Responses to Radicalisation

Conversations between Belfast and Bradford

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Introduction

Neil Jarman: This is the second of two workshops involving people from Belfast and Bradford to explore similarities and difference between what has happened in Northern Ireland over last forty years and what has been happening England in last six to eight years. It is framed around the terminology of radicalisation. I just want to introduce this session by raising a few points from that first conversation.

One of the issues which came up in the Belfast conversation was a sense of resentment over what some of us feel in terms of radicalisation being positive process, and a word that we used to describe ourselves now being used with negative connotations. Concepts, the uses, understanding and meaning of language was an important subtext in the conversations we had in Northern Ireland.

A few points regarding the similarities, but not necessarily the parallels between Northern Ireland and Bradford. One similarity was a context of segregation and separation between local communities, with limited levels of interaction, and which feeds perceptions of discrimination and inequality at the level of communities rather than of classes. This has led to marginalisation within and between working class communities and particularly within minority working class communities. This has meant a limited impact for various forms of protest, challenge and engagement, and the failure of these fed into the perceptions of marginalisation and discrimination. Protest was possible but it didn't necessarily lead to real sense of change.

In the wider context we have a history of unequal relationships in Britain, both between the Irish community and Britain, and also with the Muslim community. Both of these have a colonial sub context, but within the current context Britain's foreign policy has a distinctive role, and in particular the primacy of Palestine/Israeli conflict has an impact on the local situation. There was also recognition of the presence of an ideology or a history in which violence was legitimised as a way or raising challenge, and in which violence was accepted as a means of working through issues which could not be dealt with by legitimate means. A further common element was the presence of young men who were alienated, marginalised, frustrated and willing to act out on that legitimised violence in the context of the two situations.

The next element was around the State responses to the context of violence and which was perceived to be primarily militaristic and security focused rather than made any attempt to address the root causes of the violence. There were abuses of human rights and an overuse of legislation to challenge people's attitudes and behaviours, this also led to the stereotyping and demonising of entire communities, so that the whole community was forced to defend, justify and take responsibility for the actions of small numbers of people. This fed back into process of radicalisation. So the state response, rather than perhaps responding or challenging the processes that lead to

radicalisation, actually exacerbated the process. There was a strong sense in Belfast that what was happening in England now more of the same all over again. There was a failure to learn from past errors, which meant that they were simply replicated. There was strong sense that the state hasn't learnt very much from what happened in Northern Ireland in relation to Irish communities in Britain.

Finally, just a few points in terms of what we might learn from the Northern Ireland peace processes and the transition from armed conflict to more peaceful democracy. We can emphasise the importance of dialogue, engagement, developing understanding of the other, a process which includes all key actors, of not excluding people, and of bringing everyone into the process. It was also a very long, slow, tortuous process. In Northern Ireland it took fourteen years from the declarations of ceasefires until we had a relatively established and stable government. A long slow process, which requires ongoing commitment, which will have pitfalls, but which has to be kept going. Finally, with that is an importance of community-based issues. It is not just about a top down process, not just about what happens at the political elite level. It's actually about building from the bottom up as much as it is the actions of state level. The process involves about working on the ground, in the processes of dialogue, discussion, in building levels of understanding to move to a position where you can start to challenge the root causes which initiated the problem up in the first place.

Theme One - Human Rights

Mike Ritchie: I work for the Committee on the Administration of Justice the main human rights organisation in Northern Ireland, I previously worked with former IRA prisoners. I have a few thoughts to share. First, it is important to point out how bad the situation has got in terms of human rights in this country. We were outraged in the early 1990s at seven day detention in Northern Ireland; people being held for seven days under emergency legislation was shocking and had been condemned by the European Court of Human Rights. We now have a situation where - routinely - police and government ministers are looking for ninety days detention along with all the various arguments that you always get from people who want increased powers, that we need them on purely practical grounds. Abstracting somebody from his or her community and family for a long period of time, for seven days, was agreed to be in breach of the European Convention of Human Rights up until a few years ago. How on earth have we come to a situation now where ninety days is a reasonable demand? I think it is outrageous. Another example of how bad things have become is that was recently convicted for forty years for a thought crime and possession of dangerous information. A forty year conviction for not actually having done anything to harm anyone. This is an extraordinary situation. And finally one of the things which has struck me very strongly was the way in which the word terrorism is used unproblematically even within the Muslim community. When I worked in human

rights previously in the 1990s whenever we used the world "terrorism" we put it in inverted commas. Legally, it's a very vague term and, doesn't help in analysing things politically or sociologically. The word is not helpful in understanding people's motivation; it doesn't help to get to what is really going on. It is certainly a term that is very useful to governments and for authorities that want to demonise people but it is helpful in terms of advancing clarity and understanding.

My second thought is the danger of internalising a public discourse which says that the only problem is bad "terrorists". The corollary is to become apologetic about your community because some people adopt violent tactics. Then the problem becomes the anger that young people feel rather than the problems and policies which make them angry. What we need to address is the anger of the young people rather than analysing why it is that people are angry. The same situation pertained in Ireland. Instead of saying there is a problem with the structure of the state, there is a problem with discrimination, there is a problem with structural violence the government said that the problem is that people feel angry and need to act out their anger. I don't think anger is the problem. We need to deal with the things that cause anger rather than saying it is all about problematic pathology, For example it seems to me that foreign policy *vis á vis* the Arab/Muslim world and the activities – and even the existence – of the state of Israel are serious problems that need to be addressed; they are not unambiguous. These issues are why people feel angry. The anger needs to be engaged rather than suppressed: certainly avoid emotionalism and try to get people involved in political analysis and thinking in terms of how to bring about change. But to say that the anger is a problem it seems to me is the wrong response.

My third thought is that the language of human rights is an appropriate radical framework to discuss these kinds of issues and get some action. It is not the be all and end all. In fact, there is nothing that is a panacea for these kinds of difficulties. In Northern Ireland the human rights framework allowed you to seek international and external validation – from the UN, from the European Court – for the concerns that you had so that you were able to transcend local controversy. This freed you up in terms of making certain demands, having basic principles that you could articulate. It is not that the state then says "Alright, it's a fair cop!" and does what you want. But it is a framework within which you could have an appropriate and a robust argument. I think that is where human rights can do most good; it doesn't solve all problems but it allows us to mobilise people and to get some activism around some important issues.

My fourth issue is the importance of dialogue between Islam and human rights. I was struck when we had a discussion yesterday about the 7/7 bombings somebody in a very natural way said the 'alleged bombers' and I was very intrigued by that word "alleged". I was interested to find out that there was some doubt as to whether the government version of what took place on 7/7 is actually what took place. I am not

talking about conspiracy theories but about getting a clear sense of what happened. That was something very important in Northern Ireland in terms of moving forward and clarifying certain incidents and events that happened. For example the government still resists having a public enquiry into Pat Finucane, who was murdered in 1989, even though it is accepted that there should be one; the question of secret intelligence means that that the government just refuses to allow a proper independent inquiry to take place. Similarly in relation to the 7/7 bombings it seems that there is a demand for an inquiry. I was very interested by a quote from the Koran, which was phrased to me as 'if you are truthful indeed bring forward the evidence'. The point that was being made was that the government is refusing to bring forward the evidence about the 7/7 bombings. Where you have something in the Koran, which is clearly a human rights principle, then you can have a truthful dialogue between Islam and human rights, some common working principles can be established and people can try and mobilise and get a consensus around them.

The final point that I wanted to make from the Irish experience is that if you have people in prison someone has to look after them, monitor their situation, visit them, ensure their families have support. I heard yesterday that there are now around 200 people in prison in Britain as a result of the crisis around Islam and the government response to it. Those 200 people who are in jail are probably very exposed, very isolated. In a civilised society somebody needs to look after the prisoners. That is something which needs to be put on the agenda. Thank you.

