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WITH THE ISLAMIC WORLD

WESTERN ENGAGEMENT WITH MUSLIMS:

EUROPE'S LESSONS LEARNED IN COUNTERTERRORISM SINCE 7/7

WITH H.A. HELLYER

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INTRODUCTION:

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. GRAND: Let me ask everyone to please take their seats. We're going to get started. If there's anyone out in the hallway if my colleagues could welcome them to come in.

My name is Steve Grand, and I'm the Director of the Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World here at Brookings. The project is housed within the Saban Center for Middle East Policy.

Thank you all for joining us today.

We have the pleasure today of having Hisham Hellyer who is a visiting fellow with the Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World for the next couple of months here in Washington, here with us today to talk a bit about Europe's experience in engaging its Muslim communities following 7/7.

We also have invited a colleague of mine, Dan Benjamin, who I will introduce momentarily, to make a few comments following Hisham's remarks.

Let me just introduce Hisham. I should say that his presence here is only thanks to a very

generous grant from the Ford Foundation which allows

us to bring scholars, policymakers, journalists,

opinion leaders from Muslim states and communities

elsewhere in the world to Washington to do research

and writing. Hisham is working on an analysis paper

looking at the issue of youth radicalization in

Europe. Parts of that research will be the subject of

his discussion today, and parts, we will have another

session later in the summer to explore further with

him.

Hisham, following the events of 7/7 in

London, was nominated to be a deputy convener of the

U.K. Home Office's Working Group on Tackling Extremism

and Radicalization in Great Britain. In that

capacity, he engaged both with the U.K. and U.S.

administrations and law enforcement agencies as well

as engaging with different Muslim communities in

Britain and in the Muslim World on countering the

radical extremist narratives.

Until joining us here, he was also a

visiting professor at the law department at American

University in Cairo where he taught graduate courses

on law and policy and on Muslim European populations.

He has received Ph.D. from the University of Warwick

where he studied political philosophy and Muslim

European communities under Professor Muhammad Anwar.

As I mentioned, following his presentation,

Dan Benjamin will comment. Dan is a new colleague

here at Brookings but also an old friend. I believe

we met in 1998 in Berlin, if I'm not mistaken.

Dan was recently named the Director of the

Center on the United States and Europe here at

Brookings and has a broad range of research interests

that include American foreign policy, European

affairs, terrorism but also the Middle East and South

Asia. He brings to Brookings a set of related

interests to those of this project, and we welcome

him.

Prior to joining Brookings, as many of you

know, he was a senior fellow for six years at the

Center for Strategic and International Studies, a

small think tank down the road, and prior to that, he

served as a director on the National Security Council

Staff for Transnational Threats where he dealt with

the issue of terrorism and helped manage interagency

counterterrorism coordination. From 1994 to 1997, he

also served as the foreign policy speech writer and

special assistant to President Clinton.

With his colleague and collaborator, Steven

Simon, he's written books, two books, one called the

Age of Sacred Terror and the second, *The Next Attack:*

The Failure of the War on Terror and a Strategy for

Getting It Right, both of which have won a number of

awards.

Hisham, let me turn it over to you.

MR. HELLYER: Thank you, Steve for that

introduction. It's my first event here at Brookings

as a Ford Fellow, and I'd like to take this

opportunity to thank the folks here at the Saban

Center and at the Ford Foundation for being gracious

enough to facilitate my stay here and for providing me

with all the facilities they have so far.

The subject that they've asked me to look

at, alienation and radicalization of Muslim European

youth, is an immensely important one. While pretty

much everybody I've met in American policy circles has

recognized the importance of these issues, Brookings

is the first I have seen that has actually taken a

step, a very constructive step, forward by hosting

somebody from the region whose academic and policy

expertise is actually in the area. I hope this shall

not be the last because one of the reasons both my

country and yours have not succeeded in parts of their

own foreign policy was due to intelligence, or lack

thereof, but we shall not talk too much about that

today.

I'll be speaking in D.C. probably anything

from three to five times before I finish my report for

the Saban Center. At each of those engagements, there

will be a number of names that I will repeat to you,

and I'd ask you to listen very closely: James Adams,

Samantha Badham, Lee Harris, Rachelle Chung For Yuen,

Benedetta Ciaccia, Shahara Islam, Neetu Jain, Susan

Levy, Atique Sharifi, Ihab Slimane, Anat Rosenberg,

Mihaela Otto, Mala Trivedi.

By the end of my stay, I intend that every name of every person who died on the 7th of July becomes known to the people of this proud city. We should not let their deaths pass us by, their memories be forgotten and the tragedy be repeated because we have failed to learn from our mistakes.

In other parts of our policy-making process, people who claimed to be of the region or of the area told us essentially want we wanted to hear, and we constructed policies accordingly, although experts in academia and policy warned us against it, and we paid the price in spades in various parts of the world. In terms of domestic terrorism, we cannot afford to do the same mistake or we will have many, many more names to add to our list.

Due to time constraints and in the interest of focusing our discussions, I'll concentrate on the stage of 7/7, the United Kingdom, rather than the whole of Europe. I will speak for about 30 minutes, and then we can have the main session which is

essentially my opportunity to clarify my comments to all of you and also to learn from all of your questions.

As you may know, the European Union, as a whole, saw a wave of immigration in the years following the Second World War. To the U.K. came people from the British Empire the Commonwealth provided and particularly people from the Indian subcontinent. Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians and others came to do those jobs that Britains didn't want to do.

These communities were largely from rural areas, and they came to urban ones. They quickly formed subcultures in British society and were thought of in the British consciousness as law-abiding and not particularly problematic at this stage. The indigenous British population did not much care for them due to the racism endemic at that time, but they did not suspect them of being a Fifth Column either.

As for these Muslim communities on an internal level, they entertained the 'myth of return':

that they would make it good in the U.K. and then go
home. This was, in a nutshell, the situation for the
first generation who arrived in the fifties, the
sixties and the early seventies.

But for the second generation, the myth of
return was exactly that, a myth. They were British
born, and they were British. They had a tenuous
connection to the homelands of their parents, and they
had no interest in leaving the land of their birth,
but this generation faced a real double crisis of
alienation. As their parents had experienced before
them, the mainstream majority did not accept them as
compatriots. They were alien. No matter how well
they spoke English, no matter how acculturalized they
appeared to be, no matter how many British habits they
appeared to take on, they were still not indigenous.
They weren't white and, worse yet, they were Muslim,
and Islam in the memory of many European countries is
still fraught with a tense history, justified or not.

This generation was also alienated from the
subcultures of their parents because they were, in

fact, British. They weren't Pakistani. They weren't Bangladeshi. Their first language wasn't Urdu; it was English. They related to that country, to Britain, not to Pakistan or to Bangladesh or any of the homelands of the first generation. Essentially, as a result, they found themselves in a double alienation.

In the eighties and early nineties, there were two major developments for that next generation. From without, from the mainstream of the community, the concept of multiculturalism began to take form and shape the way the political discourse and state affairs would be managed. Uniformity in a country that was no longer uniform, if it had ever been, was no longer a given. Diversity had to be accommodated.

