CRIMINALISING RADICALISATION

Conversations between Belfast and Bradford

Edited from a seminar organised by

NIACRO,
Institute for Conflict Research
and
Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford

Belfast,
Thursday 8 November 2007

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AGIS 2006

With financial support from the AGIS Programme
European Commission - Directorate General Justice and Home Affairs

Criminalising Radicalisation

Since the attacks on the World Trade Centre in 2001 and the subsequent declaration of the 'War on Terror', relationships between Islam and the West have become more polarised. This polarisation has filtered down to affect relationships between communities within jurisdictions. It is clear that a process of radicalisation has occurred within elements of Islam that has resulted in the use of violence to achieve particular aims.

The recent conflict in Northern Ireland was characterised by the establishment of a reform movement that was resisted by government and ultimately developed into armed conflict. For almost thirty years the political, legal, social and economic landscape was dominated by the conflict which resulted in over 3,500 people being killed, tens of thousands injured and significant shifts in population.

The events of the late sixties in Northern Ireland had the effect of radicalising a generation, some of whom became involved in armed conflict. As the conflict took hold and deepened the state criminalised the activities of those seeking change primarily through legislation and imprisonment, combined with an increased military response. Individuals, groupings and whole communities were perceived as being 'the enemy' and were in effect criminalised. It is clear that there are similar processes occurring within Great Britain with respect to the Muslim community.

In November 2007 the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, the Institute for Conflict Research and the Programme for a Peaceful City at the University of Bradford organised a small seminar to discuss the similarities and differences between the developments in Northern Ireland in the 1960s and 1970s and the contemporary context in England. The seminar included participants with a diverse range of backgrounds, interests and experiences from Northern Ireland and Bradford, as well as from London Probation, who provided funding for the event under the European funded AGIS programme[1].

This seminar aimed to begin to explore the causes and processes of radicalisation that occurred in and about Northern Ireland, how non-violent agitation developed into armed conflict and how parties to the conflict constructed mechanisms that resulted in the current peace process. It sought to create a space to explore the radicalisation that has occurred within Islam and why the use of violence has achieved its current profile. It aimed to provide an initial opportunity to explore the government's to the current context in England and how this compared with their response to developments in Northern Ireland.

The conversations during the day were recorded by stenographers and full transcript was circulated to each of the participants. The transcript of the conversation has been edited in an attempt to focus on the key themes that emerged during the day. The edited text follows the general structure of the day's discussions. The event was

[1] Details of the AGIS programme can be found at http://ec.europa.eu

structured into four themes: contextualising radicalisation; government and political responses; community responses and civic responses; which provide a very loose framework for discussions. Each session was introduced by one or more persons from Northern Ireland and from Bradford (some of whom had prior notice, while others did not) and then the floor was opened to contributions from the entire group.

The event was generally regarded as enjoyable, informative and stimulating by the participants. But it was also clear that more questions were raised than were answered, and many points and ideas are left hanging, hopefully to be picked up and developed in subsequent conversations. At best a start was made in opening a dialogue between Belfast and Bradford, an initial attempt to explore the common, parallel and distinctive histories, trends and experiences of the diverse communities in each location. While the differences were noted, so too were the similarities and perhaps more importantly the apparent lack of learning from the history of Northern Ireland. This created for participants a sense of urgency to develop the debate and further explore and share our understandings and learnings.

Pat Conway and Neil Jarman
5 February 2008

Emerging Themes

Some of the key themes that are emerged during the seminar are outlined below in a very condensed form.

Overall Context

1. The lack of social, political and economic change in response to a non-violent challenge led to a move to violent forms of radical action.
2. There has been a militarising response to conflict when it is ultimately the political that needs to be addressed.
3. Similarly there has been a 'hysterical' as opposed to 'calm' response to terror in both situations.
4. A continuum model of dealing with challenge means groupings take positions within an imbalance of power relationships. This follows a pattern of: challenge → superficial engagement → challenge increases → militant/military positions taken → dehumanisation of 'Other' → conflict (intense or protracted). Eventually the political develops resulting in win or lose, agreement and/or settlement or indeed postponement.
5. The current situation with regard to Ireland was realised in part because the generation involved in armed conflict was also involved in seeking a political resolution.

Islam in Britain

6. 'Islam' as a construct within western civilisation.
7. There is a long and distinctive history of British Islam, and within British Islam there is significant diversity, and thus comparisons with Irish nationalism.
8. The current situation in England has historical parallels with the relationship of England to Catholic and Presbyterian Irish in 18th and 19th century.

State Approach

9. There is ignorance among those in power of the key issues and a lack of knowledge about those who are challenging.
10. The importance of engagement when seeking to influence. Distance/non-engagement, in most instances, perpetuates conflict.
11. Stereotypical characterisations seem to be a feature in both situations.
12. The state often regards particular communities as collectively responsible for the actions of some of its members – applicable to both Ireland and Islam.

Process of Radicalisation

13. Radicalisation occurs as a result of experiential rather than just the conceptual, although ideologies can support the experiential.
14. Government actions and responses can reinforce a radical analysis.
15. People who resort to violent radical responses are generally young – 16 to 25 – applicable to both situations.
16. Serious debate required re: effectiveness of armed resistance versus non-violent protest.
17. Need to influence debate away from the "value clash" and ground it in reality.

18. A lack of engagement with the 'Other' facilitates stereotyping and distance, while individual engagement with 'Other' can lead to changes in perceptions and attitudes.

Engaging Communities

19. There are difficulties in identifying leaders and what they represent, although there was recognition of the importance of leadership at all levels.
20. Need to construct a model of negotiation away from traditional Western approach – leader to leader - to one that takes account of diversity within groupings.
21. Use of conformist or compliant elements to achieve government aims and objectives. Most people in both contexts were/are prepared (reluctantly?) to go along with the system.
22. Need for development of coherent community development model reflected in the desire to have, 'bottom up approach rather than top down'.
23. Debate on assimilation v integration is applicable to both jurisdictions. Where does multi-culturalism fit?
24. Suspicions generated within communities particularly when resourced by governments – collusion/collaboration with government agendas

Foreign Policy

25. A post-colonial analysis has currency in both situations.
26. Foreign policy and its impact particularly the British government avoiding linkage with respect to Islam, 'war on terror' and solution in Middle East.
27. There are difficulties in discussing the nature and context of Palestine / Israel.

Human Rights

28. Attack on civil liberties, increased control of media, legislation, judiciary and protest. These are features of both societies entering into conflict.
29. Media reportage concerning complexity – difficulties in both situations leading to control and suppression.
30. Use/abuse of legislation developed for other contexts e.g. "Sus" Laws, prevention of terrorism legislation and general erosion of human rights.
31. Rights violations fuel conflict. Promotion of, or indeed attacks on, rights agenda locates individuals and organisations within context of conflict.
32. Fear of the extraordinary (e.g. terrorism legislation) becoming the ordinary.
33. Promotion of human rights is integral as part of any agreed settlements that will actually work.

Influencing the Debate

34. British Islam is experiencing difficulties in discussing radicalisation within Muslim communities.
35. Bradford schools were encouraged to create 'safe space' to allow staff and children to talk about July 7th bombings. In Northern Ireland many argued for the conflict to be kept out of the schools.
36. There is an argument that integrated schooling mistakenly defines the conflict as religious by its promotion of Catholic and Protestant children being educated together.

37. Difficulties around discussing non-progressive elements within radical movements e.g. women in Islam, ideology of Catholic Church within nationalism.
38. Hijacking of language – many wish to see radical change without resorting to violent means. The word radical is not owned by the left or right yet is now a prejorative term.
39. Need for more opportunities / platform for discussions and exchange of ideas.

1. Contextualising Radicalisation

RICHARD ENGLISH: The Northern Ireland conflict provided a depressing example of how fast you can move from something like peace to something like war. In 1968 there were no deaths from political violence in the North, in 1972 only a few years later, there were 497. One aspect of the global crisis in recent years is the surprise people have at the speed with which neighbours become enemies and killers. It's a surprise that those of us who know what happened in the North don't really feel.

It seems to me the problem we are dealing with here is not one where one side is uniformally right and the other side uniformally wrong but rather that you have competing interpretations which seem to invalidate each other, but which on close inspection seem lastingly and endurably valid for the community in question. Our challenge is not to say that one side or other should cease to be that side but rather to prevent the eruption of something like bloody conflict between them.

I want to talk about a few parallels between the experiences of the North and those in England. The first is in regard to what I would regard as the counter-productive use of law, transgression or abuse of law by the state. When crises erupt, one of the responses is for the State to say we must respond in a dramatic legal way. Those of us who are familiar with the counter-productive internment that was used in Northern Ireland in 1971 found no surprise that Guantanamo or Abu Ghraib occurred. Today's Guardian editorial referred to the need for what it called the 'calm response to terror'. Unfortunately that is not what you tend to get, you didn't get it in 1971 or 72 in the North, you haven't had it post 9/11 either.