Tommy McKearney: I am a retired, and I emphasis retired just in case somebody is listening, member of the IRA. There are perceptions and received wisdoms and it is very important to look at received wisdoms. Let me tell you something which is no longer joke because it is has been used so many times, I use this by way of illustration rather than to get a smile. Hell is where the English cook, the French do the plumbing and the Germans are the police. Heaven is where the French cook, the Germans do the plumbing and the English are the police. That is a joke for the English. Let's just take it as received wisdom for the benefits of the English police, the British police. New York calls their police New York's finest, in Chicago, Chicago's finest and in San Francisco, San Francisco's finest. Here in Britain our Bobbies are the finest in the world, without parallel. Perish the thought that someone might be shot down running for a train in London, and if it happened we could take it for granted that the Chief Constable would resign in shame. Paralleling the excellence of our police force, we have the greatest army in the world, pound for pound. Maybe we don't have the same amount of bombs that the Yankees have or the same manpower that the Chinese have but pound for pound it is the finest in the world. As for our judiciary, they are the admiration of the world. They have never made a mistake, and those that were involved in challenging convictions of the Guildford 4, Birmingham 6 etc, are 'communist agitators'. I am say that not to say that the British are the worst in the

world. There are places that could instil more fear than Britain. However, any idea that this is the finest example of human rights is a misconception. Britain's record is no better than France, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia or America. Unfortunately that perception is the received wisdom in too many establishments here in Britain.

Our experience in Northern Ireland was that was the received wisdom within the British media, within the British establishment is that you do not analyse and examine mistakes you are making in terms of human rights. Human rights are universal or they don't exist and the problem that we noticed in Northern Ireland was that in Britain human rights were taken for granted with the exception of a few necessary derogations. Twenty years ago the most devious, rascally, unmanageable group of terrorists in the world were the IRA, now they are Muslim extremists. But before the IRA we had a devious, rascally, unmanageable group in Cyprus, before that they were in Aden, before that in Kenya, the list goes on. Actually you will see on a dollar bill a guy called Washington, a devious, rascally, difficult to manage, unprincipled terrorist as well for a few years. Things haven't changed, I can assure you.

Derogation is where we fall through the cracks in terms of human rights and leads to the persecution of innocent. In Northern Ireland derogations included non-jury courts, where people were convicted in front of one judge with inverted rules of evidence. This was necessary, not because juries were in danger, as was the public rationale, but because the system was afraid that if you put twelve good men and women, they wouldn't convict because they didn't believe that most of them were guilty. The deal was to get convictions and it led to innocent people being sent down.

We used to have a very famous, unfortunately deceased now, poet, playwright and author in Ireland, called Brendan Behan. He was a rowdy, drunken former member of the IRA, who commented on an incident in England. In 1939 the IRA planted a bomb in Coventry on a bicycle which killed six innocent civilians. Brendan never tried to justify it but he noted that of the men captured for the bomb two were hanged and 30-40 others suffered very harsh conditions in Dartmoor. A few months later another group of men came to bomb Coventry, the white supremacists of the Luftwaffe, they did a lot more damage and killed a lot more civilians, and they had a long record of bombing innocent civilians from Poland, Dunkirk and Coventry, but when they were captured they were treated as prisoners of war. Let me tell you as a lesson that Britain and allies were thankfully capable of defeating Nazi Germany, in spite of treating the Luftwaffe as prisoners of war. Think of that when you are thinking of how Muslim activists, if that is the euphemism for Al Qaeda, are being treated in Guantanamo Bay.

I am not trying to be disagreeable but there is a technical definition of terrorist. Terrorism has two aspects. One is State terrorism. Do you remember the phrase 'shock and awe'? They bombed the blazes out of Baghdad to terrorise the citizens of the town. That is State terrorism. The other type of terrorism has a very clear logic,

whether you agree with it or not, and invariably is generated by despair and hopelessness. I certainly say that it's wrong but that is where it comes from: fear, despondency, helplessness, and if you undermine dignity and human rights, you will end up with a situation in which terror is prolonged.

Governments by and large have a five, six or eight year cycle in power. I suspect that most of those, who run the policing and security forces, the men and women of influence, have a similar cycle in power and understandably those people would take a view 'lets stop it on my watch'. I can't settle the problems of the world because it is not within my gift or power to do that, I can't even settle all the problems in Britain but what I can do is keeps is keep my people safe for the time that I have this desk. That is understandable. As an old and retired corporal, it is difficult to put myself in the shoes of a police constable but I try at times. I can understand why that would be the position that you would take, but if the short-term position taken involves the denial of human rights, then you are providing a long term disaster rather than short term solution.

You have the discriminatory practices used against the Muslim population of Britain. I think you must reintegrate by providing equality of treatment and opportunity for the Muslim population here. Just as over the years, with the exceptions that I am talking about, that this happened to the Irish population in Britain. The Irish problem didn't start thirty years ago; it started much earlier than that. The Special Branch was originally formed in the nineteenth century to deal with Irish republican activists, Fenian dynamiters. There was an incident in Manchester when the Fenians freed two of their colleagues from prison and in the course of that they shot a police constable, as a result three Fenians were hanged. In Irish history they are remembered as the Manchester martyrs, whereas the unfortunate Sergeant Brett is a name that few remember. If at that time someone had said that within another century that there would be a man with a very good Irish name, James Callaghan, as prime minister of Great Britain it would have been mind numbing to the Irish at the time, and I suppose it would be safe to say that 100 years from now there may well be a person with a Muslim name as prime minister. That is the path that we are looking at.

My final point is in the international sphere. Palestine is a major problem, but with all due respect and humility to the Muslim people, when you think of Palestine, I think that you should also think that the people that are occupying Palestine, are not simply a anti-Muslim, I suspect that in terms of Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan, that the great powers of the West are not interested in your faith but in your natural resources. If the people of those countries were to become born again Christian fundamentalists with headquarters in Dallas, America, Britain and Japan would still want your oil. Thank you friends for listening.

Mervyn Gibson: I am presently a Christian minister serving in East Belfast, formally of the Royal Ulster Constabulary for eighteen years, sixteen of those years as a Detective Sergeant in Special Branch, a very proud member of Special Branch and I regret nothing I did in Special Branch. I am also an active member of the Orange Order. I suspect that my view of human rights will be in the minority here but I can assure you that it is the majority view within the community from which I come. I believe that human rights and common sense are from same side of the coin. In Northern Ireland we still celebrate the Glorious Revolution, when William III, Prince of Orange, gained civil and religious liberty for all and special privileges for none.

As a people we are not against human rights but we would question how human rights have been politicised in Northern Ireland. Human rights have been used to support those who have been involved in a terrorist campaign. The language of fellow travellers and politicians, who were involved and active members of the IRA were all based on human rights. We see that as hypocritical coming from an organisation that denied the life of the many civilians, Protestant people and members of security forces in Northern Ireland, it seemed that every solicitor who defended a republican was a human rights solicitor, no longer just a solicitor. In other words human rights were hijacked by republicanism. Well if not human rights then the language of human rights. Therefore there is a natural apathy towards human rights in the Unionist community.

There is no political will to introduce additional rights, as currently is advocated by people who want a Bill of Rights. We have existing human rights legislation, through European law, which we believe is sufficient. The idea of a Bill of Rights was the product of the Belfast Agreement, which the majority of Unionists rejected. In the section on human rights, the Belfast Agreement nodded towards the traditional language of civil rights, pertaining to freedom of expression, religion, right to pursuit of political aspirations and the freedom from sectarian harassment. The experience of the Human Rights Commission has not been good either. It caused one leading Unionist in Northern Ireland to comment that the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission as turned the entire unionist population against human rights. In addition to the human rights apathy, there is also a fiscal consideration about the introduction of additional rights. Who is going to fund it? As far as I can see, the only people to make money are barristers and solicitors. With every right comes a responsibility. In many ways any additional rights would cancel each other out and many believe it to be a cosmetic exercise. Therefore the experience of existing rights has not been a good one for the Protestant and Unionist community.