From within, these second generation communities found another sense of belonging. They hadn't found it from their parents. They hadn't found it in the mainstream. They found it somewhere else: 1979, the overthrow of the Western-backed Shah and the Iranian Revolution; 1980s, Afghanistan, the Soviet invasion and occupation and resistance against

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Communism by Muslims backed by the West; 1980s, Near East, the upheaval of the Lebanese Civil War and the uprising of the Palestinians, the Intifada against Israel; 1990s, Europe, the genocide of Bosnian Muslims and the breakup of Yugoslavia.

This next generation found a sense of belonging in a very particular way. They identified themselves with their co-religionists around the world, whom they saw suffering day in, day out across the globe. The second generation had become a Muslim population, but it was only Muslim insomuch as it identified with other Muslims around the world. In pre-modern times, being Muslim was primarily about belief in God and His Prophet. In Britain of the 1980s and the 1990s, being Muslim was more about being part of a global nation of other Muslims. God and His Prophet were not particularly relevant in and of themselves. They could not be because religious education for these communities was extremely minimal and very superficial.

Their formation of Muslim identity was a

political reaction -- resentment towards their parents

for not showing a way to be part of the society around

them, resentment towards the society around them for

not allowing them to be themselves and be British and

resentment towards the world for persecuting them

elsewhere. This was the mentality of the time. It

was not particularly spiritual. It was solely

political.

Now, with the first generation of Muslim

immigrants into the United Kingdom, there was another

element that came onto the scene that did become

particularly relevant to the second generation. In

the countries of origin for reasons we can't really

get into in much depth during this session, Islamist

political movements had arisen in the 1970s. Largely,

at least as far as the British Muslim population was

concerned, the most significant was the Jamaa Islamiya

of the subcontinent but also the Muslim Brotherhood of

the Arab World. For them, a politicized Muslim

identity was key to their whole discourse although for

very different reasons and had evolved in a very

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different way than in the second generation and third

generation British Muslim communities.

In the U.K., they formed British

associations and gained members within this portion of

the community fairly quickly because they spoke to

their concerns as people concerned with Muslims around

the world. In the U.K., as elsewhere, they did not

countenance violence against the state. For these

historical reasons, Islamists formed the nucleus of

most national lobby groups in the 1980s that later

emerged in terms of British Muslim politics in the

1990s.

In the late 1990s, I came into contact with

some members of one of the more extreme of these

groups which was later banned by the U.K. Government.

But, in 1988, after reading an article that I had

written, attacking them for supporting the bombings of

American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, they

publicly threatened violent reprisals. Bob [Leiken of

the Nixon Center] suggests that I should wear this as

a badge of honor in these times.

Despite some thuggish rabblerousing, they couldn't find members of the Muslim community who would carry their threats or even repeat them. They were publicly decried and derided by all community groups, Islamist and otherwise, very fortunate for me as an outsider.

All the rest of these groups were validly non-violent. They supported the resistance fighters in Afghanistan against the Soviet occupation which was blessed by the U.K. Government and all non-Communist groups and nations, but they did not espouse terrorism, domestic or otherwise, and to be frank, most of the members were never committed to Islamism. The ideological basis of the founders was forgotten by the second day. One cannot recognize the discourse of any of these groups today and be able to link it to the discourse of Islamism in any point in history. Things have moved on; it is an age of post-Islamism.

Islamism provided for the youth, a way to express themselves politically and get into politics. That was the mechanism that they had in the same way,

I might add, that many of our own current governments, such as John Reid, were committed Communists when they entered politics. Things change. He wasn't really a Communist or if he did, he changed his mind.

They were essentially children looking to attach themselves to any sort of radicalism that fit. Some went into the Socialist Workers Party, which is a far leftist group in the United Kingdom, and others went into Islamism. But they grew out of it, and the movements themselves evolved into very different things, essentially post-Islamism.

Other groups emerged in the U.K. around the same time, but ones that were less about politics and more about promoting a minority interpretation of Islam in the Muslim World, a form of Puritanism that in academia, we call puritanical Salafism. Again, following the Salafi mainstream in Saudi Arabia, the members in the U.K., the followers in the U.K. did not tolerate terrorism.

Present day commentators on Salafism forget or do not seem to have ever known that the Salafi

establishment in Arabia disowned and rejected bin

Laden and his heretical theology in 1993 when it

became clear to them that his philosophy of

excommunicating Muslim governments would lead to

violence. Again, like Islamists, they were hardly

progressive Democrats, but they were not violent. Bin

Laden held to an offshoot of Salafism that did not

hold sway anywhere in the world including Saudi

Arabia. True, there were some incredibly backward

interpretations but nothing about vigilantist

violence.

I'm going to have to skip forward to 10

years later and skip over some of the other

developments that took place, but one development that

I should mention is that in the late 1990s, a new

stage in the politicization of Muslims in the U.K.

emerged. It was the injection of religion, of ethics

and of spirituality into these communities and, if I

might be so bold as to say, it was all your fault.

Two Americans in particular, two white

converts that entered Islam in the 1970s began to

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become very popular amongst this British Muslim

community. This community called itself Muslim but

did not really have much access to Islam because the

imams and religious teachers that had come to the U.K.

that their parents had brought over were essentially

culturally very out of place. Hamza Yusuf Hanson of

California and of Nuh Ha Mim Keller of Chicago

impressed these particular communities in the U.K.

very much.

They had perfect command of the Arabic

language which is the sacred language of God's Speech

in the Qur'an. They knew Islamic teachings after

having studied in the Muslim World. Hamza Yusuf

Hanson studied for about 11 years, and Nuh Ha Mim

Keller is still studying after about 20 years. They

spoke in English, and they came from the privileged

elite of the most powerful country in the world.

When they spoke, they insisted on rooting

life, including political life and political

discourse, in the recognition that there is really

nothing worthy of worship except God and the Prophet

Muhammad as His messenger. That brought a system of

ethics, of values that had hitherto been absent. This

sparked a general movement that sought to root the

Muslim community in the United Kingdom in traditional

Muslim teachings including its law that is not

pacifistic. It doesn't outlaw violence, but it

outlaws vigilante violence. It outlaws attacks on

civilians.

I dare say if this had not happened, we

would have seen much worse than 7/7 and much sooner.

In my years of researching this community, both before

and after 7/7, I can tell you with absolute certainty

that Islam proved to be a restraining mechanism for

these youth and it forced the channel of the

resentment of these young people into arenas that

would make the path of Al-Qa'idah very unattractive

indeed. But it was too late for the rollback to

completely take place.

On the 7th of July in 2005, four young

British Muslims who came from the community I just

described but who had not yet been reached by any sort

of ethics or spirituality blew themselves up and

killed dozens on the London transportation system.

They adhered to a radical ideology that the rest of

the Muslim world had condemned a long time ago as

heresy and rejected it for its extreme nature, what we

now call Takfirism. Takfirism took the resentment

that these young people felt and directed it in a way

that exploded on those buses and trains and claimed

their lives and the lives of many others. It remains

in operation in the U.K. but never found a home in the

overwhelming majority of the Muslim community, even

amongst those who are highly politicized and socially

extremely conservative.

