country which does not systematically violate their basic human rights in such a manner, this is a key concern and a point which cannot be stressed enough.

8. Therefore, British Sikhs ask that any allegations made by the Indian authorities regarding "Sikh terrorists' should be treated with both the scepticism and the acumen such sensitive judicial issues require. Indeed, all such cases regardless of the communities involved should be treated very carefully, thereby building trust between diverse British communities and homeland security agencies. This would also engender within the diverse British communities the feeling that their authorities are both transparent and not operating according to the whims of overseas administrations, who have particular vested interests. Transparency is of course the key issue here.

19 September 2004

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35. Memorandum submitted by Slough Race Equality Council

INTRODUCTION

1. Context and Local Community Demography

1.1 *Slough Race Equality Council's Role and Expertise*

SREC is a grant-aided not-for-profit voluntary organisation, membership comprising of various communities and individuals. SREC works with and for all of Slough's diverse communities, settled and newly arrived. Briefly our aims are to:

— promote good community and race relations;

— eradicate all forms of racial discrimination;

— empower and assist disadvantaged communities in identifying, raising awareness and addressing their needs; and

— aid victims of racial discrimination and harassment.

— SREC has expertise in monitoring community cohesion issues, racial incidents, community tensions and other local situations.

— SREC works in partnership with both police, other public sector authorities and local communities.

1.2 SREC condemns all acts of terrorism that abuse human rights and seeks to uphold justice and human rights for all. In July 2003, Slough REC held a public debate with local people, police and various groups to discuss the impact of anti-terrorism legislation on local communities, which raised various concerns and issues for local people, many contained within this report.

1.3 *Demography of Slough's Communities;*

(i) Census 2001 indicates over 36% ethnic minorities in Slough (Muslim 13%, Sikhs 9%, Indian 14%, Pakistani 12%, Black Caribbean 3%, Others 9%.).

(ii) School population figures estimate 52% from minority communities with over 40 languages spoken in Slough schools and an estimated 60 on the streets.

(iii) Hospitals estimate up to 80% of births are from BME backgrounds.

(iv) Slough also has the highest number of ethnic minorities in the Southeast Region outside of London (estimated over 50,000).

(v) Highest number of Sikhs in Britain living in one area, (estimated 14,000).

(vi) Census however does not accurately show the number and diversity of BME communities in the area. Significant number of newly arrived communities, including refugees and asylum seekers. Despite it being neither a "priority" nor "official" NASS dispersal area, Slough has the second highest new arrivals in the SouthEast (NASS 2003). Extremely poor statistics on the local variation beyond the census—estimates of 2–3,000, many from Middle Eastern, Arabic and Asian nations.

(vii) Some of the most deprived wards in the country and the worst health in the south east.

STATEMENT OF ISSUES AND CONCERNS

2. Community Issues and Impact of Terrorism "Threat"

2.1 *Increasing Hostility, Community Tensions and Community Cohesion Problems*

(i) Anti-terrorism measures, coupled with the media coverage of them are a major cause of local tensions and have definitely exploited racial tensions between different groups.

(ii) Young people, especially young Pakistanis and Sikhs say they are experiencing increased tensions.

(iii) Anti-terrorism measures have created an atmosphere of paranoia, fear and suspicion in local communities and has amplified racist hostility towards visible minorities and refugees; legitimising and justifying racist ideologies of the far-right BNP and the likes (who are increasingly appearing in various guises of white "community groups"). In the climate of fear of terrorism threats, the uneducated so fall prey to their lies.

(iv) Area Commander of the local Police force said (18 June 2003), there has been an "enormous" increase in the level of hate crime since September 11: "Slough has the highest level of hate crime in the Thames Valley . . . it is open season racist abuse and those that are perceived as 'different' are often subject to physical attack . . . The Far Right are never far away, they are always looking to get in and stir up trouble, waiting on the fringes for their opportunities . . . circulating like buzzards . . ."

2.2 *Nature of Incidents*

Racial and religious incidents can involve various forms and levels of violence and aggression, serial harassment, verbal abuse and physical intimidation, discrimination of varying kinds (including institutional)—found in homes and neighbourhoods, in the street and also many problems of targeted bullying in the workplace.

2.3 *Increased Levels of Racial and Religious Attacks and Harassment*

Particularly in community settings. Local incidents statistics from police and internal casework monitoring data show racial incidents consistently increasing to record levels, all disproportionately affecting BME—Last year (2003–04) a record level of 376 incidents, an increase of 27.9% on the previous year. There are also high-risk geographical areas in Slough that are worst affected and more volatile for cohesion concerns (often deprived areas).

2.4 Increasing concerns about racial incidents, beatings and bullying by security contractors within detention centres—barriers to reporting, lack of police investigation and prosecution of perpetrators.

2.5 *Increased Isolation, Exclusion and Under-Reporting of Incidents*

Anti-terrorism measures exacerbate factors such as confidence, fear and mistrust in the policing authorities, feeling of lack of rights, fear of reprisals, risking a heightened situation for themselves or their family—all contributing to a serious problem of under-reporting of racial and religious attacks and harassment across most communities, with particular concern about further segregation, isolation and abuse of refugees, asylum seekers and other newly arrived communities. Anecdotally there are many, many more incidents of racial harassment that are not recognised, reported or dealt with—SREC and other local agencies have many examples of such cases.

2.6 Vastly increasing incidence of targeted islamaphobia; a worrying picture for the area. Police revealed a foiled plot involving pigs blood and halal butchers. Anecdotal evidence to suggest Muslim individuals and communities are experiencing increased fear and abuse. Likewise any visible minority person, including Sikhs and Afghans are being targeted. For example, Muslim Women's "hajabs" and Sikh "dastar" (turbans) have been viciously pulled off. Local NHS staff have noted that patients from all communities have been "distancing" themselves from Muslim staff.

2.7 Impact of incidents on victims, also their families and communities can be profound and devastating, with huge long term implications on mental health, fear and security—includes conflict with colleagues and at home, damaged health to victim, families and communities, damaged community relations and cohesion.

2.8 Stigmatisation of minority groups publicly "associated" with terrorism—various implications and impact, including:

(i) Anger and high levels of fear at proscribing community and youth networks and organisations as being "linked to terrorists" when evidence of links is poor and inconsistent—often many targeted or banned organisations can represent some of the most vulnerable people in our society. Perception that decisions are made at the orders of British or other foreign governments that have an alternative vested interest to prevent political or human rights organisations from speaking out and gaining support.