This is exemplified by the actions of the Parades Commission in their restriction of peaceful assemblies. There is a right for the freedom of assembly in European law but that right does not always apply if you are an Orangeman walking back from church

on a Sunday afternoon. Rights should not be conditional or closed to people by another community. Traditional Unionists have been socially conservative and it goes against the grain to have a rights based agenda. Theologically and socially, I am responsible for my actions; I do not, or should not need a Bill of Rights to tell me to behave or to do the right thing. Even the leading Anglican newspaper, which is not known for supporting the Unionist or Protestant cause, recently wrote that a Bill of Rights if introduced, would weaken the ties between Britain and Northern Ireland. In other words it was being used as a political tool.

So, if we are not keen on a Bill of Rights or on additional human rights how do we move forward? In response to the Bradford riots, Ted Cantle said that ignorance could grow into fear. Honest dialogue is missing. We need community cohesion based on knowledge and contact, to establish a common sense of citizenship based on common principles and shared principles of citizenship and common bonds. I believe that is the way forward in Northern Ireland, not in preaching the human rights agenda or making it the new battlefield, but through respect and toleration. In many ways the Unionist community are simply looking for toleration to exercise what they see as their traditions. Republicanism and Nationalism are looking for respect, which hasn't always been there, for their aspirations to celebrate their culture and religion in whichever way they want. I think that if we move forward on that basis, on dialogue rather than seeking to introduce new laws and regulations, then I think that Northern Ireland can move forward.

I am involved in a body which is trying to seek solutions to the parading issue, one which all political parties have said is the one issue which has potential to bring down the current administration if it comes back onto the streets. We looked at the whole idea of human rights and we realised that the European Convention on Human Rights must be viewed as a living instrument in changing social circumstances. There is no uniform conception of the rights and freedom of others as a base for justifying restrictions on freedom of assembly. I would suggest that if Tommy and I, and the others, are going to share space in Northern Ireland, whatever the political realities may be it will not be based on going back to human rights every time you want something, it is based on honest dialogue and building relationships with each other. Tommy and I would have been on different sides of fence pre 1994. We are not on the same side of the fence yet politically but at least we are talking and are sharing a platform here in Bradford and I believe that is the way to move forward rather than concentrating on an additional bill of human rights.

Professor Paul Rogers: I work in the Department of Peace Studies, my work is on International Security and most of the work I have done in recent years has looked at two aspects of security; how paramilitary movements develop and the tactics they use, and trying to analyse western military policies and particularly their response to the

9/11 attacks. Over the last three days I have been in Brighton attending a conference organised by the police officers on counter terrorism. There were 400 people present and many senior police officers from across the world.

I have two or three reflections on that event. I would agree very much with the huge increase in anti terrorism budget, it is up to £2.6 billion in the next 2-3 years, a huge amount of investment, including the new office of MI5. In an address by Tony McNulty the Home Office Minister, what came across was a degree of anger at the way in which the increased legal instruments has been opposed by the human rights people and a belief that the Government actually had to put these kinds of methods on to the statute book to be used. The point was made earlier on that a Chief Constable has his/her duty to protect the people in the area for the time that they are in charge and their role is not necessarily to look behind what is happening. In another sense, what frankly surprised me was that I was invited to address this entire group for 35 minutes on analysis on why the war in terror is going wrong. I believe that a series of extraordinary mistakes have been made (I am calling them mistakes) including the decision to terminate the Taliban regime, what happened in Iraq and what has happened since. There is now a willingness to question these actions, partly because this year we are going into the sixth year of the war in Iraq, in October we move into the either year of the war in Afghanistan and the serious problem of the United States adding another 20,000 troops in to Afghanistan.

There are many people in the military questioning these policies. They are beginning to recognise that if we are not careful we will be in a dangerous conflict which is going to last decades. I think it is critically important that we understand why we are where we are now and it is still very important to recognise why the United States reacted as it did in 9/11. The Bush administration in 2001 was unusual by American political standards; it was taking big risks in its international role. This was to be the new American century, with the end of the Soviet Union, with China embracing a market economy, the American way of doing things was right for the world. This was never the majority view in the United States but with the election of George Bush, people who took that view came into positions of great influence. The project of the new American century had among its sponsors, Dick Chaney (Vice President), Paul Wolfowitz (Deputy Secretary of Defence), Donald Rumsfeld (Secretary of State to Defence), Lewis Libby (Chief of Staff to Dick Chaney). There was a real belief that the world would be best if it followed the American version of civilisation. It was rather similar to the pattern in late Victorian London, when there was a real belief that the British Empire was bringing peace, security and civilisation to the world. The sun never set on the British Empire, I remember a Ghanaian friend of mine, when I was a student in London forty years ago, saying that the reason for that was that God didn't trust the British in the dark. To crack that joke in 1890s London people would not have understood it. Similarly, prior to 9/11 if you had said, as I tried to and others did,

to the people who took this neo-con view that the US is not in a position to tell the world how to live, you would have got nowhere. But the belief by September 2001 was that this was the way forward in terms of those circumstances that you had in 9/11, and the response was very very strong and it still remains strong. The oil question does come in, the Persian Gulf has nearly two thirds of all the world's oil and that is certainly a factor, but from this perception, which is starting to fade in the US, this was the only way forward.

We are now left with these enduring wars, and an estimate of at least 150,000 civilians killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, maybe more. And you have currently 27,000 people detained without trial in American camps alone in Iraq. If you turned the whole thing round, from the Islamic perspective is Islam under attack. It is intent on a very long conflict. They are almost mirror image views that this expression in the US that the west is threatened by Islamic fascism. The view among many people across the Islamic world that it is Islam which is under threat and in the very extreme forms of Al Qaeda then you have to have the most vigorous opposition to this threat and a creation of a new political entity. You have two completely different worldviews.

What we have to recognise is that in one way we are in extremely difficult times, and much of what has been said this morning is a reflection of that. At the same time it means that people such as ourselves have a huge responsibility because we have to recognise what has happened, understand it and come up with counter approaches whether at a community, national or political level. The next five years are going to be critical for this. What way it will go, I don't know. I would hate to have to predict what will happen after these presidential elections in the US, but I don't know that very much different will happen. I concur very much that the way in which Britain, for very understandable reasons, is clamping down very carefully on civil rights with new laws in the west. But the point of view of politicians, they know full well that there may be more 7/7's and from a political perspective, they have got to be able to say in the wake of that, we told you so and you should have let us take even harsher action. Alex Carlyle spoke yesterday of pragmatic incrementalism, in other words, as the politicians put on more efforts to maintain control, people like Philip Lewis and myself will have the opportunity to speak to groups like this and to Chief Constables. I think that it is more open than I think we fear in our darkest hours and I think that there is a huge amount to play for. The experience that we learn by looking at what is happening in Northern Ireland and how this applies is immensely important. There is not much more that I can say except that these are extraordinarily important times and we just have to do our best.

Ratna Lachman: I am the Director of Justice Yorkshire, a racial justice project. Prior to that, I was involved in the Stephen Lawrence case and more recently I have been involved in supporting families who have been affected under anti-terrorism

laws. For today's presentation I wanted to go back for a short time to 1999, which was an important year for me because activists, like me, were part of civil rights movement then. So, what we considered to be a watershed in race relations, a dawn which we now begin to talk about as those good old times that resulted in current paradigms. Now the report on the murder of Stephen Lawrence had just been published. The Metropolitan Police had been condemned for making fundamental errors in the case, which meant that the murderer of Stephen Lawrence got off scot-free. In many senses his murder was not exceptional, it was another murder of a black person, whose perpetrators had not been caught. The reason that this enquiry was important was that it gave us, black communities, a language, which finally spoke to our experiences of the police, public authorities and the criminal justice system. Lord Macpherson, who was leading the enquiry, called this institutional racism, in his definition it was the collective failure of that organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture and ethnic origin.