In the aftermath of those attacks, as

mentioned, I was Deputy Convener of the U.K.

Government's Working Group on Tackling Radicalization

and Extremism, and to that end, I engaged with the

religious establishment within the U.K. and the Arab

World, both the mainstream and the Salafis and to see

what sort of defense Islam could provide against this

radical imperative. I was very hopeful as a result of

that engagement. I reviewed a religious verdict that

had long ago been formulated against suicide bombings,

and I saw the deliberations of many religious

authorities within the U.K. and within the Arab World

that rejected Takfirism at its core.

I consulted with and was consulted by the

security services in the U.K. who confirmed to me that

our counterterrorism strategies necessitated the

involvement and the trust of our Muslim communities.

Without their confidence, we could not prevail.

Without addressing the deep-seated resentment they

felt, much of it wholly justified, we could not hope

to prevent the recruitment of young British Muslims to

an ideology that could only thrive on resentment and

further alienation.

I mention all of this to you here because it

is no longer solely a European issue. 9/11 took place

in this country because people came in on planes

cleared by your security services, and Europeans can

enter this country far easier than Saudis.

There is a double-edged threat here. On the

one hand, there's the real threat of more terrorism.

In order to combat that threat, we need to understand

how this demographically tiny minority from within the

Muslim community could emerge and the nature of

ideology that exploited them. We need to do that

using only the best academic and empirical experts in

the area.

        Otherwise, we will have bad information and,

as a result, bad domestic policy, and we have already

seen how misinformation on the international arena can

result. Bad domestic policy is no longer an option.

We had bad domestic policy pre-7/7, and it led to 7/7.

We should have taken the Takfiri ideology seriously

and addressed the resentment of our Muslim community.

We didn't.

        There is a tendency even now after this

tragedy took place to rely on poor information rather

than recognize that the mainstream of Muslims

worldwide and their religious establishment is against

terrorism and against radicalization of this sort.

Some of us try to propound that actually terrorism is

a natural result of mainstream Muslim discourse. In

so doing, we're not only betraying our ignorance, and

it is certainly objectively ignorant to call it as

such when all of our academics in British and American

academic tell us it's rubbish. But we're also

encouraging those who would be our natural allies

against terrorism to become our enemies, and we cannot

so easily walk down that road.

The security services in the U.K. are very,

very aware of this. Some of our politicians seem

resistant to understanding.

I do hope that the American administration

takes its cues from British intelligence and not

British lack of intelligence. At present, it looks

like it could go either way, although my contacts over

the past month here with different parts of the

administration show that American civil servants are

as loyal to their country as British civil servants

are to mine and not willing to entertain ignorant

ideological demagogues as much as our own security

services are unwilling to do so.

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My time here, however, also indicates to me that while there are probably more experts in the United States on Islam and the Muslim World than in the U.K., they don't quite have the access yet that experts in the U.K. with our own civil servants. It bewilders me on a personal level that individuals who have no grassroots empirical work or academic expertise to their credit are being touted as experts on Islam and the Muslim World when in D.C. alone there are scholars such as Seyyed Nasr at George Washington University and John Voll at Georgetown who may be listened to but not recognized as the experts in the area, although in academia there's no question. Let alone the many other academics all over the United States who are never consulted. I'm confident that's going to change.

Some of the political establishment in the U.K. following 7/7 tried to locate the origin of the terrorist threat in the politicization of Muslims and Islamism since it had been Islamists who had taken that politicization and directed it into the formation

of lobby groups who later developed into the national

bodies that we see representing Muslims on a national

level today. The overwhelming majority of British

Muslims never ideologically bought into Islamism as a

political ideology, but it was Islamists who were at

the forefront of organization formation. Our security

services knew that, and they know that, but they also

knew that these groups were not violent and they had

acted as legitimate lobbyists for the Muslim community

who had not found any other avenue to express

themselves politically. Again, that is also changing.

But marginalizing them in the present day

context was regarded by our security services as

unnecessarily alarmist and immensely

counterproductive. Muslims already regarded

themselves as being under massive scrutiny for actions

that the overwhelming majority never had any

responsibility for, terrorism overseas and after 7/7

at home, and the police knew that to alienate them

further would not further our counterterrorism

strategy but essentially defeat it before it could go

anywhere.

Our security services also warned that to criminalize politicized discourse which had never been violent, if remarkably anti-Western from a foreign policy perspective, would push Islamist movements underground and make their members more vulnerable and susceptible to the radical imperatives of Takfirism. Worse still, it would be against our own traditions of free speech.

In particular, our security services were opposed to the marginalization of Salafi groups who had proven to be incredibly useful tools of deradicalizing British Muslims in prisons where they were facilitated and invited by our security services; although some commentators seem to forget that as they claim that Salafism is a threat to our domestic security. Make no mistake, they are not the best sources of social cohesion. They are not liberal Democrats, and they're not the people I would particularly like to live under, but they're not violent. Social arguments are best left to civil

society, not to legislators.

Most incredible of all was the encouragement of some ideologically driven commentators to induce a "Islamic Reformation" that rejected mainstream religious authorities. This was a move that may have been positive in intention, but it seemed to ignore that the overwhelming majority of Muslims in the U.K. and worldwide would never go along with it and would view it as an attack upon them and that Takfirism and to a lesser extent, Islamism [but particularly Takfirism] were, in themselves, products of Islamic reformations.

I know that here in the United States, some parts of the policy establishment share some of the ideas entertained by a minority of my own establishment. They have far less of an issue with the American Muslim community than we do with the British Muslim community as most American Muslims appear to be assimilated into the mainstream of American society. But if they continue to pursue these policies, they, at best, run the risk of

creating alienation where none previously existed and, at worst, will midwife an indigenous Takfiri element.

We are at a difficult crossroads in the United Kingdom today as it seems you are in the United States. Our engagement strategy has led to a separation between the empirically based work of our security agencies and the political assumptions of some parts of our present administration. Well-intentioned, the latter may be, but they're ignoring the facts on the ground which indicate that our policies vis-à-vis engagement are actually continuing the cycle of alienation amongst British Muslim communities and encourage their further radicalization.

As Deputy Convener of the government's working group, I spent much of the last two years trying to connect the dots in the service of my country. I was heartened to find that Muslim communities were on our side and to find a security service that knew their confidence was mandatory. I literally flew around the world to let Muslim

communities and Muslim governments know that British Muslim communities faced difficulty but they didn't face persecution (far from it). But I was also disappointed to realize that there were those who had made their careers on the basis of supporting policies that would further alienate these communities, some of them knowingly and some of them unwittingly.

But I was heartened to see that the next phase of Muslim politicization in the U.K. and across Europe had led to a situation where internally the Muslim population following the ideas of the religious mainstream establishment in the Muslim World, mediated by Western Muslims such as the Cambridge Academic T.J. Winter or the American Hamza Yusuf and others, were voluntarily moving towards a type of assimilation mediated by Islam rather than Islamism which frankly doesn't have much of a future in Europe.