(ii) A few arrests can stigmatise whole communities, community relations and community cohesion with potentially severe consequences. Sensitivities can get heightened so that small "trigger events" could become more serious in no time.

(iii) Otherwise legal activities, financial transactions and donations (especially international to families in their homelands) are being unjustly scrutinised, and sometimes delayed or refused without justification.

(iv) Impact on BME livelihoods as customers boycott stores and businesses—increases deprivation and disadvantage.

2.9 Media coverage of arrests is extremely damaging—why are the press and TV at the front door of a local minority family when the door is being broken down at three in the morning? There appears to be serious problems of press leaks by the police or other organisations—this also labels an area, a family, the community, may prejudice the individual's trial and damages the individuals reputation, even if they are released uncharged. The enforcement of this legislation is seriously detrimenting community relations and heightening fear of difference, fear of their neighbours and fear of "Arab" looking people.

2.10 At the same time, media encourages people to fear difference, and legitimises racism, Islamaphobia and racial and religious intolerance generally. Media is only serving to make the perception of Britain as a "haven for Islamic extremists"

2.11 More needs to be done by the mainstream media agencies at popular viewing and listening times to counteract the myths and racist ideas being created about Islam and Muslims. There could be much more done to explore the real Islam (meaning "peace") and the "real" message of the Qu'ran eg which states that the killing of one person is like killing the whole of mankind.

3. Impact, Concerns and Consequences of Anti-Terrorism "Measures'

3.1 *Enforcing Anti-Terrorism Legislation & Policing Issues:*

The Metropolitan police operation around Heathrow was a total public relations and community relations disaster. Massive community perception that Asian and Arabic, visible minorities and particularly young males were (and still are) being disproportionately stopped and searched without reason except for their appearance. Apparent lack of communication between the Met and the local Thames Valley Police force at ground level as to the nature and operational guidelines/local sensitivities of the area. Even a Police Chief, being "Arab-looking" said he was stopped three times.

3.2 Widespread perception that powers are being used in a racially discriminatory way particularly operationally biased toward Muslim and other minority communities (stop and search, arrests, detentions and the prosecutions). Perception of lack of accountability of police and Fear about "open door for racist abuse of police powers in the wrong hands." Indeed, community reports of arrests of Muslims and later freed without charge. Perception is reality for people—and lack of justification, and perceived discriminatory

targeting of young Asian and Arab males (and indeed families) is causing huge anger and resentment. It is extremely difficult to ascertain what the impact can be on a town's community relations. Relations with local authorities and police will most certainly be severely damaged.

3.3 Refugees and asylum seekers, probably the most vulnerable, poor, unprotected and often already traumatised people are further devastated and targeted by links and arrests under "terrorism" measures.

3.4 Serious concerns about lack of careful planning, cultural sensitivities and organisation of arrest operations. Not just the media "leaks" apparently by the police but poor quality and insensitive planning of raids and arrests in public places or in the full glare of the neighbours. One community is also very upset about the care of children of women arrested in a dawn raid—lack of cultural sensitivities and lack of consultation with communities (not just social services) about appropriate care provision of the children.

3.5 Decreased communication with police on statistics and community issues (previously shared) to assist understanding of community tensions and volatile areas. Eg stop and search or arrest statistics, racial incidents statistics, and other ethnic monitoring figures. Refusal to share monitoring figures on stop and search, especially under anti-terrorism legislation.

3.6 Local peaceful protests are being monitored, restricted, filmed and criminalised—all without justification or evidence—this breeds massive resentment against both local police and the government— heightens probability of community disturbances.

3.7 Massive fear about the future implications of widening of investigative and police powers, the "Big Brother State"—Minority communities feel they are being unfairly targeted and will come under increasing stress and restricted civil liberties. The ID card is seen to be useless as an anti-terrorism tool, with more sinister aims of "snooping" and control. Increased mistrust of authorities, decreased communication and community intelligence with public services. Perception that "justice" only applies to white Britons, not to Muslims or other "foreign nationals".

4. Impact of Anti-Terrorism Measures on Communities & Community Cohesion

4.1 Decreased sense of security for most visible minorities, especially those of Asian, Middle-Eastern or Arabic looks. This will include Pakistanis, Sikhs, Afghanis, Iraqis, Iranians, North Africans and most other communities that wear head garments, turbans, or even for those who simply have darker skin. In Slough alone this could potentially number over 50,000 people.

4.2 Perception this legislation is being used to target refugees and asylum seekers, and that immigration is being used as a smokescreen to enforce racially discriminatory policies. Refugees seeking haven here already often persecuted by police or "authorities" in their home countries fear they will be terrorised here too or deported.

4.3 Ethnic minority communities becoming more insular and segregated—when feeling "under attack", communities feel safer with their own people, they feel less and less as "part of the wider community". There appears to be a separation of communities on an ethnic basis in areas where racial harassment & incidents are worst, particularly in majority white areas that are also deprived.

4.4 Lessened sense of being British and increased sense of religious/national identity—even for those young people who were born and brought up here—increased importance in identity being a Muslim first, increased sense of "brotherhood" in the face of an enemy in the shape of their own government and sometimes their local neighbourhoods. This is a direct result of the threat of the legislation as well as the "war on terror".

4.5 Decreased sense of freedom—even in an area of high ethnic minorities, individuals and community groups have expressed the impact of the terrorism "measures" on their sense of freedom—freedom of movement into majority White areas, freedom of travel outside their communities, and freedom of speech to speak out about the racism, attacks and restrictions on civil liberties. Fear in participating in our public debate on this subject.

4.6 Criminalisation of political involvement or activism—Indeed, there is a fear that involvement of openly speaking out about many political issues, especially terrorism, if you are non-white as you will be targeted as a terrorist or unpatriotic or unsympathetic to the victims of 11 September. Even educated officers of our REC felt too intimidated to attend, let alone speak out at our debate on impact of anti-terrorism measures. One individual quoted "it's ok for you to speak out and you must—we cannot because we are minorities." This highlights serious concerns about fear in the community and lack of involvement in local, national or community politics.

4.7 Easy prey for extremism—due to this alienation, young people in particular are becoming easier prey to extremist far right religious and political groups and are being targeted outside schools with biased literature. Feeling less belonging and targeted could indeed influence to the individual's motivation to get involved and belong with such groups.