The second parallel is a mistaken tendency to militarise a response to conflict between rival groups. Those that joined the IRA in large numbers in the early days often were responding to things which had been prompted by the heavy handedness of the British Army, just as there has been disaffection amongst people regarding the harshness of the security forces (in Iraq).

The third thing is it takes us a long time to get to the heart of the problem; this involves questions of legitimacy as they relate to identity. The lasting resolution of conflict will involve attempts, very difficult and delicate, sometimes perhaps impossible, to produce lasting legitimate ways of running states and communities that respect diverse identity.

It is clear that in the early days, 1968 to 1972, mistakes were made on all sides, by all groups. I don't think any explanation of what happened then or any explanation of our current troubles in the global crisis, which is mono-causal, basically it is their fault and we are not to blame, is helpful. It was not the case in Northern Ireland and it is not true for more recent events. We need to try to explain why normal decent ordinary people became involved in violence in ways that explicable even though one does not endorse the politics that they pursue.

Another feature of conflicts that become volatile and violent is the self-sustaining quality to the cyclical violence involved. If you look at accounts of the early years in

the North, of Loyalist paramilitaries, Republican paramilitaries and British soldiers, if you look at the accounts in Afghanistan, or amongst American soldiers in Iraq, all of them speak of what they see as the legitimacy of hitting back at the other groups.

ALYAS KARMANI: The Muslim community includes around 1.6 million people, it is Britain's second religion, and is rapidly growing in numbers and visibility. The reality of British Muslims is that they are much more likely to be poor and unemployed compared with their white counterpart, to suffer ill health and live in overcrowded and unpopular houses. They are much more likely to experience racial harassment and racist crime and be over represented in the criminal justice system from stop and search through to the end.

We are talking of a highly diverse population; there are very few areas of consensus in the Muslim community and no clear idea of leadership. Muslim leadership is very flat with no clear hierarchal structures. So when policy makers look for an individual or some leadership to actually engage with, quite often 10 or 20 groups emerge, which makes the issue of trying to engage with the Muslim community more complex, and requires a more creative approach.

Islam is not something new to Britain; the UK has been interacting with the Muslim world for centuries. Islam has been a feature of Europe for thirteen and a half centuries. But the national curriculum doesn't recognise that. Muslim thinkers hardly feature anywhere in the national curriculum. If we look at history we go back to the Romans and Greeks and then jump up to the 15th Century, there is a thousand year period which is not mentioned in the curriculum at all, that is when Islamic civilisation were in the ascendancy in Europe.

Before 9/11 I thought Muslims were becoming more mainstream, it seemed there was greater acceptance, and Islam and Muslims were more valued in British society. 9/11 happened and really did change the whole game for Muslims in the UK and since then we have had 7/7 as well.

Second and third generation Muslims have a completely different concept of Islam to their parents. Young British Muslims clearly identify themselves as British, open to integration, but not at the cost of faith and identity. We are looking for a model which recognizes diversity and multiple identities. When we talk about cohesion it must recognise a two-way process, integration is about two communities building bridges, coming to the middle, not one community having to compromise. There is resonance in this with Northern Ireland.

Second and third generation Muslims have a different Islam to their parents, one born of interaction of culture, faith and identity, a synthesis of British and Islamic values, one would call it British Islam. We have lots of evidence in the UK of parallel communities, I grew up in South London, I was used to interacting with diverse communities, when I moved to Bradford I never met white people, I still don't meet white people. I only meet white people through my work. One of the reasons I can't move out of that community into a mixed community is the racial harassment I know I will experience. The anti-terror laws are institutionally Islamophobia, they

disproportionately target the Islam community. The police are using Section 44 for the anti-terror laws just to stop and search young Asian men in their cars. This is further extenuating the problems.

Second and third generation Muslims in the UK are a pivotal generation. They have skills and education experience which their parents lacked. They live the reality of experiencing two civilisations, the west and Islam. This is not an abstract notion, but something we negotiate every day in our lives. How they vote, how they dress, how they pray, whom they befriend and how they marry are influenced by the accommodation by the two. The young British Muslims seem to be finding that middle space, however focusing on the extremes reinforces the polarisation between communities, rather than recognising most people are finding a happy accommodation and are able to negotiate these things in British society. It is a pivotal generation.

If we had an incident tomorrow we know what the impact will be in terms of race attacks and the knock on institutional Islamaphobia, that Muslims have experienced in terms of going for employment, looking for jobs. Graduate unemployment in the Muslim community is very high. If you have a beard or wear a hijab it is more likely you will be discriminated against.

Young Muslims today are living a diet of death, hypocrisy and neglect that is traumatising and radicalising an entire generation. You don't need Jihadist websites to radicalise young people they only have to switch on the TV. To walk out my front door and to be told that I am an F-ing Paki that has to go home and be spat on, I can deal with that, but in a diverse community such as South London after 7/7 one can imagine it doesn't take much to feel angry and frustrated. If you don't have a way of venting that anger through some way of protesting in a non violent way one can see the consequences if people have nothing to lose. We have everything to lose if we have a stake in society, but some people feel they have no stake in society.

The summer 2001 riots in Bradford were a defining moment. Across the Northern towns young men were defined as a threat to public order. They were seen as dangerous because of extremism, because they drop out of society, because of sexuality, that old stereotype, because they allegedly prey on vulnerable white girls and are perceived as criminals because they hang out in gangs. It is hard being young and Muslim in the UK. It is even harder being young and Muslim in Europe. The geo-political context, the fact that Muslims see themselves as part of a global community, means that what happens in Iraq resonates in Bradford and similarly that the Bradford riots went all over the world.

Young people are experiencing cultural conflict, their traditional South Asian culture for South Asian Muslims doesn't rest easy with them, they have grown up in a British environment with different values and ideas. There are inter-generational issues, much of the Muslim infrastructure in the UK is run by first generation. There isn't a handing over of power to the second generation, to people who are better equipped. There is a strong element of gate keeping, here isn't an emerging new leadership. Leadership is a critical issue to guide these particular issues. First and second generation Muslims have different ideas of what Islam is about. Islam is not homogenous, there is

enormous diversity within schools of thought, and different sectarian divides within Islam. We do have scholars who legitimise suicide bombing and terrorist attacks amongst young people. It is a view that exists, in part due to a failure of the mainstream Muslim leadership.

I don't want to paint too bleak a picture, lots of work that people are doing in the community stems the tide of the anger and frustration. Young people feel that they are not being listened to, that they haven't got a way to vent their feelings. Radical views, extremist views gives them a sense of being grounded, of being part of a family, and giving them a sense of being part of a movement as well. Part of the problem is that there isn't a social movement within the Muslim community to work towards civil rights and human rights. That is another factor we can explore.

Discussion

TOMMY McKEARNEY: There maybe parallels to the time (1840s-1850s) when a substantial Irish community fled in poverty from Ireland with a deep grudge against the British Government and experienced similar poverty, deprivation, suspicions and discriminations which the Muslim community today is experiencing. In the middle of the 19th Century, Roman Catholicism was seen as superstitious, there was a fear in England as a result of the reformation. It struck me that the Fenians who bombed England through the 19th Century came from the Irish in England who were born and reared in England, and since the Fenians significant members of the Republican movement were born and reared in England, including the first chief of staff of the Provisional IRA, an English born Republican John Stephens, or Sean Mac Stiofain

BILLY HUTCHINSON: In Northern Ireland the media has played a big part in whipping up fear. Muslims don't bomb London for no reason. The same thing happened here, in 1966 three people were serving life in prison and we ended up with thousands of people serving life by the 1990s. Something went very wrong. I know the IRA blame the State, but young loyalists also got involved. The point I am making is that we didn't all become monsters. We fought because we believed the other people were wrong,

I can see the segregation in Bradford. The Government won't deal with it in the way to actually change things. The Government here did nothing to tackle sectarianism. They refuse to deal with integrated schools and they continue to allow the old sectarianism to fester. We do not put our money where our mouth is. We are not dealing with the future of this country in terms of dealing with sectarianism. Most people around the table from Northern Ireland would agree that sectarianism is alive and well. We can see it from ordinary people it is not just coming from people carrying guns or bombs.