The flurry of activity which followed on the publication of this report and more specifically the amendment of the race relations act, finally meant that black communities could hold public services accountable for failing them. Unfortunately this euphoria was rather short lived because what followed soon after were the northern riots, the Twin Towers and sadly the 7/7 incident. Consequently both the discourse and the race relations landscape changed beyond recognition. Government ministers and those who spoke on our behalf stopped talking about parallel lives, community cohesion, integration, citizenship, etc. Suddenly what we saw was that the responsibility for good race relations, good community relations, was laid at the door of the most deprived inner city communities and the two-way social contract, the contract of rights and responsibilities, between citizens and government was quickly forgotten and institutional racism became a byword.

One month after the 7/7 bombings, in a speech to journalists, Tony Blair signalled his change, when he announced that the rules of the game had changed. He was right they had changed because the Islamic Rights Commission and other human rights organisations were reporting an exponential increase on racist attacks across the country. But, for Tony Blair's government, race attacks had become a side issue, in the very first paragraph of his address he discounted them as 'isolated attacks', because Britain he proclaimed 'is a tolerant and good natured nation'. This statement had immense significance to us because the war on terror, which the government was waging was classed as a war on Islamic terrorism. Like the British governments campaign against the IRA, the version of extremism was not only deemed to shake core of western values democracy, free speech, liberty, human rights but also the British way of life which was defined as being characterised by fair play, justice and respect. Now the press and media bought into this rhetoric, as did the racists and fascists. But, if this Al Qaeda version of terrorism that we talked about was aimed at

destroying western values, it is my contention that our responses in this terrorist threat has struck a nail in coffin in the very values that we purport to defend. Every time my elected representatives stand up in Parliament and increases the number of days that suspects can be detained without charge, from seven to fourteen to twenty-eight and possibly to fifty-six days if the Government gets its way and perhaps ninety days if the chief of Metropolitan Police, Ian Blair, has his way will it really undermine judicial processes. Every time the Government threatens to amend or derogate from the Human Rights Act, in response to obstacles in the path of using even more draconian anti-terrorism legislation, what we sacrifice is our moral authority in the world.

Now raising the bar on liberty and human rights are the basis that police and intelligence services say that they need to hold suspects for up to ninety days as terror becomes more complicated. I believe that it is not a good enough reason. If that is true, then why don't our European allies? The French and the Spanish, who have also suffered terrorist attacks, hold suspects for six and eight days respectively, even Russia and Turkey, who are both accused of having poor human rights records, hold suspects for five and seven and a half days respectively. Human rights lawyers (and I make no apologies for calling them that) have told me that it is within the first five days after a terrorist suspect is brought in that he confesses. That is because our Security Services and Intelligence Services have culled that art to a tee. But this hasn't stopped our Government from creating increasingly innovative ways of incarcerating people. The world of control orders is inhabited by potential suspects who are under house arrest with severe restrictions placed on their liberty. You could argue that the price is worth paying because it saves innocent lives, but if the person under house arrest doesn't know why he is being detained, doesn't know how long he is being detained for and he is unable to challenge the evidence in court either because the evidence cannot go to court because bringing it to court would reveal the source of intelligence, then what it does is undermine the fabric of legal system, the presumption of innocence and right to a fair trial.

Now the Government states that those who engage in terrorist activity are in the minority, but in the last few years we have witnessed, not only individuals coming under assault but entire communities. Imagine for the white people in this room, that you were told in the face of far right activity the Government held £88 million for strategic objectives in an effort to get the entire white community to reject far right ideology, to isolate extremists by co-operating with the Security Services and to develop their capacity to deal with the problem. If that happened in the white community there would be an outcry because it would be tantamount to labelling an entire community as fascists. It would be akin to asking white people to spy on each other and participate in the criminalisation of their communities. Sadly this is what is happening. Increasingly local authorities are becoming an extension of the security

arm of the state. The extent of their delusion in the war on terror is evident in a number of areas. Between 2005 and 2006, just one year after the local authorities were given special powers, nearly 800 public bodies have made nearly 1000 requests a day for communication data, phone taps, mobile phone records, emails, web search histories etc. Add to this an allocation of £926 million in counter terrorism, after 7/7 in 2006 and an additional £1.4 billion last year, and the Government has estimated that this figure will increase year on year. It doesn't take genius to work out the effect that this level of funding is going to have on Muslim communities. In Yorkshire's context, where the security services are reasonably well established, the implications of how this information and level of investment is going to be used have a profound impact on the community which is already under unprecedented disclaimers.

Trevor Phillips of the CRE talks about sleep walking our way to segregation, I would like to maintain that we are sleep walking our way into a surveillance society. I ask you to consider this, there are 4.2 million CCTV units in the country and the numbers are growing. The UK national database holds the genetic profile of 3.9 million people including 100,000 children, many of whom have never been convicted of an offence. Now between 11/9/2006 (9/11) and December 2006, 1,200 arrests were made under anti terrorist intervention. Forty people were convicted and more than half of the suspects held were subsequently released without having been charged. Those numbers have only increased. I ask you to ask yourself a very simple question: What is the price that we as citizens are prepared to pay for liberty and human right taken away from sixteen million people?

Nuzhat Ali: I am a member of the Islamic Society of Britain. I have been working as a volunteer in the community for the past fifteen years and during that time have seen a lot of changes, in the way that we do things and in interfaith activity. I was asked today not just to look at the human rights issues but to ask what the Government can do, not just what they are not doing! First of all to go back a little bit in history, Sir John Mays' review of the Guildford 4 and Maguire 7 cases, which was published in 1994, was a damning criticism of every stage of the process which led to the arrests, conviction and finally the acquittal of the Guildford 4. It was quite depressing actually when I was reading this, especially in light of the fact that no-one was prosecuted for the torture or falsification of evidence, which was subsequently used in those cases. It made me wonder whether we really are all equal in law? What are the implications for us today of the track record of those in positions of supposed protectors? I found that really worrying.

With regard to the new anti terror legislation, the most basic consequences of the 7/7 bombings were not the 600% rise in hate crimes in the following four weeks but the lurch of the Government towards draconian legislation. As Ratna has already mentioned one of the speeches by Tony Blair, he told us that the rules of the game had

changed. What I worry about is that this is not a game and the rules are designed to protect the innocent, who may be abused by those in power with regards to enforcement of the law and also abused by fellow citizens. These laws are creating a far more unstable environment, in which boundaries for acceptable behaviour are rapidly decreasing: Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, Bellmarsh, house arrest, and the potential increase of twenty-eight days detention to ninety days without trial, as well as the glorification of terrorists all spring to mind. These potential threats have created a situation where free speech, from the Muslim perspective and from me as a Muslim person, has become inhibited, due to the lack of protection against fair trials. This is against the backdrop of trial by media, where everyone has become an expert in Islam, especially locally in Bradford.

The fear is that the people who will be targeted will be the academics and activists. This would stop any legitimate argument about government policy, thereby effectively blocking political participation and further polarising the very people that the Government need to get involved with. I watch a programme once in which it was said 'to criticise the government is actually an act of patriotism as you want the best for country and you are trying to correct what is going wrong', such criticism is not seen as against them but as constructive. Somebody mentioned anger before, I think that anger is quite positive because if we are angry about injustice it means that we are not immune, that we can let things happen and not think about it. Anger only comes about because we feel badly about something which has happened, which is unjust. Anger can be a positive thing as well and we have to channel it in the right direction.

No-one has mentioned that Tony was in Bradford on a 'listening exercise', in inverted commas, because I do not think that he was listening to a word anyone said. Everyone was saying basically the same thing, but Tony was saying the exact opposite. I actually pointed out to him that he was only there to put his own view forward not to listen to what was being said and that was part of the problem. This constructive debate on the background politics of extremism could result in intelligent proactive response rather than reactive response, because reaction usually goes to extremes.

