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SHADES OF GRAY: SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY
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Moderator:

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Guest Speakers:

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First Secretary for Justice & Home Affairs, British Embassy

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. GRAND: (IN PROGRESS) – Good afternoon. My name is Steve Grand, Director of the Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World. It's a pleasure to have everyone here. We would be next door, but Brookings is undergoing a major renovation of its conference rooms so that they look like this when they are complete. (laughter)

Thanks to a very generous grant from the Ford Foundation, the Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World has had the opportunity to bring over Visiting Fellows from a variety of Muslim states and communities around the world to offer to the U.S. policy community authentic voices from the Muslim world and Muslim communities and states, as well as to write serious works of scholarship, whether analysis papers or books.

It's been our great pleasure at the Project to have for the last couple of months Hisham Hellyer with us. Hisham, as many of you know, is a prominent academic and commentator who specializes on issues relating to European identity in Muslim and European communities. He's an associate Fellow of the Center for Research and Ethnic Relations at the University of Warwick and until recently was a visiting professor at the Law Department at the American University in Cairo. In 2005, following the 7/7 attacks, he was nominated as the deputy convener of U.K. government's home office working group on tackling extremism and radicalization in the aftermath of those bombings, and it's our great pleasure to have him here with us today. Given the recent attempted terrorist attacks in London and Glasgow, I think

it's all the more important to examine ways that governments are trying to engage Muslim communities, as well as to think about who we engage and how we engage.

And with that, let me turn it over to Hisham.

MR. HELLYER: Thank you, Steve, for that introduction, and as always it's a pleasure to speak as a guest of Brookings.

It's been several months now since I've been putting pen to paper, vis-à-vis my work on counterterrorism and European Muslims. It's a subject that is fraught with preconceptions and fears in the present climate, and I've noticed how difficult the discourse is to navigate here with all the mess that seems to predominate.

As a nonpermanent fixture in the Beltway, I do not feel much pressure to "fit into the discourse," which I am often abundantly thankful for, so please take me very seriously when I say that I cannot think of a better place for me to have been than in the project that Steve heads up with the capable and sincere team that he has with Aysha Chowdhry and Neeraj Malhotra. Thank you very much. I almost never feel like I'm working here, because it's such a pleasure to be working with people whose only agenda is to raise the quality of the debate.

I'd also like to thank Bob Leiken from the Nixon Center, a Senior Fellow here at Brookings, for offering to be here. He took time out to engage with me on many an occasion and I'm sure has many other commitments on a regular basis, but he was pleased to make himself available for this event, and unfortunately due to very, you know, understandable reasons he wasn't able to be here, but we'd like to thank him for that.

Taking his place, we have two guests who will speak for a couple of minutes, commenting – off the record, of course - after my little talk: Shaarik Zafar from the Department of Homeland Security and also Tony Lord from the British Embassy. Thank you very much for making yourselves available.

The recent events in the United Kingdom show us that there still exists a problem with terrorism, and it is likely that it will be with us for quite some time. Internationally there are measures to be taken, and those measures must be part and parcel of any overall strategy to respond to the world we now live in. My particular aim is to look inwardly at the measures we take domestically in our countries in the West, to ensure that we minimize risk to our own citizens while maximizing our effectiveness. Part of that is knowing who our friends are, and who our enemies are. Make no mistake, there is a threat out there. We need to be aware of it and take appropriate steps.

If I can give one piece of advice from the outset, it is to recommend that no ideological agenda dictate our strategy. We have gone down that road in other realms of activity, and we have paid a very high price for that. We must be pragmatic. We must remain true to our core values. We must rely on empirical data, even when it's unpopular to do so. We cannot afford to do otherwise.

The ideology of the terrorists did not discriminate. They targeted anyone they could, and they would have done it again if our security services hadn't foiled the recent plots in the U.K. We must not take them as our teachers. We must discriminate, but with intelligence.

My talk today relates to two themes: identifying what works based on empirical information, and also identifying the nature of what we face. Language remains incredibly important. This town has by and large realized that the enemy is not Islam, and the enemy is not the Muslim mainstream. A minority would prefer to declare war on 1.4 billion people, whereas they did not declare war on us, but thankfully they remain in the minority. But much more than that minority is still unsure as to what to call the enemy. And Steve and I and other organizations that are represented around this table have been talking about ways to further that discussion, and we'll take this opportunity to brief you on that later on.

I'll speak for about fifteen, twenty minutes and then we can have the main session, which is essentially my opportunity to clarify my comments to you, and also to learn from your questions.

The events of 7/7 rocked the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe. Europe had (inaudible) been concerned about various issues but without taking sufficient steps to adequately understand them. This was the consistent message that we heard from think tanks to security services, such as the metropolitan police. One example which will be examined further in this session was the attitude, vis-à-vis the religion of Islam, in the run-up to and the aftermath of 7/7. At first there was a denial that religion had anything to do with the attacks. Politically, it was not allowed to say otherwise. Yet it became very clear quite quickly that this was clearly untenable. A perverted misinterpretation provided the moral ambiguity for pious individuals to carry out such atrocities.