NADIRA MIRZA: The Government approach is to divide and rule. The Government is not tackling the conditions that promote radicalisation. I find radicalisation a strange word since all my life I have used it in a positive way, but in the last couple of years it is something that is wrong. It is like segregation, we have segregated communities in Bradford but it has taken 30 years to get to that point, it was no accident. It has been planned, it is a Government plan. But all of a sudden the problem is caused by the

people who are experiencing it and it is up to them and us to change. That is why we are critical of the various reports written about Bradford riots, there is a big play on segregation and the failure of communities. My worry is that we talk about community change, but there is only so much communities can do without intervention, with Government and policy makers looking at change at a higher level as well. At community level we are just responding to what we are given.

KATE RADFORD: Here as in Bradford there has been a focus on multi-culturalism, we have discreet little communities: discreet Protestant communities, discreet Catholic communities, and now discreet Muslim communities. We are trying to think more about the shared experiences whether of structural violence and the lack of commitment from statutory agencies. I was struck by the expression of the need for protest mechanisms, which is something we have all required, but there is also a need to have mechanisms to articulate and to share experiences, and for me that is where we are falling down now. We are still focusing on the lack of integration, we are still painting ourselves in our wounds, we are embedding our narratives, embedding our truths and we are not doing it through mechanisms that the State supports, for example the curriculum, nor are we able to do that through the community interventions. We are still keeping ourselves in our own spaces.

SALIMA HAFEJEE: If you look at the profiles of people that committed the acts, they were quite academic, grounded in ideology, but what is happening now is an emphasis on 'young people'. You had the statement from the head of MI5, which really demonises Muslim young people: '15 and 16 year olds are being groomed for radicalisation'. That for me is a really dangerous comment because all of a sudden the shift has changed from those groups to the whole raft of Muslim young people who can be picked up and radicalised just overnight. That is really dangerous. We need to debate how to stop that kind of top down approach.

LAURENCE McKEOWN: If you look at our situation, the IRA became prominent in the 1960s, when Republicanism was reserved to a small group of people after the disastrous campaign in the 1950s. There was a new generation, my parents generation kept their heads down because they weren't part of the State. They had to develop their own structures outside of it or somehow go along with it. A group of people, some who came from university, people Bernadette Devlin, who shortly before had been given access to third level education, decided we don't like this situation, we want change. The Northern Ireland State could not cope with this at all, people like Terrence O'Neill who was trying to move forward, but other people didn't allow things like that there to happen. Then you are into a cycle, senior Republicans would say that after 1971 it was mayhem for the next 10 or 15 years, action, reaction.

But how do people change from being involved in violent struggle, what changes came about in them. What changed was that those who had primary responsibility, in this case the British Government, decided to include everybody on the same basis and accept the representatives who were there as opposed to criminalising them. We are talking about the current situation in England and sometimes you wonder if people ever learn the lessons from history.

IMRAN MANZOOR: George Orwell said as part of the erosion of civil liberties you had to believe that the enemy was everywhere and ready to strike at any point. There is a presumption that every single young person in the State is involved Islamically, is somehow a radical, is somehow going to strap bombs to himself and blow us all up.

Just to place this in an historical context, we are a post-colonial community. Partition and colonialism left a bitter taste in the mouths of the communities that came here. Within twenty years they are living in the back yard of their former colonial masters. Some of the people who came had different political ideologies, different religious ideologies, that filters through to the frustration and ghettoisation in the Muslim communities in terms of young people keeping themselves segregated.

BILL ROLSTON: Partition and colonialism are words that would immediately have resonance with all sorts of people in this island. Yet, I think it is absolutely important that we keep looking around the world, that we keep or eyes open and don't keep folding into our own community or our own conflict. But, we have to do so with caution as well; no two places are alike.

ALAN WESTON: The difficulty is breaking out of those ghettos, of coming out of the poor areas, of establishing yourself and being part of what is going on. When I go to North of England I see communities, which are almost ring fenced, how do you break that situation when it includes a significant number of the population. We are talking about young people searching for an identity. We can bring groups together like this, but how do you get the voices of the people to engage and give them the thinkers?

2. Government and Political Responses

BILL ROLSTON: I call this 'How not to defeat an insurgency' or 'Counter insurgency for dummies'. It has got a number of points:

1. Whether in your own country or elsewhere justify your military suppression of opposition groups by altruism: bringing civilisation, defeating communism, restoring democracy, combating terrorism, because God told you to, etcetera; with luck most of the citizens in your country will agree with your actions and you will not face major internal opposition.
2. Ignore international criticism of your methods of repression. They have no right to meddle in your internal affairs.
3. Directly or by default bolster ethnic or other inequalities of power, wealth, etcetera.
4. If you must introduce reforms don't be too robust about making sure they have teeth.
5. Use the rule of law as a weapon of counter insurgency rather than a tool of justice.
6. Dismiss your opponents as criminals, terrorists, psychopaths; do not concede that they may have rational political opinions and philosophies.
7. Censure the media even if they are already compliant; you need to make sure that they don't provide the oxygen of publicity for subversives.
8. Derogate from the rule of law as often and for as long as you desire: internment without trial, torture, special courts, etcetera.
9. If you have to have public inquiries try to ensure that they are as private as possible; also agree your conclusions in advance and appoint the independent chairperson accordingly.
10. Establish, support, tolerate or at least turn a blind eye to the activities of death squads that are on your side.
11. Make sure your propaganda machine is fit for purpose, especially in relation to the international audience. At the same time deny that you are involved in propaganda. Propaganda is what they do; we speak the truth.
12. Claim that you are eager to win the hearts and minds of the local population even if the evidence indicates this is far from the truth.
13. Make constant claims that you are on the brink of victory and the enemy is on its last legs even if evidence of the enemy's resilience is plain to see.
14. Dismiss those who criticise your methods as playing into the hands of communists, fascists, terrorists, whatever.
15. Finally, never hint or concede that ultimately the problem you have created is political, that consequently it can only be solved politically and that sooner or later people will have to start talking.

These 15 points are not a figment of my imagination; I could evidence every single one of them in relation to Irish history and especially to recent Irish history. I will give three examples to back up some of the points. First quotation: 'Theoretical fiction has it that constitutional liberty is the rule and its suspension an exception, but the whole history of English rule in Ireland shows that a state of emergency is the rule and that the application of the constitution is the exception'. That was written by Jenny Marx in 1870.

If we move forward 100 years 'The law should be used as just another weapon in the government's arsenal and in this case it becomes little more than a propaganda cover for the disposal of unwanted members of the public'. Brigadier Frank Kitson, who cut his teeth in counter-insurgency in Kenya and Aden, wrote a book called Low Intensity Operations in 1971. He was Commander of Land Forces in Belfast in 1970, and is noted as being the person who set up the first counter-gangs as he had previously in Kenya.

Last but not least: 'No government wants an inquiry; they are usually held in circumstances where the government is in trouble, where it is felt that there is something to be found beneath the bland spin-doctoring of national politics. If they have to have them reach your conclusion and then choose your chairman'. Former Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine interviewed on Radio 4 Today programme in 2004.

NADIRA MIRZA: I will give some hard examples of Government changes and laws that seem ridiculous and show there has been no learning anywhere in the world, let alone in the UK or Ireland, with Government and politics around the issue of radicalisation. They realise that they have got a problem, but they should realise that they have created some of the problem and to tackle it they are not using the experience that their country or the world has learned over the last twenty years. I think the roots of radicalisation in the UK are based on racism. We decided politically not to tackle racism, but to call it a lot of other things, this helped prepare the ground for the development of what we now called radicalisation and the growth of radical organisations.

The Government has a foreign policy that they know has an impact on their citizens and they know if they did something about that then a lot of the problems would begin to be solved but they don't want to do that. They have their own relationships with what I would call terrorist regimes in the world on the western side of Britain more than the eastern side.

I think they are capitalising on scare mongering, issues of migration and immigration have re-emerged. A lot of fear and control, divide and rule is emerging. One of the overt ways the Government tells us that they are doing things is by throwing a little bit of money at what they have defined as the problem. The money of course is not enough, but the Government takes no responsibility and move off to the next thing.

Finally, the concept of 'take me to your leader'. Government cannot work with anybody except leaders. As a result you have communities fighting with each other to rank themselves in terms of leadership. The majority will be male, granted they will have a range of views among them but the interpretations of radicalisation and community, citizenship will only be seen through very gendered eyes. That is both a major Government flaw and a flaw in our community about how we tackle issues as well.

SALIMA HAFEJEE: The Government has not accepted that foreign policy has a

direct impact in what is happening today. There is no recognition of it even, and it does not matter how much we champion its importance it is not being heard. Government responses are very hard hitting. A lot of it involves putting the fear into the indigenous communities in response to the actions of a small section of the community. There is also an allocation of resources but this creates a backlash from the white communities, and particularly those dealing with the far right extremism are saying 'hang on once again allocation of resources are being given to one section of community'. So you also create a backlash.

