

Policing Terrorism

A Review of the Evidence



Darren Thiel

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Darren Thiel, February 2009

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Executive Summary

This Review assesses the empirical evidence relating to the threat of terrorism and the police and Government response to it in the contemporary United Kingdom. It charts what is known and not known about these issues, makes some practical recommendations and proposes a research agenda to fill gaps found in the knowledge base.

The terrorist threat

The suicide attacks on London's transport system in 2005 and a number of subsequent failed attacks and plots across the UK, clearly demonstrate the existence of a terrorist threat, and official pronouncements suggest this is increasing. Evidence indicates that the most pressing threat is 'al-Qaeda-inspired' and undertaken by those professing to be Muslims, but who constitute only a tiny minority of the British Muslim communities from which they are drawn.

Terrorism is not a particular group or ideology but is defined here as a tactical manoeuvre employed by those who target violence against non-combatants in order to achieve social change. Violence is central to terrorist campaigns, but both terrorism and counter-terrorism are also inherently 'moral' processes in which the groups involved make moral claims in order to legitimise their violent activities and attract support for their cause. State counter-terrorism activities and the policing agencies employed to undertake them are pivotal to these claims and are thus set in a delicate moral position.

In order to investigate the police's role, this Review is divided into seven short chapters reviewing the evidence in relation to: the level of the current threat and the nature of terrorist conflicts; the history and organisation of violent Islamism and al-Qaeda; how and why UK residents support or become involved in violent Islamist terrorism; government policy in response to the to this; the organisation and operation of UK counter-terrorism policing, and how this might be improved. A final chapter suggests areas in which empirical research should be conducted, which is followed by a short conclusion.

Violent Islamism and al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda's insurgent philosophy is a distorted and violent version of *Salafi* Islamism. Initially fermented by Egyptian scholars in the 1920s, it sanctions violence against non-Islamic influence in Muslim society, and was initially formed as a hierarchically organised training and military base in Afghanistan with recruitment centres spread throughout the Middle East. Recruits were trained to support and fight with mujahedin soldiers on front-line battlefields, while others were returned to their various home countries equipped with terrorist training. This endowed al-Qaeda with an international reach of terrorist networks providing a globally resilient organisational structure through which they arranged attacks.

The growing notoriety of al-Qaeda, coupled with the US-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, increased numbers of recruits and encouraged various other violent Islamist groups and individuals to adopt al-Qaeda's philosophy and/or operate under its banner. Anglo-Western military action destroyed al-Qaeda's Afghan base but dispersed its recruits and strengthened its ideological allure. Al-Qaeda emerged from this as a powerful free-floating symbolic entity spread through various media whereby no actual association with its members were necessary for subsequent 'al-Qaeda-inspired' terrorism to occur. It was this later form that appears to have generated some 'home grown' terrorist cells in the UK, including the '7/7' London bombers.

Due to al-Qaeda's increasingly nebulous and virtual structure, there is currently no single al-Qaeda entity but many, meaning that the number of members or its specific demands cannot be known. Its

organisational structure and techniques of attack are however, not novel but reflect a number of characteristics of past terrorist groups and activities. Also not unrivalled in history are the outcomes of austere counter-terrorist responses that become counter-productive though generating perceptions by some that they cross the boundaries of legitimacy, which occurred, for example, during the terrorist 'troubles' in Northern Ireland.

Radicalisation of UK citizens into violent Islamism

There is no straightforward pathway into violent Islamism or support for it, and individual recruits show a very broad range of socio-demographic characteristics. There are also no clear links between radicalisation into violent Islamism and an individual's deprivation or frustrated ambition, as a relatively large proportion of violent Islamists have been students and graduates. However, increased adoption of a collective pan-Islamic identity amongst young British Muslims appears to connect the less deprived to the plight of their fellow Muslims both locally and globally. This heightens sensitivity towards discrimination and alienation – two of the main factors shown to underlie drift towards radicalisation into violent Islamist doctrine.

On the basis of the limited evidence available, those aged in their early-20s with low levels of 'religious literacy' and associational networks linking them to existing violent Islamists appear most susceptible to extremist recruitment. Through violent Islamist doctrine, recruiters provide apparently clear, convincing and empowering resolutions to recruits' personal problems and feelings of alienation. Many individuals are however, 'self-starters' who join violent *jihad* without the influence of recruiters, and instead become radicalised through pre-existing small friendship groups influenced by shared conceptions of injustice and various violent Islamist-based media (books, internet sites and films). Conviction data suggest that UK-based al-Qaeda-inspired 'cells' consist of between two and 13 members, but are likely to be larger than the data imply since more marginal members may not have been convicted. There may also be various 'shades' of support for violent Islamism with no clear dividing lines between those that do and those that do not hold knowledge about, or are involved in, terrorist-related activities.

Radicalisation into violent Islam occurs at particular sites, in particular: prisons, universities, Islamic book shops; mosques; Islamic study groups; visits to Afghanistan and Pakistan; inflammatory film, literature and internet sites, and in friendship and family networks. Many convicted plot members made visits to Pakistan but this appeared to occur following their radicalisation and its potential influence is unknown. Further, whilst most of those found guilty of terrorist-related offences are male, a small number of British Muslim women have been convicted for support roles.

Politics and legislation

As a result of 9/11, 7/7, and due to the nebulous and changing shape of the threat posed by al-Qaeda, the UK government has adapted and updated counter-terrorist legislation originally introduced to counter the threat of Northern Irish terrorism. The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, the Terrorism Act 2006, and intensified usage of prescriptions in the Terrorism Act 2000 are the principal components. These Acts of Parliament made it possible to charge, imprison and/or deport those suspected of inciting violent Islamism, and to prosecute those found in possession of terrorist-related material or found assisting terrorist operations. Aspects of the new legislation may however, inadvertently undermine relations between British Muslim communities and the police and state, impeding effective intelligence and contributing to a general drift towards, rather than away from, support for violent Islamism. These aspects include:

- intensified use of Section 44 stop and search;
- ambiguous laws pertaining to non-disclosure, support for and glorification of terrorism;

- non-charge control orders;
- elongated periods of pre-charge detention; and
- non-judicial tolerance of extraordinary rendition.

Counter-terrorist policing

Three main forms of UK counter-terrorist policing underpin current legislation.

- Intelligence collection, analysis and distribution, carried out predominately through the secretive ‘high policing’ activity of the SO15 Counter Terrorism Command Unit, who also work to subvert terrorist groups.
- Target hardening activity at areas deemed at risk, carried out through design and technological measures, and through stops, searches and screening practices administered by uniformed police, customs and private security.
- Generation of ‘community intelligence’ and community cooperation through uniformed ‘low policing’ consultation with British Muslim community members, and a related policy to intensify and develop neighbourhood policing-style practices in areas deemed at risk of producing violent Islamists.

The majority of counter-terrorism policing is intelligence-driven and carried out by SO15, which has doubled in size since 2001. Their surveillance and intelligence-mining operations enable the monitoring, capture, misdirection and subversion of potential terrorists, although it is not possible to effectively assess their activities in any depth because of operational secrecy. Target hardening measures have also been intensified since 2001. These reassure the public and make it more difficult to commit successful terrorist attacks. However, both of these methods may be of limited value for the long-term prevention of violent Islamist terrorism and radicalisation into it. Target hardening screening processes necessarily operate in a discriminatory way, and SO15 activity, by engaging in high levels of surveillance and the manipulation of informants, has been perceived by some as discriminatory and non-judicial, as has the intensification of Section 44 police stop and search procedures.

These forms of counter-terrorism policing are primarily concerned with preventing the immediate threat of terrorist attack in the short-term. Yet, as the terrorist threat is predicted to be ‘with us for a generation’, a long-term preventative dimension has recently moved further to the forefront of UK policing and policy. Various methods of community consultation, ‘multi-agency’ partnership working with local state services and community groups, and a form of neighbourhood policing applied to areas with high concentrations of British Muslims, have been introduced to tackle the long-term prevention of UK-based terrorism. These measures have the potential to partially resolve some counter-productive aspects of counter-terrorist legislation and practice, particularly through their promise to increase police legitimacy by fostering protection, respect, and closer and more trusting relations between the police and British Muslim communities. Increased legitimacy may then mitigate significant factors that underlie radicalisation and increase the likelihood that local community members volunteer intelligence and cooperate with police to prevent violent Islamism and to steer susceptible individuals away from it. There is a danger however, that possible gains in police legitimacy through consultative and neighbourhood policing approaches continue to be outweighed by the more problematic aspects of recent counter-terrorist legislation and by intensified SO15 and target hardening activity. There are also potential future problems resulting from an increased connection between SO15, neighbourhood police and civilian multi-agency partner organisations in terms of their bringing centralised police surveillance deep into particular communities, potentially breeding suspicion and distrust.

Improving counter terrorist policing and policy

Adequately designed empirical research and monitoring needs to be undertaken into almost every aspect of contemporary terrorism and counter-terrorism in order to underpin current and future counter-terrorism policy and practice. To address the lack of empirical evidence, it is suggested that research should be commissioned that:

- maps the composition, social characteristics and attitudes of the heterogeneous British Muslim population, and assess the impact of counter-terrorist policing and legislation on them;
- examines processes of religious and political radicalisation and extremism;
- investigates the construction, analysis and communication of counter-terrorism intelligence;
- monitors and assesses the impact and effectiveness of consultative and neighbourhood policing-style practices in counter-terrorism, and which examines the efficacy and potential of their increased connection with multi-agency partners.

It is recognised that both target hardening and ‘high’ policing activity is necessary for effective counter-terrorism but the evidence suggests that the overall counter-terrorist effort could be improved if these processes were more effectively targeted, used more sparingly, were better communicated, and carried out with increased professionalism. If this is successful it may help reduce potentially alienating outcomes, increase community cooperation with the police and generate better intelligence, all of which could help to improve the effectiveness of target hardening and high policing activities and lessen their frequency. Improvements are also likely to be generated by the police and security services investing more value into how they communicate with their public during and after major terrorist operations and in how they and their Government justify potentially austere counter-terrorist policies.

Recent Government proposals to change centralised police performance targets from those that encourage stops, fines and arrests, to those which encourage local engagement and security are to be encouraged, but may take considerable effort to embed in policing organisations and working cultures and will require effective leadership and training. Additionally, divergences in traditional goals and working practices of the police and security services continues to impede effective counter-terrorism through the protective restrictions placed on the distribution of intelligence by the security services. These issues are being addressed under the renewed preventative emphasis encouraging greater collaboration between the police, security services and their multi-agency partners, but there is much to be done to counter-act deeply embedded police organisational and cultural divides, which will also require considerable research, management and monitoring.

Moreover, the police are only one agency amongst many that need to be engaged to counter the threat of contemporary terrorism, and their effectiveness is somewhat dependent on the broader legitimacy of the British state. Yet, for the state to be perceived legitimate by sections of the British Muslim community, in particular, by young British Muslims, Government needs to make concerted effort to encourage their social inclusion and democratic representation, as well as being seen to embrace the human rights of Muslims the world over, which is perhaps a key challenge facing the UK Government’s counter-terrorism strategy.

Introduction

This Review examines the empirical evidence relating to the current terrorist threat in the UK, and the police and Government response to it. It has been commissioned by the Police Foundation in order to provide increased understanding of the extent and nature of what is known about these issues, and in order to identify gaps in the evidence base. It aims to inform and alert commentators, police, government and policy makers to some of the potential pitfalls of the current counter-terrorist response, and to outline possible ways forward. An apparent lack of an adequate empirical foundation so far appears to have contributed to some rather fragmented, sometimes populist and, some would argue, ill-conceived legislation and policy in this area, which has been criticised by a number of commentators for exacerbating the terrorist threat rather than containing it (see Silke, 2005; Blick et al., 2006). This Review addresses some of these problems by providing a clear and measured picture of the current situation, and by suggesting potential areas for improvements in both counter-terrorist policing and research.

The terms ‘violent Islamist’ terrorism and ‘al-Qaeda-inspired’ terrorism are used throughout to describe what is purported to be the most pressing terrorist threat to the UK today. As the majority of recent UK-based terrorist plots, actions and threats have been made in the name of Islam, and as the most of those found to be involved have been UK nationals, the Review also considers the impact of these events, and the police response to them, on the British Muslim communities from which most contemporary UK terrorists have been drawn.

Methodological issues

There is a large and rapidly expanding literature about contemporary violent Islamist terrorism, and countless ideas about how to counter and prevent it. Much of this literature however, suffers from a lack of first-hand primary research (Silke, 2004) and, as mentioned above, tends to be empirically barren. The literature is also commonly emotionally laden and rapidly produced in order to satisfy the demand for knowledge on what is a highly controversial and complex subject. Many such works have an ‘imminent “use-by” date’ (Loader and Walker, 2007:3), as with each new terrorist attack, plot, conviction or terrorist pronouncement, knowledge and understanding shifts and the meaning of contemporary terrorism changes. The common resolution is the publication of more new works and the development of yet more new ideas, which fuels the cycle. Indeed one commentator has claimed that a new book on terrorism is published every nine hours (Burleigh, 2008:503).

With the intention of ploughing a sensible furrow through this expansive quagmire, this Review focuses on major texts recommended by experts in the field and analyses the empirical evidence publicly available. To further ground the review, a number of police officers, security and government officials, academics and critics were consulted, and some observations with neighbourhood policing teams in a London borough were undertaken. Whilst these sources were neither representative nor systematic, engagement with them enabled a more grounded assessment of the evidence and provided knowledge and experience unavailable in books.

Review structure

The Review is divided into seven short chapters. The first presents what is publicly known about the threat posed by violent Islamism, examines definitions of terrorism and describes the processes through which terrorism operates. It questions claims that the current threat is non-existent and explores the notion that terrorism and counter-terrorism are inherently ‘moral’ processes. Chapter Two provides a brief history and description of violent Islamism and al-Qaeda in order to better understand

what al-Qaeda is, the threat it poses and how this has evolved over time. Chapter Three examines the evidence about how and why individuals support or become involved in contemporary violent Islamist terrorism in the UK, and draws attention to the complex and ever-changing forms of these processes and the ensuing contemporary threat. The fourth chapter describes the British Government's counter-terrorism legislation and the practices it dictates. It examines the impact of legislation and highlights some of its counter-productive effects. Chapter Five examines the changing police role in counter-terrorism. It suggests that various forms of the counter-terrorist policing apparatus are contradictory and impede long-term prevention. Chapter Six suggests ways in which the police response could be improved and more effectively managed, and Chapter Seven suggests possible avenues for future research, which is followed by a short conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

Terrorism and its threat

The '7/7' 2005 bomb attacks on London's transport system and a number of failed attacks following it clearly demonstrate the existence of some level of terrorist threat to the UK, and a number of on-going court cases involving terrorist-related charges and a growing number of successful terrorist-related convictions confirm this. In March 2008, the British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, stated that 58 individuals had been successfully convicted of terrorist-related offences in the previous year alone ¹. Moreover, the police, politicians and the security services regularly espouse the growing seriousness of the threat, implying that we have, so far, seen only the tip of the iceberg. Eliza Manningham-Buller, former Director General of MI5, stated in November 2006 that her organisation were monitoring 200 terrorist networks containing over 16,000 identified individuals engaged in at least 30 terrorist plots. She suggested that 'the threat is serious, is growing, and will... be with us for a generation'. Seven months later, Gordon Brown announced that the number of individuals being tracked by the security services had risen to 2,000.

There is an element of ambiguity in aspects of the above statements as it is not totally clear what a network, plot, or a suspected individual is. Yet terrorism is, by its very nature, ambiguous. It is problematic to define and terrorist groups are clandestine and secretive. Consequently, the full nature and extent of any terrorist threat is, in reality, unknowable. Counter-terrorist state secrecy compounds this ambiguity, and estimates by academic terrorism 'experts' can be misleading or simply incorrect (see Silke, 2004; Czwarno, 2006). Moreover, and the complex and metamorphic structure of contemporary al-Qaeda-inspired violence exacerbates the confusion. What is known with some certainty however, is that many violent Islamists have emerged from within the UK population – amongst first, second and third generation British Muslims, Muslim migrant workers, settled refugees, and a number of British converts to Islam (see **Appendix 2**). But it is also known that these constitute only a tiny minority of the populations from which they emerge and from which they can be virtually indistinguishable. This means that it is difficult to predict who is at risk of becoming a violent Islamist; the processes they follow to become so; or even the nature of the organisations to which they belong.

What is terrorism?

Definitions of terrorism are highly contested. One survey of the literature uncovered over 100 separate definitions (Schmid and Jongman, 1988). Disagreements are partly the product of terrorism being a pejorative label which is applied differently by different groups at different times (Jenkins, 1975; Richardson, 2006; Smelser, 2007), and the frequently cited maxim that 'one man's terrorist is another's freedom fighter' illustrates this clearly. Most often 'terrorism' is a label applied by strong state groups onto less powerful groups that oppose them with the use of violence. States do not label their own

¹ <http://www.number10.gov.uk/output/Page15102.asp>. See Appendices 2 and 3 for specific details of UK convictions for violent Islamist-related offences.

violent actions as terrorism – although following the definition provided below, states can and do engage in acts of terrorism to devastating effect².

In order to avoid drift into relativism, a working definition is used here that defines terrorism as the *targeting of violence against non-combatants by politically motivated groups in order to achieve social change*. Whilst this definition does not capture all insurgency movements labelled ‘terrorist’, it does encompass most actions generally accepted as terrorism. In this context, terrorism is not viewed as a particular group or ideology but a weapon or tactical manoeuvre employed in a political conflict. However, to capture such a highly complex, dynamic and interactive set of processes into a simple one-dimensional definition may distract from the more important task of tracing the processes and forms that terrorist conflicts take.

Whilst not wishing to underestimate the impact of terrorism in terms of the fear and devastation it can cause, it is useful to compare it with other less dramatic but more fatal events. The attack on the World Trade Centre in 2001 tragically killed approximately 3,000 people, but this was significantly less than the 16,000 deaths through homicide or the 30,000 suicides that occurred in the USA in the same year (Richardson, 2006:183). Similarly, although the 2005 ‘7/7’ London bombings killed 52 people, this was numerically small compared to the 3,201 deaths through road traffic accidents that occurred in Britain in the same year³. The fear induced by terrorist attacks far outweighs the actual levels of risk, which is of course the very purpose of terrorism: to spread fear and provoke reaction as a result.

Terrorism is not carried out in order to obliterate military defence structures or to disable an enemy’s critical infrastructure, but aims to spread alarm, uncertainty and disruption among the public that witness the events and who demand a response from their government – which, in its turn, must be seen to be doing something to address that threat. Terrorist tactics amplify the power of usually relatively small and comparatively weak groups, and so tends to be a weapon favoured by the weak. As a consequence, terrorist aggression tends to focus on highly symbolic acts and targets in order to attract media attention so as to amplify its impact. Utilisation of various media enables terrorist groups to highlight their cause by providing them with a public platform from which to air their ideologies. Through this, the groups attempt to elicit various public and state reactions that have favourable consequences for their struggle.

Claims over moral legitimacy are central to effective terrorism and counter-terrorism through their influencing of various levels of social support for the terrorist or counter-terrorist group (cf. Sluka, 1989). Social support empowers terrorist groups by producing the subjective conditions necessary for recruiting and motivating members, as well as providing the material conditions – finance, storage facilities, safe houses, transport, activists, instructors and so on – that facilitate the development and persistence of the groups (Richardson, 2006; Sluka, 1989; Smelser, 2007). In this sense, terrorism is a highly ‘moral’ and communicative process in which dramatic announcements of terrorists’ ideology aim to both legitimate their violence and discredit the regime they oppose (cf. Crenshaw, 1995). Such a process can be observed in the events of 9/11, for example, which not only struck fear into the minds of Western populations through the dramatic media images portrayed, but also provoked the invasion of Afghanistan and turned the eyes and ears of the world onto al-Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden.