Then some decided to take it a bit further. Rather than pointing out that a misinterpretation was indeed at work, some chose to cast suspicion on the religion of Islam as a whole. This was denounced wrongly from an academic standpoint as the entirety of British academia made abundantly clear, but from a security standpoint, it was judged to be remarkably imprudent. Europe remained under threat and required the trust and continues to require the trust and assistance of its Muslim communities and intelligence gathering. The security agencies warned us that propounding the idea that Islam is the problem was not only incorrect, but it alienated the very community needed onboard to combat that threat. This was a sentiment shared by policy advisors, academics, and the British prime minister who said, and I quote, "Developing and delivering this counterterrorism strategy involves all parts of government acting together and taking a joined-up approach to dealing with this complex and wide-ranging threat. Delivery also depends on partnerships with the police and emergency services, local authorities, and devolved administrations, as well as with the private sector, the voluntary sector, and the charitable sector. Perhaps the most important of all these partnerships is between these bodies led by the government and our citizens and communities. Public awareness of the threat, understanding of the measures needed to combat it, and active support and cooperation with the police are critical to the success of the strategy." That was the Prime Minister speaking to the House of Commons post-7/7.

Another quote: "Radical extremism is a multi-faceted problem which we have to thoroughly understand in order to properly tackle with forbearance, decency,

and integrity. In the best interest of our country, our society must move forward with these initiatives and more. In this effort, the Muslim community is not a hindrance but an indefensible asset, and Islam is not a problem but a constituent part of the solution." And that was a recommendation to the British government's home secretary on the 22nd of September, 2005 by the author as deputy convener of the U.K. Home Office Working Group on Tackling Radicalization Extremism.

In the U.K., government and administrations on local and national levels attempted to increase cooperation with its Muslim communities through the following means. I'm going to list four.

One, internal organizations that advise the wider administration, such as the Muslim Contact Unit within New Scotland Yard, composed of Muslim and non-Muslim police officers with experience and proficiency. This was lauded by the British government and the administration at large in the aftermath of 7/7 for having foiled a number of terrorist attacks.

Two, external organizations that represented specific forms for engagement with the security services, such as a safety forum, composed of Muslim community representatives and senior police officers. This has been praised by both community organizations and the security services for providing a forum to share expertise and air points of disagreements.

Three, consulting with Muslim lobby groups to allow their concerns to be heard within government, as these concerns did not reach government through the normal political processes.

Four, in general in the immediate aftermath of the bombings the British security services were widely praised for presenting the terrorist threat in an evenhanded way which would not -- which did not stigmatize specific communities and developed a strategic approach composed of four key elements: improving links in communities, especially Muslim communities, to develop both community and criminal intelligence, ensuring that forces -- police forces -- share best operational practice to deal with the community context of terrorist incidents; addressing wider problems of victimization, alienation, and communication with communities; working toward reassurance and cohesion; and, four, enabling our security staff and services to respond with improved knowledge and capability.

The British government in the aftermath of 7/7 came to an interesting set of conclusions on the question of how does radicalization occur? which was made public by MI5 through its website and by the prime minister in a speech at the House of Commons. There were six main points, but if I could summarize them as three, and it's widely available: The first step -- the alienation of a population, vis-à-vis the mainstream; and two, a perceived provocation; and then three, a radical ideology that's permitted violence to address one and/or two.

Now, that's a very general sort of discussion of how radicalization takes place, and it's not specific to radical religious extremists. It could be applied to radical Marxists. It could be applied to radical secularists. But this is how it takes place.

Violent extremism is not limited to Muslims or Muslim communities. Non-Muslims -- not Muslims -- commit the overwhelming majority of terrorist acts that take place in the world according to statistics issued by the U.S. State Department. The issue of violence is not a Muslim problem per se. Using violence to further political ends is an activity that groups and individuals from all sorts of background participate in, and in terms of actual statistical casualties more have suffered from non-Muslim terrorism than Muslim terrorism.

The State Department report on patterns of global terrorism pre-9/11 estimated that terrorism was as much a non-Muslim issue, particularly in Latin America, as it was, if not more so, than a Muslim one, and in terms of victims Muslims certainly account for the majority of terrorist victims according to the U.S. government's current National Counterterrorist Center. Americans account for about one percent of the victims according to the same Center.

Of course, by and large, such terrorism does not take on board religious vocabulary but, rather, Marxist or nationalist rhetoric predominates. According to the Center, about twenty-one percent is carried out by Muslim radical religious movements, and the remainder is secular or of unknown orientation. Columbia, Sri Lanka, Nepal -- these are all countries that have a terrorist and non-Muslim problem.