5. Civil Liberties Issues

5.1 Desperate and widespread lack of faith or confidence in the British judicial system as a direct result of what is perceived to be secretive and unaccountable anti-terrorism legislation. Even professionals including local police and lawyers have expressed disbelief as to the "draconian" laws (senior police officer said this).

5.2 Perception that anti-terrorism powers give complete disregard to the most basic human and legal rights we are so proud of in this country—even the reason why some minorities have come to Britain. For example, the right to a fair trial, the right to liberty, presumption of innocence, the requirement that the State provide evidence "beyond a reasonable doubt" and more.

 (i) Communities outrage at lack of hUman Rights in having a fair trial.

 (ii) Outrage and lack of legal assistance without justification.

 (iii) Outrage at "indefinite period" of detention without justification, even with release without charge after some months—massive negative impact on individual and community relations.

5.3 Extreme concerns about lack of awareness of cultural sensitivities and awareness of immigration officers. Many communities travel to and from Slough via Heathrow and there are numerous anecdotes of rude remarks, rough, insensitive and unjustified searching of turbans, hajabs and luggage, detainment, verbal abuse and general bad treatment of minorities coming through British immigration and customs. Cultural awareness training about the importance of both gender and cultural sensitivities is imperative.

6. Conclusion and Further Recommendations

Overall

6.1 Anti-terrorism measures are impacting on communities and community cohesion in most serious and pervasive ways—intimidating them, criminalising them, stigmatising them, segregating them, attacking them. Minority communities feel that the anti-terrorism legislation and its enforcement powers are being abused, are unfair, racist, illegitimate, and actively against basic Human and Legal rights. Perception that Justice is failing those it is supposed to protect.

6.2 Ordinary criminal law is sufficient to deal with threats and terrorism and there is no evidence to suggest that the anti-terrorism measures and special powers are constructively protecting anyone, and are only making a mockery of decades of community relations and anti-racist work. There will be increasing and severe community cohesion problems if the powers are not restricted, made accountable and monitored and sanctions placed on those found misusing them.

Police Powers

6.3 Must be public accountability to provide evidence and justification for police to exercise powers under this act (see 3.2) in all areas (including stop and search, arrest, detention, and prosecution process).

6.4 Police to take positive action to both prevent and fully investigate reports of racial incidents with recommendations for positive community relations (eg community training, funding for integration events and projects, take sanctions on perpetrators). Community and race relations officers to spend more time within local BME communities—communication and interpreting issues.

6.5 Police to respect the basic human rights of individuals and their usual procedures and rights that police usually follow (eg access to legal representation etc, explanation of arrest etc).

6.6 Police to share statistical and ethnic monitoring information with local agencies/communities about racial incidents, arrest and detentions under the anti-terrorism legislation (eg Race Equality Councils, relevant community groups or welfare organisations) enhances intelligence gathering, prevention and appropriate policing of disturbances, and would go some way to re-building good community relations and mutual trust with authorities.

6.7 In the case that local Police wish to film any event, they will notify beforehand the organisers of any community demonstrations, protests and the like, with explanation of reason & intent of use & distribution of the film.

Community Cohesion

6.8 The climate of fear of Islamophobia, lack of support, even threat from the authorities on Muslims is creating fertile ground for extremists to prey on young Muslims. More money should be put into youth projects for minority and disaffected youths in all areas.

6.9 More long term and core funding for community and integration projects for all age groups especially in deprived areas or with deprived communities—need re-inclusion of ethnicity into deprivation indices. Severe funding needs in voluntary and community sector—but also individual funds like Community Champions extremely effective.

6.10 Open, vocal support of Islam and Muslims in Britain followed by appropriate positive action initiatives by senior government. Zero tolerance of racism and Islamaphobia in policing, immigration and security services under an accountable legislative framework is essential (ie severe punishment for those not justifying arrests and detention without adequate evidence).

Anti-Terrorism Legislation and its Implementation

6.11 A complete overhaul (even repeal) of all Anti-terrorism legislation (2000 and 2001), to re-incorporate respect to human rights and basic legal rights into the legislation and powers. Restore all human rights and due legal process (the right of habeus corpus) under the anti-terrorism legislation—including:

(i) Everyone must be treated as innocent until proven guilty.

(ii) Public accountability and justification for arrest and detention and prosecution.

(iii) No detention without charge.

(iv) Right to information and evidence.

(v) Right to a fair trial.

6.12 Annual monitoring and review of all actions taken under the legislation and their impact on social cohesion and the actual protection of citizens against "real terrorists".

6.13 A Race impact assessment should be undertaken in widespread consultation with all interested parties and communities, including race equality councils, community and religious organisations locally and nationally.

6.14 Definition of "terrorism" and what constitutes "terrorist links" too broad—is confusing, unhelpful, can be misused and misrepresented to suit a different purpose. Should be narrowed specifically to include need for accountability, for evidence and justification of proscription of groups. Even the British government would fit into the current definition!

6.15 Repeal all bans on proscribed (banned) organisations where there is not public accountability and independent evidence to do so (not just on the order of individuals, political parties or governments).

6.16 Need for statutory code of practice on implementation of Acts and exercising of powers.

6.17 The above code to include best practice in execution of police powers—this should include ethnic and religious monitoring of all stop and search, arrests, detentions and outcomes of CPS processes, detailed cultural/religious awareness training for officers.

6.18 Religious discrimination legislation to be implemented and extended to all public services, including the police and specific justification given in execution of police powers in terrorism measures.

14 September 2004

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36. Memorandum submitted by the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission

Further to your invitation to make representations to the Home Affairs Committee in response to baseless allegations made by Mr. Jagdeesh Singh, we would like to state the following:

Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), also known as The Swaminarayan Hindu Mission (The Mission), is a registered charity in the UK (number 273425). The Mission runs the Hindu temple, Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (widely known as the "Neasden Temple"), situated at Brentfield Road, Neasden NW10.

The Neasden Temple is exclusively used by the Mission for its religious charitable purposes. It is one of the most prominent Hindu temples in the United Kingdom and the focal point of worship for Hindus in the UK and Europe. Its very existence is a beautiful, living monument to the Hindu principles of peace and harmony. The temple makes a major contribution to community life, and the trustees and devotees are committed to peace, tolerance and love of humankind; and they are respected by people of all faiths and none.