This ‘communicative’ feature of terrorism may also be part of the reason why al-Qaeda-inspired groups have so far employed suicide missions as one of their main forms of attack. As Atran (2003:1536)

² As occurred with the USA’s use of terrorist tactics in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, and in numerous other acts of twentieth-century state terrorism (see Cohen, 2001).

³ Department of transport <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications>.

argues: 'Al-Qaeda's brand of suicide mass terrorism... operates on the assumption that the more efficient and global the media, the more powerful and widespread its effects'. Suicide missions are most frequently employed to attack democracies (Gambetta, 2005) because their full gravitas is only felt where there is an open media to publicise the events (Berman and Laitin, 2004, from Gambetta, 2005). Moreover, images of suicide missions beamed to the world's public demonstrate the enduring commitment and self-sacrifice of the terrorists' to their cause, possibly attracting reverence, moral legitimacy and, potentially, increasing support and sympathy for their cause.

In this context, the US-UK military reaction to 9/11 may have increased support for al-Qaeda, as: 'By provoking democratic governments into draconian repression they [the terrorists] can demonstrate to the world that governments really are the fascists they believe them to be' (Richardson, 2006:128-9). The invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq have been interpreted by some as a Western war against Islam intent on the domination and subjugation of Muslims, thereby supporting bin Laden's initial claims and moral justifications for Islamist violence and thus attracting increased support for his cause. Aspects of British domestic counter-terrorism policy may have too inadvertently added fuel to these claims by becoming perceived as discriminatory by some British Muslims. This is problematic, since if the Government alienates the communities in which terrorist groups attempt to hide, levels of intelligence and cooperation from those communities is unlikely to be forthcoming, making counter-terrorism a much more difficult undertaking (cf. Sluka, 1989; Jackson, 2008).

Due to Government fears about increasing levels of violent Islamist radicalisation and support for Islamist violence in British Muslim communities, the police, in the absence of other suitable agencies, have been increasingly pushed to the centre of the UK counter-terrorism stage. However, before discussing the police role, its successes and failures and possible ways of improving its effectiveness, it is necessary to present a brief history and description of violent Islamism in order to better understand what al-Qaeda is and how it has evolved.

CHAPTER TWO

Violent Islamism and al-Qaeda: a brief history

This chapter provides a brief history and description of al-Qaeda in order to provide a clearer understanding of the problems it is deemed to have generated and to chart its ever-changing nature and influence. The origins of al-Qaeda's 'brand' of violent Islamism arise out of an extremely complex international and Islamic history, of which only a very compressed summary can be presented here. Readers seeking a more in depth analysis of the issues may consult the accounts provided by Burke (2004) and Sageman (2004), and those requiring a better understanding of Islamic history and belief are recommended to consult Sardar's (2006) clear and concise introduction.

Islam, the Salaf and forms of Jihad

There are many interpretations of Islam, but what binds it together as a single religion is that Muslims profess *Shahadah*, testifying their belief that the Abrahamic prophet, Mohammed (570-632 AD), had been sent the words of God (*Allah*). These words were written and later compiled in the holy book central to the Islamic faith, the *Qur'an*. The words and actions of the Prophet Mohammed himself were written in the *Sunnah*, a text used by Muslims as an aid to their interpretation of *Qur'anic* prescriptions.

Following Mohammed's death, his disciples and successive leaders of the Islamic state – the 'rightly guided Caliphs' – spread God's words to a substantial proportion of the world. This period is known to Muslims as the *Salaf*, where the companions of Mohammed and his disciples followed God's injunctions uncorrupted by mysticism, materialism or profane interpretation. During this early period, Islam's dominance ascended but, accompanying this, struggles over positions in the Islamic leadership ensued, facilitating a violent split (*fitna*) of Islam into Sunni and Shi'a groups (Sunni forming the majority – 85 per cent of all present-day Muslims). Within these two groups, many hundreds of divisions and sects of Islam grew, ranging from the very liberal to the very conservative, including extremely radical interpretations like those professed by al-Qaeda. Unlike Christianity, for example, where religious authority is passed through church or synod, mainstream Sunni Islam rejects clergy and positively invites critical examination of *Qur'anic* injunctions (Sardar, 2006). Shi'a Islam, on the other hand, does support an organised authoritative clergy, but its various sects believe in different numbers and sources of these. Consequently, much Islamic practice and belief has changed throughout time and across regions, leading to a large diversity of Islam.

Despite the infighting and divisions between its followers, Islam's early ascendancy continued and the 'Golden Age of Islam' followed (750-1258 AD) in which Islamic states, arts, science and philosophy reached levels of development quite unparalleled in the West at that time. However, the Christian Crusades in the 11th century and the Mongol Empire's invasions in the 13th, brought the Golden Age to an end, and, by the 15th century, following a long period of infighting, Islam is said to have become frozen in time, backward looking and starved of its earlier dynamism (see Geaves, 2007; Sardar, 2006).

Salafism

A distorted version of *Salafism* lies at the basis of al-Qaeda's violent Islamist philosophy. *Salafis* believe that in order to return to the purity of the Golden Age, Muslims should live by a literal obedience of *Qur'anic* scripture, uncorrupted by worldly interventions or secular governance. They believe however, that this can only be achieved by a peaceful and gradual process of *dawa* (gradual political reform through spreading their faith and converting people) because violent struggle would result in a return to the chaotic violence (*fitna*) that followed the prophet's death.

The vast majority of today's *Salafis* continue to champion peaceful means to assist a return to the *Salaf*. However, in the shadow of the weakening grip of colonialism in the early to mid-20th century, aspects of *Salafism* became infused by Islamic revolutionary militancy (Burke, 2004). This revolutionary *Salafism* was initially fermented in Egypt in the 1920s and is associated with the scholars of the Muslim Brotherhood who had formed in opposition to Egypt's secularist Government. Like *Salafis*, the Brotherhood saw Islam not simply as a religion, but as a political programme i.e. Islamism, which contained all the proscriptions for living life and organising society. However, in order to instigate this, secular states needed to be somehow eliminated, and, at the end of his life, one of the major ideologues of the Brotherhood, Syed Qutb, argued that violent *Jihad* against the secular state might be the most effective way to do this.

Jihad

The meaning of *jihad* is complex, variable and multi-layered. It literally means to strive or struggle but in practice it means a Muslim's struggle to live a pure and Godly life. Living such a life has, however, many interpretations. Mainstream Islam calls on Muslims to adhere to the 'greater *jihad*' through demonstration of the 'Five Pillars of Islam': professing one's faith (*Shahadah*); praying five times a day; fasting at Ramadan; being charitable (*zakat*); and performing *haji* (i.e. visiting Mecca). There is also a second interpretation of *jihad*, the 'Lesser *jihad*', which involves a duty to spread Islam throughout the world (*dar al-Islam*). There are however, radical interpretations, such as those developed by al-Qaeda, which have stretched the meaning of *jihad* to represent a struggle against all *kaffir* (non believers in Islam) and *takfir* (lapsed Muslims) deemed to have corrupted Islam through secular political, military and/or economic interference.

Al-Qaeda and Osama bin-Laden

The term al-Qaeda was first noted in a text written by one of Osama bin Laden's spiritual teachers, Abdullah Azzam, to describe the group who would form the basis of a new Islamist organisation that aimed to change the world (Burke, 2004). By the 1980s, the term was adopted by pan-Islamic radicals who were fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan (Sageman, 2004). At this time, al-Qaeda literally meant the base of a struggle – in both a physical and philosophical sense, and, for Azzam, it would form the basis for a *jihad* that called on the *umma* (the global Islamic brotherhood) to drive the West out of Muslim lands.

The Afghan war against the Soviets had been a 'watershed in Muslim revivalist movements' (Sageman, 2004:18). Pan-Islamic militants met one another on the battlefield forming a strong community out of their common struggle and, when the Soviets withdrew in 1989, the militants were left to discuss their futures and philosophies. One of these, Osama bin Laden, wanted to unite the groups in a common struggle, although his fledgling al-Qaeda at that time consisted of highly educated, middle class and cosmopolitan Arab expatriates who shared little in common with the Afghani mujahedin or the Pakistani militant Taliban who were, by comparison, traditional, parochial and uninterested in al-Qaeda's more global doctrine. Nevertheless, Azzam and bin Laden assembled a small militant group in Peshawar and

established a number of recruiting offices throughout the Middle East where recruits from all over the world with a desire to fight non- and anti-Islamic forces would arrive for instruction and training.

Bin Laden returned to his home country of Saudi Arabia in 1989, but in 1992 he was exiled to Sudan. Returning to Afghanistan in 1996, he issued his treatise: *A Declaration of War against the Americans occupying the Land of the Holy Places* (1996), in which he argued that peaceful protest had failed and that violence targeted at the 'far enemies' of Islam would be the only way to effectively return the Golden Age. America and all Americans became God-given targets of *jihadi* aggression, and, as a consequence, in 1998, a group linked to al-Qaeda bombed the American embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi, signalling a shift in violent Islamism to undertaking aggressive actions abroad. The USA retaliated by shelling parts of Sudan and Afghanistan from their warships in the Gulf, which, coupled with bin Laden's increasing notoriety, served to bring the Taliban and mujahedin into bin Laden's fold, considerably augmenting al-Qaeda's military strength.

The growth of al-Qaeda

Due to infighting about the meaning of *jihad*, al-Qaeda lost many of its less extremist members in the mid-1990s, leaving behind a core of highly militant *jihadists*. By the late 1990s, this al-Qaeda core consisted of approximately 12 pre-eminent transnational militant radicals (who were mostly Egyptian) and around 100 highly committed 'troops' (Burke, 2004). Al-Qaeda was a small radical Islamist organisation amongst many, but this is not to understate bin Laden's influence. He had significant reserves of cash and contacts throughout the world, as well as burgeoning respect for his personal rejection of affluence, his diplomacy, common touch, and his nerve and ability to stand up to global superpowers.

This, coupled with the religious authority of bin Laden's fellow al-Qaeda general and main ideologue, Ayman al-Zawahri, attracted increased donations to al-Qaeda and expanded their notoriety, both of which facilitated the increasing spread of their 'brand' of violent Islamism. Embattled militants in various countries, connected to al-Qaeda by kinship, inter-marriage or through friendships forged in blood on the battlefields of Afghanistan and Bosnia, inspired and aided radical Islamists the world over to travel to Afghanistan to engage in terrorist and battlefield training (Sageman, 2004). These forms of networked recruitment provided al-Qaeda with a global reach, highly motivated recruits, dense trust networks and ensuing secrecy. In this context, al-Qaeda did not need to actively recruit or 'brain wash' people as orthodoxy sometimes assumes, but: 'A theme [that emerges from the evidence] is the formation of a network of friendships that solidified and preceded formal induction into the terrorist organisation' (Sageman, 2004:108).

This global dispersal of recruits led to the formation of al-Qaeda-linked networks located throughout the world. Al-Qaeda had become a kind of 'franchise' organisation, and its global reach and loose organisation of 'cells' provided it with a highly adaptable, nebulous and resilient structure. One of these, the 'Hamburg cell', secured al-Qaeda and bin Laden a firm place in history when they travelled to America and, in 2001, hijacked four commercial aeroplanes, two of which were flown into the World Trade Centre killing approximately 3,000 people.

The transformation of al-Qaeda

Just as the confidence, symbolic resonance and subsequent allure of al-Qaeda had increased following bin Laden's battlefield success against the Soviet army in Afghanistan (Burke, 2004), the 2001 attack on US soil, and other successful attacks on Western targets since (see **Appendix 1**), also bolstered the membership and relative power of al-Qaeda. Additionally, the West's immediate counter-reaction to the 2001 attacks, the 'War on Terror', appears to have contributed to an increase in the power and allure of al-Qaeda's ideological brand. The US-led invasion of Afghanistan destroyed al-

Qaeda's infrastructure, removed some of its Generals, and dispersed others, including bin Laden, disrupting al-Qaeda's military machinery – its sources of income, training camps and freedom of movement and communication. Yet, the invasion did nothing to disrupt the idea of al-Qaeda or its doctrinal allure, and appears to have actually increased this by tainting the moral image of the West (see Chapter Four).

Al-Qaeda's evolution from a hierarchically organised group based in Afghanistan to a loosely 'franchised' organisation with an international reach and a resilient networked structure has become accompanied by its further evolution to a free-floating ideology uncoupled from a central command structure and which inspires particular groups and individuals the world over. For example, analysis of the '7/7' 2005 London bombers 'cell' suggests that its members had radicalised, plotted and carried out their attack with little or no contact with al-Qaeda networks (Kirby, 2007). This illustrates clearly that al-Qaeda had become a symbolic and doctrinal entity under which violent Islamist groups and 'cells' of many kinds came to congregate. This is not to deny however that older forms of al-Qaeda-directed terrorism have completely disappeared; in discrete and isolated corners of 'failed' and failing states, it is possible that new bases and training camps will form, and from which new networks will spread out. Al-Qaeda's brand of violent Islamism is therefore, nebulous and many-sided, consisting at least partly of 'cells' that apparently require no contact with a command structure at all.

The size of al-Qaeda

As a consequence of its metamorphic structure it is especially difficult to know who is and who is not a member of al-Qaeda, how many members it has, or, indeed, what it represents. Cronin (2006:34) reports that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) estimates that the number of individuals who passed through training camps in Afghanistan from 1996-2001 was between 10,000 and 20,000 individuals. Yet, the CIA has no certain knowledge of the number of training camps, nor of the numbers of individuals that emerge from them. Another estimate by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (2004) put the number of al-Qaeda operatives to have been arrested or killed at 2,000, but also suggested that 18,000 potential al-Qaeda operatives remained (Cronin, 2006). Yet, as al-Qaeda no longer needs to train or even have contact with recruits, these numbers are likely to be seriously unreliable.

What do al-Qaeda want?

It is often claimed that al-Qaeda is composed of nihilistic fanatics with no demands, intent only on notoriety and destruction (see, for example, Ignatieff, 2005). However, as noted above, it is very difficult to state who is and who is not part of al-Qaeda and, therefore, even more difficult to say who al-Qaeda is or what they want (Burke, 2004). Al-Qaeda is a banner under which various groups and organisations with different histories and grievances congregate, and thus has no single demand (cf. Burke, 2008). Further, while some individual members may be nihilistic fanatics, others will be highly motivated politico-religious revolutionaries with clearly articulated aims. Even bin Laden has on occasion made clear his demands, usually referring to the withdrawal of US influence from Afghanistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Palestine. He has also suggested that he would be prepared to attend negotiations with the US.

Modus operandi

Al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda-inspired violent activity is often described as a qualitatively new and different form of terrorism (see, for example, Baudrillard, 2002), which is said to result from it being based on:

- religious fanaticism;
- a membership willing to give their own lives in martyrdom, especially through suicide bombings;

- excessive use of violence and indiscriminate killing;
- novel recruitment processes and adept manipulation of the media for those purposes;
- new technologies of terror; and
- a fluid, free-floating organisational structure that provides operational and financial flexibility, adaptability, self-sufficiency and resilience.

Whilst the exact forms of al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism are obviously unparalleled in the past, the very concepts of 'new' and 'old' may actually restrict thinking about the problem and entangle it in a largely irrelevant conceptual framework. There are many similarities between al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda-inspired groups and past insurgent groups, similarities which may help to understand and counter its threat.

Firstly, it has been observed, for example, that the 19th century anarchists shared many organisational characteristics with al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism (Cronin, 2006). Anarchists had no clear overarching aim and displayed a cell-like structure with an international reach composed of independent, self-radicalising groups and individuals. Secondly, religious terrorism is not at all new, as until the French revolution *all* terrorism was based in religion (Richardson, 2006). For example, the 11th century Assassins were Shi'a Muslims that shared a culture of religious martyrdom whereby, following their attacks, they would wait to be arrested or beaten to death by the crowd (Rapoport, 1984).

Thirdly, it can be questioned whether al-Qaeda's brand of violent Islamism is in fact primarily religious at all (cf. Abbas, 2007). Islam, in this context, may function more like a symbolic banner under which a political struggle is spread and fought, rather than being the basis for that struggle. Certainly al-Qaeda's early targets were highly politically symbolic, clearly aimed at specific symbols of US power. It has been subsequent attacks that have been more indiscriminate and less clearly identifiable as politically inspired (for example the London, Bali, and Madrid bombings), which may be the result of al-Qaeda's burgeoning little-networked structure. Additionally, if globalisation is seen to have increasingly integrated the world, and capitalism as engulfing it, violent Islamism could be viewed as an ethnically-based global separatist movement – a globalised version of the numerous ethnic-separatist groups that have gone before, many of which have also operated under the banner of religion, including the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in Catholic Northern Ireland or the Sikh separatists in India.

Fourthly, in terms of al-Qaeda's adeptness at exploiting the media, it should be considered that all terrorism relies on the manipulation of some form of media as part of its basic repertoire (see Chapter One). Before the advent of effective print media, the Assassins, for example, would commit their acts within large public gatherings for full effect (Rapoport, 1984). Thus al-Qaeda's use of media may not be new, but simply reflect the fact that the media with which it operates have changed. Moreover, in the recent past, dominant states commonly had privileged access to the media and would try to silence their opponents through blocking their access (see Sluka, 1989), but, due to the information revolution, almost any group can now utilise wide-ranging global media.

Claims as to the 'newness' of al-Qaeda and its off-shoots may have been set by the hugely iconographic and hyper-mediated attacks of 9/11 and the ensuing emotive reactions. Yet claims for example about al-Qaeda's access to new and dangerous technology appear to defy the actuality of the low-tech weapons used, including knives, hydrogen peroxide (i.e. bleach), acetone (nail-varnish remover), sulphuric acid (contained in regular batteries), gas cylinders and nails. Furthermore, as Louise Richardson (2006:55) argues, citing the actions of nation states in the Second World War: 'The greater brutality of terrorists reflects a greater brutality of political life generally'. The indiscriminate

nature of al-Qaeda-based attacks is thus not at all unparalleled in history. Moreover, Sikh separatists indiscriminately targeted air plane passengers in the early 1980s, and the IRA began their campaign of violence in the 1970s with attacks that injured civilians from their own community and others unconnected to their struggle⁴.

Suicide missions

A substantial aspect of the armoury of violent Islamism has been the employment of suicide missions. These however, are also not new, nor are they only linked to Islam, but have occurred throughout history in various guises and have been carried out under a range of ideological and religious philosophies. For example, Silke (2006: 40) points to the Old Testament's description of Sampson's suicide which is: 'presented as an act of redemption as well as vengeance... [suggesting that] it is not just Islam which can provide mixed messages on the merits and appropriateness of violent suicide'. Moreover, modern forms of suicide mission were begun by secular groups: the Japanese Kamikaze during the Second World War⁵, and members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the 1970s. Indeed, between 1981 and 2003, over 50 per cent of suicide missions were carried out by secular groups (Gambetta, 2005). Their uses among modern Islamic insurgents began with struggles in Lebanon (1973-1990) and were later carried out by Members of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Palestine.