In light of the rise of Muslim identity politics, however, it is only to be expected that radicalism amongst Muslims would express itself predominantly using religious vocabulary, even if radical religious ideologies are deeply removed from mainstream Islamic thought. Conventional mainstream Muslim thought has,

throughout history, from the earliest Muslim community developed a system of tolerating repressive conditions by channeling objection through moral imperatives, and this is why it is seen that throughout Muslim history extremist movements had to reject mainstream religious authority, as well as normative political authority, and these are the two signs of any radical movement in the Muslim world -- that it rejects normative authority and normative religious authority. This is why the British prime minister said to the Commons after 7/7, "The principal current terrorist threat is from radicalized individuals who are using a distorted and unrepresentative version of the Islamic faith to justify violence. They are, however, a tiny minority within the Muslim communities here and abroad."

It is important to understand what that distorted and unrepresentative version of the Islamic faith is and how it is related to what the mainstream and conventional form of Islamic orthodoxy claims.

There is no church in Islam, but there are systems of religious authority for both Sunnis and Shiites. Amongst the Sunni community, who account for some ninety percent of all Muslims around the world, currently and historically these authoritative transmitters developed into an orthodoxy in theology and an orthopraxy in canon law, which we now translate as Shari'a. From that point, it became an academic process.

The best academics became the equivalent of ten-year track professors and so on. In theological terms, this resulted in three approaches to metaphysics: the Ash'ari approach, the notaridi, and the authori. In legal terms and legal orthropraxy,

this resulted in four paradigms of law: the Hanifi, the Maliki, the Shaifi, and the Hanbali schools as noted in contemporary academia. All of these schools and approaches continue to this day to train contemporary exemplars and exponents through institutions such as the Al-Azhar University in Cairo and the schools -- the madrassas of the (inaudible) in Indonesia. Together they represent the mainstream of the Muslim religious establishment, and have for roughly a thousand years.

To date, the atrocities of 9/11, (inaudible), (inaudible), 7/7, and others, as well as the religious interpretations that would permit them, were not validated by any of these religious establishments. Rather, they were condemned as wanton violence that went beyond the permissions of Islamic law, and here it's a good opportunity to mention briefly the Amman message, which brought together hundreds of religious authorities and intellectuals on a single platform, which made this abundantly clear that the interpretations of the religious mainstream and the interpretations of the minority that justified terrorism were completely different and distinct.

One of our guests, I believe, from *Islamica Magazine* which helped put this platform into motion might be able to answer a few questions on that, and that same declaration from Amman was lauded by our own prime minister only a couple of months ago in London at the international conference he hosted called "Islam and Muslims in the World Today".

However, owing to modern communication and the presence of certain individuals within the British Muslim community who rejected mainstream religious

authority, the radical violent ideology, which we now call in some parts of academia *takfirism*, became a known option to finally let off steam. This lack of familiarity with Islamic intellectual history and the reality of that ideology led to some commentators making rather dubious claims which are meant to simplify matters but ended up in unsustainable analysis. It's difficult to come up with terms that don't sound rather peculiar in an English lexicon. Myself and other colleagues have agonized over this for quite some time. But on the other side of trying to come up with a more nuance vocabulary, we have other claims being posited. For example, Sufis are pacifists. Islamists are tied into an enduring violent revolutionary struggle with the state. The hijab is the radical -- the headscarf is a radical political agenda. These sorts of errors abound, and they still exist in some sections of European society and in parts of our policy establishment.

Even more bizarre was the attempt by some parts of civil society, although not government, to enfranchise certain types of modernist "reformers" that rejected mainstream religious authorities. These modernist reformers had many beneficial insights but, simply speaking, they lacked grassroots credibility within the Muslim community, and they were viewed as lacking academic credibility, vis-à-vis Islam. In addition, once the historical basis of *takfirism* as a movement that rejected mainstream religious authorities became evident, supporting such modernist reformist agendas became more problematic. Reform is not a problematic issue. Modernity is not a problematic issue. But the way that the Muslim community in the Muslim world has chosen to navigate modernity and reform has been through its

tradition, not by changing into something it's not. These are two very different things.

We are not going to stop terrorism overnight, and it is imminently likely that the terrorists will strike again. What we must work towards is minimization, if not prevention, and managing the day after. Minimization is what we have done through our engagements with Muslim communities in the U.K., but we are in danger of going down the wrong path now, because we have yet to understand the very nature of the Islamist movement.

We think that all Islamists are unnecessarily violent revolutionaries against the West. Because bin Laden says he is a Salafi, we take him at his word. I'm not quite sure why we take him at his word. And we think that all Salafis are would-be suicide bombers. This has serious repercussions for our domestic engagement policies, and we cannot afford it.