For James Adams, for Samantha Badham, for Lee Harris, for Rachelle Yuen, for Benedetta Ciaccia and for others who died on the seventh of July, we must be vigilant and we must be focused. We must

target our enemies and not our friends. We must be

informed, and we must not rely on demagogues. We must

prevail with our values intact.

        The terrorists that targeted London on the

seventh of July in 2005 sought to win by changing our

civilization. We have to let them know that we will

never give in and that we will never allow our

traditions of liberty and fair play to be compromised

just for them. Otherwise, they would have won and we

would have lost.

        Thank you.

        (Applause)

        MR. GRAND: Thank you, Hisham, for that

very, very useful and informative presentation.

        Dan.

        MR. BENJAMIN: Yes, I want to thank Hisham

for a terrific presentation that was both highly

informative and, in its own restrained way, very

impassioned, and I find that very impressive.

        I also want to thank Steve Grand and the

Saban Center for the invitation to come here. Had I

inquired more and found that I'd be surrounded by people who know much more about the issue, I certainly wouldn't have accepted.

I think Hisham has touched on -- touched on, more than touched on -- has delved into what it seems to me is one of the most important problems at the core of what, for lack of a better word, I'll call the counterterrorism challenge that we face, certainly in this decade and probably in several decades going forward. That is, if I can rephrase it a bit, that is dealing with a security challenge that is represented by a relatively small number of people but which has profound impact on concentric circles of larger populations.

Obviously, one of the foremost tasks of the state is to protect its citizens from violence, both from within the society and from without. At the same time, because of issues of shared identity between those who commit those attacks and much larger minority populations that live in these societies, the problems of law enforcement of both repressing

terrorists and of surveiling potential ones cause us all kinds of problems because it's very difficult to do without alienating exactly the people who we want on our side. Hisham is precisely right, that this is a challenge that we share on both sides of the Atlantic.

Just to elaborate a bit on this side of the Atlantic because this is about Western engagement, we have seen in this country, and Hisham is completely correct about the general tendency of Muslims in the United States to be more integrated, more assimilated than in Europe. But we have seen a sort of rollercoaster phenomenon in which lots of Muslims in the U.S. saw 9/11 as an opportunity to demonstrate their patriotism and their rejection of terrorist ideology. However, the predictable, and I say that in a sense that is meant to mean also, to a limited extent, excusable law enforcement crackdown that came afterward was deeply alienating.

Let's be careful about excusable. Let's just say that at least to understand is better than to

not understand if not necessarily to forgive.

Bringing in thousands of Muslim men for questioning in a somewhat intimidating framework was inevitably going to have a backlash. The hundreds of people who were detained under the material witness provisions, that also was deeply unsettling to American Muslims. A lot of the things that have gone on since in terms of surveillance of the communities have been highly problematic, and there's been a certain alienation there.

Now, it is interesting to note that we still, I think, do not have any really good data on radicalization in the United States or homegrown terrorists. What we do find is that some of the efforts of our law enforcement agencies to deal preemptively, in a sense, with this may in fact precipitate more problems over the long term. I bring this up just because of the recent news about the Fort Dix arrests which follow in a long line of essentially sting operations. The only person who could have made the Fort Dix conspiracy work, of course, or the only

people were the informants who were promising to sell the RPGs. It's hard to get an RPG, at least for most of us.

There is a whole string of these. Most of the prosecutions, major terrorism prosecutions over the last, well, going back to the MIHOP conspiracy in the mid-nineties -- that was the bridges and tunnels -- have somehow or another involved a sting. In that case, the informant was the only one who knew how to build the bomb. There is a certain law enforcement value to this because, for example, we got the Blind Sheikh off the street. He was a bad guy, and I'm glad he's off the street.

But, at the same time, it doesn't mean we have any insight into radicalization in the U.S. A community that feels it is going to regularly the target of sting operations is a community that may find itself less likely to cooperate over the long term, and I think that's a very dangerous and worrisome thing because it is absolutely true that the Muslim community here, as in Europe, is the first line

of defense.

To come back to Europe for a second, it is also true in many different ways, as Hisham suggested, of many of the policy recommendations, policy decisions that were taken in the wake of various terrorist attacks. You could talk about 7/7. I think another excellent example is what the Dutch Government did after the killing of Theo van Gogh. A lot of these things have a lot of political appeal and very little really good benefits in terms of reducing the terrorist threat.

I mention the Netherlands, the immigration restrictions which the Netherlands enacted after the van Gogh killing. I mean if you want people to feel like they are being encircled and that their freedoms are being curtailed as with the freedom of speech issue, for example, that's a very good way to do it. Obviously, there are legitimate immigration concerns in law enforcement and counterterrorism, but the hasty way with that was done, and I think there were 26,000 people who were then at least identified for

deportation, that's going to make a community very insecure, and it's going to reduce the likelihood that they're going to cooperate.

Similarly, in Britain, you've just had so many cases of arrests that didn't turn out to be, shall we say, kosher, halal, whatever you prefer. That also has to have a negative impact. I've met with many of the metropolitan police types, and I have to tell you Hisham has very accurately depicted their mindset, but they're also under enormous political pressure to deliver the goods, and this results in some busts that are really not very helpful.

I don't want to take a lot of time, but one thing that I would like to point out is the extent to which the terrorism problem is poisoning the well and almost ensuring that we will have further misguided policy feedback from terrorist attacks, and that is if you look at the public opinion data in Europe. Hisham, I think, accurately represented the feelings that most Muslims, and we were talking just before the event started. Gallup had some interesting new data

on this. Most Muslims in Europe -- at least according

to polling in Paris, London and Berlin -- view

themselves as highly loyal. Something like 75 percent

see themselves as very loyal to the states they're in.

They view themselves as wanting to be more deeply

engaged, as upholding the values of those states, as

viewing it really as their nation.

At the same time, the really striking data

is that those who we would consider the indigenous

population, those who aren't of immigrant stock, have

the opposite view. Where you may have 75 or 80

percent of Muslims saying that they are very loyal

subjects of the particular government, you will find

35 or 40 percent of the indigenous population agreeing

with them and often 60 or 70 percent saying their

values are irreconcilable with our values. They're

not loyal to the state. They don't want to integrate.

They don't want to play by our rules.

That's a very toxic situation, and I think

it's been underappreciated the extent to which that

can drive to very negative consequences.

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I would add that we have a similar problem in the United States in that we're seeing that elements of the right, especially the evangelical right, have decided that Islam should fill the hole that the Soviet Union left empty. If you read a lot of sermons online or sometimes they get circulated or hear some of the remarks from the evangelical right, it's pretty scary stuff. That could make even more insecure our own Muslim population.

There are probably fewer points of intersection between the American Muslim population and the evangelical right than there are points of intersection between the non-Muslim and the Muslim communities in Europe for the main reason that patterns of settlement and also the fact that in Europe, people are highly ghettoized. Muslims tend to be highly ghettoized, and therefore there's very much of an in/out or interior/exterior sort of situation that Muslims face and contact with non-Muslims, as they report in a lot of the polls, is very negative. So we may have less to worry about here, but we still

have something very serious to worry about.