Those who undertake suicide missions, like members of terrorist organisations in general, tend, on the whole, not to be psychologically deranged, but are more likely to be highly politicised individuals who have encountered violence, discrimination and/or humiliation against their fellows (Richardson, 2006; Sarraj, 1997; Silke, 2006). Such experience can be vicarious; a product of images and discourses on suffering (Speckhard, 2007) and, in the current conflict, this is bolstered through a sense of *umma* (the global Islamic brotherhood) that powerfully sensitises some Muslims to the suffering of their fellows (see Chapter Three). Suicide missions are therefore akin to forms of altruistic suicide (cf. Atran, 2003; Durkheim, 1952 [1897]) and, in terms of the logistics of terrorism, are driven by apparently rational aims (Pape, 2005). It has been suggested that in Palestine and Sri Lanka, for example, there are usually more recruits for suicide missions than the organisations can efficiently utilise (Gambetta, 2005). Such missions may provide their incumbents with a sense of revenge, renown and reaction (Richardson, 2006), and are a powerful tactical weapon of the weak (Pape, 2005), which in most cases succeed in provoking a reaction where other tactics may fail (Kalyvas and Sanchez-Luenia, 2005). Suicide missions tend to provoke inspiration and admiration from supporters and some bystanders⁶, and fear, insecurity and incredulity from their opponents.

Analysis of Palestinian suicide bombers illustrates that they, like members of terror groups in general, tend to be better educated and more affluent than Palestinians in general (Atran, 2003). This also appears to have been the case for many of those involved in planning and/or executing al-Qaeda-

⁴ The IRA later drew away from indiscriminate killing with the realisation that it was losing them support (Sluka, 1989).

⁵ It is important to note that the Kamikaze attacked only military targets and not civilians. Psychologically it may be simpler to attack military targets in terms of personal justification and legitimisation for such attacks. Kamikaze missions are therefore, somewhat different to al-Qaeda-based suicide missions.

⁶ There is evidence from Northern Ireland to suggest that during the IRA hunger strikes in the 1980s, broad social support for the IRA increased because of the resolve, commitment and self-sacrifice demonstrated by the hunger strikers (Sluka, 1989). This is in many ways different to al-Qaeda-inspired suicide because the IRA hunger strikers did not take the life of anyone but themselves. Nonetheless, giving ones life for a cause demonstrates extreme commitment and self-sacrifice that impacts powerfully on audiences.

inspired bombings in the UK (see **Appendix 2**). One study (Pargetter, 2006) argues that British Islamist martyrs are more likely to be members of the middle class, whereas those engaged in *Jihadi* combat on battlefields abroad are more likely to be less formally educated and have criminal histories. However, since the evidence base on involvement in suicide missions by British citizens is small, and evidence on those fighting abroad is even smaller, such generalisations should be treated with caution.

Not all al-Qaeda-inspired plots and attacks have involved suicide missions, and quite what motivates individuals who grow up in the West to follow a doctrine for which they are willing to give their lives and take the lives of others, is subject to much debate, which is the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

How do UK citizens become involved in Islamist terrorism?

To effectively generate terror, violent Islamism has to engender members willing to take huge risks for its cause. Their recruitment depends on forms of ideology that are able to somehow fit into their frames of reference; media and spokespeople to spread the ideology; and networks of supporters from which operatives can be recruited and encouraged. This chapter examines the key processes thought to facilitate involvement in and support for contemporary violent Islamist activity in the UK.

The main factors deemed to underlie British-based radicalisation into violent Islamism are:

- deprivation and frustrated ambitions;
- discrimination;
- the politics of identity and religion;
- gender;
- low levels of religious literacy;
- manipulative radicalisers;
- family and friendship associations with radicalisers; and
- Western foreign policy.

Various combinations of these factors are regularly cited in the literature and by counter-terrorism officials as the main ingredients for the spread of violent Islamism, although they are not uncontested. Evidence suggests that there is no single pathway to violent extremism (Blick et al., 2006; Chaudhury, 2007; Innes et al., 2007; Pargeter, 2006; Sageman, 2004), and, as mentioned in the last chapter, many cells operating under the al-Qaeda banner appear to be 'self-starters', only subsequently seeking contact with al-Qaeda operatives (Sageman, 2004), with others having little or no contact at all (Kirby, 2007). What is known with some certainty is that al-Qaeda-inspired violent radicals in the UK have emerged from the British Muslim population.

The British Muslim population

Demographic data on the British Muslim population is limited. UK statistics have, until recently, grouped British Muslims under the category 'Asian' or, latterly, as 'Muslim'. This is problematic because both Asian and Muslim groups are highly heterogeneous, characterised by a plethora of

national backgrounds and faith groups. For example, British Bangladeshi Muslims living in London's Tower Hamlets are said to be largely cut off from the wider British Muslim population and have brought with them from Bangladesh a form of secular politics that tends to be critical of Islam. Even within the group, there are divisions by politics, faith and tradition (Begum and Eade, 2005)⁷.

In the 2001 Census, the British Muslim population was estimated at 1.6 million individuals. It is a young population with an average age of 28 (compared to the UK average of 40), characterised by large family sizes (Peach, 2005), suggesting that the above figure is now likely to be an underestimate. Of the 1.6 million British Muslims registered in 2001:

- 42% were Pakistani;
- 16% were Bangladeshi;
- 8% were Indian; and
- the remainder were a diverse group including: Arabs, Albanians, Bosnians, Eritreans, Ethiopians, Iranians, Nigerians, Somalians, Sudanese, Turkish and many others, including a number of UK converts to Islam.

Of all British Muslims, approximately:

- 40% live in London;
- 12% live in Birmingham;
- 9 % live in the Bradford and Leeds area; and
- 8 % live in Greater Manchester (calculated from Peach, 2005).

The largest group, British Pakistanis, are residentially concentrated mainly in the Midlands and the Northern industrial towns and cities of Bradford, Leeds and Greater Manchester, with only 20 per cent living in London.

Most British Pakistanis were originally from the rural areas of Azad Kashmir and Mirpur. They arrived in Britain in the 1970s along with the second largest British Muslim group who came predominately from Sylhet in Bangladesh (the majority of whom live in London's Tower Hamlets). Both Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups were invited as ex-colonial subjects of the Crown to work predominately in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs in Britain's heavy industry during a period of labour shortage. This employment pattern partly explains the groups' clustered settlement in Northern mill towns, the industrial West Midlands, and in London's dock areas. However, almost as soon as Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups arrived in Britain, global economic competition led to deindustrialisation and the subsequent decline in manual work, heavy industry and shipping, which left substantial proportions of British Muslims, particularly the second generation, living in areas of concentrated deprivation and unemployment.

Deprivation and frustrated ambition

Partly as a consequence of their migration history, the British Muslim population is the most deprived group in British society (Abbas, 2005; Maxwell, 2006). In 2001, only 38 per cent of British Muslims

⁷ This is not to say that these factions have not to some degree joined together in their opposition to recent British and US foreign policy (see Begum and Eade, 2005).

were officially registered in employment and, of these, most worked in low skilled jobs (Blick et al., 2006; Peach, 2005). British Muslims, particularly Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups, also:

- tend to have fewer educational qualifications than the population as a whole, and suffer low levels of upward social mobility (Platt, 2007);
- live in the most overcrowded housing conditions; and
- suffer the highest rates of illness and disability of all UK ethnic groups (Peach, 2005).

Such concentrated and intergenerational deprivation has been linked to the rise in violent Islamism. As an example of this, three out of four of the 7/7 London bombers grew up in or near Beeston in Leeds – an area of clustered British Muslim residence and concentrated deprivation. However, it is important to note that no forms of violent Islamism have been linked to British Bangladeshis who are the most deprived members of the British Muslim community. Furthermore, there is considerable evidence to suggest that it is not the most deprived individuals who become involved in terrorist organisations in general (Atran, 2003; Gambetta, 2005; Richardson, 2006; Sageman, 2004). Schmid's (2005) analysis of levels of deprivation and terrorism globally finds only a small correlation between poverty and terrorism, which stands in contrast to a much stronger correlation between violations of human rights and the growth of terrorism.

In 2001, prior to the terrorist attacks on the USA, rioting occurred in some of Britain's most deprived Muslim communities in the cities of Oldham, Burnley and Bradford. This manifestly illustrated the existence of social problems and an acute sense of frustration within those communities (Cantile, 2001). However, it cannot be assumed that the factors and processes that formed a backdrop to the riots were the same as those that underpin involvement in violent extremism: rioting and terrorism are two quite different forms of political struggle involving different motives and moralities. What the riots clearly demonstrate however is that the young British Muslims involved were disenchanted and, in many cases, alienated from the police, mainstream politics, and white British society in general (Macey, 2007).

It has also been suggested that violent Islamists are aspiring and fully integrated individuals whose ambitions have been frustrated by an increasingly unequal society (Young, 2007). Some of the 7/7 bombers could be placed in this category, including Mohammed Sidique Khan and Shehzad Tanweer who were both university graduates working in relatively low-skilled occupations. Additionally, Burke (2004) identifies a number of common background factors shared by non-UK born members of the al-Qaeda 'hub' including frustrated ambitions, but also: recent migration from rural provinces to urban centres; having middle class parents; religious upbringings; and a university education in a technical discipline. Yet, with respect to British violent Islamists, the picture is more complex and nuanced than this. As illustrated below, profiles of those convicted of involvement in al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism indicate that they tend to be from a plethora of different national and ethnic backgrounds, geographical locations, and display various migration histories and levels of formal education and integration. Further, the attempted terrorist attacks on the UK mainland in June 2007 involving immigrant health professionals, contradicts the notion that British-based violent Islamism is necessarily linked to frustrated occupational ambition.

Deprivation may provide the emotional vicissitudes and basis for moral justifications of political violence, but it has been suggested that those suffering the deepest deprivations tend to be too preoccupied with the challenges of everyday life to partake in organised political activities (cf. Croteau, 1995). Yet, a strong sense of collective Islamic identity underpinned by *umma*, appears to generate and/or amplify feelings about economic and political discrimination in other, less deprived, sections of the global Islamic brotherhood. Vicariously experiencing the pain and frustration of their impoverished

brethren, partly embellished through the spread of an increasingly global media, appears to push some less deprived British Muslims into becoming the political representatives of their downtrodden fellows (cf. Speckhard, 2007), and it is in this sense that deprivation may play a key role in the processes of radicalisation into violent Islamism.

Discrimination and the politics of identity

The spread of violent Islamism into Muslim communities in the West has been linked with the rise in Muslim diaspora identity politics. Explicit self-recognition of a singular and transnational Muslim identity is a form of Western politics of recognition engaged in for empowerment and equality, and which took hold in the 1980s in the wake of the decline of class politics and the fragmentation of inclusive 'black' race politics (Modood, 2003). It is mirrored by the rise of new religious movements, which may, like politicised identities, provide a source of psychological security and belonging in an increasingly fast-changing and insecure world (Giddens, 1991). In an ethnographic analysis of a group of young Bangladeshi men in Tower Hamlets, for example, Alexander (2000) suggests that the experience of deprivation, discrimination and racism that the young men faced had an insidious effect on their self-esteem which they countered through their explicit adoption of Islam and the collective strength found in *umma*. As Modood (2003) argues, being and feeling distant from their parents' homeland and its culture, as well as from mainstream white British culture, this supra-national, religiously-based identity provides second and third generation British Muslims with a cultural home, easing identity contradictions and providing a solid and empowering collective sense of belonging.

As pan-Islamic identity is not tied to any single national geography, it allows for a dual identity of being both British and a Muslim, and may in the vast majority of cases provide a mechanism for integration (MCB, 2007; Modood, 2005). Moreover, it has been argued that since 2001, a more mainstream British Muslim identity has emerged, providing a route for British Muslims to express their dissent and disapproval of British Government policy and of radical Islam itself (Appleton, 2005; Yaqoob, 2007)⁸. In support of this, survey data indicate that the overwhelming majority (86%) of British Muslims feel a sense of belonging to Britain despite citing Islam as central to their lives and identities (Maxwell, 2006)⁹. These data were, however, collected before the 2005 London bombings, after which British Muslims' notions of belonging to the UK may have significantly altered (see Blick et al., 2006; and below).

Since the Salmon Rushdie affair in 1989 and the first Gulf war in 1991, the adoption of an explicit Muslim identity may have become increasingly attractive to British Muslims. The invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and rising levels of Islamophobia since 2001 and 2005 have ostensibly compounded this trend (Chaudhury, 2007; Marranci, 2005; Maxwell, 2006; Policy Exchange, 2007; Spalek, 2007). Of course, only a tiny minority of those explicitly identifying as Muslim become violent Islamists but, in the present British political landscape, the decline of class politics and the socialist left may have left disaffected minorities with few legitimate avenues of effective expression (Waddington, 2000). Cut-backs in the Welfare State since the 1980s, whereby government provision

⁸ Appleton's survey of Muslim students' attitudes represents only the minority of formally educated British Muslims rather than the less formally educated majority. Further, there is no evidence to suggest that their movement is new, simply that it is voiced. The majority of middle class British Muslims may have always been integrationist and anti-radical. Yaqoob (2007) however, shows that unprecedented numbers of British Muslims turned out to vote against UK foreign policy in the 2005 general election.

⁹ Data from the fourth PSI Survey indicates that 95 per cent of British Muslims surveyed felt that religion was 'very' or 'fairly' central to their lives (in comparison with 46 per cent of white members of the Church of England) (Blick et al., 2006).

for British Muslim community-based projects (youth clubs, after school projects, English classes, employment services etc) were largely replaced by Mosque-based services, may have compounded this by exacerbating faith-based community divides and peppering community provision with religion (Hussain, 2006). Political expression is also blocked by restricted access of British Muslims to British public life, excluding their voices from mainstream media, party politics and the arts. This is a serious problem in terms of the growth of violent Islamism because, as Hussain (2006:2) suggests: 'The path to social advancement may be closed to [British Muslims] elsewhere, but the doorway to rightwing, fundamentalist theology is broad and always open'.

It has been claimed that second and third generation young British Muslims may be becoming more religiously conservative than the first generation (Policy Exchange, 2007¹⁰). Maxwell's (2006) analysis of the Citizenship survey indicates that the longer Muslims spend living in the UK (including time spent growing up in the UK), the more likely they are to feel British. It may therefore be the case that it is British Muslim youth, rather than being part of a youthful cohort, that is periodically religiously conservative.

It seems clear that British Muslims' adoption of a collective, religiously-based identity, apparently unparalleled by other faith groups, frames (and is framed by) a subjective connection with other Muslims both locally and globally. This connection, sustained by global media and a strong sense of *umma*, provides an emotional connection between the geographically distant pan-Islamic family, provoking feelings of anger and upset towards the deprivation and discrimination of many of the world's Muslims. However, possessing a strong sense of Islamic identity and becoming deeply involved in the teachings of Islam and the lives of Muslims certainly does not mean that one will become a violent extremist.

Identity politics and violent extremism

Chaudhury's (2007) review of the literature on the role of Muslim identity politics in radicalisation led him to conclude that the path from radicalisation into extremist activity commonly involves an individual's search for identity at a moment of crisis. Underlying identity crisis is a sense of not belonging to or not being accepted by society, predominately as a result of discrimination, racism and lack of confidence in its political system. These factors shake potential radicals' psychological frames of reference and lead them to question what it means to be a Muslim. In the UK, the answers to such questions cannot be found in many traditional religious institutions or organisations because they often fail to address the problems of the young, being based primarily in country-of-origin traditions and often led by non-English speaking imams (see Din, 2006). This leaves a 'space' that extremist groups can exploit through active public recruitment or, more commonly, through social networking (Sageman, 2004; Wiktorowicz, 2005).

It should be re-emphasised that overall, British Muslims actually tend to invest higher levels of trust in the British political system than their Anglo-Saxon counterparts. The small minority that do express distrust tend however to be younger and better educated (Maxwell, 2006), which reflects the general profile of those found to be involved in al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism (see Appendices 2 and 3, and below). Nonetheless, much of the discourse on the causes and effects of burgeoning British Muslim identity tends to be theoretical conjecture. It is not totally clear what identity is or what its effects on social action and consciousness are, and it is questionable whether people's sense of identity can be

¹⁰ The Policy Exchange (2007) survey compared the attitudes of 16-24 year old British Muslims with those aged 55+. It shows that the younger cohort had significantly more conservative religious views and that larger proportions of them encouraged religious *Sharia* law and religious conservatism. The study has however come under criticism for not revealing its sampling methodology or interview questions and for its political impartiality (see: <http://mpacuk.org.content.view/3318>).

established from closed, limited-response social survey questions like those contained in the UK Citizenship Survey. Panel discussions and focus groups with British Muslims demonstrate that they tend to express a number of flexible identities rather than a single homogenous one (Blick et al., 2006), and research suggests that identity varies by social context (cf. Goffman, 1959; Jenkins, 2002). The notion of 'identity crisis' can, therefore, be called into question. Moreover, many people experience a crisis of identity at some point in their lives without resorting to political violence to resolve it.

Susceptibility and recruitment

Evidence indicates that those who become involved in violent Islamism most frequently hold low levels of religious literacy which increases their susceptibility to religious indoctrination (Chaudhury, 2007; Wiktorowicz, 2005). Indeed, in a report leaked to *The Guardian* newspaper in 2008, it was claimed by MI5 that possessing a strong sense of Islamic identity actually protected against radicalisation into violent Islamism¹¹. For those with limited knowledge of Islam, Violent Islamist organisations and doctrine provides potential recruits with apparently convincing but theologically weak answers to their unanswered questions (cf. Wiktorowicz, 2005).

The organisations also provide:

- a sense of belonging and an empowered sense of self;
- dramatic and intensive evidence of atrocities against Islam;
- dehumanising discourses on their enemies; and
- religious justifications for violent political action.

Wiktorowicz's (2005) ethnographic study of the now outlawed UK radical Islamist group, al-Muhajiroun, shows that although the group tried to actively recruit members through speeches and demonstrations in and around mosques and in universities and stalls set up in public areas, the vast majority of their recruits were members of the social networks of existing recruits. Wiktorowicz suggests that following some kind of personal crisis, potential members sought answers to their problems from within their faith, but those with social networks linked to al-Muhajiroun became susceptible to the group's doctrine which was adept at providing clear, convincing and empowering resolutions to the potential recruits' personal problems. Consequently, '...seekers reach out to activist friends and activist friends reach out (and even prompt) seekers' (ibid: 22). Wiktorowicz also demonstrates that personal crisis can be the result of any number of social, economic, political or personal problems, but one of the most salient of these was feelings of racism and discrimination and the perceived inability of mainstream political and religious organisations to effectively address such problems. It is important to remember however that not all violent Islamists have been recruited, but that many are apparently 'self-starters'.

The social characteristics of plotters found guilty in UK courts

From a cursory analysis of conviction data of UK-based violent Islamist plotters¹² (**Appendix 2**), it can be seen that, of those found guilty to date:

- their approximate age range was 20-39, with a mean age of 28;

¹¹ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/aug/20/uksecurity.terrorism>

¹² This analysis of conviction data is largely supported by an MI5 report leaked to the press in 2008 based on analysis of 'several hundred individuals known to be involved in, or closely associated with, violent extremist activity'. See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/aug/20/uksecurity.terrorism>

- around 50 per cent lived in London ¹³;
- a relatively large proportion were students and graduates (in relation to the relatively low levels of formal educational qualifications within the British Muslim community in general);
- approximately half were born in the UK and half were economic or political migrants that had lived in the UK most of their lives; and
- a small proportion were converts, of which the majority were second generation Caribbean .

On the other hand, those found guilty of inciting Islamist violence (**Appendix 3**) tended, on average, to be older than plotters, with an approximate age range of 20-50; a mean age of 34; and with over 50 per cent living in London. The educational levels, age distributions and marital status of both groups were in contrast to, for example, those found guilty of criminal offences, who tend to be younger, unmarried and less formally educated (cf. Silke, 2008).

Analysis of the 'cell' structures of UK-based plots (**Appendix 2**) reveals that:

- 'core' members of cells tend to share long-standing associations with one another, living or growing up close by each other, but not exclusively; and
- cells consist of between 2 and 13 members, with a mean size of 6.