We have also completely ignored the mainstream Muslim thought as is against civil upheaval and, obviously, all types of terrorism since they suffer from it more than we do, as we are, and we have failed to empower those initiatives that have sought to root out from the Muslim community in the West and the radical ideologies, and we have failed to help them in that initiative. With the war of ideas so clearly identified as necessary, this is no longer good enough.

We do not need a reformation. The radical ideological itself is a reformation. We require a counterreformation, and this may not result in creating friends, and the world will always have differences of opinion, but what our goal needs to be is

ensuring that difference does not lead to violence. It seems vital to properly

delineate what our enemies are and what they are not. They are not the mainstream

Muslim community. The rejected the mainstream and targeted the mainstream as

much as they targeted us all. Rather than say "you are with us or against us," we

must move towards an idea that says, "if you are not with the terrorists, then we are

with you."

Thank you very much.

MR. GRAND: Thank you, Hisham, for that very thoughtful commentary.

As Hisham mentioned at the start of his remarks, we'd initially listed on the

invitation that we have Bob Leiken here as a commentator, and for unexpected

reasons he was unable to join us today, but we do have the pleasure of having two

gentlemen who work on these issues day to day and in various governments, so I

thought it might be helpful to start the conversation to hear from each of them, and

I'll leave it to them as to whether their comments are on the record or off the record.

Shaarik Zafar, do you want to start?

MR. ZAFAR: Thank you very much. Hisham I consider to be a friend and

certainly a scholar, and it's a privilege just to speak and to hear you. Unfortunately,

my comments are off the record, because I am here in my official capacity and so I

believe Chatham House Rules apply.

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MR. GRAND: Thank you. Questions.

MR. AMR: Thanks, all, for your comments. My name is Hady and I work at Brookings.

I guess my question is the following, and it's very simple. How do we think the U.S. is going to react to the next terrorist attack on our homeland by Muslims, if it is by Muslims? It could be by others, but how are we going to react to the next terrorist attack on our homeland? What is -- what is the cross-pollination that's going on between the U.K. and -- you know, Shaarik, what's going to happen to my civil liberties after the next terrorist attack on the homeland?

MR. GRAND: I think Ambassador Ginsberg was next.

AMBASSADOR GINSBERG: Thank you. My name is Marc Ginsberg, and I'm the former U.S. ambassador to Morocco and spent most of my formative years growing up in the Arab world.

I listened to you very carefully. In some respects, you've apologized for issues that I feel -- with respect to the genesis of terrorism generally, I think the issue on the table is indeed radical Islamic terrorism, and the battle of ideas that you've made reference to is something that has truly not been engaged in the -- just even the condemnation of the writings of (inaudible) or others, even in Great Britain where I just did a survey -- trouble me that while you indicate that there are plenty of individuals, given the fact that there's no papacy in the Islamic faith, who speak up and condemn terrorism, there are far few who have been willing to condemn the ideology that gives the genesis to bin Ladenism or what you have here in the United States deemed by many, including those who my fellow colleagues in the media, who

feel that Islamic lay leaders may be condemning terrorism but not condemning the ideology or denying the validity of the ideology itself, and I consider -- one, I'd like to hear your comment, but I will make my -- finish my observation by saying it is insufficient, in my judgment, for Islamic lay leaders or religious leaders to condemn or to appear to be condemning merely the acts of violence and not the underlying ideology; and, two, perhaps not necessarily in the United Kingdom but here in the United States there is still, unfortunately, a widely perceived perception that Islamic leaders, whether they be lay or religious, have insufficiently expressed their outrage either at the acts of violence of the underlying ideology itself. What can we do or how can this battle of ideas, not the condemnation of violence, be further engaged?

MR. HELLYER: Thank you very much for your comments. The worst part about doing a fifteen-minute presentation is that you have to summarize a lot.

I think that Tony will be able to verify this, and the dates are there, but right after the 7th of July bombings, I remember a mufti in Oxford, actually, in the United Kingdom, being delivered a tract by someone called Omar Bakri Muhammad, and if you've been in the U.K., I suspect you've heard his name before. He's not the most pleasant of characters, I might add, and he issued a verdict, which he was unqualified to actually issue, several years ago justifying terrorism. This was before 7/7 that he issued it.

But very interestingly, just before 7/7, that tract -- or just after 7/7 -- that tract had been delivered to the mufti, and the tract was very interesting, because to somebody who didn't know Islamic law it would appear to be a religious verdict,

something that had been justified using Islamic texts, something that made reference to Islamic history. Any lawyer would be able to see through it. Any legal jurist in the Muslim tradition would definitely be able to see through it, but to most people within the Muslim community itself, I might add, would be very confused.