Finally, as Hisham also pointed out, things
that go wrong in Europe are things that affect us very
deeply. Europe is, in a very significant way, within
our security perimeter. As any European leader will
tell you, any political leader will tell you, you do
away with the visa waiver, you do away with the
transatlantic relationship. I know it seems strange
for an American audience, but that is in fact a very
big and important issue for Europeans. So I think
Hisham has it quite right, that this is something that
we need to be extremely vigilant about.

At that, I'll turn it over to the crowd.

I could say something that would force a
response.

MR. HELLYER: No, no. That was fine. I'm
just waiting.

MR. GRAND: Before opening up, Hisham, I
wonder if you could just say a few words about
concrete examples of things that are positive --
positive examples from the U.K. that we might think

about here, whether it's in terms of things that the
U.K. Government has done in reaching out to Muslim
communities or things that have happened within Muslim
communities to steer aside extremism in one way or
another, to tamp down extremism within the community
in one way or another, to push reasonable voices
forward.

MR. HELLYER: I think Steve is trying to get
me to give you guys my report before I actually finish
it.

MR. GRAND: Just the tidbits.

MR. HELLYER: I actually have about 20
recommendations that will be in the report, but I'll
pick on two right now, one for the mainstream and one
for the communities.

The communities need capacity-building.
It's not so much about extremism as it is draining the
swamp, and the swamp only exists when alienation is
allowed to thrive. They need to have leaders and
people who can act as role models for these younger
generations, who can actually show them a way forward.

I can sit here and write as many things as I like, write as many books as I like, but people get inspired by people. At the moment, there are precious few role models within British society that Muslims can actually look to, to be both 100 percent Muslim and 100 percent British. I think that that's something very important.

The second thing, which is more of a security issue, the metropolitan police and now it's a nationwide thing, but the London Metropolitan Police had what we called a Muslim Contact Unit which was made of Muslim police officers and non-Muslim police officers who had the connections in the community that they would be able to predict what sort of reaction they would face in any sort of counterterrorism criminal initiative. That is now being rolled out to a nationwide police force. My only regret is that it wasn't done much sooner and also that it wasn't done for other parts of government because as yet we still don't have that sort of mechanism in place in other parts of government.

I would love to see a situation where that would never be even necessary, but we've seen that it is necessary. So it's time for us to pick up the slack and hope that we can phase it out as quickly as possible, but right now it's really needed.

QUESTIONER: On the issue of polling data--

MR. GRAND: Can you use the microphone and also identify yourself?

QUESTIONER: Hi. Eric Treen from the Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice.

On the issue of polling data, in the U.S. you frequently hear quoted this figure that 30 percent of British Muslims believe that the 7/7 attacks were justified because of Britain's stance on the War on Terror. That, to Americans, is a rather alarming figure. Do you have any comments on the polling there, the question asked, the reliability of that information and so forth?

MR. HELLYER: Are we doing one at a time?

MR. GRAND: We'll start with one at a time.

MR. HELLYER: I haven't heard 30. I've

heard less, but I've heard significant numbers. I think anything from 20 percent, and it is alarming until you look at actually what the polling data was. Often, the question will be: Did you understand why it took place? I think we can all understand why it took place. It doesn't mean that we agree with it. It doesn't mean that we accept it. It simply means we know how it happened and why it happened. That's it in a nutshell.

But, actually, a number of commentators within the U.K. and I believe one of Brookings' former guests, Tufyal Choudhury, actually tore to pieces the polling data, showing where it had gone wrong in its questioning and why it hadn't included certain things in its public representation. I'm not sure Tufyal did that but a number of other people within the U.K. establishment did clarify that.

MR. GRAND: David.

MR. BENJAMIN: Thanks. My name is Dave Pollock. I'm at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, another small think tank in the

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neighborhood. I want to thank you, first of all, for really a very impressive and interesting presentation.

My question is about groups that may not be supporting financially, morally or otherwise terrorism inside their own country but may be supporting terrorism or at least violence in the name of Islam or some other related cause in other countries. This is a problem that we face or an issue that we think we face here in the United States with groups that, for example, support Hamas or Hezbollah or other what we consider officially to be terrorist organizations, not here in the United States but somewhere else.

Is this an issue in the U.K. in the same way that it seems to be here where you often have the question of prosecuting what appear to be charitable or other Muslim American organizations on the grounds that they are actually funneling money to Hamas or Hezbollah overseas?

If so, if it is an issue, do you have any suggestions about how that can be dealt with, how we can do better perhaps at dealing with it here? Thank

you.

MR. HELLYER: I don't believe there's any organized effort within the U.K. or, for that matter, anywhere else in Europe where Hamas goes and says we want money and people give it to them.

What you do get is that by and large, and we saw in particular after the tsunami, our Muslim populations are particularly charitable. They do give, and we saw this in how the relief effort took place after the tsunami, and they don't generally ask where the money that they give actually goes. It will simply be help your brothers across the world, who are suffering. 'I'll do that'. 'I'll do that very happily'.

We had some of the organizations picked on by certain parts of the British establishment, like Islamic Relief and INTERPAL which is a Palestinian charity, and the charges were all thrown out because these charities knew that the money that they were given was never given for anything but for charitable humanitarian causes. They followed the lines. They

went into the countries, and they asked what are you

doing with this money, so on and so on and so on, and

it was all thrown out.

I haven't heard of any charity within the

U.K., and I believe that there are people here from

the British establishment who can back me up on this

or correct me, but I don't think there has ever been

any charity in the U.K. that has been closed down

after being investigated for any support of terrorism

abroad.

You will even find that although Hamas, even

before it was in government, had humanitarian wings on

the West Bank and Gaza that had nothing to do with the

actual military attacks, even those particular

branches of Hamas were not funded.

QUESTIONER: I am Annette Shevalur from

Central Kyrgyzstan.

I have a question on the nature of Hizb ut-

Tahrir headquartered in London. This group was

outlawed in Germany, but officially you know it

operates in London, inviting members of embassies to

their seminars, participating in seminars. When I
asked one expert in the U.K. about this group, he told
me that they're not dangerous at all. They're like
Trotskys. They're very loud, but in general they're
not dangerous.

But my question is they are very active in
terms of working abroad in other countries. So what
is your opinion about that? Thank you.

MR. HELLYER: I'm sorry. I don't quite
understand; what is my opinion about how they behave
in other countries?

QUESTIONER: No, no. My question was about
why if this group was outlawed in Germany and still
operates in the U.K., maybe we do not understand
something. Maybe you know more about this group. The
question was related to the nature of this group.

MR. HELLYER: I'm sorry. I misunderstood
your question.

They were outlawed in Germany under a
particular provision of German law. I actually have
an article on this somewhere on this computer, and

I'll look for it for you later.

The actual legislative tool exists in
Germany that would outlaw any number of groups that
called for certain things, whether in that country and
overseas, and a lot of that has to do with the nature
of the German state after the holocaust. It's very
specific to Germany. It's not banned, I think,
anywhere else in Europe. But even in Germany they
were not banned for being a violent group. It was
never accused of them that were a violent group.