The Neasden Temple is an independent Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and has no political affiliations in any way, shape or form and is exclusively religious. No other organisation other than The Swaminarayan Hindu Mission and its associated bodies, have ever organised, operated from, been based at or conducted any activity from Neasden Temple, let alone the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) or any other organisation whatsoever.

The Hindu community is one of the most peaceful and law abiding in the country. We do not countenance violence of any kind whatsoever. And it is a slur to suggest otherwise. Therefore, the allegations by Mr Singh have caused profound offence to the wider Hindu community in the UK and are irresponsible, inflammatory and incorrect. It would be a tragic injustice that your witness should have sought to use the committee as a vehicle to undermine community relations in this way. You will no doubt agree that these comments rather than helping inter-community relations only serve to do the opposite. Left unchallenged, the minutes of evidence, on the Committee's website could, albeit erroneously, lend credence to such falsehood.

To begin to understand exactly how offensive such baseless lies are to inter-community relations it is important to note that recently the mother Temple of the Neasden Temple, Akshardham in Gandhinagar, India was itself the target of an appalling terrorist attack in which some 33 innocent lives were lost including a sadhu and very young children. The Gujarat riots had just about abated and a small spark was all that was needed to re-light the fuse that could turn Gujarat into a burning inferno. However, due to the composed and measured appeal by His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the Spiritual Master of the Neasden Temple, to pray for peace and to do nothing that might incite retaliatory violence or conflict in any way, this was averted. In fact, delegations of Muslim elders came to His Holiness to pay their respects and thank him for his message of peace, which resulted in peace throughout India.

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha (also known as the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission in the UK) is a socio-spiritual, charitable organisation with an international network of over 8,100 centres, 700 learned sadhus, a million members and 55,000 volunteers performing 162 humanitarian activities. It is an NGO in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

BAPS promotes care for education, environment, health, de-addiction, disaster management, family values, serving the needy, tribal and rural welfare, transmission of traditional and cultural awareness, Youth Development and curbing of social ills like violence and crime. It creates a society with active volunteers serving skilfully and selflessly and spreading the message of socio-spiritual harmony.

The organisation opens up new horizons of a meaningful better life, creating a climate of peace and purity, harmony and understanding through cultural, moral and spiritual values, that inspire to serve God and humanity.

These endeavours are a saga of sacrifice, of selfless service and boundless dedication, of continuous combined efforts of countless people; of people who have risen above the narrow confines of caste, creed, colour, sex and nationality and who live a life free from crime, aggression and addictions.

The organisation is the inspiration of His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the fifth spiritual successor of Lord Swaminarayan and the present Spiritual Leader of BAPS.

His compassion for humanity, deep concern for its problems and conscious efforts to alleviate them, cure conflicts and promote peace in this world have touched many world religious and national leaders. However, most important is his quiet, undisturbed love for God, which rises beyond all borders of nation, religion and race. This makes him universally revered and respected.

He has been honoured by the House of Commons and the Canadian Parliament and has been given the Freedom of the City by no less than 40 cities in the United States of America. Additionally, he was named by the Guinness World Records 2001 as one of twenty most influential people in the world.

Various international leaders including HRH The Prince of Wales, Rt Hon John Major (then Prime Minister), Rt Hon Tony Blair (then Leader of HM Opposition) and Sir Richard Branson have visited the Neasden Temple, and confirm the peaceful nature of the Mission.

We would like to thank you for giving us this opportunity to hopefully redress the utterly false and baseless allegations by Mr Singh.

Mr Jitu Patel
Trustee
The Swaminarayan Hindu Mission

6 December 2004

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37. Memorandum submitted by the Union of Jewish Students

The Union of Jewish Students (UJS) is the main representative body for Jewish students on campus in the UK and Ireland. It provides social, cultural, political and educational programming, training and resources as well as organising national events for students. It is a peer-led union, which elects its leadership and is held to account by an annual conference.

The Campaigning function of UJS has been a core activity for 30 years. In 1974 the NUS (National Union of Students) passed a motion establishing a policy of "No Platform" for racists and fascists, in 1975, the UN voted to equate Zionism and Racism (which was recently revoked). These events together, inspired numerous attempts to ban Jewish Student societies all over the country. Some of these attempts were successful. The UJS campaigns department secured Jewish student welfare and safety during this time, and has done ever since.

UJS Campaigns is designed to facilitate and support pro-active and re-active campaigns on campus, defend and promote Jewish student welfare, and to work for equal rights for all minorities at University. In recent times UJS has lead the way in the fight against Holocaust denial and the BNP, has exposed the evil in and behind the Islamist extremist groups Hizb-Ut Tahrir and Al-Muhajiroun, and has campaigned to ensure anonymous marking at university. UJS and its representatives have taken a lead in highlighting the problem of Islamophobia, and campaigning against it.

The UJS campaigns team works with a number of other student and faith organisations to promote positive community relations on campus. This includes strong partnerships with the National Union of Students, the National Hindu Student Forum, The British Organisation of Sikh Students, Muslim Jewish Dialogue groups and others.

The past few years in particular have proved very difficult for Jewish students, since the beginning of the current intifada, anti-Semitism has risen, and threats against Jewish students have increased. The problems can be broken down into a number of key areas: academics, websites, motions, extremist groups and miscellaneous threats.

It should be made clear however, that while this material is evidence of anti-Semitism, there is a parallel rise in complications, misunderstanding and lack of balance as regards teaching the Middle East conflict. It is the view of UJS that criticism of particular policies of the Government of the State of Israel is legitimate and certainly not anti-Semitic. In fact, in the late 70s and early 80s, UJS was the first UK based Jewish organisation to adopt a policy of a two state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, and to advocate a policy of mutual recognition between the State of Israel and the PLO. However, it is worthy of note that tension in classrooms and lecture theatres on, and surrounding this issue has led to demonisation and isolation of Jewish Students.

ACADEMICS

There has been a noticeable rise in academic intolerance, misunderstanding, abuse and anti-Semitism. A few key examples outline the more general problem.

1. *Nat Queen—Birmingham*

A student surfing the web found that a Birmingham lecturer's personal University homepage included links (which were personally endorsed) to an anti-Semitic website. Dr. N M Queen, lecturer in applied mathematics from the School of Mathematics and Statistics has a section on his site entitled "Human Rights". From a link titled "American State Terrorism", one is taken to a site filled with Jewish conspiracy stories, a complimentary bibliography of David Irving and pages on Zionist power. The initial response from the University was slow and unhelpful: they supported the lecturer and tried to stop most discussion on the subject. In a media interview the academic defended his position. Following pressure from the Union, press and UJS, Birmingham changed their policy as regards web usage, and academics' personal sites in particular.