The Government has to realise that they cannot maintain credibility if they keep jumping from one organisation to another as the representatives of the Muslim community who hope that they will not be criticised. Rather, they should listen to and take on the many different viewpoints, realising that there is not a homogenous viewpoint. We don't all think or feel the same way, we do have different opinions. They have to recognise that and not just lock people out because groups do not say what they want to hear, and they move on to the next group. The Government cannot also redefine Islam for the Muslims of Britain, that has to come from deep soul searching within the community, which has already started. What we have to remember is that the first generation of Muslims in the UK was generally illiterate and

had a lack of understanding of what it was to be Muslim in the deeper sense. They may have prayed and fasted but they did not understand deep-rooted Islamic affairs because they came from illiterate communities. Now the second generation is rediscovering faith, which is going to take time, especially from a western perspective. What the Government needs to do is look at ways of protecting community from becoming ostracised. I really believe that if they have that opportunity to do this that this will strengthen the outcome and that will lead to stronger identity of integrated British Muslim citizens.

The recent outburst, I believe, regarding Sharia law shows lack of ability on the part of the Government to hear and understand what is being heard rather than listening to how we discuss things. There is an assumption rather than willingness to understand; instead what happens is scare mongering in the media and press. The use of the term 'British Values' as used by Tony Blair and now Gordon Brown is opposed to Sharia and show how little our leaders, including the Muslim representatives in the Government, understands what it means. They don't understand that what is needed is for the government to be educated to influence society in a positive way. If they were to go down that route of education they would probably realise that one of the reasons Muslims want to live in the UK and prefer to live in the UK even now, more than anywhere else, is that we are living seventy per cent under Sharia anyway. There isn't that much of a big difference. This big 'clash of cultures' is mostly a fear of the unknown and of what they don't actually understand. There needs to be more recognition of the interconnected and interdependent global village, where we feel that the effects of our speech and actions are being made across the globe immediately. There are a couple of illustrations I would like to give. A couple of weeks ago, a Pentagon spokesperson on Sky News, spoke of people who were about to be tried by martial law. What he said put a smile on my face, the reason they were going to be tried he said was because they had broken the laws of war. What were the laws of war? They were the killing of innocent civilians, the bombing of civilian places. The thing, which stuck me, was what have we been doing in Iraq? Was that not the same?

The other thing that we have to recognise is that we enjoy living in a democracy and others want that too. Our government's lack of recognition of Hamas in Palestine is detrimental to the process of transcending extremism. Whether we agree with Hamas or not, it is the choice of the Palestinian people and they are paying a high price for that. It just goes to show that when we talk about democracy for the Middle East, we want it on our terms and what he feel is best for them, and it is not for them to decide.

I am going to finish with a quote from the UN Defence Secretary General Kofi Annan, when he was speaking of the over expanse of anti terrorism measures he said 'Compromising human rights cannot serve the struggle against terrorism. On the

contrary it facilitates the achievement of the terrorist objectives by giving him the moral high ground and provoking tension, hatred and mistrust of government amongst precisely those parts of the population who are least likely to find their troops. Human rights is not only merely compatible with a successful counter terrorism strategy, it is an essential element of one.

Theme Two - Preventing Violence

Caroline Wilson: I manage the conflict transformation project in Belfast City Council and am also a board member for the Community Relations Council for Northern Ireland. Belfast City Council has taken a twin track approach to dealing with segregation, division and relations between the different communities in the city. Previously, community relations were something that Councils did 'unto' local communities, whenever we re-established our community relations programme it was very much a twin track approach: it was about what needed to change within the council as much as how could we support change within communities. Some of the things that we did within the council were to look at how we could create a sense of belonging and trust within the public institution that is Belfast City Council. We looked at practical things like training and learning for all of our 2,500 staff. We also looked at all the memorabilia within the city council. A panel of experts looked at city hall and highlighted that most of the memorabilia represented the historic white, middle class, male, Protestant and Unionist population. So, to start to build a sense of inclusion and a broader representation within the institution of Belfast City Council we began introducing new pieces of art into the building. We also looked at the commemorations that the City Council holds, particularly to the Battle of the Somme and the November Armistice memorials. It was very much felt that we now really needed to remember the wider community that had participated in the two World Wars and include not only the military but the mothers and firemen etc in Belfast itself. Those were integrated into new commemorative ceremonies we have in the city of Belfast.

We also set up a Good Relations steering panel, which was a unique committee within the city hall structures, it includes six elected members from each of the party groups but we also invited twelve external representatives. We originally had four from within the main Christian churches within Belfast, and representatives from trade unions, the business sector, minority ethnic sector and the Community Relations Council to really get engaged around some of the most contentious issues that City Council had previously avoided or pushed to one side. Positive work has come out of this process on memorabilia, commemorations etc, which are items that brought about real change internally. We then engaged it a community engagement process to develop the good relations plan for the city. We wanted to look robustly at how you could bring a transformation agenda to Belfast. We consulted with lots of community

organisations, with all of the political groups within City Council and came up with four key objectives for action around building shared city space. The key thing was that it was within a public values framework, negotiated within the parties. For instance, we have £250,000 per year for local community groups to apply for to work at interfaces, churches etc. We also looked at a series of civic events in terms of how do we truly engaged diversity in Belfast, in the city hall these include Holocaust Memorial day and Irish language events. Some of these were held for the first time in city hall so they were quite significant.

The third stage is the project I work on, which aims to generate a collaborative agenda between the different agencies in Belfast. Councils in Northern Ireland have very different powers to local authorities in England so we have to work with the housing authority, education authority and various departments from central government. The common area was that we had to understand the problems in Belfast so we developed a research agenda around the issues of segregation and various legacies of conflict within the city of Belfast. From this common evidence base we are seeking an agreement on what the priorities should be between agencies, for example, what the housing sector was doing and what that the council was doing and how it was adding value to each agency and so on. Inter-community relations continue to grow in strength in the city of Belfast but it is still a city of contrasts, depravation is concentrated in those areas most affected by the violent conflict. These are areas which need specially designed interventions. Segregation has had significant costs within the city and we are talking about the 'diseconomies of division', the fact that Belfast City Council provides dual leisure facilities within the city and provides some community services on a dual basis – we have different squads of cleansing teams that go into different areas, which has an impact within the labour and housing markets in Belfast.

Another issue is around transport and connectivity. Those communities, which suffer depravation, are also those communities least likely to access private transport, and in terms of mobilising people within the city, in leisure and economic activities, transport and connections are key. We have to look at designing a footpath network across Belfast, so that we as a local authority do not reinforce segregation patterns, which are within the city. Finally we are looking at how we deliver services. For example, a health centre has been relocated onto an arterial route on the boundaries of two segregated areas and as a result their client base from the two main communities is split 60/40 instead of the 85/15 balance it had previously. We are thinking more about the policy interventions related to making shared spaces by involving staff in how to make people feel safe and able to express different opinions. Another key area that we are looking at is how do you develop space in the city where people can interact in a public arena, so that Belfast city centre will continue to be considered as neutral. This differs significantly around time of day and the age of individuals but we

want to consider how to ensure we have shared spaces where different people can feel safe that their cultural identity will be tolerated, a place where different culture identities and opinions an be expressed.

We are just at the beginning of this collaborative agenda. I really believe that the evidence base that we are developing with and for the different agencies is key. There is a new willingness from all of the Coos to engage robustly in the discussion about how we can collaborate to promote cohesion and interaction within the city of Belfast. There is a really positive drive to build a shared city.

Peter McGuire: I am described in the pack as ex loyalist activist. I have no problem in describing that what I was involved in was terrorism. We used terror to make people do what we wanted them to. I am going to talk about my own experiences, how I grew up and how I got involved in terrorism.

My mother was fifteen when she became pregnant, a very bad thing to do in socially conservative Protestant Northern Ireland. I was taken from her, raised in care and never saw her again. Because she was a Presbyterian/Protestant I had to be raised as Presbyterian/Protestant even though my family didn't want me. Even when I was in my mother's womb I was already in box with a label, born into community and had to be Unionist, loyalist although not knowing what we were loyal to. You had to be British. Everything is decided for you, how you speak, what football team you support, where you go, what colours you can wear. I wouldn't wear a green t-shirt, always blue and black Presbyterian colours. I never go to church but its hard growing up in Northern Ireland, to get out of those boxes. If you try to you are labelled as mad or a traitor, you become worse than enemy. So I would say be very careful about labelling people or putting them in boxes. If you say to anyone in Northern Ireland, the word Muslim, they will say back to you Al Qaeda, Taliban, Osama Bin Laden etc. You have got to be very careful about putting people in boxes or labels.