In the U.K., I don't know who you spoke to,
but they're right. In the U.K., they are not a
violent group. They can get loud. They can get a bit
belligerent. They can be a real pain, quite honestly,
but they're not violent. In fact, the majority of the
members are usually young people, and they're not as
thuggish as other groups that I've come into contact
with who are non-Muslim.

The only exception would have been that
particular group that was actually a radical offshoot,
and that was called al-Muhajiroun, but they were

banned, and Omar Bakri is in Lebanon and can't come back.

QUESTIONER: Thank you. Akram Mahale , Capital Communications Group.

Thank you very much for this wonderful expose especially about the alienation. I think it's quite relevant to many groups, obviously for Islam with the concept of the ummah and this global environment makes it very relevant. But I think we may see other groups and non-Muslim groups also operating in this global environment in similar fashion. So it's important to understand how we deal with this alienation.

I have a question which troubles me a little bit. There's something about the way you've depicted the Salafis that is really troubling to me, and I'd like some more clarification. Three specific points there:

First, it is true that the Salafis in Saudi Arabia diverged from Osama bin Laden and condemned him. However, some say the dispute between them had

to do with the overthrow of the monarchy and the Al-Saud Family, and somehow there was an arrangement between the monarchy and the Wahhabi Salafis that as long as they don't mess with the eternal security of the kingdom, they can go about doing their activities abroad. Somehow, Osama bin Laden was trying to obviously disrupt that equation. So that's the first point.

The second point, the groups, the radical groups that are actually doing the suicide bombing and terrorist activities are getting their monies. It's not the average Muslim who is really giving them the money. They're basically getting their money. They're going to Salafi and Wahhabi groups because they feel that their view of life and what is happening to the Islamic World makes those people more ready, more accepting. I guess they feel empathy, if you want, and they can get the money from them.

This is well documented. It's happening in Iraq. Recently, Lebanon, you know Fatah al-Islam, now there are clashes between the Lebanese Army and their

group in northern Lebanon. These guys are getting
their monies from mainly Saudi Salafis and Wahhabis.
Those groups are doing these terrorist activities. So
how do you respond to that?

Thirdly, and I think in a more broad
fashion, the approach to Islam as advocated by the
Salafis is making it much easier for these groups to
recruit people. I mean it's like going to the
National Socialists, for examples. I don't think you
would have had stormtroopers be able to really do what
they did if you did not have a National Socialist
ideology with a large following. Of course, they were
not saying go kill people, but they made it so ready.
So jumping the line basically from being a National
Socialist to becoming a stormtrooper became much
easier.

I'd like you to answer really the thing
about the funding. They're not doing the terror, but
their members are really funding. That's where these
groups go to get the money. And, secondly, the whole
ideology in general. I appreciate it. Thank you.

MR. HELLYER: I told Steve when I first got here that his idea of mapping out these groups was particularly important for us to understand their relationship with one another -- the mainstream Sunni Muslim communities, the Salafi communities, and there are different types both within Saudi Arabia and within the rest of the Arab World. I think, Steve, you were very right. We'll have to do that tomorrow.

MR. GRAND: Today?

MR. HELLYER: Your three questions, I really appreciate that you asked them, and I'm glad that somebody actually has that sort of awareness of the distinction between the mainstream and these different movements because that is a level of nuance and sophistication I'm not accustomed to.

Your three points: State violence, first, Osama bin Laden's fallout with the Saudi Salafi establishment was not purely about his wanting to overthrow the monarchy in Saudi Arabia. His fallout with them was his wanting to excommunicate a Muslim government and then overthrow it. It's this idea of

Takfir, of excommunication, and that was what got the
Salafi establishment in Saudi Arabia very, very
unhappy.

I thought that they hadn't even touched him
until after the Gulf War. But, in fact, as soon as he
returned from Afghanistan, the Salafi establishment
knew that as a result of some of the ideas he had
encountered in Afghanistan that actually weren't Saudi
in origin but came from another part of the world and
also the brutalization of war in general, they knew he
would be a problem. As I said, in 1993, they
viciously attacked him, and they still viciously
attack him on the basis of theology and on the basis
of law.

So this idea of an arrangement between the
two; he tried to strike up an arrangement. In fact,
before the United States actually put troops onto
Saudi Arabia, he went to the Saudi royal family and
said, 'I will give you troops. I will give you all
the Afghan Arabs that you need.'

I don't know how many he thought he was

going to give them, but 'I will give you everything that you need to defend against Iraq,' and they turned him down. So that was the beginning of a political split, but the theological split happened much, much earlier.

The second part, finance, as I said, the Salafi religious establishment put clear blue water between them and him. That doesn't mean that angry, ridiculously conservative people are not going to fund the suicide attacks. They may very well know that it is against even the Salafi interpretation of their religion to do so, but they'll do it.

I remember, in the late nineties, I came across one fellow in particular. This was during one of the bombing campaigns. He was a Lebanese who was actually being bombed at that time. He said, 'I support Hamas'.

I said, 'you know that suicide bombing is forbidden in your religion, right?'

He said, 'I don't care. I'll ask forgiveness from God because this is what I've been

led to.'

He was serious. He knew it was forbidden.
He knew that it was a sin, but 'I can't (tolerate
this). I have to lash out.' The next day he was
fine, but it was very disheartening on that particular
day.

The final point about the relationship
between Takfirism and Salafism, if I could draw
something in here, then I would try to make it
graphically quite evident. I think that the Takfiri
ideology comes from a mixture of different types of
Salafism. It does, but it is the same sort of
distance between the two of them as National Socialism
and Socialism, for me. I really think that that's the
case.

They are related, and it's important to
document how they're related. They both abhor
mainstream religious authority. You know that the
Salafi religious establishment is an overwhelming
minority amongst the Sunni Muslim world, and it's
important to put that out there. But I just don't see

such a direct relationship I mean there is a chain, but I think the chain has many links in it.

Does that answer your question?

QUESTIONER: Thank you.

MR. HELLYER: Thank you.

QUESTIONER: Sharik Zaffar from the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties in the Department of Homeland Security. Hisham, always a pleasure to hear you.

Foreign policy seems to be a large focus of frustration both certainly in the European Muslim context and perhaps even here in the United States. You seem to allude to the fact that religious leaders particularly in London and other parts of the U.K. are helping to fill a void and helping to lead people, not necessarily back off the edge but helping them explore what traditional Islam says.

I'd be interested in, first, what are religious people like Hamza Yusuf and other leaders that you pointed out saying in how Muslims should deal with these foreign policy frustrations?

The second question is a bit harder. What do you think governments should do? Short of actually changing policies but in terms of engagement, how should governments reach out and engage with Muslim populations, knowing full well that a lot of the policies that are place that are driving in frustration aren't changing any time soon?

MR. HELLYER: Well, on the first question about these religious establishments, what are they talking about, they're not depoliticized. So it's not that they don't talk about political issues and foreign policy issues, but it's not their main focus because they recognize that in order for you to express your resentment and your dissatisfaction with your own country's policies abroad, you need to be able to relate to that country from within. That's really where they start. That is the beginning point for them: to indigenize the communities that exist within the U.K., within Europe and within the United States as far as I've seen. This is their move. That's what they focus on.