Actual cells are likely to be larger than conviction data suggest because some members, particularly the more marginal ones, may not have been convicted. There may have also been various 'shades' of support for plots (cf. Sluka, 1989) and therefore no clear dividing line between those who did and those who did not hold knowledge about terrorist activities. Most cells appear to consist of a core of long-standing friends as well as a number of looser associates (e.g. the 7/7 cell and the 'Bluewater' plotters) and the data suggests that cell formations grew out of such friendships (or family associations) initially, with members becoming violent radicals later (cf. Sageman, 2004). A number of plot members are reported to have visited Pakistan before instigating their plots or being convicted for plotting, but this appears to have occurred following their radicalisation and it is not clear what members did there or whether they had any contact with other violent Islamists.

Gender

To date, the overriding majority of those found to be involved in British-based violent Islamism are men. Men may be more attracted to terrorist organisations than women because of their association with masculine notions of strength, protection and levels of heroic excitement, which may enhance members' masculine status and be very seductive to young men in particular (cf. Katz, 1988) who may subsequently block the entry of women into their groups. However, women have been found to be engaged in terrorist operations and suicide missions in, for example, Palestine, Iraq and Sri Lanka (Gambetta, 2005; Richardson, 2006), and the adaptive nature of al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism means that it may not continue to be the predominant preserve of men. Indeed, in 2007, the wife of a British Muslim suicide bomber stated in an interview that her husband had tried to recruit her for a suicide mission (BBC, 2007a). Additionally, in 2008, three British Muslim women were successfully prosecuted for their involvement in UK-based terrorist cells (see **Appendix 2**). These appear to have been in support roles but, as outlined above, social support fuels terrorism and is thereby a central aspect of the problem.

¹³ Although this is not surprising given that 40 per cent of all British Muslims live in London.

Sites of recruitment and radicalisation

Radicalisation is deemed by the police and Government to occur at particular sites. For example, a number of UK citizens found to be involved in violent Islamism converted to Islam and/or were radicalised into violent Islamism in UK prisons (HM Government, 2006). Prisons have a long history of inmates finding or turning to religion, and many religious conversions occur in them, Malcolm X being one famous example. The failed 'shoe bomber', Richard Reed, converted to Islam whilst an inmate in Feltham Young Offenders' Institution, but his subsequent journey from Islam to violent Islamism appeared to occur after his release and is associated with his involvement in the Brixton mosque (BBC, 2001). A number of other prison converts have, on release, been supported by mosque-based services at a time in their life where little after-care is provided by other institutions. Similar processes have been observed among Muslim asylum seekers who, new to an unfamiliar country, unable to work, and possibly suffering considerable stress, are targeted by radical organisations and individuals operating on the fringes of mosques (see Githens-Mazer and Lambert, 2008; Pargetter, 2006).

In addition, language barriers and country of origin politics and traditions that dominate talk in and around many British mosques tend to be remote to second and third generations who may consequently drift to the fringe (cf. Din, 2006), increasing their susceptibility to radicalisation processes. Intensified police and security service action, supported by new legislation and cooperation with mainstream Muslim organisations (see Chapters Four and Five), may have driven-out most active radicalisation in and around mosques. Yet, in terms of prisons, reports continue to alert to the threat of radicalisation at these sites¹⁴ despite concerted efforts by Government and security services to counter such processes (see Chapter Four). Also, despite the findings from a large-scale survey of Muslims studying at British Universities indicating that the vast majority rejected Islamist extremism and tried to distance themselves from it (Appleton, 2005), it is apparent that extremism still exists to some degree at British universities, even though this may not necessarily translate into political violence.

Mosques in Britain

The first official mosque to be set up in Britain was established in Woking in 1889 (McLaughlin, 2003). Initially British mosques were shared by a variety of Muslim faith groups but, as more mosques became established, different factions of the Muslim community separated into faith-specific mosques. Now there are estimated to be between 1,500 and 3,000 mosques in Britain (Blick et al., 2006). Most of these are not purpose built dome-like structures but are set up in converted houses and community centres, which accounts for the wide variation in estimations of their numbers. Mosques are run not by their imams but by non-elected tribal groups (*biradaris*) who administer them autonomously, and who select which imams work in their mosques.

Other sites assumed to be implicated in radicalisation are: Islamic book shops; Islamic study groups; visits to Pakistan; and inflammatory literature and internet sites. However, the overwhelming weight of evidence suggests that friendship and family relations, rather than brainwashing or active recruitment, is the most critical and frequently occurring variable in becoming a violent Islamist. It is also important to remember that sites of radicalisation change and are likely to continue to change in order to stay one step ahead of police counter-action. This point is worth emphasising because, like the changing organisational characteristics of al-Qaeda, sites and forms of radicalisation are likely to be in almost

¹⁴ See for example: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7347643.stm>; and Lowe and Innes (2008).

continual metamorphosis. As counter-terrorist apparatus adapt to the threat, the threat counter-adapts in order to avoid its capture and so on (Innes and Thiel, 2008). In this context, counter-terrorist agencies might expect the unexpected and avoid becoming set into institutional or taken-for-granted ways of doing things (see Manning, 2006).

The role of religion

As most recent terrorist events have been carried out in the name of Islam and committed by those professing to be Muslims, it has been suggested that Islam itself somehow facilitates terrorism and justifies suicide bombings. This however, does not appear to be the case. As mentioned in Chapter One, like any mainstream religion, there are various interpretations of Islam, ranging from the very liberal to the radically extreme. Yet, it may be that religion, rather than Islam itself, plays a role in facilitating terrorist violence, although this role appears to be one of connecting its members and facilitating moral justification for violent action rather than in causing the commission of terrorist acts.

Religion, rather than Islam per say, may play a facilitating role in the commission of terrorist acts because:

- religious texts can be interpreted to neutralise and justify member's actions in the eyes of the most powerful source of moral authority – God – which can be raised high above the authority of nation states and their laws;
- placing one's actions into the hands of supernatural powers may relinquish personal responsibility, enabling behaviour to be justified as supernaturally moral, thereby releasing psychological barriers to violent behaviour (cf. Sykes and Matza, 1957); and
- religion provides some of the 'social glue' required to tightly bind members together in pursuit of a common cause.

Foreign policy

A major influence on the emergence and spread of violent Islamism is the singular view that the West has oppressed Muslims throughout history. Whilst this is not the case if one takes a long-term view of history, Western colonisation of parts of the Middle East, North Africa and the Indian subcontinent in the 19th and 20th centuries, the splitting of the state of Palestine in 1947, and Western military action in the Middle East in late 20th and early 21st century, have all adversely tainted the moral image of the West, particularly the UK and the USA. The second war in Iraq has compounded this image, especially given the official justification for the war – that Saddam Hussein was assembling weapons of mass destruction – a justification which has now been clearly discredited (Butler, 2004). It should be noted though, that a number of violent Islamist terror plots were uncovered before recent USA and UK aggression in Afghanistan and Iraq (Manningham-Buller, 2006), and a number of al-Qaeda-linked and inspired attacks have occurred in countries not linked to hostilities in the Middle East, such as Tunisia. These later attacks might be linked to violent Islamists' antipathy towards Western 'decadence' and interference, but the 'reconstruction' of Iraq and Afghanistan has undoubtedly added fuel to Islamist frames of reference about the West.

An indication of British Muslim attitudes towards UK foreign policy is highlighted in a survey conducted in 2006 by the 1990 Trust ¹⁵, which shows that:

- 91% of British Muslims surveyed disagreed with UK Government foreign policy;

¹⁵ Based on a snowballed sample of 1,213 British Muslims.

- 93% felt that UK Government policy on terrorism is dictated by the US; and
- 81% believed the 'War on Terror' to be a war on Muslims.

The same survey also revealed that the vast majority (82%) of those surveyed felt that British Muslims had become more radicalised since 2001, although 65 per cent of respondents did not primarily associate radicalism with violence, and only a small minority (1.9%) felt that it was justifiable to commit acts of terrorism against civilians in the UK.

In the same year, an ICM poll of British Muslims (2006)¹⁶ showed that the majority of respondents (approximately 60%) felt that British Muslims had become more alienated from British society since 7/7, but only 20 per cent felt sympathy with the 'feelings and motives' of the July 7th bombers, with just one per cent believing the attacks to be 'right'. Due to its sampling method and size, the ICM poll is of questionable validity but, taken together, these two polls suggest some indication of various shades of support for violent Islamism within the British Muslim population, and that this is perhaps increasing.¹⁷

Conclusion

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that feelings of racism and discrimination underpin a susceptibility to various forms of Islamist radicalisation into violent action. Racism and discrimination are manifest in multifarious overt and covert guises, but more institutionalised forms contained in foreign policy and some policing and employment practices, together with the symbolic effects of the widespread deprivation of Muslims, may have an insidious effect on some British Muslims' sense of attachment to the UK. Feelings of discrimination amongst British Muslim communities appear to have increased since the attacks on the World Trade Centre in 2001, and again following the London bombings in 2005, and it is reasonable to assume that this increase may have pushed a small number of individuals on to a path towards becoming a violent Islamist. However, following such a path commonly involves contact with others with similar politico-religious views and discriminatory experiences, most frequently through pre-existing associations in small groups, or through the influence of active radicalisers who are also likely to be members of recruits' pre-existing networks. Whilst radicalisation into violent Islamism has only affected a tiny proportion of British Muslims, there is evidence to suggest that there is a larger level of sympathy and support for al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism, which may act to increase the overall resilience and effectiveness of terrorist activity.

¹⁶ Based on snowball sampling and telephone interviews with 300 British Muslims.

¹⁷ Further support for these general trends was uncovered by a survey undertaken by the Policy Exchange (2007). Based on a sample of 1003 UK Muslims and 40 semi-structured interviews with younger British-born Muslims (sampling method not specified), the survey focussed on intergenerational differences between 16-24 year old British Muslims and those of 55 years and older. It shows that 13% of 16-24 year olds 'admire organisations like al-Qaeda that were prepared to fight the West', compared to only 3% of 55+ year olds. This survey has however, been criticised for political bias and methodological weaknesses.

CHAPTER FOUR

Politics and legislation: The Government response to the terrorist threat

This chapter describes the legislation introduced by the UK Government in response to the threat posed by violent Islamist terrorism. It examines the effectiveness of the legislation and demonstrates that aspects of it may be counterproductive by generating perceptions of decreased UK state legitimacy and alienating disaffected British Muslims. Rather than deterring people from becoming involved in terrorist activity, some aspects of recent government policy may have thus inadvertently increased membership of and support for violent Islamism and thereby impeded, rather than assisted the counter-terrorist response.

Counter-terrorism policy and legislation

Following the attacks on the World Trade Centre in 2001, and prior to the London bombings in 2005, British domestic government policy towards violent Islamist groups could be described as minimal. Following 9/11, the Home Office initiated its 'Preventing Extremism Together' (PET) initiative which aimed to open up dialogue and cooperation with British Muslims and reassure them and the wider public of their safety. PET resulted in:

- the development of a Mosques' and Imams' Advisory Board;
- the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, visibly engaging the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) (the relationship later broke down as a result of the war in Afghanistan);
- the 'scholar's road show' whereby influential but mainstream Islamic scholars were invited to tour UK mosques, prisons and universities to spread the message of non-violent Islam.¹⁸

PET, however, did little to quell violent Islamism, and despite warnings about extremist preachers with possible links to al-Qaeda being harboured in Britain, the UK Government initially operated a 'hands off' approach. This explains why the French security services dubbed London 'Londonistan', the European hub of Islamist hate (Phillips, 2006). Indeed, reports from the trial of an al-Qaeda operative in the United States suggest that Bin Laden and his senior generals made over 260 telephone calls to 27 phone numbers in Britain from 1996-1998.¹⁹ Government's initial laissez faire approach towards domestic violent Islamism is likely to have been a result of the desire of the UK security services to

¹⁸ The 'road show', administered by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, has been criticised as ineffective because it assumes a relationship between theology and political extremism when the evidence suggests that it is politicised emotions that drive radical theology rather than vice versa.

¹⁹ <http://www.rense.com/general21/noc.htm> Accessed 15/04/2008.

track and monitor violent radicals instead of driving them underground or into Islamic hinterlands where their activities would become more difficult to track.²⁰ However, following the 2005 London bombings, UK Government domestic policy changed radically.

The Terrorism Acts

Following 7/7, the Commander of the Metropolitan Police Service, Sir Ian Blair, and the President of ACPO, Ken Jones, met with Government Ministers to discuss the terrorist threat and how best to counter it. The ensuing proposals, strongly endorsed by the Prime Minister, sparked protracted parliamentary debate, in particular the proposal to increase the period of pre-charge detention for terrorist suspects to 90 days. This was eventually rejected in favour of a maximum of 28 days, and Tony Blair experienced his first ever defeat in the House of Commons²¹. The other proposals were largely accepted and subsequently framed by a new Act of Parliament – the Terrorism Act 2006, which was largely geared towards providing necessary powers for police and security services to respond to the immediate threat of terrorism. The Act also embellished aspects of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, which further enhanced police jurisdiction in counter-terrorist activities.

The 2006 Act included:

- increased powers to search suspects and their dwellings;
- extension of Section 44 stop and search powers; and
- an increased period of 28 days pre-charge detention.

The 2006 Act also introduced new laws and bolstered existing ones²² enabling the prosecution of those found to be:

- encouraging terrorism by committing, preparing, instigating terrorist acts;
- ‘glorifying’ acts of terrorism with ‘praise or celebration’;
- disseminating terrorist publications that instigate or glorify acts of terrorism;
- being a member of a proscribed terrorist organisation;
- preparing for terrorist acts by planning or helping others to plan, commit or glorify acts of terrorism;
- training for or instructing terrorism;
- attending places of training;
- making or possessing radioactive devices or materials, or making terrorist threats related to radioactive devices; and
- trespassing on nuclear sites;

²⁰ There may have been added justifications for the laissez faire approach because of the ‘Covenant of Security’ prescribed in *Sharia*, which dictates that Muslims should not attack the land that provides them refuge.

²¹ The length of the pre-charge detention period was a protracted saga in British politics. In May 2008 the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, announced a consultation on extending the period to 42 days. This was later rejected by a large majority in a House of Lords vote, forcing the Home Secretary to withdraw the proposals and retain the 28 day limit. See: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/7666022.stm.

²² The first major extension of police anti-terrorism powers was introduced in the 1974 Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act following the IRA’s ‘pub bombings’ in Birmingham in November 1974 (Hillyard, 1993).

Additionally, a number of aspects of the Terrorism Act 2000 were intensified and specifically backed by the Prime Minister, to:

- proscribe increased numbers of extremist organisations deemed to promote terror;
- deport UK nationals who advocated or condoned terrorism;
- provide new guidelines for Section 44 stop and search procedures; and
- increase the size and activity of the Special Branch Counter-terrorism Unit and the Security Services, which in 2006 were reorganised into the joint SO15 Counter-Terrorism Command Unit.

Another piece of legislation, the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, introduced ‘control orders’ for individuals suspected of terrorist-related activity but who, because of lack of evidence, could not be charged or convicted, or for foreign nationals suspected of terrorist-related offences but who could not be deported (see below).

Effects of the new legislation

It is difficult to assess the success of the new legislation in terms of its ability to stop violent Islamist terrorism. As the extent of the threat cannot be known with any certainty it is impossible to know the extent to which the new legislation has reduced the threat or which aspects may have caused such reductions. New powers under the Terrorism Act 2006 that outlaw support for Islamist violence and/or terrorist organisations have enabled some supporters and preachers of Islamist hate to be charged, imprisoned and/or deported, and made it more straightforward to prosecute those found possessing terrorist-related material or assisting terrorist operations. However, there are significant aspects of the legislation that have been criticised for their austerity, disregard of due process of law, and their potential to discriminate and alienate. Indeed, a number of prosecutions under the 2006 Act relating to the possession of terrorist materials have been subsequently quashed on appeal, for example the five Bradford University students who served jail sentences for downloading and exchanging terrorist-related material until their convictions were repealed (see BBC, 2008). Moreover, some actions pushed forward by Government, for instance, powers to close religious premises and the banning of extremist but non-violent Islamist groups such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, have reputedly been opposed by a number of senior police officers on the grounds that they would drive radical activities underground and alienate some members of the British Muslim community upon whom the police rely for intelligence and cooperation (see Chapter Five). Other potentially counter-productive aspects of legislation, which are discussed below, include:

- Section 44 stop and search;
- laws pertaining to non-disclosure and glorification;
- control orders; and
- non-judicial tolerance of extraordinary rendition.

Section 44

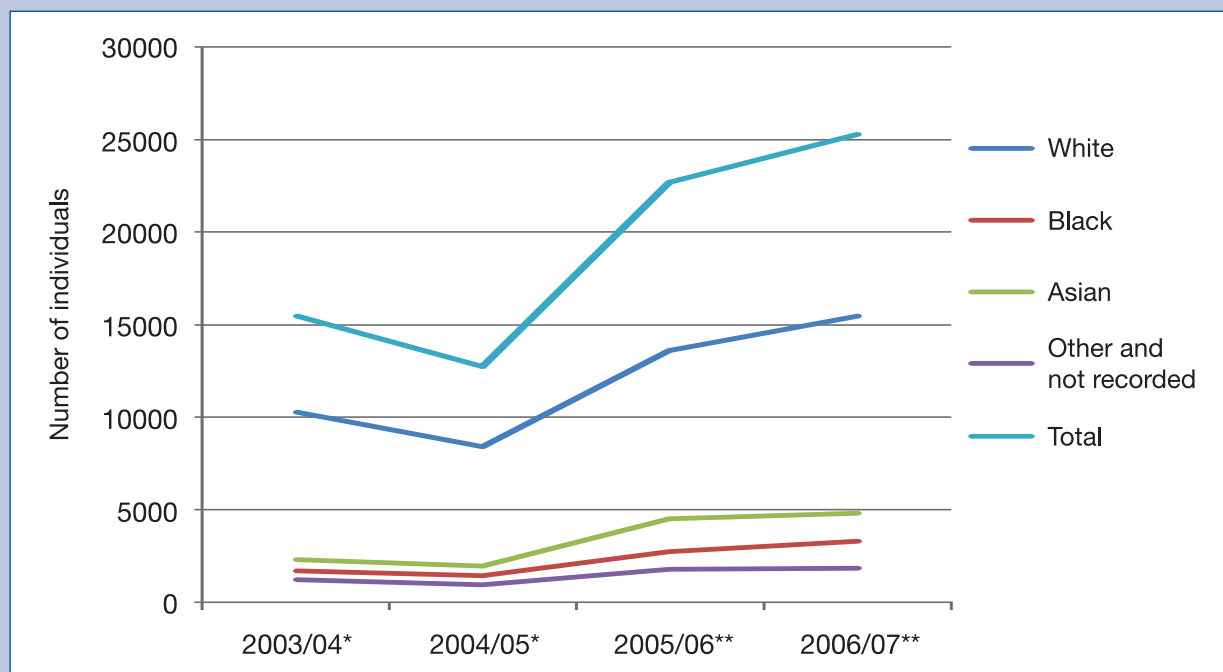
Under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, areas deemed at risk of producing terrorists or terrorist attack can be designated by senior ranking police officers²³ as spaces in which anyone can be

²³ The ranks of Assistant Chief constable, Commander and above may authorise Section 44 powers to be used for a 28 day period which must be supported by the Home Secretary within 48 hours of the authorisation. Or, for a 48 hour limit of Section 44 authorisation, the Home Secretary must be informed within 2 hours of the authorisation. In London, no Home Secretary has so far failed to support such authorisation.

stopped and searched without grounds for reasonable suspicion. This is not unproblematic. Section 44 has been perceived as disproportionately targeting innocent ‘Asians’, compounding feelings of discrimination and alienation (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2005). Stop and search has long been a thorn in the side of police-minority ethnic relations, and was identified almost 30 years ago by Lord Scarman as undermining police-community relations (Scarman, 1982). Subsequent legislation – the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) – introduced the requirement that ‘reasonable suspicion’ was necessary before an officer could stop and search someone. However, in areas deemed ‘at risk’ of terrorism, PACE is over-ruled by Section 44, and reasonable suspicion no longer required.