There has been a dramatic increase of young people being stopped and searched. At the moment over 400 young men under 30 are being questioned without charge; and there have been consultations over whether individuals can be held longer than 28 days. I don't know what everybody's understanding of consultation is, but if you get a majority feed-back that it is not a good thing to extend it, then I think the Government doesn't understand the concept. The feeling I get is that it is going to be increased to 56 days.

The Youth Justice Board was £10 million given early in the year to spend on young people by the youth offending team, I said what do you want to do, diversionary work with young people? What is prevention work? We should skill up our workforce to have debates and a dialogue and allow people to be challenged about their values. I think the Government actually needs to listen to the bottom up approach rather than the top down approach.

Discussion

BEVERLEY MILTON-EDWARDS: After 9/11 the Government defined the agenda but they have also consciously turned this into a debate about values. You are either with us or against us, you are either wrong or you are right. How we define ourselves as British. It has become quite consciously caught up in this value debate, which has been actually defined by a very tiny clique at the top of the British Government, a clique of special advisors. The focus should not be on educating young people, but thinking about the ways in which young people learn and absorb debates and define themselves in terms of their own communities and their own societies, which is why some of the more radical 'groups' at home and abroad are able to. They use means and methods that have an appeal. It is not seen as something as distant or alien that doesn't speak to the young. We need to go back to the issue of young people learning and challenging how Government, how Blair, turned this into something about values and it is not. It is not about values or clash of values or an alliance of civilisations.

MUHAMMED AL-QARYOOTI: Government has neglected the needs of other communities such as Muslims and other minority groups. We don't see any involvement of minority communities at a strategic level or operational level, if you find any involvement of Muslim or non-Muslim in strategy they will be very highly professional and educated, they will be forced to choose him.

TOMMY McKEARNEY: One of the best ways of integration is to give people a share of the wealth and share of employment. A decent job is one of the best ways to access

a share of wealth. When I hear about the need to educate Muslims to behave more like a certain class of British, it strikes me that there was an old musical-hall song 'Why can't a woman be more like a man'. It seems to me pretty much the same thing, why can't we make these Muslims the type of British you get in the Home Counties.

LAURENCE McKEOWN: It was always beneficial to hear an English person speaking out on the Irish situation, saying 'I think there is a problem there', because there was validity in the voice. There was a problem with an Irish accent: 'they are all bed fellows of the IRA' or 'Provo lovers', it didn't matter whether you were a lawyer or academic, that fear factor could easily be created. People felt it was not going to help their employment or their friends to rock the boat, so they keep quiet and become complicit in the whole situation.

The only reason that the IRA existed for the time it did was because it had the support of the community and vice versa and interacted with the community. In terms of working with young people from Islamic traditions, is the motivation 'how do we stop people becoming militants and Al Queada or suicide bombers?' or is it 'how do we work with young British Islamic people to get their rights, to have a share in employment and all the rights that should be theirs?' They should be radicalised, they should be talking about what is going on in the State, they should be asking where is our place. I wonder if what is happening creates an internal fear that makes people believe 'we have got to protect our young people from being caught up in this' as opposed to talking about 'is it right that Al Queada does this?' They are going to be interested should feel an interest in what is happening abroad. The issue is how do they channel this in a way that means that they don't resort to violence.

KATE RADFORD: For me the concern in looking at the similarities, however diverse they might be, between Muslim communities in Great British and Irish communities and English communities in the North of Ireland, is 'domestic' foreign policy and 'foreign' foreign policy. We have talked about Afghanistan, we have talked about Iraq, we have talked about Pakistan, nobody has mentioned the big elephant in the room.

ALYAS KARMANI: This is the establishment of an equitable solution to the Israeli Palestinian conflict. Certainly in the Muslim community, if you deal with Palestine you have dealt with 90% of the world security issues. It is as simple as that, because that is the main grievance that most Islamist groups, Jihadist groups use that as their rally call. It is an open wound for the Muslim community. It does sound a simplistic solution but in terms of the Muslim community that is what we do feel, deal with that issue you deal with 90% of the world security issues. Why is there a reluctance to address that issue head on and work out an amicable solution?

What is remarkable about Northern Ireland in terms of the political process is that you have people involved with serious grass root credentials. You have to talk to your enemies, you have to talk to people who you feel uncomfortable with, whose view you find unpalatable. The British response completely alienates people whose views are considered as extreme and radical, but those groups are the ones that have the credentials on the ground. There is no point getting people going around the UK on road shows, who are conformist, compliant, non-political Islamicists individualists,

you want someone who has hard core Jihadist credentials doing that job on the ground. That is about engaging people, young people see that as someone one who has credibility. As well Hamas has to be engaged, you have to engage and talk to people who have that grass roots political credentials.

BEVERLEY MILTON-EDWARDS: The problem is not the resolution of the conflict; it is the way in which the conflict is used as a platform both by Government and the so-called Jihad groups.

MUHAMMED AL-QARYOOTI: We don't talk to terrorists, but the terrorists have people who listen to them. If they are ignored and nobody talks to them, nobody wants to listen to what they are saying, and then it will be difficult for, they will find the easy target for them. The Government can work with leaders, but they just agree between themselves, they forget about the rest of the local population who have a different way of thinking, different goals. The Government should talk to the right representatives who will represent the majority of people who are well respected in their societies.

LIZ DIXON: We struggle with differences, struggle with cultural difference, we don't share the same views. It is how we manage the differences and how they can impact on different groups and we have to learn about how we manage cultural difference. As a mature community we must learn how we can live with somebody even though we fundamentally disagree.

NADIRA MIRZA: I think we have so much emphasis now on difference and valuing of differences. Valuing of difference is important but the emphasis on difference is not so healthy, it takes us away from our shared history, our shared knowledge and that is the bit that begins to help me develop a relationship with you, so I can tell you things that I don't like about you.

RICHARD ENGLISH: When we talk about the violence in NI, the UVF or IRA, or the violence of 7/7 bombers, we rightly say it is not enough to condemn and assume that somehow there is something inherently evil or inexplicable about it. We try to explain how it happens because if you want to deal with something practically, we must understand it. There is danger in rooms like this with right thinking people, when you say the State is doing a terrible thing, to not to bother to try to remedy that by explaining why it is that it happens. If you want to change the way Government policies are occurring and so forth you have to be prepared to explain why it makes sense to so many people.

The second thing is, the violence question is important, because radicalisation is equated with violence, but many people are seeking radical change who are not violent. One of the consequences of violence is it tends to reinforce polarisation and division, lack of trust, lack of understanding, which is what we have been hearing. You do find that after 9/11 the sorts of things we have been talking about become more marked in Britain. No doubt whatever the intention of practitioners of violence, one of the consequences of the violence in Northern Ireland was a depth of sectarianism.

ALTAF ARIF: We do need to celebrate what we have in common. One of the things in Bradford, and what I picked up from the tour of Belfast, is of industries dying out. For example, in Bradford we had a textile industry and for white working class people, people from Pakistan and India had a common goal around work place issues. If a white worker or an Asian worker was made redundant that was a common issue about working class, all shared common work based issues. The point being one of the common goals is around work place.

BILL ROLSTON: Amongst the slowest learners are those in control of State organs, especially military State organs; they do things this way because that is they way they always did things. That is not a whole explanation but a beginning of an explanation, because as somebody said earlier, things start to open up when the State provides the space. To me that is an answer to the conundrum of whether the aim is to change the State and its policies or to bring people getting together. To me the two things are totally inter-connected; it is how they relate to each other.

ALAN WESTON: Government have short memories and those memories are full of expediency rather than truth. I feel that we have lost a lot of the common roots that used to join us together: the loss of the work place, the loss of the sharing, the loss of the common grieving when people lost their employment, the move towards segregation into individual ways of employment which are often not related to people but to machines, to technology, means that the only way we have our global identity and our togetherness as humans comes out in other ways and the emphasis then does become on our faiths, our beliefs and our desire to see change.

BILLY HUTCHINSON: For me the change came whenever I was able to understand where the IRA was coming from and where individuals were coming from, that is why I changed. I recognised that I could not prevent them from carrying out acts of violence or trying to get what they wanted. I didn't grow until I met republicans, once I met them then my attitude changed and I had to try to match them in terms of resolving the problem. There was a realisation that I wasn't going to defeat them and they weren't going to defeat me. My job as a paramilitary was not only about fighting the war but bringing about peace.

MICK BEYERS: I just wanted to comment on tolerance. I worry about tolerance in terms of celebrating diversity because I think as soon as something goes pear shaped tolerance goes out of window. Celebrating diversity will go out the window as soon as your community bombs my community, then I don't want to celebrate diversity. I see those programmes as they are deployed in an American context as more about stabilisation and maintaining the status quo and putting a band-aid on something.