They do talk about foreign policy. I
remember right after 7/7, one of the most well known
figures of the Muslim World, Ali al-Jifri , came to
the United Kingdom and had a huge open conference that
was actually funded by the Home Office and the Foreign
Office. He said -- I think it was within the first 10
minutes of his speech -- that 'what happened in Iraq
was a crime.' Because he knows that that is what is on
the burning minds of these youth. But he took out
that sort of frustration, and he molded it. By the
end of the speech, he was talking about how: 'You're
dissatisfied? Fine, be dissatisfied but do something
about it.' Doing something about it doesn't mean just
sitting at home, stewing and then letting yourself
blow up either psychologically or physically. It
means getting involved in the system and trying to
change things, and you can't do that if you think of
yourself as alien.

Lots of people disagreed with Iraq. Lots of
people disagreed with our foreign policy. It is
probably, unfortunately, what our present Prime

Minister will be most remembered for, even though he
did a lot more than Iraq. This is an overwhelming
feeling across the British spectrum. It's got nothing
to do with Muslim or non-Muslim.

So that's really what they're looking at.
They say: 'If you want to be against foreign policy,
fine, be against foreign policy but express it in a
way that shows to yourselves that you are part of this
community, that you are part of this society even if
that society doesn't like you. Even if that society
doesn't recognize you as loyal. You recognize
yourselves as loyal because that's what you are. That
is what your religion tells you to be.'

The second part, the second question that
you had was relating to -- I don't know what it was
relating to.

QUESTIONER: Governments engaging
themselves.

MR. HELLYER: Oh, should we change our
policies?

I'm a domestic policy specialist, and I

think that it's very important for people in the

policy establishment on the domestic and the national

level to know that they need to be aware of the deep-

seated resentment that exists due to foreign policy.

It is a key factor. That's what we told the

government right after 7/7. It is a key factor.

That doesn't mean we change it. Sometimes

we take foreign policy decisions that are unpopular

and that are morally correct. Sometimes we take

foreign policy decisions that are not. Sometimes

people are justified in being resented. Sometimes

it's imaginary. We should make the distinction

between the two to them.

But I would never advocate that we change

our policies so that a portion of our population be

happy. I would advocate that we change our policies

because they're wrong, and it befits us as moral human

beings to change them because of it.

QUESTIONER: Thank you. Waleed Hadid ,

Jordan Embassy.

First of all, thank you very much, Hisham,

for the very informative presentation.

I wonder what is the effect of the Brotherhood movement within the British Muslim community. Is it, from your point of view, a more direct voice? Do they have an organizational link with the Brotherhood movement all over the world? How do you see it? Thank you.

MR. HELLYER: Most of our British Muslim population originates from the Indian subcontinent. They're not Arabs. So that's something very important to know.

We have a small Arab population, particularly in London, also in the north of the country. The Muslim Brotherhood is an Arab movement. It's not an Islamic-wide movement. It's an Arab movement and, for that reason, it's not particularly significant within the British Muslim community as any other group. It has less significance than any of the mainstream political parties, the Liberal Democrats, the Conservatives, the Labour Party.

Within the Muslim politicized groups, it's

quite small. It exists. Actually, one of the reasons

why it split off from one of the other groups, I

think, was due to the fact that it wanted to engage

more in certain arenas that would take it towards a

British identity. So I would have to say that it's

very 'moderate' in the U.K.

That doesn't mean that they also are not

politicized. They are very politicized. They're

probably more politicized than everybody else, but

they are very, very much involved with trying to get

their members to realize that they are part of British

society. It's reflected in the way that they've done

their speeches, in the way that they have published

their literature, even in their name. I think the

name of the group is the Association of Britain or

something like that. You can see their literature.

They're very forward-thinking in trying to ensure that

these British populations think of themselves as

British.

If they have any organizational links to the

Muslim Brotherhood worldwide, it's not my specialty.

There are other people that would be able to answer

that much better for you.

Because they're so insignificant in the U.K.

as a U.K. movement, we don't really pay much attention

to them. A lot of times, some of the links between

these groups are very tenuous. I've met people who

say that they are part of the tanzeem, you know, the

organization, but they don't know anybody. They just

read Hassan al-Banna, and that makes them part of the

organization.

QUESTIONER: (Inaudible)

MR. HELLYER: Yes.

MR. GRAND: Let's take three last questions,

starting with Dan, and we'll take them all at once and

finish up.

MR. BENJAMIN: I wasn't going to ask a

question. I was going to inflict an opinion.

MR. GRAND: Inflict away.

MR. BENJAMIN: Just on the issue of

Salafism, what we face is a very, very muddy picture.

I think it is recognized that most Salafis are not

violent and that a small minority are.

But one of the problems that we find -- and I will tie this back to something Hisham was talking about -- is that the border between or the membrane between one group and the other is rather porous. In fact, if you become attracted to Salafi religious practice, as most people do, through a personal association or over the internet as opposed to some kind of formal religious activity, then it is possible that you could wind up in either camp. Frequently, particularly on the many, many different religious web sites, you get a package of politics with it, and it can lead you into a fairly violent mindset because together, bundled with advice on how to dress and who to socialize with comes a lot of images of what's going on in Gaza or what's going on in the West Bank, what's going on in Iraq, so on and so forth.

This is important, it seems to me, because a lot of it comes from essentially non-establishment organizations, non-organized religion. Hisham, I think, made an important plea -- and I am sort of

rehearsing a debate that we had a while ago -- for using established authority to fight these what might be called modern heresies. It seems to me that it's more complicated than that because what we face is a really serious crisis of authority, especially in Europe but throughout the Muslim World, that makes it very difficult to tamp down some of these heresies. Frankly, the lines are all blurred.

You talked about how there's an absolute prohibition on suicide attacks. Well, you know, Yusuf al-Qaradawi doesn't agree. He doesn't agree in Israel, and he doesn't agree in Iraq. Since he's the star Egyptian preacher and the most famous Muslim preacher in the world, this has spillover effect. This is why fighting these brushfires in this way is problematic.

We don't really always have an establishment to turn to. We're in a period of the decay or authority as opposed to the establishment of it. So I'm not sure we have even a brass bullet. Forget a silver bullet there. That was really all I wanted to

add.

QUESTIONER: I think that was a presentation that you don't often hear in the United States, still less even in Britain, in terms of its subtlety and granularity.

You do hear it from the French, but the French are pretty critical. I'm thinking of French intelligence services I've talked with of the British in two respects, well, in one respect, not in both. They'll say that British intelligence is very good, that they know what's going, but that the legal system has allowed what some popular writers have called Londonistan to develop. They point at Abu Qatada and Abu Hamza al-Masri and others who are allowed to, according to some reports, encourage What is your response to the French?

Then the other issue, you kind of talked about three versions of Islam -- the Salafists and Ramzi Yousef and the Islamists -- and you said that Ramsey Yusuf was sort of the way to the future.