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) conduct around 70 per cent of all Section 44 stops and Searches in England and Wales (Ministry of Justice, 2008b). Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) (2007) statistics from 2005-2006²⁴ indicate that Section 44 disproportionalities are most pronounced by gender, with a ‘huge over-representation of men’ (MPA, 2007: 48). Official figures from 2003/4-2006/7 also show that, on average, ‘Asians’ constitute over 17 per cent of stops although they comprise 12 per cent of the population covered by the MPS. Additionally, around 7 per cent of the total number of those stopped under section 44 powers by the MPS do not state their ethnicity, and there is evidence to suggest that because many young people stopped by the police are not fully aware of their rights, they are often stopped and searched by police who do not record the incident (Sharpe and Atherton, 2007). The figures may thus hide further disproportionality, although the direction of this cannot be known with any certainty.

Figure 1: Number of stop and searches conducted under Section 44 by the Metropolitan Police, by ethnicity of individual stopped (2003-07)



* Home Office, 2005 **Ministry of Justice, 2008a

Although Section 44 stop and search data for 2008 was not available at the time of writing, Figure 1 shows that the number of Section 44 stops and searches conducted by the MPS almost doubled

²⁴ See **Appendix 4** for comparison of stop and searches carried out under section 44 by the MPS, the City of London Police and by the London British Transport Police.

between 2004/5 and 2005/6, and that both 'blacks' and 'Asians' became increasingly disproportionately targeted ('Asians' by 5 percentage points between 2004/5 and 2005/6).

How the police target Section 44 stops and searches puts them in a difficult position because stopping and searching slightly disproportionate numbers of 'Asians' and 'blacks' is perhaps logical, or at least understandable, in terms of gathering intelligence about violent Islamism. However, as mentioned above, it has been interpreted by sections of the British Muslim community as racist and discriminatory. And, although the police do not formally adopt racial profiling for Section 44 stops, decisions about who to stop is ultimately down to the discretion of individual officers and team leaders based upon 'elevated intelligence' and 'professional judgement'. With regard to professional judgement, Andy Hayman, ex-head of the MPS's counter terrorism unit, has been quoted as saying: 'that is so flaky, you know, even I feel embarrassed saying that. But that is the truth as to what they do' (MPA, 2007: 50).²⁵ Moreover, police officers' 'professional judgement' is institutionally and culturally constructed, whereby studies of police decision-making show that the police tend to use informal and 'taken-for-granted' tacit knowledge to reach their decisions (Sudnow, 1965; McConville et al., 1991; Waegel, 1981). In the UK, this knowledge has been shown to sometimes rest on racially-based stereotypes, or what the Macpherson Report (1999) called 'institutional racism'. This term, regardless of its validity, has entered the public imagination and become a prism through which the actions of the police are interpreted by sections of UK minority ethnic groups (Foster et al., 2005), putting the police in a very difficult position whereby intensified use of Section 44 is likely to at least maintain these 'prisms', if not exacerbate them.

It is almost impossible to know if intensified use of Section 44 has contributed to the prevention of terror attacks in the UK or not. Clearly it has not prevented all of them, and no adequate data were available on the number of those successfully convicted for terrorist offences as a result of Section 44 or which describe the value of intelligence that such stops generate. Available data do however show that in 2006/7 the MPS made 334 arrests for indictable offences as a result of Section 44 stops (Ministry of justice 2008b), but that only a small proportion of these arrests were made under the Terrorism Acts. For the 14,316 persons stopped and searched in their vehicles under Section 44(1) in 2006/7 (i.e. not including pedestrians stopped on foot), the MPS made only 13 arrests under the Terrorism Acts (out of a UK total of 14 arrests under those Acts) (Ministry of Justice 2008a).²⁶ Additionally, the number of those arrested who are successfully convicted under the Terrorism Acts has so far been relatively small. For example, from 2001-2007, there were only 41 successful convictions under the Terrorism Act resulting from 1165 arrests made under the Terrorism Act 2000 (see **Appendix 5**). As a consequence, whilst section 44 may have an effect, although an unknowable one, of creating a 'hostile environment' for terrorism and by possibly generating some intelligence, the data suggest that Section 44 may be of only very limited value, especially considering the evidence from a number of studies of policing which show that frequent stop and search practices tend to uncover little indictable activity but significantly contributes to the alienation of those stopped and searched (see, for example, Reiner, 2000:122).

There are a number of other aspects of UK policy that may also be counter-productive, which are outlined below.

²⁵ During observations of London neighbourhood policing teams, an officer who regularly conducted Section 44 stops told me that who to stop was 'subject to interpretation' and that officers tend to 'look out for Asians obviously'.

²⁶ Complete data of the total number of arrests for 2005/6 and 2006/7 for all persons stopped and searched as a result of Section 44 (1) and (2) i.e. both pedestrians and vehicles, was not available at the time of writing.

Non-disclosure and glorification

As discussed above, new offences under the Terrorism Act 2006 include incitement to, or praise and celebration of, religious hatred and violence. These aspects of the Act, it has been suggested, undermine or contradict the right to freedom of speech, whereby individuals could conceivably be brought before the courts for, for example, praising the Palestinian Liberation Organisation or Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam. The legislation also raises questions about what constitutes praise and/or celebration, and thus it could be open to misuse, thereby compounding some British Muslims' concerns about expressing their opinions without being misunderstood, unduly attracting the attention of the security services and even being wrongfully arrested under the provisions of the 2006 Act.

Control orders

Anti-terror 'control orders' were introduced under the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 to regulate the movement of those suspected of terrorist involvement but for whom there is insufficient evidence to charge, or for those unable to be deported²⁷. The orders are issued to suspects without trial, who are placed under curfew for up to 18 hours per day. The intelligence required for the orders to be issued does not need to be made public and consequently cannot be challenged by suspects. This bypasses due process, lacks transparency, and provides an easy target for human rights lawyers who have described the orders as 'virtual house arrest' (BBC, 2007b; see also Nellis, 2007). In 2008, 15 individuals were bound by control orders, but seven had absconded, making the orders appear at best quite ineffective.²⁸

Extraordinary rendition

Although somewhat outside the scope of this Review, it is important to note the potential impact of extraordinary rendition on UK state legitimacy. Extraordinary rendition involves the removal of terror suspects from their countries of residence without trial (or accountability structures) to third countries where they are interrogated and imprisoned. A European Parliament report maintains that the CIA have flown 1,245 flights into European airspace or stopped at European airports since 2001 (see Brodeur, 2007), a number of which were in the UK. The United States and the European countries permitting these actions are in contravention of international and European human rights laws, which seriously undermines their moral authority.

Conclusion

Evidence about hard-edged counter-terrorism legislation introduced during 'the troubles' in Northern Ireland, including police and military aggression, intrusive stops and searches, detention without trial and secret trials, illustrates that the legislation was largely counter-productive through its negative impact on the legitimacy of British rule and the subsequent increase in support for the Republican cause (Hillyard, 1993; Sluka, 1989). In the same way, recent legislation introduced to counter violent Islamist terrorism, by intensifying concerns about discrimination within sections of British Muslim communities, may also have inadvertently increased support for the terrorist cause. Some released terror suspects and even the Archbishop of York, have gone so far as to suggest that British Muslims are now living in a 'police state' (BBC, 2007b). This may be overstating the case, but it seems likely that the recent legislation, coupled with perceptions of rising Islamophobia and forms of policing that are perceived as discriminatory, may be contributing to increasing rather than reversing a general drift towards support for violent Islamism amongst some sections of the British Muslim communities.

²⁷ It is not possible to deport someone without bilateral agreement from the destination country.

²⁸ See: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7450708.stm>

CHAPTER FIVE

Counter-terrorism policing

This chapter describes and analyses the UK police and security services response to the threat posed by violent Islamist terrorism. It examines their role and looks in particular at how the police implement new counter-terrorist legislation and policy which has placed them at the forefront of the counter-terrorism apparatus and increasingly conjoined their activities with those of the security services.

CONTEST

In addition to developing new legislation, following the 2005 London bombings, the Government released its counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST (HM Government, 2006), which constitutes the operational response to the threat of contemporary terrorism. CONTEST comprises four interrelated aspects: to Prepare for, Protect from, Pursue and Prevent terrorism in the UK.

- Prepare involves preparation for responding to the consequences of terrorist violence on the UK mainland i.e. the clear-up response following acts of terrorism, and predominately entails the planning and co-ordination of various emergency services.
- Pursue involves pursuing potential terrorists and those that sponsor them in order to infiltrate, misdirect and disrupt them, and/or bring them to justice.
- Protect involves protecting the public, the critical national infrastructure and UK interests overseas from terrorist-related activity.
- Prevent attempts to reduce the risks of individuals becoming radicalised into violent Islamism.

CONTEST also includes broader policy on the need to address structural inequality and human rights by: 'The promotion of good governance and human rights internationally... [and] the drive for equality, social inclusion, community cohesion and active citizenship in Britain' (2006:9). It also aims to initiate work with local communities and Muslim organisations to: 'identify other areas where radicalisation may be taking place and to help communities protect themselves and counter the efforts of extremist radicalisers...' (ibid:13).

Additional aspects of CONTEST include:

- to support and fund democratic and human rights reform in Muslim countries;
- to explain and justify British foreign and domestic policy in those countries;
- to train prison imams and support 'at risk' prisoners upon their release; and
- to deter radicalisers through increased use of the Terrorism Acts of 2000 and the new powers legislated through the Terrorism Act 2006.

CONTEST is intended to be a multi-agency approach to countering terrorism but, in practice, the police and security services have so far been the major providers. To date, most CONTEST resources and activity have also concentrated on its 'pursue' and 'protect' strands that are intended to shield

against the immediate and short-term risk of terrorist attack. Protect mostly involves target hardening, deterrence and reassurance functions by, for example, stepping up visual patrols and screening at sites deemed at risk of terrorist attack including major ports and transport depots, and at sites deemed to house and produce violent Islamists such as urban areas with high concentrations of British Muslim residence. These activities are largely carried out by police, immigration officials, private security services, and through technological measures (e.g. CCTV). Pursue, however, has been largely carried out by security service agencies. The police are involved in pursuing suspects in order to bring them to justice, but most pursuit of potential terrorists is monopolised by so-called 'high policing' security service agencies. This is because identification of terrorists is almost completely dependent on effective intelligence for which 'high policing' organisations have specific skills and operating practices (see Wilkinson, 2001).

'High policing' and intelligence

Intelligence is vital for effective counter-terrorism because terrorist attacks must be stopped before they occur. This is in contrast to traditional crime policing where, up until recently, the major emphasis was on apprehending offenders after the event (see Maguire and John, 2006). These two different methods of policing have been usefully conceptualised as 'high' and 'low' policing (Brodeur, 1983). 'High policing' is primarily concerned with protecting the state and nation as a whole and, in Britain, is carried out by the security services and Special Branch using intelligence to pre-empt, infiltrate and subvert insurgent groups deemed threatening to the state and public good. More traditional 'low policing' of crime, by contrast, protects the public and maintains public order through the collection of evidence and prosecution and conviction of criminals, which is carried out predominately by local uniformed police.

SO15 and Special Branch

In pursuing terrorists, the 'high' policing counter-terrorism unit, SO15, has to perform a difficult balancing act: it needs to act pre-emptively in order to foil terrorist attacks, yet also has to allow terrorist operations to unfold to a point where it can gather the necessary evidence to secure appropriate convictions and/or further intelligence. It must therefore engage in continual assessment of potential threats (Lustgarten, 2002), which can only be as effective as the intelligence that the assessments are based upon. Security services thus expend most effort on intelligence collection, analysis and distribution.

Intelligence is gathered primarily through various forms of covert surveillance, espionage, infiltration, and the recruitment of informers and 'grasses'. This means that most SO15 activity is conducted in secret and blocked from researchers, making it impossible to assess its effectiveness. This also makes SO15 activity an easy target of criticism because of its virtual public non-accountability, and also its tendency to cross the boundaries of legitimacy and actively circumvent aspects of human rights. The authority and legitimacy of secret high policing activity radiates from the service's attachment to a legitimate state and claims that to effectively protect the national interest from terrorism may frequently require a clandestine response (see Ignatieff, 2005).

There are valid reasons for the secrecy, confidentiality and relative operational independence of high policing operations. Secrecy affords cover from opponents and allows SO15 to operate and adapt to new challenges relatively unhindered by encumbering bureaucracy and public accounting methods (cf. Innes and Thiel, 2008). Despite the relative opening up of the security services in recent years (Hennessy, 2007), much of their activity continues to be shrouded in secrecy. This is partly embedded in an antique operational and cultural ethos that is a relic from the Cold War and may thus no longer be so justifiable (cf. Bowling and Newburn, 2006; Sheptyki, 2007; Treverton, 2001). It may also be a

way in which the service monopolises knowledge and justifies its activities through manipulation of that knowledge but, because of secrecy, the extent to which this is the case is unknowable. However, in order to uphold state legitimacy, secret practices might be morally justified and grounded in due process, especially given increasing public demand for greater transparency and accountability.

In the wake of the events of 9/11, the size of SO15 has increased by 50 per cent²⁹. The subsequent increase in their activity may have successfully countered, uncovered and subverted some acts of terrorism, but it may have also contributed towards counter-productive outcomes. Evidence of mistaken intelligence in botched raids (see below), coupled with intensive surveillance, espionage and the recruitment of informers who may be ‘... manipulated by trickery, guile and deceit and offered under-the-counter inducements’ (Dunnighan and Norris, 1999:81), is likely to erode the legitimacy of counter-terrorist agencies. The use of informants is a particularly contentious issue which has been described as: ‘the most intrusive instrument of surveillance... [and] the most destructive of the social fabric as it thrives on betrayal and fosters mutual suspicion and demoralisation’ (Brodeur, 2007:28). Indeed, such approaches to counter-terrorism appear to have exacerbated feelings within some sections of British Muslim communities that they are being unjustly targeted, infiltrated, criminalised, subject to high levels of surveillance and cajoled into becoming informants (Spalek and Lambert, 2007; Spalek et al., 2008). It appears essential then, that the police and security services effectively manage these perceptions and attempt to balance their use of covert and manipulative counter-terrorist techniques.

The shift to prevention

Despite a long standing organisational separation of high and low policing, in terms of the long-term prevention of terrorism, they have been recognised as interdependent (O’Connor, 2006). Additionally, as a consequence of the perception that violent radicalisation is increasing, extra attention and resources have been turned to long-term preventative activity. In 2008, for example, ACPO announced a programme for increased cooperation between high and low policing operations, primarily through their integration in localised neighbourhood policing-style models³⁰. This strategy will be discussed below, but in view of the evidence presented in Chapters Three and Four, it is clear that prevention should be central to any counter-terrorism strategy, which should aim to:

- avoid the creation of social, psychological, political and/or economic conditions that facilitate various levels of support for, or involvement in, violent Islamism;
- generate accurate intelligence about those involved or at risk of becoming involved in violent Islamism; and
- control or steer susceptible individuals away from violent Islamism.

Before the publication of CONTEST, the police’s prevention strategy was embedded in facilitating ‘community resilience’ to terrorism, but following 7/7, the perception of an impending immediate threat pushed this to the sidelines. The relative neglect of long-term prevention by Government in the aftermath of 7/7 was then in part due to the urgent need to address the possible immediate threat posed to the general public, which would be a priority of any Government. However, a broader strategy for preventing future generations from turning towards violent Islamism has more recently become seen as vital, and a key element for its success is to increase levels of trust between the police and the communities they serve.

²⁹ Gordon Brown (19/03/08) <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page12678.asp>

³⁰ ACPO (16/04/2008) <http://www.acpo.police.uk>

Consent, cooperation and attitudes towards the police

General levels of confidence in the police declined from the late 1950s and continued to do so throughout that century (Reiner, 2000). Recent data however, indicate that the proportion of the general public who think their local police do a 'good or excellent job' has risen to just over 50 per cent (Kershaw et al., 2008), and show that the police are still more trusted than any other criminal justice agency (Allen et al., 2006: 4). These data however, hide more worrying trends. Between 2000 and 2004, for example, the percentage of the population who were 'not at all confident' in the police doubled to 16 per cent (Allen et al., 2006), and levels of confidence in the police are significantly lower for particular sections of the population. Data from the 2000 British Crime Survey (BCS) shows that British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis had the lowest levels of confidence in the police of all ethnic groups in both self-initiated and police initiated encounters, with 25 per cent of them saying they had been 'really annoyed' by the police in the 'last five years' (Clancy et al., 2001)³¹. These figures are, of course, pre-2001, and analysis of post-2001 data may yield quite different results but were unavailable at the time of writing³². More recent research has shown that since the 7/7 London bombings, certain sections of the British Muslim population feel under increasing police scrutiny and suspicion. Discussion groups commissioned by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) in 2007, for example, revealed a section of society that were 'highly disengaged' from the police, which: 'Largely consist[ed] of young ethnic minority males from less affluent backgrounds... [who] tended to perceive all police officers with a great deal of suspicion, viewing their motives with distrust' (2007: 12). The report goes on to point out that 'Asian' and Muslim participants felt increasingly targeted by police since 7/7 and 9/11 (see also Home Affairs Select Committee, 2005; Sharp and Atherton, 2007).

In addition to having little trust in the police, Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups are, year on year, more than twice as likely to perceive themselves as a victim of a racially motivated crime than groups categorised as 'black' (Clancy et al., 2001)³³. This may facilitate a belief that the police offer such groups little in the way of protection and thereby make it less likely that they will call on the police for protection or otherwise. Indeed, focus groups with young Muslims (16-24 years old) indicate that they were reluctant to report terrorist-related activity to the police because they did not trust them not to implicate them in the activity or to make potentially fatal errors of judgement (Blick et al., 2006)³⁴. Moreover, a number of individuals found to be involved in Islamist violent extremism have been converts to Islam (Pargeter, 2006), and there is evidence of an increase in their numbers (MPA, 2007). These converts have been mostly young men of Caribbean heritage – another UK minority ethnic group that experience relatively high levels of exclusion and alienation, and who tend to have low levels of trust in the police and Government.

These issues have serious implications in terms of British Muslims' potential cooperation and volunteering of possible intelligence to the police. As studies of police legitimacy show, cooperation from

³¹ This was significantly less than the 34% of 'Black' respondents who said they were 'really annoyed'.

³² Separate data breaking down the 'Asian' category into its main constituent parts has been publicly unavailable from the Home Office since 2001 (see footnote 33 below).

³³ The level of racially motivated crime amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups is not corroborated by analysis of the 2005/6 BCS (Jansson, 2006). However, Jansson's analysis only *selectively* breaks down the 'Asian' category into the various ethnicities deemed to compose it, making comparison with the 2000 BCS impossible. No open source Home Office or other Governmental publication since Allen et al.'s analysis break down the category 'Asian' (see, for example, Ahmed and Magill, 2006; Allen et al., 2006; Jansson, 2006; Salisbury and Upson, 2004). Consequently, Allen et al.'s analysis was the most up-to-date official data on Pakistani and Bangladeshi experiences of crime and policing available at the time of writing.