ALAN WESTON: We have to accept that Government will use agency and people to pursue certain objectives. Sometimes those are overt, sometimes those are covert, all of this is about confidence and keeping confidence within some kind of framework that holds society together. How can communities be confident in any form of justice, and if we are not confident in justice surely we move into anarchy. We have to recognise, whether we like it or not, if people are going to become subject to the law

in some way or the other for what they do, at some point in time they will come back into the community and we have to find ways of being able to assist in stopping violence being portrayed positively. I have nothing against radicalism at all, I believe we would not change without radicalism but I have a strong objection to it being expressed in a violent way.

DUNCAN MORROW: I think that a lot of the right thinking agenda is characterised by avoiding conflict, it is catastrophic actually because it needs conflict, and the arena of violence is its mechanism. Governments particularly in western societies do not exist in the abstract of their electorates. Electorates generate Governments, Governments generate electorates. The push on the Israelis to build fences isn't just a State agenda, it is actually coming from below as well. The push for internment didn't simply come from a clique, it actually came very broadly supported from a group of Unionist middle classes who wanted to do something very harsh against what they saw as a threat. The radicalisation wasn't just the radicalisation of the IRA, it was a radicalisation of the Catholic community. Therein lies a complex inter-relationship.

Something happens in relation to this word radicalisation, which is a description of a method not a person, and the radicalisation, which I support, is to do with humanisation or rehumanisation. I want to be a radical in relation to that. But what happens in this process is a radical dehumanisation, which escalates: in which one act of dehumanisation leads to another, leads to another and the cause and effect process therefore depends on what you decide is the cause and what is the effect. If you define the problem not as radicalisation but dehumanisation, it forces the State into saying what its part in the dehumanisation process actually is.

I don't believe that our communities were simply the victims of the State. I don't believe that the State has the right to write off either the victims, that they were the victims of the community by the way. I am simply saying that that this is a more complex thing. If people are serious about ending this process, the question is what can we bring to the table, what is the loop which re-establishes the humanisation relationship rather than the radicalisation going in the other direction? I see it going on in the Muslim community, I recognise that what is happening to you is what happened to us. We went down that pipe very very quickly. The diversity conversation is not in fact a harmonious conversation at all, it is about a lot of people bringing great social injury and inequality to the table and asking people how you can resolve that.

BEVERLEY MILTON-EDWARDS: There is symmetry in the way in which Governments respond to these issues, whether they are domestic or foreign. I understand the point you are making, these are democratic societies, Government is accountable to the electorate but I would argue that post 9/11 the way in which Government has closed down, controlled, limited discourse, the role of media, legislation, judicial sector, right to public gathering, protest, means we can talk about the democratic crisis. There is an issue of accountability and I think that was reflected in the most recent election in that those people who were voting on foreign policy agenda issues were ignored.

3. Community Level Responses

LAURENCE McKEOWN: The first thing that influenced me was the Civil Rights marches. One of the big issues of the Civil Rights campaign was discrimination in housing. I never realised until later years but that was one of the things that my parents' generation lived with was the knowledge that we had been abused by the State because you are not part of it, you are the wrong religion. They never translated it into any big protest or anything, it was generally their way of life.

The reason why I joined the IRA, apart from a wakening consciousness, was when the Ulster Defence Regiment was formed. It was largely a Protestant army and there were people in it who I knew very well, they were neighbours. The first time I was stopped 15, 16 years old, not involved in anything, and getting stopped and being asked for name and where we were going. The first time it happened was, I think they felt awkward because I knew them well, they knew me well, so how do you say to someone what your name is. But after the first time the awkwardness went, the humour went and it became more hostile and in later years became hell for hours. For me it was the first in my consciousness, I had grown up with these people, but it is nothing about what church you go to on a Sunday, it is about one community has the right to carry arms, be out on the street and stop me and basically do whatever they want with me and that was my view of it.

Internment without trial was a big disaster for the British Army because a lot of people arrested just weren't involved in the IRA, their intelligence lapsed 20 years earlier. But it gave obviously massive support to the IRA. And then in one of those demonstrations against internment you had Bloody Sunday which effectively killed off the Civil Rights movement and after that it was all out armed conflict.

Without giving everybody a history lesson, 1976 was a very particular year because new legislation brought in, part of which was called criminalisation, all of it based on Frank Kitson's counter-insurgency programmes; criminalisation, normalisation, Ulsterisation. The whole attempt to show that this isn't really a political conflict, this is about two communities, it is about religion, it is about bad guys in each community, generally the rest of the people want to get on with life. Basically the new roles were: you will wear prison uniform; you will associate all together; there is no such thing as officers commanding and all the rest of it, just criminals. I was 19, in the prison - that was the average age, it is young people who become involved in fighting wars whether it is on the side of the State or guerilla armies.

A major turning point for Republicans was when Bobby Sands was elected as an MP. The policy was to make us all criminals, but here is a person elected to Parliament, by people in his own community. I think that was a major change for Republicans, they seen there was electoral support at home, they also seen that internationally there was the support - it is easy to see why, because a lot of these countries had suffered from British imperialism as well. I think that changed the thinking of the Movement. It meant taking part in elections, as that support grew then it was easier to move into other situations and to come to a point where within that traditional militant Irish Republicanism, which usually said the only thing the English understand is the bullet

and the bomb, that others put up an argument to say well actually now there is another way, we can still achieve our objectives. So it went through a long process, but it is a process that intelligent, rational people took part in.

BILLY HUTCHINSON: Growing up as a young man I suppose what affected me was two IRA bombs on the Shankill, one where a bomb killed two pensioners in a pub, and the second, which had the biggest impact, they blew up what was called the Balmoral Showrooms, an 18 month old baby was blown to bits. Shortly after that I went off and started my own organisation called the Young Citizens Volunteers. I probably recruited 20 or 30 young people, none of them over the age of 18. At that particular time you didn't join the UVF, the UVF picked you.

I want people to understand that I was an active UVF member, that I was being harassed, but I was being treated the same as Republicans were being treated. Anyway, I ended up in prison. I spent 16 years in prison, that brought me into contact with IRA men on a day and daily basis. We had discussions, we had debates. One of the things that it showed me was that we had a lot in common. Our political philosophies were different, our religious backgrounds were different, but we grew up in the same sort of social conditions.

Whether you are a Protestant or Catholic and feel you have been discriminated against by someone else whether it is Protestant or Catholic, there has always been discrimination in this society. That is probably one of the reasons why the IRA was formed, I do not deny that. I think that the people who discriminated against Catholics and the people who tried to discriminate against Laurence's father were the people who had power. They happened to be the people who were in middle classes and people who were in Unionism.

MOHAMMED KAMRAN: My remit is working with 16 to 25 year old Muslims across the city of Leeds. One of the issues that I come across is engagement and why won't they engage. There are certain issues around engagement, such as when you talk about the authorities or the services, of mistrust. When you get the likes of the Metropolitan Police kicking down the doors of the residents' houses without any warning, doing midnight raids etc because there is alleged terrorists living in the area and the wives of alleged terrorists.

When I'm out in the community, the first thing young people will ask you is not what are you doing, but they will ask you who is your job funded by, the work you are doing, who is it funded by. They are not looking at my agenda, they are looking at the agenda of my funders because ultimately they are the ones that are dictating and pulling the strings. So when I'm saying it is funded by the Home Office they are already sceptical, they are thinking why should we engage with you, are you intelligence gathering. Other issues that I come across are anger and frustration at a grassroots level. For me that's not just the Muslim issue, there is a big class issue as well, when you look at how the BNP recruit young, white, working class males from working class estates, it is this very anger and frustration they work on. They work on these insecurities, these vulnerabilities of these young people. I think that's maybe a similar issue within the Muslim community when you are looking at anger and

frustration at grassroots level.

A lot of people say Muslims are aligning themselves with Palestinians and the Iraqis etc. but just to make a point, young, white, British people are aligning themselves politically with America because when 9/11 happened they have taken a foreign policy stand, they have looked at how Americans have been attacked, because at that point Britain wasn't attacked, yet young British people were aligning themselves with something that had happened in America. It is not a one-sided thing. I think that needs to be acknowledged because it is always seen that Muslims are aligning themselves with what's going in Palestine etc, but I think what's happening in other parts of the world, there has been young British people that have aligned themselves with that.

Young Muslims will always see the other, as the oppressor and themselves as the oppressed. A couple of years ago there was a project in Bradford where 15 young people from very different areas went to do some work in Kenya and they climbed Kilimanjaro. I was fortunate enough to be one of them young people, I was 18 at the time, and there was a guy from a very white working class estate in Bradford. I had the opportunity to talk with him, and he says 'Why is it that you lot get all the resources and got the good parks and get the good housing?' I was shocked because I thought no no, let's stop, stop you right there, it is you. So, for him, we were the oppressors, we were the people that were taken out of the system with good houses and good education. And on the flipside I felt the same. Again that kind of reinforces the class issue. But again for me it made me look at it from an another perspective, I don't necessarily have to agree with him, but it taught me that I can understand why you do this, I don't agree with it, but I can understand why you do this.