MR. HELLYER: Hamza Yusuf.

QUESTIONER: What?

MR. HELLYER: Hamza Yusuf.

QUESTIONER: Hamza Yusuf, excuse me, not Ramzi Yousef. Wow, he's definitely the way to the future. We've got him locked up already.

What kind of organizational, if you think of the Islamists, as you pointed out, having the organizational traction and doing the political lobbying. Other than the media, what kind of traction does Hazma Yusuf have in Britain?

QUESTIONER: I'm from the Islamic Society of North America, Sayyid Muhammad Syeed. I was telling Hisham that it's a breath of fresh air for us to hear on of our youth, from young scholars, leaders from England talking like this and presenting such a comprehensive paper.

The year before last year, he came with a delegation to attend our annual convention of the Islamic Society of North America in Chicago. I was recollecting that our organization is now 44 years old. Having been associated as one of the pioneers

and the founders of this organization, I was trying to
recollect when in the seventies and the sixties, we
were trying to have a similar experience in Britain.
It was not possible because that was very clear.
While we were successful in America, why could we not
have a similar kind of organization in Britain?

So that was mostly because of the
composition of the immigrant Muslims in Britain and
here. In our case, we had mostly the products of the
brain drain coming, the best and the brightest coming
from all over the Muslim World. So that provided us
nucleus that ultimately determined the mainstream
Islamic trend in America. Thank you.

MR. HELLYER: I think I'll go backwards.

Thank you very much, Dr. Syeed, for that. I
was at the ISNA convention a couple of years ago,
where I was very impressed, particularly as I was not
a British Muslim leader of any type but was a guest of
my government and of ISNA who were kind enough to host
us.

The question about the French, I totally

agree with the French. I think that we made a big

mistake in allowing people like Abu Qatada to actually

operate freely within the U.K., and I think that the

British security services would agree. They didn't

envisage it would be a problem at the time because it

was made very clear to them by Abu Qatada and by other

people within the sort of radical Takfiri fringe that

Britain would never come under fire.

Because Britain has a history of hosting

people who may be considered as radical in other

places, for example, the anti-apartheid movement.

They were condemned as terrorists a long time ago, and

they found a home and a safe haven within the United

Kingdom, and that's something we're very proud of.

We're proud that we sheltered people who were fighting

legitimate resistance abroad in our country.

They didn't take as seriously as I wish they

had, that this was not actually a resistance movement.

This was an offshoot of an offshoot of an offshoot

that would eventually target everyone, whether it was

the West, whether it was the East, whether it was the

North, whether it was the South. I think that they

agree, and they locked up all of these people that you

mentioned. Well, actually, Omar Bakri , they let him

get out of the country and go take care of his mother

in Lebanon. Of course, when Lebanon was being bombed,

he suddenly realized that he was British and tried to

get on one of our evacuation boats. Unfortunately,

there wasn't any space.

Abu Qatada, I believe is still being held.

Abu Hamza al-Masri tried to defend himself

at his trial by saying that he was utilizing his

freedom of expression and freedom of religion, and the

British courts were very clear: 'You don't speak for

Islam. You don't speak for the Muslim community.

You're going to jail', and he did.

The worry that I have is that while Abu

Hamza was thrown in jail, other people who are

significantly as virulent and racist as he was because

he was picked up about racism charges, not so much

about violence. He never did any violence himself.

He was exhorting to religious hatred. Other people

who were exhorting to religious hatred in the U.K.

from non-Muslim communities, and they got off scot-

free right around the same time. It was very

disconcerting.

As I said, I agree with the French in terms

of what we did with people like Abu Qatada. I don't

have any compunction about the fact that we allowed

other resistance movements to find a safe haven in the

U.K. as long as they didn't commit crimes in the U.K.,

and I think that the United States would agree.

Otherwise, you don't have the sense of political

asylum. We have a tradition of political asylum.

It's important to make sure that it's political asylum

and not terrorism asylum.

Abu Qatada, I don't know if Abu Qatada

actually did anything physically himself, but he was

definitely involved

The second part about Hamza Yusuf, Hamza

Yusuf is one individual. He's not as significant so

much as he was the first famous figure. The reason

why he's significant is not because of the ideas that

he propounded insomuch as he propounded them from the
mainstream religious establishment of the Muslim
World.

Lots of people are coming from that
mainstream to the U.K., to the United States, to all
over Europe, and they're propounding exactly the same
sort of message. Some of them are white. Some of
them are black. Some of them are Arab. Some of them
are Indian. But they come from the mainstream
religious establishment, and they've been very
positive in that sense.

He, himself, may not have the organization
capability that he might want or require for his
message to be delivered, but I don't think that that's
a problem because all of the other organizations are
very happy to host them. I think he's spoken at ISNA
more than once in the past few years because all of
these organizations are coming to realize that whereas
they may have felt that they themselves were American,
they didn't emphasize that to their members, and they
have changed and very positively.

Again, I don't think this was so much a problem in the United States as it was in the U.K. You're right. I don't think ISNA ever would have been able to exist in the U.K. at that time, but it's very different now.

Just one clarification about the Islamist movements that exist, most of these movements, 90 percent of them, they are post-Islamist. They were founded by people who were connected to the Islamist political establishment in the Muslim World in the eighties. I don't think that they really have any real dedication to Islamism anymore, and you can see it in the evolution of their speeches.

The final question related to?

MR. GRAND: Salafism.

MR. HELLYER: I beg your pardon.

MR. GRAND: It was Dan's point Salafism.

MR. HELLYER: Yes. Dan and I met, I think, on the first week that I was here, and we had an interesting discussion about religious authority in the Muslim World. I actually agree with him

completely that we have a total lapse of religious

authority within the Muslim World, but I do think it's

changing.

I wish the gentleman from the Jordanian

Embassy was here because it was actually his

government that helped re-establish in the minds of

the Arab World that there was a religious mainstream

through the publication of the Amman message which was

when the king actually hosted several hundred

religious scholars and proclaimed that the ideology

and theology of Osama bin Laden and people like him,

whether in Iraq or elsewhere, was unsustainable and

untenable, and that was signed across the board.

It's not enough, and you can't change the

state of affairs in religious authority in the Muslim

World that took about 200 years to develop, overnight.

But I think that the institutions are still there. I

think that they need to be revitalized and brought up

to date. I think that if you expect universities and

institutions in the Muslim World that claim to uphold

mainstream religious authority, they should stop

giving classes on economics as though we live on the

gold standard. But they are still there. They still

have a tradition of over a thousand years that we can

work with, and they are our first line of defense.

(Applause)

MR. GRAND: I just want to thank Hisham for

a fascinating discussion today and for enlightening us

on a range of fronts.

You'll be hearing more from Hisham as his

research develops. As you can tell, he is an

invaluable asset to us here at Brookings, and we hope

to get him out in front of as many people within the

Washington policy community as possible.

Thank you to my colleague, Dan, for his

comments, and we look forward to future cooperation

with the Center for the United States and Europe as

our interests overlap in many, many areas.

Thank you all for coming today. Thank you.

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