My second point is that I grew up in a community which had nothing. We had nothing to lose by going to prison. Some of us were better off in prison, you were a hero, there was a sort of status and you were better off. By being involved in violence and going to prison, you could go from being nobody and having nothing, to having real status in community and influence. Who wouldn't do it? I quickly became very influential in my community and I realised there was a ready source of supply of young men, foot soldiers, for our organisation from socially deprived areas. People who had nothing! Of course we promised them something, we guaranteed them something and had a ready supply of foot soldiers. When the police caught and charged me, they could have let me go and I would have walked the sixty miles to prison because I wanted to be there. It was a great achievement of mine to go to prison. Still today when you talk to some of the young people in the communities and

ask them what they want to be when they grow up they say 'I want to be ex-prisoner'. That gives them some status because they don't have anything.

One of the biggest experiences in my life was that we were always talking to each other, loyalist to loyalist, and constantly reinforcing what you believed. It wasn't until the ceasefire and peace talks that I talked to someone that didn't have the same opinion and analysis that I had. It had a great effect on me so I would encourage people like yourselves to talk to people who are possibly in the same situation here in England that I was. I was completely isolated from any other person. I did it to myself but society did it too. I have never been as enthusiastic about anything since I was a terrorist. There is not a day where I am not thinking back.

When I was a young boy I listened and soaked things in. I saw people like Bernadette (McAliskey) on TV and thought about shooting her and killing her when I grew up. I was soaked in people legitimising violence and thought I was doing it for my community. When I was involved in violence I listened for people who agreed with me. It reinforced the message that we were doing the right thing. People couldn't say it openly but secretly they wanted it. Be careful what you say. People caught in the cycle look for legitimisation.

I was asked by my organisation to be part of the peace process so I would mess things up. It was only by talking to those who did not agree with me that I thought any differently. People don't want to be changed. For most people it has to be forced. You are subjected to influences, which make you change. If you sit beside people you don't have to take their views. You can talk with people and still leave holding your own political views. How do we stop young people in violence? I don't know but we have to try, to take a risk. It's hard to do peace building but it's everyone's responsibility to persuade others not to be involved in violence. It's everybody's responsibility whether paid or not, start with your family etc. Now I won't have anything in my house which is linked to loyalism.

Bernadette McAliskey: I think there is something quite ironic in asking anyone from Northern Ireland how to prevent violence because we are seemingly bad at it and are coming out of a period of very violent conflict. We don't understand enough about the dynamics of violence to really come to a point of saying here is an informed basis on which you can base interventions on how to prevent violence. I agree with Peter that I am not sure how you prevent violence but I have a suspicion that to take direct interventions that are aimed at the prevention of violence is to miss the point. I think that you would probably be more successful in preventing violence, if perhaps you took certain other actions, which as a consequence reduced the level of violence in certain aspects of society.

I personally am not a terrorist, never was, but I am identified as a terrorist because I am identified as apologist for terrorism, a defender of terrorists, and the government was afraid of me. I am not responsible for the government's lack of courage. The government has to take responsibility for its own affairs. In the course of my life I have been responsible for two conscious acts of violence. The first was when I hit Reginald Maudling. Do I wish to apologise for it and atone for it all of these years later? No! I can't reconstruct myself and that is my honest opinion. I didn't hit him hard enough, because my personal response was a very small act of defiance to a man who presided over the state slaughter of the state's citizens for the crime of exercising their non-violent right to protest against the state. The Home Secretary was responsible for the deaths on Bloody Sunday, and the Home Secretary was responsible for lying to the House of Commons and deceiving them as to what happened. Thirty years later the truth of that situation was clarified. In that context putting those two things together I have to ask the question; what is violence? My puny little swipe in bad temper, which I am not justifying but am not apologising for because the apology which should come first is the one from the government, which was entrusted to maintain democracy and civilisation, but shot its own citizens. That is the issue of violence for me.

The second act of violence, for which I went to jail, was on the occasion of the actual bodily harm of a police officer. I wish to say that I did not do that. Through no fault of my own I did not cause actual bodily harm to the police officer because I missed. I was guilty of all other charges as I was a participant in that battle of the Bogside, when the area came under attack, and I don't do things by half. When the people were defending the area quite inefficiently I got publicly involved in making defence of the area slightly more efficient, and as a result was charged with incitement, organisation and participation in a riot. Those were my two acts of violence.

In 1981, three people came to my door in the middle of night, with a sledgehammer. One of the men held my children at gunpoint, while the other two shot myself and my husband and left us in the house to die. On leaving house they were arrested by the British Army, soldiers who I had spoken to on the way into the house earlier that night. They were immediately arrested and subsequently put in prison: Mr Watson, Mr Smallwood and Mr Graham. They were members of the Ulster Defence Association, which at the time was as a lawful organisation, listed in telephone directory and who had a Commander-in-Chief who was also listed in the telephone directory as such. It was a lawfully armed, paramilitary organisation. Membership of UDA did not prevent you from being a member of either the police or the British Army because it was not illegal. So members of this citizen specific organisation came into my house and shot me and the people were arrested by the soldiers who saw them coming into my house but who had orders to arrest them coming out. The British soldiers who were there stated that their orders were to arrest the members of

the UDA coming out of my houses. What did they think they were coming in for, to have a discussion on the prevention of violence? To sell me their newspaper? No! So I will ask again - what is violence? Because the core of violence there was not the three unfortunates who trundled into house to do what they did. I have to say that I have no problem with them, I don't like it but I understand where they are coming from. What I don't understand is where was the government coming from? Where was the British Amy coming from, who, knowing I was going to be shot, took the tactical decision to allow it to happen and have the people arrested coming out. Only because I am so awkward a citizen who doesn't have the decency to die when they have been shot, I would have been dead. The situation would have been that I would have been dead and the villains would have been apprehended by the law-abiding state. But the state conspired, collaborated in my attempted murder. So I am asked to have a conversation about where violence comes from.

When these three musketeers turned up in court they pleaded guilty as charged. Mr Smallwood pleaded guilty without mitigation or apology. That was his statement. The judge said that charges against the attempted murder of my husband should be dropped because Mr Smallwood could have had no idea that he could have got in the way of the real operation, which was to shoot me. The judge also said that Mr Graham was a petty criminal, a wife abuser and that the judge had no idea why a man of such a calibre should have been taken on a mission of such importance. Who is the perpetrator of violence here? The unfortunate from the UDA or the learned judge who considers that I deserved what I got because in his head and from the community point of view, I am a terrorist. The last gentleman, Mr Watson pleaded that the IRA had shot his brother, who was a prison officer. The judge said to him 'I appreciate, Mr Watson, the provocation that you acted under but you had no right to take the law into your own hands. Those are things what nobody saw anything wrong with. The media sat in the court and wrote everything down but nobody heard the judge. Nobody reported what the judge said because it made sense to everybody except me and my husband. They constructed me in a certain way, therefore coming to my house, kicking my door in and leaving me for dead was not violence. It was alright, a bit excessive but not violence. Armed forces, whose duty it is to protect, conspiring in it happening is not violence.

So perhaps being asked how to prevent violence is the wrong question? The real question is, what are the social problems, economic problems, cultural and race differences, what is the framework, what is the discourse around the tensions in our society, how will these be resolved other than through the systematic use of political force to stamp out or suppress deception and difference and political opposition. That is the real question because we can't actually take responsibility, at the end of the day, for the individual choices that people can make. What we can change are the economic, social and cultural environment which informs those choices. I think you

have to start doing it. There are not either ors. As Peter says at a personal level of citizenship you have to start doing everything in your personal area of influence.