2. *Andrew Wilkie—Oxford*

Oxford University Professor Andrew Wilkie denied an Israeli student a PhD place based on his nationality, and the fact he had served in the Israeli army. This was considered an anti-Semitic case as the denial of admission was based on the particular nationality of the individual involved, and the question was raised and unanswered as to whether a former member of any other army would have been prohibited. Furthermore this was a clear case of discrimination in admissions, and caused tension on campus. The Students Union and UJS worked together to ensure positive lessons were learned. The University was very slow in investigating the case and publicising their findings. The Professor was eventually suspended for two months, resigned as a fellow of Pembroke College (denying him certain privileges) and was sent to compulsory equal opportunities training.

3. *Mona Baker, Sue Blackwell, Miscellaneous*

There has been particular tension caused by those academics that cross the line between personal interest and activism and academic abuse of power. A number of examples exist, most prominently Mona Baker, who fired two Israeli academics from her journal because of their nationality and has as yet remained without reprimand; Sue Blackwell, who had links from her personal Birmingham University page to www.whatreallyhappened.com, a website propagating conspiracy theories surrounding the 9/11 attacks, notably that Israel was their true perpetrator. This is a throwback to classic Jewish control and conspiracy theories. Finally, other random cases of lecturers who have provided lectures comparing Israelis to Nazis or Israel's actions to ethnic cleansing (for example at London Metropolitan University and LSE). Again, the dehumanisation and demonisation of Israel in this way leads to tension on campus and anti-Semitic incidents, and is beyond the line of legitimate political comment.

WEBSITES

1. One of the worst cases of web-based anti-Semitism was found on the Open University's website, the message board (the "first class conferencing system") included outrageous racist remarks. The message board is only accessible to students at the University. One student moderator resigned over the affair, admitting that she had not performed her duties as she should have. After much pressure and press

involvement, the University moved the international affairs board to a "view first" system to stop offensive posts being put up. Their reaction was slow and generally unhelpful. The Jewish students involved no longer use the website through fear of attack.

2. Many universities have been found to have links to offensive websites, or unacceptable web content on their servers. An offensive site was found via a homepage at the University of Cork. Among other articles, the website contained material linking Israel to the 9/11 attacks. Furthermore, anti-Semitic passages appeared on the Essex University Islamic Society website: http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/islamic/ilm/misconceptions/baz-trty.html

3. The most serious cases of web anti-Semitism regard death threats. At both Birmingham and Lancaster, Jewish students were sent messages through society websites threatening death and violence. Most often the comments were linked to Israel. One example is reproduced below.

From: kill the jews@paki.com
a: sharon
b: ye right
c: believe!
d: 999
e: Both (YC/Shalem)
g: fuck u..ur all gona die! in this country..u wont survive

MOTIONS

The clearest example of anti-Semitism on campus relates to anti-Zionist and Israel boycott motions, which were submitted in a co-ordinated campaign across the country in 2002–03 and continue today. They drew a linkage between Jewish student support for Israel, and the rights of Jewish students to organise themselves on campus.

The motions followed a very similar word pattern, and it is believed that this was an orchestrated campaign from the extreme left campus groups, occasionally in collaboration with Islamist groups or individual activists.

The cycle began in Manchester in 2002 with a motion that threatened to ban the Jewish Society. There was a huge demonstration against the motion, which failed to pass, but Jewish-Muslim relations on campus became extremely tense.

Following this, there were a further 17 similar motions across the country, only six of which were passed. The motions compared Israel to apartheid-era South Africa and called for a boycott of Israeli goods (which in many places would have lead to a banning of many, if not all, kosher products). In most cases, tensions were stirred up around the motions, and a number of anti-Semitic incidents took place, mainly—but not exclusively—against the Jewish students who were involved in campaigns against the boycott motions.

Incidents of anti-Semitism included: skullcaps being knocked from people's heads; screwdrivers through letterboxes and knives in doors; anti-Semitic graffiti; verbal abuse; incidents of students being followed. This again highlights the clear connection between tension in the Middle East, and anti-Semitic incidents on campus.

Universities UK were helpful, and sent a memo out to all vice-chancellors and Universities providing guidelines and advice in order to ease tension on campus.

Worthy of particular note is the School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS), University of London, where last year another motion was passed paralleling Zionism with Racism. As a consequence, Jewish students now feel very uncomfortable, and feel it necessary to minimise their Jewish presence on campus due to fear. The outcome of this motion has been that no official Jewish Society can be established and Zionist activity on campus is banned.

EXTREMISTS

There is a constant presence of extremist groups on or around campus who are anti-Semitic, and have a history of anti-Semitic rhetoric and behaviour.

The extremist Islamist group Hizb-ut Tahrir (HUT) are still prevalent on campus. UJS led the student movement in raising awareness about their attitudes and behaviour in the mid-1990s. They were banned by NUS, but have since reappeared under a number of aliases. A BBC Newsnight documentary exposed their activity at Kingston University, and they have also been active at UCE in Birmingham and QMW in London, amongst others. Their publications in the mid-1990s were highly racist, anti-Semitic and anti-democratic/Western; they still utilise the same symbols and speakers. They were banned again this year by NUS.

Al-Muhajiroun, led by Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed remains active especially in the Manchester, Nottingham and London. Al-Muhajiroun remains highly anti-Semitic and inflames tensions on campus. They have held rallies in support of 9/11 and their members are suspected to have been involved in the anti-Semitic attacks surrounding motions.

The Muslim Public Affairs Committee (MPAC) uses its website to promote anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, Holocaust denial and homophobic rhetoric. Their student arm is the Islamic Public Affairs Society, which is present at the University of London Union. This group was also banned at NUS this year; however their website reaches many students, and has a markedly negative impact.

The Young BNP claim to have posts all around the country, but were only visible at the NUS national demonstration against fees. Their aim is often to overturn No Platform policies in order that their leadership can speak on campus. This caused tension three years ago in Leeds, where Mark Collett, the disgraced Young BNP ex-leader, was studying and politically active.