I work on the Leeds Muslim Youth Forum, my organisation provides a faith sensitive service, not a faith based service. We are not there to promote faith, we are looking at being sensitive to the needs of young Muslims, which is very different. I think that is a crucial way of moving forward because you are not isolating yourself by saying we are faith based, we're just being sensitive to our needs.

Leadership programmes are about giving young people the adequate skills to know how to engage within politics, because one of the reasons young people feel so frustrated and angry is because they don't know how to articulate themselves, they don't know how to sit in a boardroom and how would you refer to the Chair, just how you present yourself. That etiquette needs to be taught because it is not necessarily that you are in a position where you can articulate yourself or you understand what's going on, when it is your time to speak. Young people do be fearful of that, they people need to be taught how they can engage with politics and effect change rather, than thinking the only way I can get my voice heard is through graffiti or punching someone. They need leadership programmes to be developed on engaging Muslims.

IMRAN MANZOOR: I was radicalised as a young person, I joined what would be deemed a very extremist radical organisation, but it was a confusing time when 9/11 happened because in the 1990s Mujahadeen were considered to be heroes. I remember watching Rambo III, the film, it was dedicated to the great Mujahadeen of Afghanistan so, you know, great, Rambo, why shouldn't I?

I remember Moazzam Begg who was detained in Guantanamo saying that when he was in Bosnia he played football alongside British soldiers, they all knew each other, they used to have endless debates about whether or not Manchester United were going to win the Premiership that season. Yet in the very short space of time the political language changed and he is a terrorist now, he is a threat to national security and he is detained. People are campaigning to get him released. So for young people, especially my generation, it was a very, very confusing time. I had been radicalised because of racism, because of police harassment etc. But as soon as I was old enough to know better I got myself out of it. It wasn't radical in terms of bombing Britain, it wasn't radical in terms of hurting innocent people, it was more in terms of there is other Muslim groups out there who were deviant, go check up on them, go check what they are doing. It was more about your religious ideology rather than the big threat.

There was this huge paranoia that there was this Judean-Masonic conspiracy to end the Muslim world, to destroy all of us and there was a comparison to the Jews in Europe, just as there were significant communities all around Europe we were now becoming that significant community, significant minority. So we must defend ourselves and therefore we must be radical because the enemy is out to get us, they have changed their allegiance, and now we are a Green threat whereas there was a Red threat before. When 9/11 happened all Muslims were categorised almost as if you were categorising a curry - you had your extremist, you had your moderates. Moderate Muslims are all fine, no problem with moderate Muslims, as if you are ordering a vindaloo or korma and it was very easy to place everybody. He doesn't have a beard so therefore he is with the kormas. She wears a scarf, clearly a vindaloo. And that kind of resentment manifested itself in terms of young people.

There was great confusion about 9/11 because we didn't do it. It didn't happen here, it happened in America, so why are we being targeted with these anti-terror legislations? What has it go to do with us? I think that was the biggest factor, those immediate moments after 9/11, in radicalising young people. A lot of people suddenly became interested in religion who otherwise were secular, there was a real focus on Islam. We also felt like we were being made to apologise for something that had nothing to do with us. I was asked constantly 'why doesn't the Muslim community apologise for 9/11?' as if we have got some kind of collective responsibility for what has happened. I know a lot of Muslims who cried when they saw what happened, it was that horrific. And yet we are all being targeted as the perpetrators of that act.

For me it was very clear that the people who were being radicalised were the ones going to university campuses, who were bright, intelligent young people who 30 years ago would have donned a Che Guevara T-shirt and espoused radical socialism, and now they were kind of gravitating towards this element of Islam, it was anti-capitalist, anti-State, it was radical and that is what you wanted to do when you were a student, you wanted to be radical.

The project I worked on targeted students, we looked at violent/non-violent movements, we looked at slavery, looked at apartheid, we looked at partition, movements of Gandhi, the Northern Ireland conflict, a whole range of situations and they really left it open to debate. We asked what does extremism mean, does violent

extremism work, does armed resistance work, does non-violent protest work? It is very difficult to try and encourage them towards non-violent protest when you have got two million marching against the war in Iraq and nobody was listened to.

We ended the programme with examples of extremism so we took some to Auschwitz. We did a lot of preparation work, we worked with multi-faith, multifaceted organisations such as Stop the War, The Holocaust Education Trust, Amnesty International, Help Close Guantanamo Campaign and young people are being opened up to the idea of the West isn't bad, all non-Muslim people are not bad. When they went to Auschwitz, we had a Holocaust survivor who kindly came in to tell her story, so the students laid a memorial for this lady and actually read from the Jewish Bible, they read the Mourners Kaddish, which was incredibly powerful. Some of these kids, when they started the programme, perhaps were Holocaust deniers and here they are, a group of Muslim kids for a little old Jewish lady reading the Mourners Kaddish, laying the pebbles and doing a full memorial. That was our response.

Discussion

KATE RADFORD: I thought it was really interesting because all of the speakers at some level referred to women in all of what they were saying. Women are an integral part of your personal and political lives, but they are not really here and they are not really heard and that saddens me both as a professional and as a mother and as a daughter but also as somebody who thinks that it probably saddens you guys too.

SALIMA HAFEJEE: To pick up on the point in terms of where women are, in terms of community response some of the work they have done in Bradford is where women speak to woman, this is women across communities and some of the topics on the table that are around - extremism and what are women's roles in combatting some of this - there is a mobilization of women in that. But it actually interesting that one Government response has been to establish a National Muslim Women's Forum in Great Britain, and we have asked who is on that Forum, but what we have picked is that it is mainly civil servants etc, not many people representing community perspective, and there is not a single person from the north of England

BILL ROLSTON: The notion of community as the basis for resistance and the community as the basis for radicalisation, suggests that women were at the core of that community that kept things going and that the harder things were the harder the women worked to keep things together. One of the things that I am a little bit depressed about is that as we get towards more normal politics that sort of thing gets pushed to one side. That was all right while the war was on, community kept things going, the voluntary sector, women and all this, but now it is all over let the politicians get on with, and we know most of them aren't woman, aren't community activists and so on and so on.

WILLIAM CRAWLEY: Can I say something about the role of the media in some of this? I'm a broadcaster, a journalist, and I have reported on some of this though as a journalist I'm also a member of the community in Northern Ireland, I grew up in the Mount Vernon estate. But it seems to me that one of the things we are talking about

here is radicalisation as a kind of voice raising exercise, people who feel they don't have a voice get radicalised and the dynamics are extremely complex in the radicalisation process. We were talking over lunch about one of the books that were short listed for the Booker Prize this year, The Reluctant Fundamentalist, which is a story of radicalisation. It isn't just a grand political story; it is a personal story, a one-to-one personal story. Those are extremely complex - disaffection, cultural isolation for ethical and moral and political values, growing sense of resentment in the midst of all of that, a sense of powerlessness or voicelessness, a sense that your own identity has been challenged, not respected, not recognised.

The media is involved in that too because it is a place where people should in the best sense have a voice. There is a problem for the media in reporting something like Northern Ireland over the years. First of all, it is often too complex to report correctly because those dynamics are extremely complex: the religious language that is used - this isn't a religious conflict, though it does have religious aspects to it. In England, in Bradford and other places, the religious language is a connection with Northern Ireland as well.

Class divisions are as important in telling the story of Northern Ireland as religious divisions. What does it mean to be Irish? What does it mean for Northern Ireland to be British, to be European? That's a very complicated story to do in a two minute 40 second package on the six o'clock news for people in London and other places who haven't a clue about Northern Ireland.

The story in Northern Ireland was that the editors wanted Troubles stories and they wanted simplified Troubles stories, so it was very easy to tell the story of a Catholic terrorist versus Protestant terrorist, a nice, easy, simple story even though that is not the story. Then when the Troubles move away from us thankfully, the editors in London want nothing to do with Troubles stories. Troubles fatigue is like consultation fatigue. What kind of Northern Ireland story do you tell now? In fact, the interesting stories coming out of Northern Ireland now I think are to do with the complexities of our communities and the new communities, the new ethnicities coming in, the new religious backgrounds coming in which make it a fascinating story. The media is responsible for some mis-reporting over the years, the format and the medium makes it very difficult to do justice to the complexities of many of these dynamics and issues.