³⁴ They also feared reprisals from terrorists and said that they would report such activity to a trusted Imam.

the general public is vital for the police to function effectively, and alienation from the police has been clearly demonstrated to reduce law abiding behaviour and cooperation with state authorities (Matza, 1964; Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tyler 1990; 2004; Sykes and Matza, 1957). Additionally, because terrorism needs to be countered pre-emptively, cooperation from the public is even more vital than in more routine policing tasks. However, the perception of discriminatory practices resulting from recent UK foreign policy, legislation and aspects of policing, have potentially reduced the moral authority of the law, decreased cooperation with the police, restricted the recruitment of Muslim and other minority ethnic police officers, and possibly increased levels of support for violent Islamism. This is also likely to have severely restricted the amount and quality of intelligence emerging from British Muslim communities.

A lack of volunteered intelligence, in conjunction with the ostensible realisation that increasing numbers of individuals were becoming radicalised into violent Islamism, has prompted a greater emphasis on the potential of overt 'low' community policing-styles as a panacea for increased police legitimacy, improved community relations, and ultimately to garner more useful intelligence for the long-term prevention of terrorism (see Innes, 2006). Only time will tell whether this will be effective or not, but it is important to note that the police have traditionally found it problematic to generate cooperation and voluntary intelligence from particular UK communities (Pearson, 1983; Reiner, 2000), although this may be partly a result of morally inappropriate practices by the authorities in those communities (cf. Hobbs, 1988; Taylor, 1984) and may thus be countered through changing particular police practices and increasing police legitimacy.

Engagement, legitimacy and policing to prevent

Engagement and consultation with representatives of Muslim communities has been a central part of both the Government and police response to al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism since 2001. The Muslim Safety Forum (MSF) was set up following the events of 9/11 to provide a platform for Muslim community representatives to voice their attitudes and concerns about crime, security, Islamophobia and violent extremism. The MSF holds monthly meetings with members of the MPS, ACPO, the MPA and the Home Office. It has, however, been criticised for only raising the voices of the 'usual suspects' i.e. community members that frequently come forward to represent their communities but who are not actually representative of them. Furthermore, as Blick et al. (2006) point out, although Government has been engaging with mainstream Muslim groups since 2003, it has not done so with the Islamist organisations that really needed to be connected with (see below). Yet, at a more local level, individual Borough Command Units have set up local Independent Advisory Groups to discuss policing and security issues with local community representatives. In the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, for example, senior officers attempt in particular to engage hard-to-reach sections of the community and set up constructive dialogue with their critics. This resolves some of the problems of engaging only the 'usual suspects', is important for local police-community relations, and for opening up key channels of communication that are vital for calming community tensions during or following police raids and other counter-terrorism activities (see Chapter Six).

Other aspects of engagement and consultation with British Muslim groups fall outside the scope of policing and are covered by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The FCO conducts anti-radicalisation programmes in Muslim dominated countries by organising for successful and moderate British Muslims to visit these countries and promote the UK as an egalitarian and religiously tolerant nation. The DCLG administer a programme of Muslim community engagement and empowerment whereby community organisations are invited to bid for funding for Muslim community-based projects. In June 2008, the Prime Minister announced an increase in funding for these projects from five million to 70 million pounds³⁵ as part of the renewed Prevent agenda.

³⁵ <http://www.number10.gov.uk/output/Page12678.asp>

There have been some potential drawbacks in the implementation of these early programmes. Firstly, by only engaging moderates and distancing themselves from radicals, DCLG's programme may push the British Muslim community into becoming polarised and internally suspicious, leading to the further marginalisation of more radical groups, rather than reaping the benefits of engaging them (Spalek and Lambert, 2007). Secondly, various community organisations and agencies are likely to have variant interests that might draw them into conflict with one another, thereby impeding any potential gains. Lastly, disproportionate targeting of government resources at Muslim community organisations could generate envy and perceptions of discrimination from non-Muslim communities who may feel that their voices and needs are being ignored in favour of less-deserving others. Such ill-feeling already exists in some sections of deprived white communities who feel discriminated against as a result of the elevation of race and identity politics (cf. Cantile, 2001; Cohen, 1996; Foster, 1999). Providing extra community-level funding to Muslim communities alone could thus generate an Islamophobic backlash that encourages further insularity of British Muslim communities.

The Muslim Contact Unit

SO15 have conducted a small but influential aspect of their preventative counter-terrorism response through the Muslim Contact Unit (MCU) that avoids some of the pitfalls outlined above. The MCU operates a form of de-radicalisation by overtly engaging radical but non-violent UK *Salafi* Islamist groups with overt 'low' policing methods. Through the increased levels of trust and cooperation that this elicits, the *Salafi* groups work alongside the MCU to offer authoritative but non-violent interpretations of Islam to those suspected of drifting towards Islamist-based violence, successfully diverting some of them out of violent Islamism (Lambert and Tupman, 2007; Jackson, 2008). More recently, the MCU have also succeeded in bringing different and often competing radical Muslim groups together to discuss violent Islamism and the situation of Muslim communities in the UK. This is unprecedented and suggests that radicals are concerned to combat violent extremism and prepared to engage in dialogue with one another and agents of the state. The MCU is however, only a very small London-based team of ostensibly eight officers covering the whole country, and its operating practices have generated some conflict within Government and SO15. Nevertheless, its presumed success has led to an increased emphasis on the potential of engagement with radical groups, and MCU practice and expertise has begun to be imported into Neighbourhood Policing (NP) style programmes conducted in areas with high concentrations of British Muslims (see Innes and Thiel, 2008).

Preventing terrorism through neighbourhood policing

In response to the problems of generating effective intelligence and cooperation from particular communities, a large section of expert and practitioner opinion has pointed to the counter-terrorism potential of NP-style practices (Davies and Murphy, 2002; Flanagan, 2007; Innes, 2006; Lyons, 2002; MPA, 2006; 2007; Murray, 2005). A report by the think tank Demos (Briggs et al., 2006), for example, argues for a community-based 'bottom up' approach to UK counter-terrorism. It recommends assisting and empowering Muslim communities to combat deprivation, increasing their voice and participation in British polity, and furthering their influence over local policing practices through NP types of approaches. The report also suggested that a clearer role be developed for local policing during counter-terrorism operations and that the Muslim Contact Unit be spread to other forces.

By engaging with and uncovering community concerns about crime and security, reassuring the public and building public confidence in the police, NP teams have the potential to generate useful but

voluntarily provided intelligence from communities. Research indicates that NP generally increases public feelings of safety and levels of confidence in the police (Skogan and Steiner, 2004; Tuffin et al., 2006), which may generate a subsequent increased willingness to cooperate with the police in matters relating to terrorism. As Innes argues:

'[By] providing local communities with a degree of democratic influence over how they are policed, NP officers will be well positioned to build levels of interpersonal trust with members of Muslim and other minority communities upon which the communication of intelligence is often contingent' (2006: 224).

By intelligence, Innes means not only information about potential violent extremism but also 'knowing' the community in terms of its socio-demographic profile and, importantly, its fears, frictions and opinions. Community intelligence can thus generate increased understanding of a community's primary concerns around crime, safety and security, and, through resolving these concerns, open up a dialogue with the community that helps to identify the existence of tensions and/or the presence of extremist activity without impeding police legitimacy.

As NP for the purposes of counter-terrorism represents a new aspect of counter-terrorism policing, there is little evidence to indicate its effectiveness in this respect. However, evidence from the evaluation of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) that piloted NP-styles with regard to crime and anti-social behaviour, suggests that NP styles can deliver modest improvements in crime reduction, public confidence, feelings of safety and perceptions of anti-social behaviour (Tuffin, 2006. See also Morris, 2006; Tuffin et al., 2006). The evaluations are, however, limited by small and problematic sampling, under-representation of 16-24 years olds, and the complete omission of those under 16 years of age.³⁶ Home Office research teams also ostensibly played a significant role in keeping the NRPP programme on track in order to avoid 'implementation drift', which may be more difficult to achieve when rolled out nationally, and which may partly explain the more limited impact of the national NP Programme (see Quinton and Morris, 2008). Nevertheless, lessons may be learned from the evaluations in terms of the development of NP styles to combat terrorism, although more certainly needs to be known about the views and attitudes of the young in relation to NP since it is these groups that are most at risk of becoming radicalised into violent Islamism.

Improving neighbourhood policing for counter-terrorism

There are a number of concerns that NP could slip into expedient and traditional police ways of doing things at the expense of listening to, hearing and acting on the concerns of residents. Key to the success of NP in this respect is the development and nourishment of a NP working culture that understands and values the importance of engaging with local citizens, of supporting their concerns, and involving them in priority setting and the development of collective solutions to problems. Currently, the nature and quality of citizen engagement varies between police command units and wards, depending often on the motivations, management, attitudes and cultures of particular forces and individual team leaders, although proposed alterations in police performance targets are intended to lead to positive changes in this respect (see Home Office, 2008; and Chapter Six).

³⁶ Tuffin (2006) also demonstrates that only two out of six sites analysed actually experienced significant reductions in recorded crime in comparison to the control sites, and that positive effects on feelings of safety only occurred 'after dark', which may have been the result of increased street lighting rather than neighbourhood policing per se (see also Morris, 2006, who actually found an increase in violence and criminal damage in some of the pilot areas). Neither of the main Home Office reports (Tuffin et al. 2006; Morris, 2006) indicate why certain neighbourhood policing pilot areas did *not* show positive results.

NP teams also need to expend considerable effort engaging and listening to all community members and not just those with the 'loudest voices'. As Sir Ronnie Flanagan, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, has stated.

'Making policing more accountable to local communities will only yield true benefits if the full diversity of communities and the impact of policing on community cohesion is recognised. This means providing quality services not just to those with the loudest voices, but to those who are most in need... Thought needs to be given also to the different perceptions and needs of existing and emerging community groups and individuals, and to appropriate means of community engagement. It also means not separating the local from the serious. The conditions for crimes such as terrorism and serious organised crime to occur in local communities, and how they are tackled has a major impact on local confidence and trust in policing' (2007:4.17)

In the context of combating terrorism there are a number of practical ways of achieving this. Innes et al. (2007) research into processes of radicalisation and the security concerns of British Muslim communities suggests that trust and intelligence can indeed be developed through effective engagement. It shows that British Muslim communities tend to rank racism and hate crime, drug dealing and burglary as their priority security concerns. This is in contrast to majority white communities which are generally more concerned with youth anti-social behaviour. Innes et al. argue that this is because British Muslim communities possess high levels of 'social capital' within their communities that enable them to informally control the anti-social behaviour of young people. This results in anti-social behaviour being of little concern to them, but also results in their relations with the police tending to be rather under-developed. Innes et al. suggest that protecting British Muslim communities from what they most fear – racist hate crime, burglary and, increasingly, drug dealing – could help to bridge the trust divide and thereby build more effective relations and intelligence. This may also prevent the communities informally dealing with such problems themselves – a situation that inevitably pushes the police further to the margins of those communities.

The increased emphasis on Prevent announced by ACPO in April 2008 has put many of the above recommendations into practice through implementing specific types of MCU-influenced NP in areas deemed at risk of generating violent Islamists.³⁷ This represents a shift in the direction of traditional UK counter-terrorism towards an increased emphasis on community-based approaches involving joined-up working between SO15, NP teams and various 'multi-agency' organisations, including local authorities, religious groups and other community organisations. Broader changes in policing policy and practice emphasising the interconnected role of policing and public agencies and the centrality of public cooperation and community consultation for effective policing, underpin this changing emphasis (see Home Office, 2008). There is, however, evidence from the early implementation of community-based NP-style approaches, which although identifying the benefits of the approach, notes continuing problems related to the variability of provision across different areas, and divisions between high and low policing organisations that restrict the flow of intelligence into the various agencies leaving them with little overall direction for coordinated action (Audit Commission and HMIC, 2008). Additionally, most counter-terrorist activity is still largely London-centric, although three counter-terrorism units have now been established in Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and West Yorkshire, supplemented by five smaller Regional Intelligence Units, which has begun to spread counter-terrorism resources further across the UK. However, measures to prevent violent Islamism in

³⁷ ACPO press release (16/04/2008) www.acpo.police.uk.

the long-term remain small by comparison with more traditional counter-terrorism methods, which are likely to continue as long as the police and intelligence services remain separate organisations with different working practices.

Traditional counter-terrorism

Most emphasis in the Government's renewed counter-terrorism strategy announced in June 2008 endorsed and consolidated traditional approaches. These included:

- the drive for a single, unified, uniformed border force with new (police-like) powers to protect ports and airports;
- the introduction of electronic entry and exit controls and biometric identification systems at borders;
- a terrorist offender register;
- a review of the use of intercept evidence in court; and
- new powers for SO15 to obtain information from other government agencies.

It can be seen thus that whilst Government has made a concerted attempt to improve police relations with Muslim communities by initiating a shift towards localised approaches, counter-terrorism continues to be dominated by traditional 'high policing' and target hardening measures which may negate any gains made in increasing legitimacy (SO15 has doubled in size and its access to confidential data has expanded, and increased funding and powers have been made available for security guards, border controls and offender registers). Additionally, many of the traditional counter-terrorism measures are unlikely to actually prevent acts of terrorism. Target hardening, for example, may increase the risks and effort required to commit an act of terrorism, but terrorists are apparently so highly motivated that increasing their risks and efforts is likely to be a virtually negligible disincentive. Further, since potential targets are almost unlimited, the hardening of one target is likely to simply displace a potential terrorist act to another (Smelser, 2007). Large-scale screening systems may be similarly ineffective because of the almost insurmountable operational difficulties of screening such huge numbers of people in open societies. On an average week day on the London underground in 2007, for example, there were 3.4 million passenger journeys per day³⁸. Screening every passenger would be an almost impossible task, and screening 'random' passengers is unlikely to deter a highly motivated suicide mission for example.

Intensive counter-terrorist policing activity based on secretive and often clandestine high policing practices in combination with traditional screening and target hardening processes may, in the eyes of some sections of the British Muslim community, negate any gains made in police legitimacy through the new NP-styles and consultative counter-terrorism practices. In this context, counter-terrorist thinking appears to be dominated by some quite distinct and almost opposing logics, which may seriously impede long-term prevention (Innes and Thiel, 2008; and see Chapter Six). Only the future knows the degree to which this will be the case, although aspects of more traditional counter-terrorist policing could be carried out in ways that lessen their potentially negative effects, which may in turn enable more sparing usage of traditional measures. The next chapter looks at how this could be achieved.

³⁸ <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/archive/7103.aspx>

CHAPTER SIX

Improving policing to counter terrorism

This chapter examines ways in which policing might be improved to prevent the growth of violent Islamism and the commission of terrorist acts with particular regard to balancing short and long-term prevention strategies. It discusses the potential of using Neighbourhood Policing (NP) styles to combat UK-based terrorism, suggests ways in which less-intrusive 'high policing' practices could be more successfully utilised, and considers how target hardening and reassurance operations could be better accomplished.

Improving traditional counter-terrorism policing

As discussed in the last chapter, it has been recognised that public cooperation is essential for effective counter-terrorism operations. Mastrofski (1999) has identified six basic guidelines that police may follow in order to elicit more effective support and cooperation from their public. These are as follows.

1. *Attentiveness* – police should attend to their publics' problems and 'be around'.
2. *Reliability* – there needs to be a degree of predictability about what the police do.
3. *Responsiveness* – the police should provide a client-centred service that is reassuring to their public.
4. *Competence* – the public respect police who can get the job done and where this cannot be done, public respect police who clearly and honestly explain why.
5. *Manners* – far more significant than what the police accomplish is how they treat people on an interpersonal basis.
6. *Fairness* – police should treat all people fairly.

As Mastrofski highlights, police interpersonal manners during encounters are particularly important. Indeed, one UK-based study indicates that for all ethnic groups analysed ('White', 'Black', 'Indian', 'Pakistani and Bangladeshi'), the police's 'poor demeanour' was rated as the most frequent source of their being 'really annoyed' with the police (Clancy et al., 2001). This is further supported by Skogan (2006:105), who suggests that: 'Research on police-initiated contacts finds that fair and courteous treatment, giving people reasons for stopping them, and explaining their rights, all contribute to satisfaction with encounters'. The sentiments are also echoed by Tom Tyler's (2004) extensive research, which suggests that to increase police legitimacy and thus public cooperation, police officers should:

- afford people input into police decisions;
- be objectively neutral and transparent as possible;

- be polite and treat people with dignity and respect for their humanity and rights; and
- be sincere, explaining decisions and justifying conduct in a benevolent manner.

These basic guidelines have been shown to be effective in increasing cooperation from the public, and individual police officers need to be explicitly trained and briefed about the potentially counterproductive impact of their practices if such guidelines are not followed in their routine encounters with the public. Whilst the suggestions effectively apply to all forms of policing, in the current counter-terrorism context they are of especial significance, particularly with regard to stop and search and screening practices.

Improving the legitimacy of stop and search

The National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) practice advice on Section 44 stop and search (NPIA, 2008) recognises that stop and search can have potentially counter-productive outcomes in terms of its negative effects on public trust and cooperation with the police. Additionally, in light of the evidence presented in the last chapter, the effectiveness of such ‘target hardening’ measures can also be questioned. Section 44 might then be used as sparingly as possible, and, indeed, if police intelligence is improved as a result of better intelligence generated through improved community relations, the police may not need to cast such a wide ‘section 44 net’ thereby reducing the necessity for frequent Section 44 operations. The NPIA (2008) report however recognises that Section 44 will continue to be used at particular times in particular locations in order to create a ‘hostile environment’ for terrorist activity as one of a number of counter-terrorism measures. Yet, it is possible to improve perceptions of the police in stop and search encounters.

NPIA guidelines (2008) suggest widely publicising Section 44 operations in surrounding areas through advisory groups, posters and other forms of communication with local communities. They also suggest that officers need to carry out stops and searches with sensitivity and respect, reflecting the evidence presented above that if individual police officers are effectively trained to communicate their activities clearly and respectfully, the risk of undermining police legitimacy is significantly reduced. In this sense, it is important to also consider evidence presented in Chapter Three which shows that it is not deprivation per se that appears to drive violent radicalism and support for it, but the way in which that deprivation is managed. Consequently, how the police and other official agencies with stop and search powers (e.g. immigration officers and private security) manage even their most routine encounters with British Muslims and other potentially vulnerable groups should be recognised as an essential part of the counter-terrorism effort.

It should be noted however, that some research into stop and search practices suggests that no matter how the police approach random stop and searches, the public are unlikely to view them favourably for it (McCluskey, 2003). The numbers of these searches should thus be kept to a minimum. Yet, being inattentive, impolite, seeming unfair and not explaining why someone is being stopped is likely to compound or increase negative reactions to being stopped and searched.

Managing community tensions during and after and terrorist-related raids

As most counter-terrorism relies on the generation of intelligence (Wilkinson, 2001), which tends to be ‘grey’ (i.e. always provisional), and, as SO15 operations must be pre-emptive in order to prevent harm to the public, the security services will, as openly admitted, sometimes make mistakes. However, the way in which counter-terrorism raids and their aftermath are managed does not need to lend itself to mistakes – although how a number of operations have actually been dealt with has been subject to criticism and some of these have been held up as contemporary landmarks in poor police-minority community relations (see McLaughlin, 2007). For example, the way the police

managed the aftermath of the Forest Gate raids, where an innocent British Muslim man was shot and his family man-handled by the police (NMP, 2006), has undermined police-community relations not only in Newham but across the whole country (Blick et al., 2006). Similarly, the fatal shooting of the innocent Brazilian, Jean Charles de Menezes, on a busy tube train at Stockwell London underground station may be remembered not just as an avoidable tragedy, but also for the series of alleged police cover-ups and media leaks that ensued. These events appear to have contributed to the feeling amongst some British Muslims that police use of deadly force was a typically aggressive act against an innocent non-white person, and the media leaks and rumours that ensued simply added to perceptions of police dishonesty and wrongful action.