The extreme left are particularly vocal on campus, and in recent times have colluded with Islamist Extremist groups like the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB). Between the Socialist Workers' Student Society, Stop the War Coalition, MAB, Friends of Al-Aqsa, the International Solidarity Movement, the General Union of Palestinian Students and Friends of Palestine, there is often material, comments or publications where the line between anti-Israel comment and anti-Semitism/Zionism is crossed. Often, in public lectures in particular, the word Zionist is used interchangeably with Jew. Azam Tamimi, a spokesman for the MAB, and former spokesperson for the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, often speaks on campus where he consistently attempts to justify, and expresses support for, Palestinian suicide bombing against Israeli civilians. These groups collectively are behind much of the tension, unease and fear felt by Jewish students. Examples of their literature and comment are available from UJS.

MISCELLANEOUS

A number of miscellaneous anti-Semitic incidents occurred on campus over the past year. These include:

— The London Metropolitan University Jewish Society was told it had to change its name in order to "shield it from society" following the merger of North London and Guildhall Universities to form the Metropolitan University.

— Various articles in the Birmingham student newspaper *Redbrick* inciting racial hatred, and insinuating a Jewish conspiracy in the union.

— An anti-Semitic article in the Sussex student newspaper was printed. The article played on Jewish support from American and Imperialist groups, furthering the idea of a conspiracy theory.

— The Russian Society at Oxford refused to take part in Holocaust Memorial Day activities as some of their members "may have strong anti-Semitic views".

— The Edinburgh student newspaper printed a picture supposedly poking fun at Holocaust denial, but which in fact caused shock and offence.

— A number of speakers, including Rev. Stephen Sizer from Oxford Brookes University, have been openly anti-Semitic and demonised or dehumanised Jews and Israelis.

UJS are happy to provide evidence, examples and further details of any matters outlined above.

23 September 2004

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38. Memorandum submitted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

1. The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is a non-political humanitarian organisation charged with leading international efforts to protect and assist refugees. It seeks durable solutions for refugees, including voluntary repatriation, local integration in their country of asylum, and resettlement to third countries. The UN refugee agency currently looks after some 20 million people worldwide, including refugees, asylum seekers, recent returnees and other persons of concern.

2. UNHCR's interest in this inquiry stems from concerns over unwarranted links made in some quarters between terrorism and the status of refugees/asylum seekers. Whilst UNHCR fully supports all efforts aimed at eradicating terrorism, the fight against terrorism must ensure full respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of all law-abiding individuals. Although there have been some positive and encouraging examples of measures to combat terrorism that fully respect the rights of asylum seekers and refugees, there have also been cases that have negatively affected people in need of international protection. It is UNHCR's belief that any discussion on security safeguards should start from the assumption that refugees are themselves threatened. Refugees are by definition escaping persecution and violence—including even terrorist acts—and are not the perpetrators of such violence.[50]

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[50] Statement by Mr Ruud Lubbers, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to the Special Meeting on Terrorism and International Law at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (San Remo, Italy), 30 May 2002.

STIGMATISATION OF MINORITY GROUPS PUBLICLY "ASSOCIATED" WITH TERRORISM

3. Most sections of the media have reported responsibly on terrorist incidents and called for the general public to avoid blaming certain ethnic groups or religious communities that may share similarities with individuals who have committed grave crimes. However, certain media outlets have promoted impressions amongst the public of generalised linkages between terrorists and certain communities. These sections of the media, by their frequent and dramatic style of reporting, have created amongst some members of the general public impressions that clear links exist between terrorist groups and certain ethnic or religious communities, gravely endangering some segments of society. In the UK, the Association of Chief of Police Officers has highlighted concerns over unfair and careless linking of Muslims and terrorism.[51]

4. In addition to the oft-cited linkages between Muslim and terrorism, of even greater concern to UNHCR are unwarranted associations that have been made between terrorism and refugees/asylum seekers. If such unwarranted associations gain widespread public currency, they will serve only to generate feelings of fear and anxiety and compromise the safety of asylum seekers and refugees whom UNHCR is charged to protect. Such an atmosphere will also seriously hamper asylum-seekers' and refugees' acceptance and participation in the host community, with individuals of the Muslim faith being particularly disadvantaged. It negatively affects their ability to integrate and contribute to their host community, leading to their marginalisation and isolation.

5. The 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (henceforth "1951 Convention") has itself been offensively termed a "safe haven for terrorists". In reality only a very small number of asylum applicants have been arrested under anti-terrorism legislation. The 1951 Convention excludes terrorists from protection and does not stand in the way of their criminal prosecution. It provides for mechanisms to enable governments to decide who is a refugee in need of sanctuary and who needs to be excluded because they have committed serious crimes making them threats to national security or public order. Article 1F of the 1951 Convention explicitly enables governments to exclude individuals who, even though they may be facing persecution in their country, have been involved in serious criminal or terrorist activities. Article 32 allows for the removal of such individuals to a third country, and Article 33 may be exceptionally invoked for a refugee to be returned to his or her country if he or she has been convicted for a particular serious crime and represents a danger to the community.

MEDIA COVERAGE

6. It appears that certain media outlets have purposefully propagated public animosity towards certain categories of foreigners for various reasons, including to help increase their readership and profits. Such sections of the media appear not to care that their misreporting and incitement of insecurity might harm community relations, including those between residents of the host community and individuals who have fled persecution in their homelands for the safety and respect that should be afforded by democracies such as the UK.

7. Negative attitudes propagated by some press reports make asylum seekers and refugees feel unwelcome and feed racist and xenophobic attitudes. Research recently commissioned by the Lord Mayor of London[52] has pointed to links between negative media reporting, increased community tensions, and hostility and violence aimed at asylum seekers. As well as compromising the safety of asylum seekers and refugees and significantly damaging community relations, racism and xenophobia may also contribute to mental health problems and hinder their successful integration.

8. UNHCR is aware that one of the major factors that contribute to indifference or hostility toward refugees and asylum-seekers is public confusion about who refugees are and why they are forced to flee their homelands. However, rather than laying the ground for a legitimate public debate on refugee and asylum issues, hostile and alarmist media coverage threatens the lives of those who have fled persecution and conflict. Therefore, alongside responsible and balanced reporting of issues relating to the nature of the terrorist threat, news outlets must avoid propagating misleading and potentially damaging associations.