Now, what exactly is going on here? Very quickly, that mufti took it to pieces, trashed it, and showed how its methodology in and of itself was completely unsubstantiated regardless of the conclusions, because now we're talking about law, and in law methodology is what counts, and the methodology was completely flawed, and that tract -- I'm sorry, that tract and the response to that tract was published, it was referenced, it was sent all over the United Kingdom. No Muslim organization said anything against it in the slightest. I wish that it had been more widely published, but I don't think that was about an intention on anybody. I think that was about capacity, and this is the underlying problem, that you don't have the capacity in many communities to actually deliver what you are asking about.

You're asking not simply for them to go and say Islam is peace, right? Islam is against terrorism. Great. That's all well and good. That's exactly what we want to hear. But what about what justifies from within the mind of these radicals that are out there? What about their narrative? What about the way that they use religious vocabulary? What do you have to say about that? Those responses exist. They do. I've seen them.

AMBASSADOR GINSBERG: I know they do. I agree with you on that.

MR. HELLYER: Yeah. But capacity to actually -- first you need capacity for those counter-responses, what we would call the *rukt* in legal terminology, a response back, a refutation. The capacity to have those delivered all over the place -- that's something that we need to work on, because right now it does not exist. The best place for something like that right now is to go on the internet. I'm sorry, that's not sufficient.

The second issue is that many of the religious leaders in this country, as well as in the United Kingdom, are not actually religious leaders. They're not legally trained in religious law, so when you ask them what does Islam say about terrorism, they say Islam is against terrorism. And they're right, but then you ask them so what about this, this, this and you get into details about the ideology of the terrorists, and they'll just throw their hands up and say I'm sorry, I don't have a clue what you're talking about. You know, this guy (inaudible), all I know about him -- I'm not talking about me, but in conversations that I've had -- all I know about him is that he was in Egyptian jails 30, 40 years ago and he went a bit crazy, but he wrote some books that talked about how Islam is something for the Muslim community, so on and so on and so on, and that's why you'll have those tracts being delivered all around the U.K. I've seen them. Whether or not they lead to violence, that's another question, and that's something that I would like very much for the Muslim community to discuss, because by and large I think that these things are symbolic, because I know that even in Egypt where (inaudible) was. He came out of the (inaudible), right? He came out of the Muslim Brotherhood. He actually came out

of it. He had to leave the Muslim Brotherhood because the Muslim Brotherhood at large rejected his ideology. But they had the capacity to reject it, right? The next leader of the Brotherhood took apart his ideology, and this was before any terrorism had actually taken place (inaudible) said this stuff will lead us down the wrong road. So, even in Egypt where he was from, they haven't really taken up his cause, as it were. But, you know, I hope I've answered your question. It's about capacity and it's about training people up.

AMBASSADOR GINSBERG: It's something that you and I can probably spend many more hours talking about.

MR. GRAND: Please do.

MR. HELLYER: At your service.

MR. GRAND: We had a question from Masahiro Matsumura, my colleague, and then -- and also from Ambassador Safieh, and then I think I've written everyone else down.

MR. MATSUMURA: Well, thank you very much for an interesting presentation. My question go to you.

I agree with you in principle when you say that our enemy is extremists, not Islam but (inaudible). I in fact agree that maybe overwhelming majority of Muslims are innocent and in fact are good citizens. Practically, however, if we don't have effective means to identify who is the most problematic extremist elements, the population at large will be subjected to the (inaudible) and the (inaudible) suspicion, and in that conjunction -- at that conjunction I was very much intrigued that you

used the term Islam communities in a (inaudible). By that, I suspect that you have subcategories or a breakdown of Islam communities in Britain. You can use a separate possible criteria like Sunni, Shiite or other more detailed breakdown, or you can use ancestor origin from which the answers that came from, or you can even cluster these subcategories with a socioeconomic stratus. So, what's your sense -- what -- how exactly are you going to identify the most problematic extremists and the potential recruit of that?

The very fact that the British government could not prevent the attacks the other day that the government policy in dispute is not in fact effective. But this is only the hindsight. It is a (inaudible), but from the (inaudible) prospect that is how it is. Do you consider that current British government approach is sufficiently effective and efficient?

It is easy to point out both problematic enemies from the (inaudible) perspective, but I would appreciate your sort of insider perspective. Thank you.

MR. GRAND: So, let's take a question from Ambassador Safieh.

AMBASSADOR SAFIEH: Thank you. Before coming to Washington my wife and I spent fifteen years in London, and I still remember arriving in 1990. There was no Muslim British elected in the House of Commons, no Muslim British elevated to the House of Lords. But throughout those fifteen years there was one MP elected, then there were two, and then there were four, and now there are I think four or five elevated to the House of Lords. You would go to parliament. There was no parliamentary staff of Muslim origin. Now there are plenty. You would go

to BBC, TNT, DDT, Sky TV. You would see none, and now you start seeing in junior positions, but that's the way it starts. And now there is a junior minister (inaudible).