As community organisations we have to work through the hard issues. We have to talk. We have to find a framework, and I do not know any other framework that allows us to function in those tensions other than the human rights framework. A framework that recognises, notwithstanding our position in society, not withstanding our different faith systems, not withstanding our different political ideologies, that there is a fundamental cornerstone of human rights and freedoms, within which we have got to negotiate space and respect for each other. If we don't have a human rights framework to start with and we don't have a framework of shared citizenship, which is not Anglo-Saxon, or Protestant, and we don't have a shared framework of physical space then, by default we only have a framework of power. And power is unequal. The powerless only have one weapon, to respond to the abuse of power exercised by violence with further violence. The only way to prevent violence in the long term is to create a non-violent framework that allows these issues to be resolved. If somebody has got a better framework than the human rights framework then set it on the table.

Chief Inspector Graham Archer: I am a police officer who has worked in and with various communities in Bradford in my twenty-seven years service. This year I was put into a counter terrorism unit and told I was going to prevent violent extremism. I asked what that meant and they said they didn't know but just to do something with it as it was the latest thing. It was quite daunting really. I don't work alone, I have five staff across West Yorkshire and I am part of the counter terrorist unit. Prior to that we were in the local policing team. When I was told what I was going to be doing I was worried about how the community would react to what I had been doing previously, which was working as the head of Drug & Vice Squad. I have to say it was very positive. But I don't have definitive answers but I will share with you some of the research on the causes of violence.

Of the key things I have looked at was the Stanford Prison experiment by Philip Zimbardo. He is a Professor of Psychology who took ordinary students, half of which were given the role of prisoners and the other half guards. It was supposed to run for a month but had to be stopped after seven days because such was the level of abuse, such was the level of violence, that the 'prisoners' were being subjected to that they had to call a halt to it. His wife drew his attention to it because he also had been drawn into the perpetration of violence. What it demonstrated is that everyone is capable of obscene insane acts. We mustn't delude ourselves and say not me. Zimbardo says that the processes of turning people violent include anonymity, dehumanising the enemy, and the structures, which support these individuals. Good

apples can be put into barrel but if the others are bad they will turn bad. It is from that premise I work.

Also when I say about preventing extremism everyone thinks 'Islamic', but what about David Copeland who blew up the Admiral Duncan pub in London in 1999. In Darfur, ordinary people took machetes and murdered their neighbours. We mustn't just look at one particular community when we are looking at violent extremism. Unfortunately we have also got to bear in mind that since 7/7 this country has changed. The IRA gave warnings when they were about to blow up the bomb. The people who were involved in 7/7 jumped on buses and tubes and without warning killed fifty-two innocent people and maimed 700 others. We have never experienced that in mainland Britain as an instrument of terror. The IRA had a degree of responsibility in that they gave a warning, sometimes it went wrong, but most of the time it didn't.

The other chap that I have looked at is Ariel Merare who studied suicide bombings in Israel for the last twenty-five years at Tel Aviv University. He said is that the only abnormal thing about a suicide bomber is their total absence of fear at a certain point. I don't know of a single case of anyone who is really psychotic, so we are dealing with ordinary members of the public, which makes the job even more difficult. None of them show suicidal tendencies, or drug dependency, mood disorders, schizophrenia or had attempted suicide. They were balanced ordinary people. The typical profile of the bomber is someone from a good home, good education, and I know that this contradicts some of the things which Peter and Bernadette have said, holds down a good steady job, has friends, is not a criminal, rarely impoverished or ignorant. Look at the Glasgow bombers: doctors, good jobs, plenty of money. They filled their jeep with gas canisters and drove them to the airport. I will illustrate this with Shehzad Tanweer, who put himself on bus that blew up in Tavistock Square. He worked very closely with a colleague of mine and he was loved by the community. He was not racist or sectarian. He did lots of work for the community. He was placid, educated, hard-working, regular worshiper and not criminal. Someone from the community said that 'he was just an ordinary lad like me who was loved by the community'. Merare came to the conclusion that suicide terrorism is not a personal phenomena but an organisational phenomena of organisational systems. At 8.50, 7 July 2005 three bombs went off within fifty seconds of each other on three underground trains, the fourth went off in Tavistock Square causing mass destruction, mass fear, 52 people dead 700 injured. Shehzad Tanweer who was one of them.

So we have a situation where we ask what common prejudices we have there. If we are asking people to intervene where is the starting point? These are ordinary people. There are some commonalities: a sense of injustice, humiliation, a sense of immovable despair. They have witnessed some form of humiliation either in friends,

family, the national or international stage, intense feelings of strong belief, a sense of a divine will or that they are doing a divine work. They tend to be introverts, or very quiet but overall they are just ordinary. An important part is the organisational structure, one of the key elements in getting them to commit murder, looking for able and committed recruits who are willing to die for the cause and are coaxed along by the act of martyrdom which includes dehumanising non-believers, whatever it may be. Looking back at the killing of Stephen Lawrence, they dehumanised black people as sub-human. The Nazis did the same with the Jews.

So the general approach is for a national preventative agenda, trying to support communities, identify those at risk and support them. We are trying to address issues around some of the causal factors, and trying to divert young people from the lines that they are potentially going to go down. We are trying to turn humiliation into realisation, prevention and support and to some degree give a political voice to the grievances which are there. It is one of the most difficult things I have tried to do in my service. There is anxiety, which I fully understand, about me being an instrument of the state doing this in the community. I work in the Bengali community and when I told them what I did an elderly chap came up to me and said that I haven't slept in almost a year worrying and I need to tell you what is going on out there. There are people out there trying to move people down this line and I am frightened for me and children. It is not going to go away and we need to address it.

Sadek Hamid: My background is in professional youth work and I have been working with young people for over twenty years. Since last year I have been responsible for a groundbreaking Muslim youth work degree at Manchester University. It is the only one in UK. We are basically training people to go back into the communities and make a difference. In addition, I am conducting academic research into the area of radicalisation of extremism.

This is a summary of some of the themes which emerged from studies we were involved in last year. For me the agenda of extremism radicalisation and how to actually deal with that is a very complicated phenomenon. I don't think that we can pretend that there are ready made strategies, there are no silver bullets, there are no concrete ten point plans for preventative strategies, rather to really understand and solve the problem we must understand the nature of the problem, the multi-causal nature of current Muslim extremism, and to respond to it requires a holistic approach that mixes strategies and interventions which are integrated at different levels. Certainly at the UK context, we are still trying to get to grips with what it is. What I have done in terms of suggestions is to break it down into three areas: strategies for communities, for working with young people and those that the government could look at.

The first thing we have to understand is that the Muslim community is a community of communities. It is very diverse and we can't generalise it. Those of us who work in the Muslim community realise that there is a huge diversity and there are issues which we disagree amongst ourselves (I am talking to my fellow community leaders) but we have to learn to talk to each other, learn to put disagreements aside and promote common areas of interest. There are recent models of good practice here as well as international pledges and agreements that have drawn across the sectarian theological divide in the community, for example the Amman declaration where prominent Muslim scholars came together to agree an agenda to address issues of Muslim extremism. Beyond that, the obvious problem is the huge number of internal issues and challenges facing local communities. Unfortunately, although some people may not like to admit it, there are many things that we are in denial about and there are also things that people are ignorant about. I say denial because there are things that people are aware of but because of the nature of the problem, the shame associated with it, and the taboos that are part of our culture and traditions, mean that we don't want to address them or deal with them but they are not going to go away. That forms part of the background in terms of where are young people and our communities are in terms of how they are vulnerable to discourses of extremism.

Following on from that, we have to look at building within our communities, certainly in the mosques, we need to develop a theological rebuttal to the discourse on extremism. This is a crucial point which has been recognised by some scholars but no real work has been done yet. The bottom line is that young people attracted to extremist rhetoric find it appealing because it seems to explain a picture of the world, domestically and internationally in a simplistic and appealing way and has a logic to it. I think that when people are ignorant of their religion and someone appears to have superior theological knowledge of it and quotes scripture they think well actually they have got a point there. When you are young and don't know any better and are still learning about your faith you become vulnerable. Our religious leadership and all members of the community who are interested, need to get to grips with what the extremists are actually saying and be able to separate that out. It is important also to remember that there is a distinction between an implicit violence and self-defence. I am not advocating pacifism because I think that if we are honest there are things taking place in Muslim world where Muslims are on the receiving end of violence. There is no doubt that people have a legitimate right of self-defence but there are rules of engagement. The waters been muddied there by some of the prevalence of Al Qaedist rhetoric and discourse, another huge area which we need to have an internal conversation about.