9. It is absolutely crucial that media outlets provide the public with information that objectively presents the situations of human rights abuse and war that have brought refugees and asylum seekers to seek refuge here so as to better foster understanding and tolerance towards these groups.

10. UNHCR welcomes the publication (October 2003) by the Press Complaints Commission (henceforth "PCC") of guidance on the reporting of asylum and refugee issues, which was the result of consultation with concerned agencies, including UNHCR. In addition, UNHCR, in conjunction with the National Union of Journalists and the Mediawise Trust, has published guidance for journalists on best practice in reporting of asylum and refugee issues. However, despite these positive measures, UNHCR continues to express grave

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[51] Association of Chief of Police Officers, press release 8 June 2004, Ref: 59/04.
[52] Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees in the UK (ICAR) *Media Image, Community Impact: Assessing the impact of media and political images of refugees and asylum seekers on community relations in London.* Report of a pilot research study commissioned by the Mayor of London. April 2004.

concern that certain sections of the media continue to publish inaccurate and misleading stories that are a danger to good community relations. Such coverage disrupts the process of integration and infringes on the fundamental rights of law-abiding individuals.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

11. The UN refugee agency calls for measures to avoid further deterioration of community relations through the tackling of inaccurate media coverage without affecting the freedom of expression. In this regard, UNHCR notes the recommendations of the European Commission against racism and intolerance[53] to member governments encouraging debate within the media on the image they convey of minority groups in connection with the fight against terrorism. The UN refugee agency suggests that media voluntarily promote mutual respect by countering stereotypes and prejudice and build upon the existing work of the organisations mentioned above.

12. UNHCR further notes that previous adjudications under Clause 1 (Accuracy) of the PCC's code of practice have underlined the danger that inaccurate, misleading or distorted reporting may generate an atmosphere of fear and hostility that is not borne out by the facts. UNHCR would welcome a re-affirmation by news editors to the PCC's code of conduct's preamble, which states that "it is essential that an agreed code be honoured not only to the letter but in the full spirit", in addition to stricter adherence to the aforementioned guidance notes.

13. With regard to actions by the government, UNHCR welcomes recent initiatives on community cohesion and integration.[54] The establishment of legislative frameworks, policies and programs may not only help better manage cultural diversity, but may tackle many of the phenomena of concern to this inquiry.

14. The successful integration of refugees and asylum seekers is contingent on fostering a climate of understanding, acceptance and tolerance. This would motivate refugees and asylum-seekers to better integrate, avoiding self-isolation.

14 September 2004

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39. Memorandum submitted by the United Synagogue

1. The United Synagogue (US) is the umbrella body for 65 synagogues and 40,000 member families located in London and the Home Counties. The US was created in 1870 by an Act of Parliament (Jewish United Synagogues Act, 14 July 1870). In addition to running those synagogues and employing their religious and other staff, the US operates a number of Jewish cemeteries, is the foundation body and denominational authority for five Jewish primary and two secondary schools, funds the Chief Rabbinate and London Beth Din (ecclesiastical court), operates Jewish hospital and prison chaplaincy in the London area. The US is also heavily involved in youth activities and community development work. In essence the US is an essential part of the infrastructure and fabric of orthodox Jewish life in London.

2. The US is also involved in numerous interfaith, inter-community and other civic activities both centrally and through our individual Rabbis and communities. The US is represented on bodies such as the Interfaith Network, the London Civic Forum and the Churches Main Committee. The US was asked by the Home Office to facilitate consultation with parts of the Jewish Community during the recent 'Strength in Diversity' consultation exercise.

3. The US welcomes the announcement that this inquiry will consider the incidence of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other forms of prejudice.

4. The US endorses and supports the central Jewish community submission to this inquiry, which has been made by the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD) and the Community Security Trust (CST). The US is an affiliate of the BOD and works very closely with the CST to ensure the physical security of our synagogues, offices, schools and cemeteries.

5. The intention of this brief submission is to outline the specific impact of the recent increase in anti-Semitism, consequence of anti-terror measures and community cohesion issues upon our own members and the religious facilities that we run on their behalf.

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[53] European Commission against Racism and Intolerance General Policy Recommendation No.8 on Combating Racism while Fighting Terrorism 17 March 2004).

[54] Consultations on which UNHCR has or will comment include, *inter alia*: "Fairness for All: A New Commission for Equality and Human Rights" (Department for Trade and Industry White Paper in association with Department for Constitutional Affairs, Department for Education and Skills, Department for Work and Pensions), "Strength in Diversity: Towards a Community Cohesion and Race Equality Strategy" (Home Office), and Integration Matters: "A National Strategy for Refugee Integration" (Home Office).

6. Over the past two and a half years the US has suffered a number of direct attacks and desecrations of our religious facilities. Most notably these include the desecration of the Finsbury Park Synagogue in April 2002, an arson attack at South Tottenham Synagogue in June 2004, the May 2003 desecration of 368 gravestones at Plashet Cemetery in West Ham and the racially motivated attack on the North West London Eruv last year.

7. The impact of such attacks is multifaceted:

7a. On each of the occasions listed above, our local Rabbis reported the unsettling effect and sense of isolation across the London Jewish community. Finsbury Park is an elderly community, many members are Holocaust survivors and the Rabbi is a survivor of Kristallnacht. In the case of cemetery desecrations, the emotional impact upon families of those buried in the facilities concerned cannot be underestimated nor can the wave of anxiety triggered across the community.

7b. The repair of damage is often a costly exercise in its own right and in some instances major costs are not recoverable through insurance policies after incidents of this nature. Such attacks invariably lead to police advice to tighten security arrangements both at the site itself and on all nearby Jewish institutions. Again, these costs must be borne by communal Jewish charitable funds. The attack on South Tottenham Synagogue saw the destruction of priceless and irreplaceable books and manuscripts rescued from Nazi Germany.

7c. It is encouraging to note, that particularly in the case of Finsbury Park Synagogue, local volunteers from other faith communities, and church groups have assisted in repair and clear up efforts. Letters of sympathy and solidarity received from other faith leaders and groups in such circumstances are deeply valued.

7d. The need for increasingly tight security arrangements at our institutions and events has become an all too familiar feature of Jewish life in London. Security guards at synagogue doors, outside Jewish schools and outside communal events, are a necessity that overshadow our members' ability to go about their daily business as British Jews.