My question to you, sir, is the following. The horror of 9/11 and 7/7, seen today years later, did they trigger the factors that accelerated the integration of Muslim communities, or did they, on the contrary, catalyze the factors that ended delaying -- retarded that desire for integration? And how does it play, sir, the fact that we see the emergence of leaders, leadership, visible, vocal with ideas and visibility in the media? How does that affect the minority phenomenon, the marginal phenomenon that have since (inaudible) who are totally unrepresentative, yet seen by their community as a nuisance, etc.? Thank you, sir.

MR. GRAND: Let's take one more from this gentleman right here.

MR. ABUZAAKUK : Aly Abuzaakuk, Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy. Mine will be brief.

Following the events in U.K. and here -- in our country here -- there is, you know, a new kind of discourse that they are trying to prevent what they call the hate speech or measure the hate speech. What is the delicate line in the democracy between the freedom of expression and the freedom of, you know, of opinion and the freedom of speech, and who defines the hate speech? -- because we have seen in the issues of the cartoons in Denmark -- I mean, a great protection of the idea in secular democracy our freedom of expression, and we have seen also in Europe when (inaudible) wrote, you know, the founding (inaudible) of Israeli policy that he

was sent to court, you know, since you are somebody who really deals with this, and this will affect and has a lot of repercussions in the community of Muslims in Europe and in the United States.

MR. HELLYER: Thank you very much. I should have really spoken for less time, because the questions are so good.

First, the first question, how do we identify and categorize more effectively these communities and the community at large? I use both words. I use "community" and "communities," because I think there are Muslim communities, but I also think that there are -- that there is a Muslim community. It depends exactly what you're talking about. So, there's a Muslim community in the United Kingdom, but it's also composed of different ethnicities, different religious backgrounds. So, in that sense, we can talk about communities within a community. But the categories of what those are, that's something that as academics, sociologists, and anthropologists we struggle with on a regular basis because the categories keep changing.

From government, I don't know if they're that interested or indeed if they should be that interested to have that much in the way of categorization. They want to know enough of the categories in order to implement policies that are going to help those communities. Having the categories exactly correct sometimes is useful; sometimes it's not.

How are we going to identify them? At the moment I think the approach that we have -- at least within the United Kingdom is -- it's pretty good. We have

been engaging with those communities on a regular basis. My fear is that we will shift in a certain way, whereas before we were interested in engaging with those communities at large.

There is now a pull from some parts of our society to only engage with communities or those parts of our communities that agree with everything that we do. That I don't think would be particularly useful, and we've seen that from some sections of our government. I don't think this is across the board; in fact, I think it's very much not representative of government in the United Kingdom, but it is something that exists where certain groupings are put to one side because they may seem to be problematic for reasons that are not criminal. And this is not an approach that I would advise. I think -- and perhaps this is where we can link a freedom-of-expression question. I don't think that you criminalize people when they haven't committed crimes. I think you criminalize people when they have.

Apart from that, I'm quite willing to have anybody around the table to discuss so long -- and this goes into the leadership question -- so long as you realize that the people that you are engaging with are not necessarily the representatives of those communities. There are some, and we have lots of different representative bodies within the United Kingdom, as well as within the United States, but these are not really representative bodies. These are lobby groups. They can't be representative bodies. There are no such things as representative bodies in any sort of society. The only representative body is the elected one. But you have lobby groups, and those lobby groups should continue to be still engaged with, because the

community at large watches, in this age of mass communication, how those lobby groups are treated, so they become de facto representative bodies if not du jour representative bodies. That I think is very important for people to understand.

The second question -- I hope I've answered your question. The second question, did 9/11 bring about more assimilation? I wasn't sure if you were discussing the American Muslim community or the British Muslim community in that respect.

MR. HELLYER: Okay. Prior to 9/11 I believe very sincerely that the Muslim community, after a good twenty or thirty years of very difficult -- it's a bit patronizing to call it maturation but every community goes through an age of coming into its own.

(Interruption)

-- representatives of those communities. There are some, and we have lots of different representative bodies within the United Kingdom as well as within the United States. But these are not really representative bodies. These are lobby groups. They cannot be representative bodies. There are no such things as representative bodies in any sort of society. The only representative is the elected one, but you have lobby groups and those lobby groups should continue to be still engaged with because the community at large watches in this age of mass communication how those lobby groups are treated. So they become de facto representative bodies if not de jour representative bodies. That I think is very important for people to understand.

I hope I have answered your question. The second question, did 9/11 bring about more assimilation? I was not sure if you were discussing the American Muslim community or the British Muslim community in that respect. Prior to 9/11 I believe very sincerely that the Muslim community after a good 20 or 30 years of very difficult, it is not patronizing to call it maturation, but every community goes through an age of coming into its own and I saw very clearly in the late 1990s that process flourishing in many different ways. So prior to the 1990s you saw almost a question in people's minds, Muslim or British? At the end of the 1990s this was no longer something people took seriously. The idea of having an indigenous British identity mediated through Islam for Muslims was very attractive to people and this had nothing to do with 9/11. It had nothing to do with external pressures. It came from within.