The incidents suggest that in order to calm community tension and build legitimacy, local police should expend significant resources on, and increase the value they ascribe to, communicating with their public. Like the guidelines shown above, in these circumstances local police should communicate sincerely, honestly, clearly, consistently and reliably to their public during and after terrorist-related raids. If they fail to do so, media leaks and rumours may fill the information gap (cf. Shibutani, 1966), some of which are likely to cast the police in a negative light (see NMP, 2006). Moreover, examples of poor police communication have occurred regardless of a number of previous examples of successful handling of terrorist raids in the UK, including Operation Crevice and Operation Overt (see Briggs et al., 2006; Thornton and Mason, 2007).

The Newham Monitoring Project (NMP) report to the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) on the aftermath of the Forest Gate raids describes how *not* to communicate with and manage local communities during and after raids. Aspects of the report are re-presented below in combination with advice from the National Community Tension Team (NCTT) that provides expertise and best practice guidelines for the police and local authorities on request. A general set of guidelines for effective management of communities following counter-terrorist raids might comprise the following:

1. Understand the local community and all major channels of communication in order to connect with *all* sections of the local community (unlike in Forest Gate where only Muslim groups were consulted).
2. A single senior officer should take the lead to make clear, consistent and honest statements to the press and community groups in order to counter rumours and unsubstantiated media leaks.
3. Prepare for the knock-on effects of raids such as the potential effects on surrounding residents and families of suspects. Family Liaison Officers and social services should be brought in to assist, and a senior officer should be available to communicate directly with those residents directly affected by the raids.
4. Work with partner groups and representatives in order to identify any indicators of tension, and utilise their influence to address potential tensions and communicate intent.
5. Where possible consult with the community prior to raids.
6. Be visible, accessible and culturally and linguistically sensitive throughout the events. The provision of an information centre in the locality of the raids staffed by well-briefed local police and PCSOs could help to serve this purpose.
7. Continue to monitor the situation through partner groups and key individual networks after the event, and be prepared to talk to the media if suspects are released or when community tensions flare up.

8. Continual learning and adaptation throughout and after the event, admitting and apologising for mistakes and/or delivering clearly defined, visible and accountable solutions to any errors made.

Implementing such guidelines may counter at least some of the more negative effects of counter-terrorism raids. Most of these guidelines could also be used to decrease community tension in major Section 44 operations.

Neighbourhood policing as counter-terrorism

The renewed emphasis on preventing violent Islamism in the long-term puts NP-styles at the centre of the counter-terrorism effort. The evidence presented in this Review largely supports the change but equally there are concerns that NP could easily slip into expedient and traditional police ways of doing things at the expense of listening to, hearing and acting on the concerns of residents. Currently, the nature and quality of citizen engagement varies between police command units and wards, depending often on the leadership, motivations, and cultures of particular forces and individual team leaders. It is vital for the counter-terrorism effort that these problems are addressed, with more emphasis placed on diversion, inclusion and protection rather than enforcement; less-antagonistic police contact; improved responses to hate crime and racist abuse; and, vitally, listening to and acting upon local security concerns.

Improving community engagement

Evidence from the large scale longitudinal analysis of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) in the USA (Skogan and Steiner, 2004) – a similar programme to NP – indicates that for all social groups, levels of trust and confidence in the police increased, although this was less so among non-English speaking minority groups, the young and those of lower than average formal educational status.³⁹ Although one cannot accurately generalise from the studies conducted in Chicago to the situation in the UK, demographic data on UK Muslim communities show that they are disproportionately young and of lower formal educational status than the population in general, which means they may be less willing to engage with the police than other socio-demographic groups. NP teams therefore require particularly enlightened, innovative and effective management in order to generate more positive relations with British Muslims, and young British Muslims in particular.

To improve community engagement with such hard to reach groups, NP teams might consider⁴⁰:

- Widely advertising community engagement schemes in various languages and through various ethnic media.
- Where possible, utilising existing community organisations and groups to advertise through and engage with.
- Targeting ‘quiet groups’ through posting letters, knocking on doors, street talking and beat engagement (including ‘adopt a block/street’ schemes for individual officers), and using Key Individual Networks (i.e. accessing hidden groups through influential and well connected members of the community).
- Recruiting local volunteers to assist with communication, conducting reassurance ‘call backs’ and administration.

³⁹ It was also found that the disparity between levels of trust for whites and for black and minority ethnic groups remained over time.

⁴⁰ Adapted from Neighbourhood Team Guide. See www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk. and Centrex, 2006.

- Setting up stalls in busy areas like shopping centres, markets, or centres of trading in community-specific goods, and utilising local supermarkets where both workers and customers reside locally.

In order to increase and sustain participation at community consultations, prevention activities should include a reassurance element and respond directly to the main concerns of the community. For greater effectiveness, community concerns should be addressed by the communities themselves in partnership with the police. This could be approached by:

- encouraging the community to take ownership of their problems and build up community-driven practical solutions to them;
- identifying and engaging various service providers to facilitate community-driven solutions (for example, local councillors, councils, housing officers, landlords, local employers, religious, community and youth representatives etc).
- formulating clear check lists of what has and has not been resolved with a clear accountability structure so that everyone knows who to hold to account when problems are not being addressed or resolved.

Once this has been established specific problems can be tackled by a process of:⁴¹

- identifying a single specific problem and developing a specific set objectives for its reduction;
- developing very clear definitions and goals of engagement – admitting realistically what can and cannot be done.
- selecting specific interventions and creating practical operational solutions (commonly there a number of solutions to one single problem);
- implementation and on-going evaluation of the solutions; and
- adjustment of solutions accordingly.

The weight of evidence suggests that following these guidelines may go a long way towards developing neighbourhood-based solutions to preventing crimes that concern communities, and thereby build improved police-community relations that contributes to the long-term prevention of terrorism.

An increased role for Police Community Support Officers?

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) have been shown to add value to the role and effectiveness of NP (Flanagan, 2007), and specifically to counter-terrorism-focussed NP (Audit Commission and HMIC, 2008). But there is also evidence indicating that within NP teams, officers tend to gravitate towards the traditional police ways of operating, with much of their time spent dealing with low level crime and anti-social behaviour rather than community engagement (Cooper, 2006). Given the importance of developing trusting relationships with local communities, some PCSOs working in areas with high concentrations of British Muslims may be in a pivotal position to contribute to community engagement. This however, needs to be facilitated by more attuned management, more variable career opportunities, and adaptation to proposed new performance targets. As communities cut across geographic space, more experienced and able PCSOs might be tasked with co-ordinating

⁴¹ Adapted from Ekblom (2001).

activities across wards and boroughs. They could also be involved with keeping up-to-date with multi-agency activities, funding opportunities and key contacts in order to better support NP teams and local communities in diverting young people away from illegitimate behaviours.

Radical engagement

As mentioned in the last chapter, specially trained and talented NP teams in areas with high concentrations of British Muslims are beginning to be encouraged to develop dialogue with various local extremist groups and individuals in Muslim Contact Unit-inspired approaches that collapse the traditional division between high and low policing practices⁴². Specially trained officers might also undertake similar work in areas with other types of extremist groups (e.g. far right, animal rights, environmental groups etc), and develop expertise in monitoring tensions, cooperating with influential non-violent radicals, formulating and disseminating best practice, and providing training to other NP teams and members (cf. Audit Commission and HMIC, 2008). In the longer term, it may be useful to develop such practices by increased engagement with new migrant and political groups in order to empower them to prevent possible future forms of violent extremism and community tension before they become a problem (for example, various new migrant groups or new kinds of environmental campaigners). However, there is some evidence to indicate that SO15 remain locked into their traditional practice of withholding intelligence, which restricts the focus and ability of NP teams and their partners to engage cooperatively and successfully in particular counter-terrorism activities (see below).

Performance targets

Although multi-agency working and community consultation are favoured by current policing best practice guidelines, there are currently no formal systems in place that monitor the extent to which the police do this or, if they do, how effective it actually is. A recent Home Office Green Paper (Home Office, 2008) however, proposes a change in police accountability targets away from encouraging stops, searches and arrests, towards measuring levels of local support for the police. This is to be encouraged as existing performance measures work to the detriment of engagement, protection and diversion by promoting Fixed Penalty Notices, arrests, and Dispersal Orders that run the risk of alienating the police from their communities, in particular, young people, who are also most likely to attract such measures. New performance targets that measure public support for the police must however, avoid focusing on majority community attitudes at the expense of minority communities, and therefore need to be very localised.

Each of these above proposals may increase police legitimacy, facilitate trust and thereby raise the potential for intelligence to voluntarily emerge from communities without the use of clandestine high policing operations. However, it is not only how intelligence is collected that is important for effective counter-terrorism, but also that it is accurately identified, validated, distributed and acted upon.

Increasing the value of intelligence

The value of intelligence depends on how the police gather, analyse, share, and use it. As already mentioned, counter-terrorism intelligence is largely monopolised by SO15 who predominately use traditional, 'high policing' methods to gather intelligence, including espionage, infiltration, the use of informants and grasses, and covert surveillance. Such methods may only be effective in the long-term if they are sparingly used and accurately targeted, but this requires effective background intelligence which, in view of the nebulous structure of al-Qaeda and al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism, is difficult to obtain. An increase in voluntarily-generated intelligence would of course aid targeting. Yet, if NP and

⁴² See <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/access/committees/mpa/2008/080724/08.htm>

multi-agency initiatives are to consistently generate useful and reliable counter-terrorist intelligence, NP officers and their partners need to be better trained in and alerted to what to look for, respond to, and what to do with potential intelligence. Observations conducted for this report suggest that many NP officers had little idea about what they should be aware of, and although recent policing and Government policy recognises the importance of lubricating the flow of intelligence between traditionally divided high and low policing operations, this appears to have not gone far enough (see below).

Lowe and Innes (2008) suggest that as front-line, 'public-facing' community members and staff tend to be tacitly attuned to the everyday 'rhythms and routines' of social life in their particular localities, they are in an effective position to notice subtle changes in their local environments that outsiders may be unaware of. Such subtle cues may, for example, signal community suspicion about unusual activity that may or may not be linked to terrorism. NP teams should therefore regularly engage with other 'public-facing' individuals in order to elicit and interpret potentially useful information (and NP team members are, of course, public facing individuals themselves). Yet, as Lowe and Innes (2008) note, public-facing employees first need to know what to be aware of in order to aid their 'situational awareness'. This requires that aspects of police intelligence are moved out of SO15 and into local policing teams, and further, into local 'public-facing' community members, although in practice, SO15 have been reluctant to share information.

Due to divergent working practices involved in 'high' and 'low' policing, Special Branch traditionally avoid sharing their intelligence with the police as they view them as potentially interfering in 'their' surveillance and subversion operations⁴³. They thus impose 'hierarchical authority' onto information flows which severely restricts intelligence sharing in this context (Sheptyki, 2007). To improve counter-terrorist operations 'on the ground', this situation is beginning to change, with more emphasis being placed on filtering intelligence, expertise and advice into particular local policing units as part of the concerted programme to prevent violent Islamism in the long term⁴⁴. However, a study of early implementation suggests that intelligence continues to be held within high policing agencies and is not effectively filtering down to the neighbourhood level (Audit Commission and HMIC, 2008). The study goes on to suggest that lack of information sharing has confused the practical operation of the Prevent agenda, which is variable across areas and Departments with no effective leadership or direction.

Of course, high policing agencies need to develop effective intelligence themselves before passing it on, and the accuracy of such information is sometimes variable. Yet, irrespective of the quality of intelligence, SO15 are in an effective position to advise and train NP teams about when and how to engage in operational practices that identify and address issues of radicalisation into violent Islamism, and this needs continued emphasis within relevant local policing areas.

Intelligence also needs to be effectively transferred up through counter-terrorism organisations as well as more effectively passed down to street-based officers. In practice, local intelligence is filtered through the police criminal intelligence database by borough-based intelligence and SO15 officers who sift this further before passing it up the hierarchy to Scotland Yard. The deployment of SO15 officers in local Boroughs has increased information exchange and cooperation between Special Branch and local police, as has the restructuring of the central Counter-Terrorism Command Unit into smaller regional units. But, again, this appears to have not gone far enough (Audit Commission and

⁴³ Based partly on private communication with an SO15 officer who clearly differentiated the work of traditional police by referring to them as 'old bill'.

⁴⁴ See <http://www.mpa.gov.uk/access/committees/mpa/2008/080724/08.htm>

HMIC, 2008), and since very little can be publicly known about flow of counter-terrorism intelligence, it is virtually impossible to accurately assess the effectiveness of existing processes.

More targeted intelligence may too be vital. Aside from its potential to alienate communities, another problem arising from spreading an intelligence-collection net too wide is that too much irrelevant material is pulled in, impeding its value. This is exacerbated by the proliferation of computerised open source information and the crumbling of boundaries between separate governmental departments. The information feeds the security services' 'compulsive demand' for data, whereby more and more information about more and more citizens is collected (Treverton, 2001). The consequence is that security services suffer 'information overload', confusing and restricting the quality of intelligence. Furthermore, as more intelligence is collected, more potential suspects are drawn in, diluting the service's capabilities and capacities.

Some of the above problems were illustrated by the court cases of the failed July 21st bombers where it was claimed that they were linked to the 7/7 bombers but that the links were not adequately investigated by the security services⁴⁵. Moreover, whilst one of the 7/7 cell members, Mohammed Sidique Khan, was known to the security services before his suicide mission on the London underground, this intelligence was apparently not effectively analysed, used or distributed⁴⁶. Similar examples of poor data sharing have been identified in the USA by the Federal Commission's investigation into the 9/11 attacks (Keane and Hamilton, 2006). Further research and monitoring of the collection, analysis and exchange of intelligence, may therefore be vital in order to improve efforts to combat terrorism.

Conclusion

This chapter has put forward some practical, evidence-based policy and operational measures that may help improve the policing of terrorism. It has become increasingly recognised that local policing teams and community members have a central role to play in countering terrorism but, as this is still a relatively recent development, there is as yet only a limited evidence base from which suggestions for improvement can be made. In this context, NP teams working in areas deemed at risk of producing violent Islamists require intensive inputs of expertise and management, and continual assessment. Equally important is that all police officers, and especially those working in or across 'high risk' areas, need to be made acutely aware of the potential contribution they can make to the long-term counter-terrorism effort through their everyday routine policing practices, in particular their face-to-face encounters with members of the public.

⁴⁵ See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/mar/24/terrorism.july71>.

⁴⁶ See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/may/01/topstories3.july7>.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Areas for future research

As demonstrated throughout this Review there is a need for empirical research into almost every aspect of contemporary terrorism and counter-terrorism. There are a number of areas in which research would be particularly valuable.

1. Very little is known about counter-terrorist policing because most is 'high policing' activity which, due to its secrecy, effectively excludes researchers. It would be immensely constructive to offer suitably security cleared researchers' access to aspects of high policing practice, or to at least provide researchers with the capacity to evaluate the processes of analysis that currently occur within high policing services. Research might be particularly focused on how counter-terrorism intelligence is constructed, what is deemed intelligence and what is not, and how and how well this is filtered, processed and used in operations. Analysis of the two-way flow of intelligence between 'high' and 'low' policing might be especially enlightening.
2. There is no adequate or publicly available research that 'maps' and explains the British Muslim population by faith group, country of heritage, or demographic characteristics. Research of this kind is necessary to begin to construct a basic understanding of the socio-demographic make-up of the very heterogeneous British Muslim community and to provide a more objective identification of areas where more detailed research of specific groups might be lacking.
3. There is little reliable research available on British Muslim's attitudes to terrorist events and processes, including the policing of terrorism. Well-designed survey work might be undertaken in order to address this.
4. The Home Office appear to have stopped publishing data on police-community relations that breaks down the 'Asian' category into its main constituent parts. It is necessary for effective independent research and for adequately informed police practice that this issue is addressed.
5. There is little detailed or reliable research into the opinions, attitudes and lifestyles of British Muslim groups and communities. Ethnographic and other qualitative studies of such communities could be undertaken about their opinions towards the police, the state, racism, counter-terrorism policy and violent extremism. There appears to be even less publicly available qualitative research on North-African or Arab heritage Muslims living in Britain, Muslim asylum seekers, refugees, guest workers or irregular migrants.
6. There is little effective empirical information about any extremist groups in the UK. Detailed research into groups' histories and everyday concerns and interactions may help to increase understanding of these types of groups and their members. It would also be valuable for researchers to examine how such organisations recruit people, and how, why and when people become interested in joining and leaving them.
7. Research should also be initiated into the relationship between British Muslim political radicalism and violent radicalism. This research might analyse why those apparently at risk of becoming

involved in violent extremism (based on demographic, religious, philosophical and attitudinal factors) do not actually become involved – for example, members of radical but non-violent Islamist organisations. Such research may shed light on the various factors that facilitate involvement and support for violent radical groups and could be used to develop more effective interventions to prevent radicalisation into violent Islamism.

8. Independent monitoring, research and evaluation of neighbourhood policing-style community engagement projects in areas with high concentrations of British Muslims, monitoring changes in police performance targets and practices, and taking into account the attitudes of the young, will also be essential for effective counter-terrorism.
9. Research that addresses how the police and security services conduct more traditional counter-terrorism operations without alienating deprived communities and the young, with particular regard to British Muslim communities, should also be considered. If the police continue to frequently use stop and search it will be vital to know how effective this is and to identify both good and bad practice, especially in relation to young members of minority ethnic groups. Such research might also include an assessment of how the police decide whether to stop and search in Section 44 operations, and on the dynamics of inter-personal communication during the encounters.

Conclusion

It is increasingly understood that developing and maintaining moral legitimacy lies at the heart of effective counter-terrorism, and that the desire for protection and security of the majority needs to be balanced by maintaining the human rights and freedoms of everybody. Where infringements of basic rights and 'due process' are considered a necessity, it is vital that these are few and that the reasons for them are explained in clear, consistent and overt terms that are open to some level of public scrutiny. Basic operational policing principles that emphasise explanation, respect, manners and equanimity in encounters with the public may have lasting positive effects, and if the present generation of young British Muslims grow up in a society in which they feel equal, respected and valued, the UK would become an increasingly hostile place for violent Islamist groups. A police force that facilitates the delivery of human rights rather than denies them, engages and protects its public rather than controls and commands them, diverts rather than displaces, and prevents as well as responds, could thus significantly help to undermine the conditions that contribute to the generation and sustenance of violently oppositional political ideologies in the UK.

Contemporary UK counter-terrorism policy operates, however, through a series of conflicting logics (Innes and Thiel, 2008) with regard to the contradictions between promotion of police-community engagement and the creation of hostile environments for terrorism through traditional counter-terrorism measures, which have the potential to seriously impede the current counter-terrorism response. Additionally, recent counter-terrorist policy that aims to submerge aspects of high policing into civilian communities through neighbourhood policing and multi-agency work, exacerbates a blurring of boundaries between traditionally different forms of policing and security services. Whilst this may bring benefits, critics have warned that the process may be moving to a point at which: 'the "police spies" model feared by opponents of the "new police" in the 1820s and studiously avoided by Peel, now lies at the heart of Government thinking about the future of the police contribution to national security' (Bowling and Newburn, 2006: 26). This may represent a trend that if not effectively scrutinised and managed, or supported by an inclusive and morally legitimate state, could be significantly counter-productive.