We need to re-evaluate some of the educational curricular, which is actually being taught in mosques and after-school classes and ensure that they producing Muslims who are rounded and confident British Muslims. There is a lot of work that needs to

be done especially if some of our institutions are presenting exclusive interpretations of Islam. Again this is something which communities need to get to grips with, we have the resources and the tools to initiate the re-evaluation ourselves. It is not something somebody from the outside can do but rather we have to have an honest debate about it, what it means for us and where it should be going. Something I hear all the time is to increase religious literacy, the majority of people employed in our mosques across the UK are from overseas. Most can't speak English. They can't communicate with the young people who access these institutions. The fact is that of the Muslim communities in the UK, about 2 million people, over fifty per cent are actually British born and English is their first language. Yet we have the majority of mosques communicating in mother tongue languages which is not helping at all, and people who are not speakers of these continental languages are excluded as well.

Muslim communities need to develop relationships with white communities, we have communities, which have been established for thirty, forty years or more, but there is understandably a sense of siege, a lack of confidence and the feeling of being under threat. At the same time we have started to see communities opening up and developing alliances with other communities and the rest of society. Muslims have to be looking for commonalities and with their fellow citizens and to pursue interests, which benefit us all. That is happening, the obvious example being the anti-war movement.

Looking at young people specifically because that is the core of people's concerns, especially young men, is how to actually engage with the disaffected young men. Asian young men have been targets for a long term anyway but in last seven years it is about religious extremist movements. Statistically they are the ones who tend to get involved in terrorist activities. There are problems in terms of frustration and anger and there is a sense of outrage, particularly against British foreign policy. I have a few other suggestions but I think that I am going to have to bring it to a close now. I would stress that the deconstruction of arguments surrounding extremists, needs to be done within and ideally from those individuals who have some street cred. I did have suggestions regarding foreign policy but I think that we all know those in terms of reconsideration of foreign policy, re-evaluation of the impact of anti-terrorist legislation etc and really getting to the causes of some of the social and economic exclusion that we have been talking about. We have to continue to try to understand what is taking place in terms of the wider processes.

Summary and Overviews

Dr Philip Lewis: It is impossible to do justice to such a day but I will touch on a few cross cutting themes and reflect on some of the differences that we all need to draw out really. First of all I was struck by our friends from Belfast, we are rightly concerned about the Human Rights situation here and it is good to hear from the other

side of the water as I think that we can get very complacent about what is happening with this drip-drip process.

I was very taken by what Peter and some of the others said about the dangers of labelling and about being careful with the language we use. I don't think in this city we have yet found a language to talk responsibly about complex issues. We routinely talk about race when we mean religion or culture. I don't think we have a vocabulary yet which is ready to talk about complex issues. Listening to our friends from Belfast, I was struck by their honesty and their disagreements. I think that one of the difficulties we have in Bradford is that, as with Northern Ireland, you have competing histories and memories and how you deal with those is not easy. The danger, I think that we have in this city, on the back of segregation, are different histories and memories, which are quite toxic, and which perhaps we are unaware of. How we begin to address that is very important.

I would like to know more about transnational and international components of the Belfast conflict. I suspect, in our context that when we are dealing with Muslim communities we are dealing with these issues. We need to tease that out far more than we have done today really. I was very struck by Peter's analysis of radicalisation. We often forget that young men get a buzz about extremism, and I think that we forget about the status that derives from such actions. We don't factor that in with our ideologies. That was helpful.

I would like to have known more about the difficulties about how the churches in Northern Ireland sought to either encourage or de-legitimise violence. My sense was that in the Catholic Church there was no explicit religious legitimating. But I think that on the Protestant side there was clearly some legitimisation going on and demonising the other. I think that religious dimension would have helped us here to tease out our religious dimension and the specificities of our situation. There is a Muslim component in all this. How, therefore, does one legitimise that and who de-legitimises it? How do external agencies support that de-legitimisation? We need religious literacy's in cities like Bradford. Not to pretend that all of the issues have to do with religion because they do not.

I have just one or two final comments. I was struck by a comment this morning about the need for a dialogue between human rights and Islam. I think that is also a larger dialogue between the secular imagination and religion. In the English context of Bradford, unlike Northern Ireland, you can't take religiosity for granted as a given, even if only as a badge of identity. Here we have to enable serious debates between the religious and secular imagination because I think that there is deep polarisation in England now between a militant secularism and an entrenched defence of religiosity. Those are just a few observations and thank you for a fascinating day.

Alyas Karmani: I have been involved in both legs of this fascinating process with lots of interesting discussions. I remember that after the first leg I was so enthused by the things that I learned in Belfast and I felt that I had to get back and talk to young people. The frustration that I have had in this whole process is that it seems that we just seem to repeat these mistakes time and time again. Where are the practical solutions in particular? Where is the working with young people? Where is the drawing a halt to it? That is my frustration.

Speaking to different people here today about the discussions, there is generally some consensus and agreement and some conflicts. The conflicting discussions are the most interesting. That is where things are really thrashed out. The starkest are between activists and those who have power. The other thing is that I have always tried to relate things back to education and learning, which I feel is at the route of all of this. What we have in the world is a clash of ignorances. People are ignorant of and opinionated about another and that inevitably leads to conflict and clashes as well.

What I drew from this morning's discussions is that the human rights agenda has been so derogated really. We also add another layer to that in that generally we are failing young people in British society full stop in terms of their emotional well being. One of the failures of this is presenting young people with an understanding what are human right, their ethical responsibilities as global citizens, and that the decisions that they are going to make in the future are going to have enormous ramifications. The key issue for me is to prioritise human rights and to get it back onto the agenda and get young people thinking about what it means. This is part of a long-term initiative.

I want to end on a positive note. I am always asked what are you doing about your extremists and radicalists? I always put this back and ask what are we doing together about extremists? This concerns all of us. We create that level of despair that someone is prepared to dehumanise another and have no fear and feel that they have nothing to lose in society. Interestingly we have everything to lose. We have to work together in society in terms of engaging these issues even though in some of our discussions today we have found that we cannot achieve a consensus. What is always refreshing is when I see people with such divergent views, who took arms against each other and who can sit side by side with each other. That is obviously a positive side that we can sit together and address core issues.

Nadira Mirza: It falls upon me to bring everything to a close. In a way I am happy and sad. This has been inspirational. We have had colleagues from Northern Ireland and Bradford communities really inspire us and open up our minds to the issues that we need to be dealing with and some of the things we need to be doing about the future. We have heard about languages, legislations, violence, human rights. What really stood out for me were the message about dialogue and communication between everybody and of course the role of places like this university which perhaps stand out

as one of the few neutral arenas in the UK. I think it is really fantastic that we have worked, talked, listened and struggled to understand things. I think that it is fundamentally about bringing about change. I really now want to let other people have the last say and ask one representative from each table to say one positive constructive thing about what you are going to take away with you today.

- The ceasefires in Northern Ireland. The government said they would never sit down with terrorists, well they have done that and now we have ceasefires. I hope the same government now will sit down with so-called terrorists and work something out now.
- Meeting people from Belfast brings hope, grass roots level communication, dialogue with young people is important.
- Different perspectives, honest, frank observation, hard but worthwhile.
- Can Bradford learn from Northern Ireland? I think that we can learn from each other.
- A lot to think about. Action. Make a start, take new risks. Without taking risks there is no point in dialogue.

Nadira Mirza: we will be meeting again and maintaining our contacts with Belfast and we will be taking some of this with us into action. Thank you very much and safe journey home.