4. Civic Responses

COLIN HARVEY: I have jotted down some human rights issues from the Northern context: internment; non-jury trials; extensive police powers; emergency powers; unrepresentative police force; violations of economic and social rights; use of lethal force; abuse and treatment of prisoners; disrespect for the right to life on all sides; freedom of expression; broadcasting ban; freedom of movement (who remembers exclusion orders?); right to silence; detention; detention without charge; miscarriages of justice. Having read that list I leave you to judge whether lessons have been learned for the current debate. One rather basic point to start, human rights are the guarantees for the person based on international standards, but also national standards. They apply to everyone and they are for all.

First, in an emergency law, anti-terrorism context the State will take on ever more extensive powers. In that context the rights of the person become essential. The State is taking for itself enormous power. I think we are reasonably clear that rights violations fuel conflict, they embed resentment and they fuel conflict. There seems to me to be general agreement that human rights abuses perpetuate conflict by building resentment and providing a constituency for radicalisation - and even for violent radicalisation.

A second point, when conflict is raging those speaking out in defence of human rights can and often will find themselves under attack. But strong, well-organised, independent, human rights organisations remain absolutely essential nonetheless. In the radicalisation context, and with State responses, independent, non-governmental human rights organisations that take no position on the politics of the conflict and can speak with credibility to all sides, are absolutely essential. But in speaking up for rights, lawyers and activists will often come under attack.

The third point is that all problems cannot necessarily be resolved by human rights. Human rights language is everywhere at the moment. It seems to me that it is used as much by States and others to justify questionable things as it is used in other contexts. All problems can't necessarily be resolved by rights and we need to remain vigilant on how human rights talk is used. Human rights protection and promotion will be part of the solution but - and I think this was made very clear earlier - resolutions will often rest in the sphere of the political with human rights being one part of the solution.

Looking globally and locally the lessons are not being learned. Look at one of the terms from our debate that has taken on a different form recently: 'normalisation' - the normal globally is clearly becoming what was the exception. So the North in a sense is normalizing to the exception. In this context we should be considering approaches which do strongly take into account the particular circumstances here in our post-conflict scenario. There is a real risk of us being normalised into a permanent global state of emergency.

For me, in terms of the radicalisation debate, there is a very banal and boring end point, that is holding on to a commitment to the human rights of all: respecting the human rights of all is a radical agenda.

DUNCAN MORROW: Radicalisation in pursuit of human goals to me seems to me to be a purpose to be applauded, but if we are talking about radicalisation by people who are fundamentally alienated from any sense of connection to others then it becomes problem, a problem however which is usually diagnosed as a problem was radical. I think we are not real if we don't think that mass bombing is a problem for the rest of us, it is. But radicalisation always occurs in relationship to something else and there is no way to deal with radicalisation except as you also look at what it is in relationship with, and change has to happen not only in the radical but in the relationship. Simply criminalising, simply applying a good/bad environment into this, usually leads to further polarisation. So my first point is radicalisation can't be dealt with at the level of just the problem of the radical, it has to be dealt with a problematic relationship in which radicalisation has emerged that will require all of us to change.

The second thing is that once you get into this kind of polarisation, in which we understand our own motivation as victimhood in the face of something else, it makes peace very complicated because peace looks like a sell-out. It always looks like having to deal with the people who you think are unjust, and there is a profound problematic where people are trying to find some kind of ethical process if you believe those people are fundamentally bad, thinking in any other terms is fundamentally unjust. We have to find a new articulation what restorative justice means in global terms here, we need a just way which restores and there has to be a concept of relationships as a re-constitution of the State.

The dialogue around colonialism gets messy because colonialism actually wasn't a simple process, it was a long and complex process and we need complexity around that conversation. A model of colonialism which talks about a ruling class of one sort and ruled class by another comes to grief in a context where the colonials weren't just a ruling class, they were actually a more complex interclass reality and in which attacks on the colonial mean attacks also on them, so your Protestant working class response becomes a serious issue. We have to distinguish between an integrated community and an assimilated community. Integration means belonging to a common whole. Assimilation is the adoption of the being of one like the other. And we already know once these things happen that we have a crisis of assimilation, it is not going to happen. But multiculturalism, simply existing in separate spheres, doesn't work either. There is a profoundly important debate going on at the heart of western states, particularly because they are the object of new migration in such large numbers, about not assimilating but integrating, in other words, the change process we are all going to have to go through as a result of this.

I suspect that what we essentially have to try to do in this situation is begin to pre-imagine what we have to go through. Some of that does involve making plausible and real stories. This is not simply a question of harmony or of false equality, but of generating spaces where we will engage under a principle of the value of each person. We can't just talk about this at the level of the ideology or the level of the State, it has to also be talked about the level of real experience and outside of that context it will be impossible to engage housing debates, education debates, cultural debates, local government debates and actual community development debates.

LISA CUMMING: I worked for a project that was trying to engage people in volunteering and citizenship, supporting young people develop projects that mattered to them in their communities and encouraging volunteering. And 70-80% of the young people I engaged in Bradford were of Pakistani/Bangladeshi/Muslim heritage, there was absolutely no problem engaging young people who wanted to make a difference in their own communities, and in cross-community work as well. The sort of passion for young people in inner city Bradford to make a difference was enormous.

We have not had any particular conversations about radicalisation, about extremism, partly because of some of the huge sensitivities around this, this subject. I really welcome the opportunity to come here because I think sometimes when you step outside you are somehow liberated to look at a context in a different way. I think whatever the difference is, certainly what I have heard today, you know, the learning, there is hugely important things to learn and to understand.

About 18 months before the July 7 bombings some, people in Bradford, decided to establish something called a civic network and they used research by an Indian academic called Varshney who had done some analysis about where there were outbreaks of sectarian violence and where there weren't. Part of his analysis is quite obvious, but where there was strong cross-sector relationships and relationships that weren't just dependent on the State then there were far less outbreaks of violence. So the civic network tried to go about building some of these relationships and it asked questions of people who came along from education, from business, from faith, from various backgrounds. It asked: How did Bradford respond to terrorist attacks on UK soil? And it asked people to consider whether vulnerabilities were in the district because, generally speaking, Bradford is pretty okay but there are vulnerabilities like there would be in any diverse city. So people did a variety of things to try and build up some conflict prevention mechanism, so all the faith leaders - and you know there are issues there, somebody called them the grey beards of Bradford - they wrote an inter-faith statement which made sure that they said that no one community should be blamed, we should unite together. The wording was argued over, but because that had been done prior to anything happening when the London bombing did happen the inter-faith statement was able to go out immediately. Likewise a statement was issued to all Bradford schools to say create a safe space to talk about what has happened in your schools today.

I think that there are so many important key issues that I don't need to go over, foreign policy, inequalities and human rights, for example. But I also want to open up conversations about interpretations of Jihad and the Umar and also to unpack politics, religion, ideology, context, circumstances and all the complex intersections that they bring. Two brief points, it is for me not to conflate issues around deprivation and radicalisation, extremism, whatever word we conjure up. Certainly I have worked with young men in inner city Bradford who disengaged, messed up at school, armed robbers at the age of 15, serious issues, serious disaffection. Their issues are whether to work in a completely crap, boring job or to get into drug dealing, not to go and blow people up in London. I think there is a conflation of these issues that maybe I have heard a tiny bit of today. I suppose I'm still, just on a very personal level, struggling with how the decision, how the leap is made to see that violence is morally defensible

and practically useful, whether that is by government or whether it is by individuals, particularly when it is about civilians, particularly when it is about blowing up women and children wherever that is coming from. I'm struggling with that leap.

Discussion

TOMMY McKEARNEY: I would just like to focus on the point about rights violations fuelling and perpetuating conflict. The vast majority of torture is low level to accumulate intelligence. In a very short time frame it can just about work, but the long term impact of it is not that it will access on the day a few pieces of ammunition or an operation, but that it will thoroughly and absolutely alienate an entire community and it is more counter-productive in the long term than short term.

Another thing that strikes me, whether it is assimilation or integration or cultural diversity, how do we accommodate those communities? We listen to a very firm human rights agenda, which is one of the ways you can guarantee divergence and difference, there is a basic charter there around which we can agree to differ but there are basic principles from which there will not be a division, if that is set aside because of some exigency of the moment my view is that it leads very quickly from what was a campaign or demand for basic conditions, can very quickly run through to a demand for the absolute.

ALYAS KARMANI: Understanding difference really is the issue of our time and it is linked to everybody on a global level as well. We allegedly live in this global village and our lives are so inter-dependent now, when we need to develop relations more than any time in our history, in our recent history, we are unable to develop those relationships. Then we relate that to citizenship within schools, certainly in England, Ofsted has identified that schools are failing in teaching children, engaging them on the issue of understanding their role as a global citizen and understanding how they can relate to difference. We are told multiculturalism is failing, but the reality is we live in a multicultural situation and Britain has always been diverse for 5000 years, it is not something new, just an influx of one people going in an out, there is that change taking place, not something new, it seems we are unable to understand how to actually mesh these relationships together.