This is nothing surprising for historians because everywhere where Muslim communities have gone in history, they all went through the same process and that is why you see Chinese Muslims being very Chinese, you see Indonesian Muslims and other Muslim communities that are not from the "heartland" of the Arab world being very connected to their cultures. You see it in the architecture. The mosques in Indonesia are built in a certain way, and it is not just about style, but it is about effectiveness because if you build a mosque that is built in Saudi Arabia in Indonesia, it does not really work very well because the rain collects above and it eventually destroys the mosque, and that actually happened in some places where people

wanted to do a counter-assimilation process, it did not really work very well and it is not part of their tradition.

However, post-9/11 and post-7/7, those natural processes that were beginning, not even beginning, but going very gently along and spreading to the generation that was growing up at that time, they suddenly felt very much under pressure because rather than begin to navigate through these societies and develop their own identities, they fell under attack, they fell under siege, they felt that they had to defend rather than grow, and it is very difficult to do both. I see that even now, that it is a very difficult sort of task to on the one hand say we are not with the terrorists and we are also with you in a very essentialist kind of way because if you have society around you that is questioning are you really with us, are you really not with the terrorists, it makes things very difficult for them. But I am not too worried about that. I am quite hopeful because of the nature of our society that these are growing pains for both non-Muslims and Muslims in the United Kingdom.

The final question, hate speech, this is a very good question because we had people within the United Kingdom prior to 7/7 who were guilty of hate speech, and for reasons that our security services later told us, they were actually allowed to get away with it. Post-7/7 we through them in jail. Abu Hamza was one of them, Abu Hamza al-Masri. You guys might know him as Captain Hook because he had a hook instead of a hand. That was a nickname he was given in the press. He was thrown in jail because he was actively inciting. I think it is a very difficult decision for government to make. I think it is something that they have to do with certain

people, but it has to be along not freedom of expression but, rather, responsibility of expression, you must be held accountable for what you say. The main issue that I have is whether or not it is consistent. This was very interesting, around the same time that Abu Hamza was convicted of hate speech and incitement to violence, Nick Griffin was acquitted even though he explicitly said Islam is a wicked, evil religion. Why Abu Hamza gets through in jail for saying something that is quite distasteful and why the leader of the British National Party does not, these are questions that we should ask and we should make very clear are you really talking about responsibility, are you really talking about freedom of expression, or do you have a double standard? As I said, I am totally convinced that there is a need to curtail -- and there is no such thing as absolute freedom of expression. We do not believe this in Western law. That is why in the most basic of classes as a law student, Shaarik, I am sure you can confirm that this is the same thing in the United States, you shout "fire" in a crowded theater, you are held accountable. But where does the line actually get drawn and who draws it? That is the question.

MR. GRAND: We have nine people who want to comment in 9 minutes, so why don't we try this? I am going to try to take five questions, and they are going to be very, very short questions if you could, just limit yourself to a sentence or two and let Hisham respond and then see where we are. The first gentleman was all the way in the back in the very back row with the dark shirt.

MR. YUSUF: Moeed Yusuf, the Brookings Institution. I have come late, so if this is redundant you can just let it pass, but my question is more so based on the

South Asian community in Britain and not just the Muslim community, and there are two points I want to raise here.

MR. GRAND: Is there a question, because we really want to move to a question?

MR. YUSUF: There is a question. I'll just get to it then, basically, two issues, this looking at South Asia or Pakistan and places where all the militants end up and they have a connection, the problem we found and the British authorities agreed with us when I was working on the Pakistani side is that there must be something going on with these people in Britain before they end up in Pakistan and the connection of just the Pakistanis now, there is this Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, they are considered South Asians in Britain in my experience. My question is, do you see this spreading beyond just Islamic terrorism to a phenomena against Western policy where all South Asians are part of it? I bring this up because of the Indian sort of doctors, the revelation of the recent event. So is it just Islamic in Pakistan, or do you think it is going to spread?

MR. GRAND: There is a woman with a dark jacket right there.

MS. ABDO: My name is Genieve Abdo with the Century Foundation. I am an Islamic expert there. Hisham, this is probably too long of a question for a short answer, but I just wanted to ask you if you could elaborate on the relationship between extremism and religious authority. As you mentioned, obviously there is a religious dimension to the whole extremist phenomenon however Muslims might define it, and it has particularly been articulated within the leadership of these

movements rather than among the foot soldiers. I was wondering if you have done research specifically about the attacks in the U.K. and the relationship to those attacks and religious authority.

MR. MITCHELL: Thanks, Gary Mitchell from "The Mitchell Report." First, I am intrigued by the title "Shades of Gray," and I wanted to ask whether I missed something because I am not sure whether you talked about shades, and I am also actually interested in why gray.