In this respect, considerable effort to counter contemporary terrorist threats must be conducted outside of the realm of the police and security services in broader social, cultural, economic and political processes. Indeed, police legitimacy is partly contingent on broader state legitimacy and perceptions of social inclusion (Reiner, 2000). As a consequence, the UK state might explore new ways of incorporating increasingly diverse peoples and political struggles, whereby groups at risk of violent extremism be provided more avenues for expression and their voices increasingly brought into the public realm to be both heard and challenged. In the present context, increased social mobility and a higher profile British Muslim voice in the media, the arts, sport and journalism, would begin to provide a powerful symbol of inclusion for future generations and thereby contribute to preventing any future escalation of violent extremism.

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Abbreviations

| | |
|------|--|
| BCS | British Crime Survey |
| BNP | British National Party |
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| DCLG | Department for Communities and Local Government |
| FCO | Foreign and Commonwealth Office |
| HMIC | Her Majesty's Inspector of the Constabulary |
| INLA | Irish National Liberation Army |
| IRA | Irish Republican Army |
| LTTE | Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (commonly known as the Tamil Tigers) |
| MCB | Muslim Council of Britain |
| MCU | Muslim Contact Unit |
| MPA | Metropolitan Police Authority |
| MPS | Metropolitan Police Service |
| NCTT | National Community Tension Team |
| MI5 | Military Intelligence 5 |
| NIM | National Intelligence Model |
| NMP | Newham Monitoring Project |
| NPIA | National Police Improvement Agency |
| NP | Neighbourhood Policing |
| NRPP | National Reassurance Policing Programme |
| PCSO | Police Community Support Officer |
| PIRA | Provisional Irish Republican Army |
| PLO | Palestinian Liberation Organisation |
| SO15 | Special Operations 15 (joint Counter-Terrorism Command Unit) |

Appendices

Appendix 1: Terrorist attacks linked to al-Qaeda, 1993-2007 ⁴⁷

| Date | Location | Approximate Number of Fatalities |
|----------------|--|---|
| February 1993 | World Trade Centre bombed, USA | 6 |
| August 1998 | US Embassies bombed in Kenya and Tanzania | 220 |
| September 2001 | World Trade Centre and Pentagon hit by hijacked airplanes, USA | 3000 |
| April 2002 | Synagogue bombed, Tunisia | 17 |
| October 2002 | Nightclubs bombed, Indonesia | 202 |
| November 2002 | Hotel Bombing, Kenya | 13 |
| May 2003 | Series of bomb attacks in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia | 34 |
| May 2003 | Series of bomb attacks in Casablanca, Morocco | 45 |
| December 2003 | Suicide attacks on two synagogues, Turkey | 23 |
| December 2003 | British Consulate / HSBC bank offices bombed, Turkey | 27 |
| March 2004 | Ten bombs exploded on commuter trains, Madrid | 191 |
| May 2004 | Company offices and housing complex targeted by gunmen, Saudi Arabia | 22 |
| July 2005 | Series of bombings on London underground and London bus, UK | 52 |
| February 2007 | Seven police stations bombed, Algeria | 6 |
| April 2007 | Government building and police station bombed, Algeria | 23 |
| | TOTAL | 3,935 |

⁴⁷ This list is not definitive. There have been a number of successful attacks on US military targets labelled 'terrorist' (for example, helicopters shot down in Somalia in 1993, a Military base bombed in Saudi Arabia in 1996 and the bombing of the USS Cole in Yemen in 2000) and many other attacks on civilian targets where the influence of al-Qaeda is less certain. There have also been large numbers of al-Qaeda-linked attacks in Iraq and Afghanistan since the US-led invasions, too many to be included here. I would like to extend my gratitude to Phil Larratt for helping to compile this information.

Appendix 2: UK citizens convicted of violent Islamist attacks and plots in the UK⁴⁸

| Plot/attack | Name | Background details |
|--|--|--|
| Pleaded guilt of failed home made bomb attack in a restaurant in Exeter in May 2008 (awaiting psychiatrists' reports for sentencing) | Nicky Reilly | Born 1986. Muslim convert who had 'learning difficulties'. |
| Convicted for attempted bomb making and possession of extremist material, December 2007 | Hassan Tabbakh | Born 1969 in Syria, lived in Small Heath, Birmingham. |
| Convicted of conspiracy to cause explosions 08/09/2008 (and allegedly linked to a large-scale plot to blow up to transatlantic airliners) | Abdulla Ahmed Ali | Alleged plot leader. Born 1979 and lived in Walthamstow, North East London. |
| | Assad Sarwar | Born 1980, lived in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. |
| | Tanvir Hussein | Born 1979, lived in Leyton, East London. |
| | Five more men of similar ages and living in East and North-East London were charged of possession of materials able to make 'at least' twenty bombs in the alleged plot to blow up aircraft but were found not guilty by a jury. The Government were however, considering an appeal against this judgment. | |
| Convicted of car bomb attacks in West End of London and Glasgow airport 29/07/07 | Bilal Abdullah | Drove jeep into Glasgow Airport. Born in UK in 1980 but moved to Iraq as a child. Qualified as doctor in Baghdad in 2004. Came to UK in 2006. Worked as doctor at Royal Alexandra Hospital, Paisley. Lived near Glasgow. |
| | Kafeel Ahmed | Died of burns from the attack on Glasgow airport. An Indian Muslim born in Bangalore 1979. Studying for an engineering PhD at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge. |
| | Six other suspects were arrested for this attack, but as they have not yet been prosecuted, and were not as clearly implicated as the examples above, they are not included here. | |

⁴⁸ Profiles have been compiled from various open sources including the *Guardian* and Telegraph newspapers and, mostly, BBC online. Some profiles contain more information than others simply because this information was available. The details were correct at the time of writing, but a number of court cases were ongoing. Neither of the tables (Appendices 2 and 3) include information on foreign nationals prosecuted in Britain for terrorist-related offences, nor do they provide information on British nationals fighting jihad abroad as information on these was unavailable. Additionally, UK citizens convicted for possession of Islamist-related terrorist materials have been excluded from the Appendices and from the main analysis of those convicted of terrorist-related offences because a number of individuals initially found guilty have since won their innocence on appeal (see, for example, BBC, 2008).

| Plot/attack | Name | Background details |
|---|--|---|
| Imprisoned for failed suicide mission on London transport system 21/07/05 | Muktar Said Ibrahim | Born Eritrea in 1978, arrived in UK in 1990, lived in Stoke Newington, North-East London. |
| | Yassin Omar | Born in Somalia, 1981, arrived in UK in 1990s. Fostered. 1999 moved to New Southgate and did GMVQ in 'Intermediate Science' at a college in Enfield. Attended the Finsbury Park mosque from 2000. |
| | Hussein Osman | Born in Ethiopia in 1978, came to UK in 1996. Married with 2 children, living in Stockwell, South London. |
| | Ramzi Mohammed | Born in Somalia, 1981. Arrived in UK in 1998 via Kenya. Lived in West London. Unmarried but had 2 children with his girlfriend. |
| Pulled out at last minute of failed suicide mission on London transport system 21/07/05 | Manfo Kwahu Asiedu | Came to UK in 2003 from Ghana, where he lived with a 'well-to-do family' and had studied A-level equivalent, later working in the family agriculture business. Lived in New Southgate with Yassin Omar in 2005 and worked as a painter and decorator. |
| Convicted for involvement in plotting the failed suicide mission on London transport system 21/07/05 | Adel Yahya | Born Ethiopia, 1982, but moved to Yemen as a child where he married in 2004. Attended the Finsbury Park mosque with former school friend, Yassin Omar. Also a student of Southgate College. In 2004 he graduated in computer networking from London Metropolitan University and lived in Tottenham but had fled to Ethiopia in November 2005. Visited Pakistan in 2004. |
| Imprisoned for 9-15 years for aiding failed suicide mission on London transport system 21/07/05 | Muhedin Ali | Born 1979 in Ethiopia. Lived in Ladbroke Grove, West London. |
| | Wahbi Mohammed | Born 1983, lived in Stockwell, South London. Brother of one of the failed bombers – Ramzi Mohammed. |
| | Ismail Abdurahman | Born 1983, lived in Lambeth, South London. Worked as an administrative assistant. |
| | Siraj Ali | Born 1976, lived in Enfield, North London. Foster brother of Yassin Omar (a failed bomber) and who later lived in the same block of flats in New Southgate, London. |
| | Abdul Sherif | Born 1978, lived in Stockwell, South London. Brother of one of the failed bombers – Hussein Osman. |
| | Yeshi Girma (F) ⁴⁹ | Born 1976, the wife of the failed bomber Hussein Osman and mother of his 2 children. Lived in Stockwell, South London. |
| | Esayas Girma | Brother of Yeshi Girma. Born 1986. Lived in Stockwell, South London. |
| | Mulu Gira (F) | Sister of Yeshi Girma. Born 1984. |
| Mohamed Kabashi | Boyfriend of Mulu Girma. Born 1983. Lived in Brighton. | |

⁴⁹ (F) = female convicted of al-Qaeda-inspired terrorist-related activity.

| Plot/attack | Name | Background details |
|---|---|--|
| Imprisoned for 3 years for helping Yassin Omar escape the UK following 21/07/05 failed attacks | Fardosa Abdullahi (F) | Born 1988, fiancée of failed Bomber, Yassin Omar. A 'long history' of mental illness. |
| Convicted for organising plot to kidnap and kill a British Muslim soldier, and for shipping military-related equipment to Pakistan | Parviz Khan | Born 1970 in Derby to Pakistani parents. Lived in Alum Rock, Birmingham. |
| | <i>(Convicted alongside Khan but only for helping to smuggle equipment: Zahoor Iqbal; Mohammed Irfan; Hamid Elasmr)</i> | |
| Convicted for conspiracy to cause explosions likely to endanger life at the Bluewater shopping centre and the Ministry of Sound nightclub 30/04/07 | Omar Khyam | Born 1981. Cell leader, living in Crawley. Studied at the University of North London. Attended a Pakistan training camp in 2000. |
| | Anthony Garcia | Born in Algeria, 1982. Moved to Leyton, East London, 1987. Left school at 16 and worked as security guard at Tesco. Attended Pakistan training camp. |
| | Jawad Akbar | Born in Pakistan, 1983. Moved with family to Italy before arriving in Crawley, West Sussex in 1991. Studied maths, technology and design at Brunel University where he was a member of a militant Islamist society. Married to a Sikh convert to Islam. Attended Pakistan training camp. |
| | Waheed Mahmood | Born 1972. Lived in Crawley, West Sussex. 1989-1995 he worked as repair man for British Gas. Had various jobs in the building industry and worked in a tile shop. Married with children. |
| | Salahuddin Amin | Born in London, 1975. Moved to Pakistan in 1979. Returned to Luton in 1991. Held a degree in product design engineering. Had various jobs. Returned to Pakistan early 00s. |
| Convicted for conspiracy to murder in a 'dirty bomb' plot to blow up US financial institutions and various attacks in UK 06/07 | Mohammed Naveed Bhatti | Born in UK 1980. Lived in Harrow. Graduate in engineering, and a post-graduate at Brunel University. |
| | Junade Feroze | Born in Lancashire in 1976. Lived in Blackburn. Worked in family car garage business. |
| | Abdul Aziz Jalil | Born 1983. From Luton. |
| | Nadeem Tarmohamed | Lived in Willesden. Born 1978. |
| | Zia Ul Haq | Born in UK 1979. Lived in Wembley. Architecture graduate and chartered surveyor. |
| | Omar Rehman | Born in 1974. Lived in Watford. Studying for degree in graphic design. |
| | Qaisar Shaffi | Born in UK, 1979. Lived in Willesden. |

| Plot/attack | Name | Background details |
|--|-----------------------|---|
| Convicted for conspiracy to murder in a 'dirty bomb' plot to blow up US financial institutions and various attacks in UK 07/11/06 | Dhiren Barot | Leader of 'dirty bomb' plot cell above. Born a Hindu in India in 1971. Moved to UK 1973. Converted to Islam in UK aged 20. Lived in North-West London. Worked as a clerk for an airline company but spent long periods not registered as working. |
| Convicted under the Terrorism Act 2000 for plot to shoot down aircraft 05/06 | Kazi Nurur Rahman | Born 1978 in London. Worked as plumber and lived in Newham, East London. Trained in camps in Pakistan. |
| Convicted for possession of terrorist material and plotting to kill British soldier 22/12/05 | Abu Bakr Mansha | Born in London in 1984. Lived in Thamesmead, South London. Market trader considered to be unusually unintelligent. |
| Committed suicide mission on London transport system 07/07/05 | Mohammad Sidique Khan | Born 1974, Leeds. After leaving Leeds he returned to live there to help out his local community. Classroom assistant and graduate from Leeds Metropolitan University. Attended Pakistan training camp. Married with 1 child. |
| | Hasib Mir Hussein | Born 1986, West Yorkshire. Grew up near Leeds. College graduate with police record for shop lifting. |
| | Shehzad Tanweer | Born 1984, Bradford. Grew up in Leeds. Sports science graduate with police record for disorderly conduct. Attended Pakistan training camp. |
| | Germaine Lindsay | Born in Jamaica but moved to Huddersfield in 1986. Converted to Islam in 2000 with his mother. History of casual employment. Married with 1 child. |
| Convicted of failed shoe bombing on airplane 22/12/01 | Richard Reed | Born in Bromley, 1973. Converted to Islam whilst in a youth offenders institution. Spent a life of petty crime, in and out of prison throughout. Moved to Pakistan in 1998. |
| Accomplice of Reed but dropped out at last minute 22/12/01 | Saajid Badat | Second generation Pakistani, born in Gloucester in 1980. Attended a Grammar school, graduating with 4 A-levels. Received terror training in Afghanistan and Pakistan. |
| Convicted for conspiracy to commit a public nuisance and murder for killing a police officer and involvement in ricin plot | Kamel Bourgass | Born 1974, a failed asylum seeker who claimed to be Algerian. |

Appendix 3: UK citizens convicted for incitement to Islamist-related terrorism

| Conviction | Name | Background details |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| Convicted in December 2008 for 'directing terrorism' and being members of an al-Qaeda cell | Rangzieb Ahmed | Born 1975, lived in Manchester. |
| | Habib Ahmed | Born 1980, a taxi driver living in Manchester. |
| Convicted in September 2008 for setting up websites instructing weapons use, circulating inflammatory material and possession of al-Qaeda-related material | Mohammed Atif Siddique | Born 1986, Lived in Clackmannanshire, Scotland. A student studying for a computer technicians course at Glasgow Metropolitan College and worked in a computer shop. |
| Convicted April 2008 for supporting and encouraging terrorism whilst members of al-Muhajiroun | Abu Izzadeen/ Omar Brooks | Born 1976 in Hackney, East London to Christian Jamaican parents but converted to Islam at the age of 17. Lived in Leytonstone, East London. Was married with three children. Originally trained as a British Telecoms technician. |
| | Shah Jalal Hussein | Born 1983, lived in Whitechapel, East London. Is currently missing. |
| | Simon Keeler | Born 1972. Lived in Whitechapel. |
| | Abdul Saleem | Born 1976. Lived in Poplar, East London. |
| | Ibrahim Hassan | Born 1983. |
| | Abdul Muhid | Born 1983. Lived in Whitechapel. |
| Convicted for inciting Islamist-related terrorist murder on the internet 05/07/07 | Younis Tsouli | Born in Morocco. Living in Shepherds Bush. |
| | Waseem Mughal | Born in UK, 1983. Biochemistry graduate from Leicester University. Living in Chatham, Kent. |
| | Tariq al Daour | Born in UAE, 1986. Lived in Bayswater, London. |
| Convicted of terrorist training at camps in UK (4 other men convicted of attending the camps not included) | Mohammed Hamid | Found to be leader of UK-based training camps. Born 1957 in Tanzania to Indian parents but grew up in Batley, Yorkshire. Moved to London aged 12 and lived in Hackney, East London. Married twice with a total of 5 children. Had spent time in borstal and prison. Converted to Islam in the 1990s whilst a recovering crack-cocaine addict. |
| | Atilla Ahmet | Born 1965. Lived in Bromley, Kent. |
| | Kibley Da Costa | Born 1984. Lived in South-West London. |

| Conviction | Name | Background details |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| <p>Convicted for soliciting murder and inciting racial hatred through radical sermons at the Finsbury Park Mosque 07/02/06</p> | <p>Abu Hamza</p> | <p>Born in Egypt, 1958. Studied civil engineering before moving to UK in 1979. Worked as a bouncer in UK and married an English woman (marriage broke down). Studied at Brighton Polytechnic. Re-married with 7 children. Went to Afghanistan in late 1980s. Returned to UK 1993. Left in 1995 for Bosnia. 1997 returned to UK, joined Finsbury Park Mosque.</p> |
| <p>Convicted for incitement to murder in radical sermons 24/02/03</p> | <p>Sheikh Abdullah al-Faisal</p> | <p>Born in Jamaica in 1964. Raised Christian but converted to Islam whilst living in Saudi Arabia (1980-1988) where he took a degree in Islamic studies. Moved to UK and lived in East London.</p> |
| <p>Convicted for terror fundraising and assisting transit to terror training camps</p> | <p>Brahim Benmerzouga</p> | <p>Born 1972 in Algeria. Living and working in Leicester illegally at time of arrest.</p> |
| | <p>Baghdad Meziane</p> | <p>Born 1965 in Algeria. Living in Leicester at time of arrest and had applied for asylum. Claimed benefits and worked illegally.</p> |

Appendix 4: Section 44 stops and searches in London, by police force, 2005/6 (MPA, 2007)

| Metropolitan Police (October 2005-September 2006) | City of London Police (July 2005-September 2006) | British Transport Police (January 2006-December 2006) |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22,672 Sec.44 stops These resulted in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 arrests for terrorism-related offences; and • 242 arrests for other offences. The self-defined ethnicity of those stopped was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 52% White • 16% Asian • 9% Black • 3% Mixed heritage • 16% Not stated + 114 Sec.43 stops (requires reasonable suspicion). <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Resulted in 13 arrests (none of which were terrorism-related offences)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8,216 Sec.44 stops <p><i>Data not available for number of resultant arrests.</i></p> The self-defined ethnicity of those stopped was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 56% White • 17% Asian • 9% Black • 2% Mixed heritage • 14% Not stated <p><i>No information available on Sec.43 stops.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20,255 <p><i>Data not available for number of resultant arrests.</i></p> The self-defined ethnicity of those stopped (in London North and South, and London underground) was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48% White • 18% Asian • 8% Black • 3% Mixed heritage • 20% Not stated <p><i>No information available on Sec.43 stops.</i></p> |

**Appendix 5: UK terrorism arrests (excluding Northern Ireland),
11 September 2001 – 31 March 2007**

1228 arrests were made:

- 1165 arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000
- 63 arrests under legislation other than the Terrorism Act, where the investigation was conducted as a terrorist investigation

Of the total 1228 arrested:

- 132 charged with terrorism legislation offences only
- 109 charged with terrorism legislation offences and other criminal offences
- 195 charged under other legislation including murder, grievous bodily harm, firearms, explosives offences, fraud, false documents
- 76 handed over to immigration authorities
- 15 on police bail awaiting charging decisions
- 1 warrant issued for arrest
- 12 cautioned
- 1 dealt with under youth offending procedures
- 11 dealt with under mental health legislation
- 4 transferred to Police Service of Northern Ireland custody
- 2 remanded in custody awaiting extradition proceedings
- 669 released without charge
- 1 awaiting further investigation

Of those charged:

- 41 Terrorism Act convictions to date
- 183 convicted under other legislation: murder and explosives offences (including conspiracies), grievous bodily harm, firearms offences, fraud, false documents offences, etc (this includes the 12 cautions detailed above)
- 114 at or awaiting trial

Source: These statistics are compiled from police records by the offices of the National Coordinator for Terrorist Investigations. They are subject to change as cases go through the system. <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/>. Accessed: 12/2008.

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