Having had radical views in the past certainly it was due to the fact that I had a very selective understanding of what Islam was about certainly and about the reality of other people. When that opens up and when you are brave enough, those are real brave people when they are able to open themselves up to a different way of thinking and challenge their own worldview. Okay, so it is knowing yourself.

One of the things unfortunately with our young people in the Muslim community, certainly in Bradford, they don't know anything about their history, they don't know anything about 14 centuries of heritage. The Iraq situation is a prime example. We are told obviously by the recent example that Muslims - Shia, Sunni and Kurds – can't live together. For 13 centuries they did live together, they were a civil society in Iraq, and it was one of the most advanced societies of its time for a while and a particular kind of Kalifa was in Baghdad. And Shia, Sunni and Kurds didn't have ongoing

conflict. Likewise in India as well - Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians lived for centuries. And likewise Muslims, Jews and Christians in the Middle East as well. So it is not characterised by ongoing terminal conflict, there is a considerable amount of history in terms of cohabitation. Only our recent history has been one of being dispossessed and re-colonised and characterised by conflict as well. So it is about knowing that history, knowing your heritage, having confidence this is where we have come from, rather than a very kind of limited perspective that is often given to our young people today. That's a real challenge I think, how do we get people to understand this is the issue of our time, it is linked to global poverty, linked to the environment, linked to everything.

DUNCAN MORROW: I know that human rights abuses are fuelled by terror in the meaningful sense of the word fear, not by a particular group but the profound fear that underpins it. Northern Ireland Protestants, of which I am one, were in many ways the inventors of homeland security only we called it Special Powers. It has been catastrophic and it is still justified in many people's minds by huge terror that if they didn't do it they were facing an existential war for existence. Once that becomes the dialogue it is very hard to get rational frame around that and to talk human rights.

The second thing is I'm not sure counter culture is always enough, I think we need contrast culture. I think you need something else, you have to show that the cycle can really broken not just say it must be, because if that is the only thing you have to say then you are still waiting for somebody else to change. And I am absolutely sure that small opportunities become critical to this. I am sure that it is harder to hate people if you know them actually. I'm also sure that leadership and institutions who work at getting people to speak and listening to each other are absolutely critical if this society is to move forward.

We have to get away from the notion that the alternative is harmony, the alternative is a bloody hard conversation about some very serious inequality and the road to equality is not an equal one, which is a very, very jagged edged conversation with lots of different people. It has to be started around human rights and non-violence in public life. There is no mechanism actually to get through the hardness of the conversation. The conversation after the peace has to be hard and radical and we require radicals in it. But we have to detach the radicalisation from a project, which was about violence to one which is now about something which engages the other.

LAURENCE McKEOWN: It is very interesting how big a thing is language and labelling. For instance, in our protest in jail it was a no-wash protest, for the Government it was a dirty protest because dirty has a different meaning - black, dirty, something wrong. It is just how easily language can be used to dehumanise, it starts with Mafia, godfathers, gangs, so on and so forth. You dehumanise them first and then basically do whatever you want to them. It is interesting that in Iraq people are referred to as insurgents, not referred to usually as terrorists, they are insurgents which is a much more neutral term.

LIZ DIXON: After the Bradford riots many of the young Muslim youth got disproportionate sentences, highly disproportionate sentences, then actually one of the

activities was that people who were writing the parole reports and probation reports took a pro-active approach, saying these lads are going to come out and they are going to be angry and we need to think about how they are going to reintegrate because if we don't acknowledge the fact that they got a disproportionate sentence to their white counterparts then actually we are storing up trouble. And all my work with offenders is about critical incidents in their lives where the fall-out is bigger. So that's why you have to suspend the kneejerk reaction to punish and to think about the big time. And it worked very well, what you had with those lads was actually was that they got lower re-conviction rates, they rehabilitated better than their counterparts because of the pro-active approach that had happened as people thought about it.

WILLIAM CRAWLEY: I don't believe prisons are the breeding ground for radicalism. Prisons are where people come together, the dynamics in the society around the prison are the breeding grounds for the radicalism. There was a very interesting point about trying to redeem this term 'radicalisation' or 'radicalism' because there are a lot of good things involved in the process of radicalisation. If a young Muslim, for example, decides to take more of an interest in his or her heritage, if they want to, for example, claim some clothing or change the way they dress in society or grow a beard or go to an Iman and take some special tuition, I don't regard those things are dangerous things or bad things for a society. For example, in Protestant working class areas precisely the things happened when people became born again Christians - they changed the way they dressed, they changed the places they went to, they stopped smoking and often they became more middle class because they had more disposable income, they separated themselves sometimes from the community around them and became quite different people at times from the people around them. That's not necessarily a bad dynamic, it is when it turns into violence that we have a problem.

BILLY HUTCHINSON: In terms of prison I think that the British Government recognises that Special Category or political status actually worked. They allowed us to have our own command chains, allowed us to do all negotiations, one person talked to the Governor, all that, it worked. The thing about it was people used to describe it as the university of terror. In the cages, we had an education system and that whole education system was about having debates. People took degree courses, people educated themselves. So you know I think Special Category status worked and the reason why it did work, it gave us that whole notion that we were politicised, that we were there for something that was political and we all sort of bonded together and wanted to do things.

In terms of dispersing people through prisons, it doesn't work, what it does is it has a negative effect on the community and families because it is dispersing people all the over place and that jus makes the situation worse.

Final Thoughts

MAGGIE BEIRNE: I don't believe in any 'industrialising' of the peace process exchange, but I do think that there needs to be many more of these kind of exchanges of experiences and views. My view is that the experiences of Northern Ireland have

been compartmentalised 'over here/there' and deliberately sidelined, and indeed silenced, so I would argue for more of these kinds of exchanges. A second thing that I wanted to say was about the importance of human rights. I actually think that the language of human rights, and the concepts of human rights, put us all on the same page. We have this humanity that is common to us all, and we are also fantastically diverse in this humanity; we have totally different competing needs, aspirations and so on. But human rights can create the framework within which to have this discussion.

The third thing to say, is that there was a period here in Northern Ireland in the 1960s and early 1970s that if the right decisions had been taken, or different decisions had been made at that time, we might not have had the death toll that we have had. I hope I am not being too depressing, but we have 'only' had one 7/7. If we have more or if we have a run of such attacks we will have lost any hope of real dialogue and the potential for change. I think the debate we are having is a very complex one. This day has shown how many issues need to be explored, and how many more probably haven't come on to the agenda; we need to unpack all of this. However, there is also an urgency to the debate - there is a window of opportunity which we really need to grasp. So this is not a summation of the day but it is a kind of plea for more of these exchanges, but also a plea for some urgency in our deliberations.

Seminar Participants

Northern Ireland

1. Muhammed Al-Qaryooti, Belfast Islamic Centre
2. Maggie Beirne, Committee on the Administration of Justice
3. Mick Beyers, Coiste na nIarchimí
4. Pat Conway, NIACRO
5. William Crawley, Broadcaster
6. Richard English, School of Politics, Queen's University, Belfast
7. Drew Harris, ACC, Police Service of Northern Ireland
8. Colin Harvey, School of Law, Queen's University, Belfast
9. Billy Hutchinson, Mount Vernon Community House
10. Neil Jarman, Institute for Conflict Research
11. Kieran McEvoy, School of Law, Queen's University, Belfast
12. Tommy McKearney, ExPac
13. Laurence McKeown, Coiste na niarchimi
14. Barry McMullan, NIACRO
15. Kerry McMullan, NIACRO
16. Beverley Milton-Edwards, School of Politics, Queen's University, Belfast
17. Duncan Morrow, Community Relations Council
18. Kate Radford, Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College Dublin
19. Bill Rolston, School of Sociology, University of Ulster

Bradford

20. Lisa Cumming, Programme for a Peaceful City, University of Bradford
21. Altaf Arif, Probation Officer, anti-fascist activist, trade unionist
22. Salima Hafejee, Director of Bradford Youth Development Board, National Youth Justice Board, local magistrate
23. Mohammed Kamran, works with Leeds Muslim Forum
24. Alyas Karmani, racial justice activist, imam, free lance trainer
25. Imran Manzoor, voluntary sector community/youth worker
26. Nadira Mirza, Dean, School of Lifelong Learning University of Bradford

London

27. Pauline Durrance, London Probation
28. Liz Dixon, London Probation
29. Alan Weston, Head of Diversity, European Projects, London Probation