The second and larger question which has been referred to is what are we to make of the ramping up, the involvement of physicians, in this most recent set of incidents in Great Britain. What is the message there?

MR. GRAND: The woman in the green suit. I'm sorry, I do not know your name.

MS. QUINN: I am Sally Quinn from *The Washington Post.* I was actually interested in Mark Ginsberg's question about religious leaders speaking out. I just want to take one minute to say that I am the moderator, co-moderator of "On Faith" which is an online religious feature on *The Washington Post* and *Newsweek* with John Meacham who is the editor of *Newsweek.* One of my questions is going to ask for the help or advice or questions from everybody in the room because we are on Sunday launching an unprecedented thing on *Newsweek* and with *The Washington Post* Company, we are going to an entire week on Islam and we have given our website over to the top Islamic religious leaders in the world, and we have invited about 50

of them. This came out of a symposium at Georgetown where I asked, Why don't religious leaders speak out against violence and terrorism?

Newsweek is doing a cover story, the "Outlook" section is doing the entire section on Islam, *Slate* magazine which we also own is doing an entire week on Islam, *The Washington Post* TV news stations are doing a whole week on Islam, the London Independent Group is also partnering with us as is Georgetown University and the Pew Foundation, and we are also translating all of this into our *Newsweek* Arabic edition which will go out in Arabic online.

I have literally been on the phone for weeks and weeks and weeks. We have finally gotten 20 people of the top religious leaders to agree to participate. We also have Jimmy Carter, Nelson Mandela, Tony Blair is going to be part of this, I think Queen Rania, Muhammad Younis, Kofi Annan, the Dalai Lama. We have really covered all of our bases. But one of the biggest problems we are having which of course the main event is getting these religious leaders to comment. If anybody here has ideas or thoughts or questions because this is going to be running for a week and a half, you can Email me at quinns@washpost.com.

But again, getting back to this question of here we have basically said you can have this entire company and the attention, we have hired a huge P.R. agent to speak out on these issues, and we have had a modest response given the kinds of people who we have asked and the kind of opportunity they have to talk about this issue.

MR. GRAND: That is terrific. That level of dialogue needs to happen. That is terrific. Let me finally end with Syafi'i Anwar who is our new Ford Foundation Fellow.

MR. ANWAR: My name is Syafi'i Anwar. I am from -- I am executive director of the International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP) and with the Brookings Institution. First of all, I would like to congratulate your enlightening -- secondly, as a Muslim, I would suggest that, and this it is also a question addressed to you, about -- I think it is very important in the way of understanding that those who have become -- also related to what they call process of becoming, not process of being. It means that it is also influenced by political and religious reading, and in this regard I would like to ask you that what is the problem with what (inaudible) for instance, the meaning of jihad. You know that the meaning hard struggle in the very true meaning of Islam, but it is radicalized as against the others. That is the first point.

The second point is that the strong belief in conspiracy theories, this kind of perception accepted by radicalists and jihadists. I would like to know your response. Thank you.

MR. HELLYER: Very quickly, the subject of Pakistanis being disproportionately represented in these sorts of circles in the United Kingdom, terrorism does not know how to discriminate on the basis of race which is why I find racial profiling rather silly. We have had people join these movements from all sorts of backgrounds. They can be converts, they can be people who were brought up in

Muslim homes. It is not really an issue. I am sorry, I have to go very quickly over this.

The relationship between religious authorities and extremism, I think that there are two elements to every sort of radical religious movement out there, rebellion against normative religious authority, and rebelling against normative political authority. They do go together very closely because normative religious authority does not allow rebellion against normative political authority even when that political authority is repressive. The religious establishment is very clear on this point, that a day of civil unrest, of upheaval, is worse than 66 years of tyranny by a repressive government. So these two elements between normative religious authority and normative political authority are always cast aside by any radical movement.

"Shades of Gray," I thought the title was quite good. I did not choose it. One of our staff did. I thought it was an excellent title, but I am afraid that I did not live up to the title. My point for talking today was to establish that there are differences in these communities and that we should be able to identify and discriminate between them so that we do not put a broad brush against all of them, so there are different types of Salafi Muslims. We in the U.K. have actually used different Salafi groups in our counterterrorism strategies. On the other hand, there are also some Salafi groups we would not touch with a 10-foot pole. And there are different types of Sufi movements. Some of them are pacifists; some of them are

fairly militant. You have to establish from the outset that maybe these categories are not quite what we thought they were.

The modest response to your blog, Sally, and I am very pleased to hear about it, I have actually been told about it over the last couple of days. Some of the religious authorities that you mentioned and contacted I know and I am happy that they at least got in touch with you. But I would not interpret that their lack of response actually means very much except that it is not often that people in Yemen or Jordan get contacted by *The Washington Post*. They probably with all due respect have no idea who you are.

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