8. The United Synagogue is keen to promote positive and harmonious relations between the different faith communities in the London area. As stated previously we are involved in numerous local initiatives to this end. Our President recently wrote to Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, expressing our concern that his hosting of Sheikh Qaradawi at the GLA, and his lack of consultation with other faith communities in the London area about the possible consequences of such a visit, might damage such relations. We are saddened to point out that our letter of 14 July 2004 was not given the courtesy of an acknowledgement or reply until 9 September 2004. It is our sincere belief that when a section of the community has heartfelt concerns, politicians should give leadership and comfort. Politicians are elected to serve the entire community and should not selectively ignore the concerns of those sections with whom they believe themselves to be in political disagreement. The Mayor's delay contrasted with those of Stephen Byers MP, who dropped other commitments to be present with members of the Finsbury Park community in the immediate aftermath of the desecration of their synagogue. The impact of this visit was very powerful and comforting as was the visit of David Lammy MP to the site of the South Tottenham Synagogue following the arson attack.

9. The US enjoys positive relations with parts of the Muslim community in London. We have worked together with their representatives on matters such as organ retention and burial matters. Many of our local synagogues maintain close relationships with nearby mosques, churches, temples and gurdwaras.

10. The US invites the committee to consider the following specific recommendation:

10a. That the Government works with local authorities to ensure that following any serious attack upon a place of worship, financial and practical support is provided to minimise any disruption to the normal religious life of the community affected.

12 October 2004

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40. Memorandum submitted by Young Muslims UK (London Branch)

I am writing on behalf of the Young Muslims UK (London Branch) to provide our views and opinions regarding the inquiry into terrorism and community relations

The Young Muslims UK is the youth wing of the Islamic Society of Britain (ISB) and an affiliate to the Muslim Council of Britain—an umbrella organisation representing the Islamic organisations and mosques in the UK.

The Young Muslims UK is overwhelmed that this inquiry will be carried out and is somewhat overdue following the much publicised treatment of British Muslims, especially after 9/11.

Our concerns as a youth organisation, are many, primarily how many British Muslims are being labelled "terrorists' and how Islam has been linked to encouraging terrorism. Despite many statements about Islam's position on terrorism by leading Islamic figures both in the UK and around the world, it seems in the public eye that Islam preaches and encourages terrorism and public disorder.

Islam is a religion of peace, love and harmony and our holy scripture-—The Qur'an clearly makes reference to this.

"God calls to the Abode of Peace and He guides whom He wills to a straight path."

—Qur'an (10:25)

In today's society we are gradually using the terms terrorist and terrorism being associated with Islam. But how many us know what terrorism is? What it entails? If terrorism is a term associated with Islam, how would one describe the activities and the actions of groups such as the IRA, ETA and many other groups who cause social disharmony?

If they fall under the description of "terrorism", then are these groups "Christian terrorists"—a phrase which has never been used before in modern day language.

The impact of the "All Muslims are terrorists" mentality has created a stereotype amongst a growing number of members of the British public is all to see. A Muslim man with a beard or a Muslim female who wears a headscarf—hijab is branded extreme, uncompromising and even oppressed from people who know little or nothing about the religion of Islam

While a Christian nun who wears a headscarf or a Jewish rabbi who grows a beard is seen as respectful, honest and pious. This is the by-product of Islamophobia and stems from the whole misconception that Islam promotes terrorism, violence and is a religion which is intolerable.

The media has contributed towards the discrimination and the ill feeling towards Muslims. Many right-wing newspapers have created an image of fear and hatred towards Muslims as a result of a few words said by a minority. They have latched on these comments and used it as an opportunity to use these individuals to misrepresent the face of Islam with an evil intention to sell newspapers, make money and generate resentment towards Muslims.

This has also caused racism and crimes against Muslims which are obviously never reported by the press. How many incidents of streets attacks against Muslims are reported or jibes against Muslim women, commonly labelled "ninjas".

This can only be evident by the increasing support for hard line racist organisations such as the BNP, who use the religion of Islam and promote it as religion which is a threat to Britain and the world, and their recent political broadcast which misquoting verses of the Qur'an is clearly evident of this.

The media coverage has become so biased, that the days of neutral and fair reporting are quickly diminishing. The British public are well tuned to current affairs and tend to believe what is said on the TV or the comments in a section of a newspaper. British Muslims must ensure that the true faces and voices of Islam are heard and reported accordingly.

Even if the media do report a fair and neutral opinion of Islam and British Muslims generally, can we trust the police? The police are recruiting more and more people from ethnic minorities with a growing number from the Muslim community. Is this playing the race card or is it a genuine attempt to ensure that Britain's diversity is reflected in the police force?

The whole terrorism issue has forced a hardline approach from the police, constant stop and searching anyone who fits the stereotype of a "terrorist" using the zero tolerance route to safeguard "national security". British Muslims are losing trust with the police and this has been further reflected with the incident involving our dear brother, Baber Ahmed. This incident was never reported in the media and has only come to light from the efforts of the Muslim community and initiatives such as Stop Political Terror.

For those who do not know, Baber Ahmed was a victim of a quite savage arrest by Anti-Terrorist Police who broke into his house in a pre-dawn raid. He was then brutally assaulted in front of his wife. He sustained over 50 injuries to his body, two of which were life-threatening. During this attack Babar was placed in the prayer position and asked, "Where is your God now?"

After six days of intensive investigation he was released without charge.

Babar filed a complaint against the police officers who assaulted him. Despite photographic evidence of his injuries, independent medical reports and eye-witness statements, the Crown Prosecution Service decided that there was "insufficient evidence" to prosecute any of the officers involved.

On 5 August 2004 Babar was re-arrested on an Extradition Warrant from the United States of America. He is currently held as a British Political Prisoner at Woodhill Prison, Milton Keynes awaiting Extradition proceedings to commence in November 2004.

This quite shocking incident demonstrates how the civil liberties of British Muslims have become abused by the law for the sake of the "fight against terrorism". The notion of "guilty until proven innocent" is commonly used and only one side of the story is portrayed.

It has created a lack of confidence with the rule of law and the British policing system. This incident happened to an ordinary individual who is a respected family man, this can happen to anyone.

Islam denounces terrorism and anyone who promotes such behaviour. Muslims are not terrorists; we are peace-loving people who represent the teachings of God through the Qur'an and the example of our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

I hope that this inquiry looks into the issues that have been highlighted and represents a balanced conclusion.

Imran Mohiuddin

27 November 2004