The Future for Muslims in Britain

The British Government’s Agenda

_Hizb ut-Tahrir_

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Muslims in Britain and Europe have faced unrelenting pressures since the attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in 2001. Governments and media in the West have followed the flawed idea that the adherence of Muslims to Islam is proportionate to the risk they pose to the safety and security of people in the West – so merging the issues of loyalty, citizenship and identity with terrorism.

Most Muslims want nothing more than to live in peace, according to their beliefs and values. They might hate governments’ policies towards Islam and Muslims across the world, but they are happy to maintain good relations with friends, colleagues and neighbours. They believe that violent attacks on civilians like 9/11 and 7/7 are haram, but are frustrated that labels of ‘terrorism’ are fixed to those legitimately resisting violent military occupations in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan and Kashmir. They try to live their lives according to Islamic values without imposing them on others, only to see those values ridiculed and misrepresented. They are proud to be part of a world-wide Muslim Ummah, but face accusations of being a ‘fifth column’ and failing to integrate - despite being told the world is now a globalised village.

However, after invading two Muslim countries in the name of spreading ‘freedom’, we saw the ban on the Islamic dress of women in France, the ban on minarets in mosques in Switzerland, and calls to ban the Quran. It became open season to vilify Islam’s beliefs and values; and a parallel system of justice was established for Muslim communities across Europe using anti-terrorist powers, including the profiling of individuals based on their political and religious beliefs.

These anti-Muslim policies and propaganda have been established for distinct but related reasons.

Firstly, there was a very real concern that the Islamic revival in the Muslim countries will challenge the hegemony of the United States and its allies in the Muslim world. There are huge pressures in the Muslim world for a change away from the current despots and tyrants, who serve only their own interests and those of their Western backers. Growing numbers of people wish to replace these current oppressive models, whether democrats, dictators or occupying powers, with Islam.

Similarly, Muslims in the West have also voiced this desire for change, this opposition to the regimes in the Muslim world, as well as opposition to the anti-Muslim colonial foreign policies. As a consequence, the ‘Muslim Diaspora’ has become the front line of a global ideological struggle.

Secondly, there have been concerns that years of soft policies have failed to win the submissive loyalty of Muslims to the State, and had left them unconvinced of secular liberal values.

This led to a process of coercion of the Muslim community, indicating a lack of confidence
in the ability of secular values to win the hearts and convince the minds of Muslims.

Thirdly, regardless of how productive and decent Muslim citizens are in the community, successive governments have had anxieties about the ties that are maintained with a global Ummah that are manifested by a refusal to endorse British military policy in Afghanistan and Iraq, and criticism of the West’s creation, and slavish support, of Israel.

This booklet is set against this background and aims to do three things:

1. To illustrate the policies of the British State, under successive governments, in dealing with Muslims in Britain. It is an updated understanding of the policy since the general election in 2010 together with a brief historical overview, and is based on statements by ministers whilst in government and in opposition, as well as supportive material that is in the public domain.

2. To highlight the points of ideological pressure on Muslims, as illustrated by the attacks on Islam. We highlight these key areas so Muslims can recognise the nature of the attacks, when they occur, and can therefore stand for Islam – i.e. understand how to respond in a way that does not compromise our beliefs and values.

3. To try to define a positive Islam-based agenda for Muslims living in Britain, which provides clarity amidst the mass of confusion and present a clear set of actions that can be agreed upon and pursued by the Muslims collectively.

We welcome feedback on the contents of this booklet and hope that it will spur a debate amongst the Muslim community regarding one of the biggest challenges that faces us today.

History teaches us that since the age of empire the tactics of these Capitalist states, and the corporate wealth they represent, may change - but their aims remain the same – i.e. to maximise their own power and wealth at the expense of all else. It is the independent and liberating force of Islam that they see as the biggest threat to their hegemony. The words ‘terrorism’ and ‘extremism’ and the fear they represent are used to cloud matters and deflect attention away from Islam as a political system at a time of a global resurgence in Islamic awareness.
The Future for Muslims in Britain

Part 1 – The British Government’s Agenda
The current Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition government in the UK has the same ends for Muslims as their predecessors regarding identity and loyalty, but have adopted a more coercive approach.

Like Labour before them, they continue to justify this approach using the rhetoric of ‘terrorism’ and ‘extremism’, perpetuating the lie that Islamic ideas lead to violence.

However, the agenda for the full scale ‘westernisation’ of Muslims has shifted emphasis, from the Islamic reformation promoted under Labour, to greater political, social and legal pressure on the Muslim community, under the Liberal-Conservative coalition, so that it is subjugated, compliant and passive.

Both approaches share the aim to subjugate Muslims such that they are compliant, passive subjects; and such styles are not dissimilar to those used in colonial India in the days of empire.

They plan to continue the previous government’s westernization agenda by:

1. Bullying those who oppose their agenda into silence or loyalty to their foreign policy
2. Rewarding those who serve their agenda with favourable engagement
3. Forcing the adoption of secular liberal values
4. Trying to impose a legal clamp down on those who oppose their agenda

It is likely that they will use a mixture of legal instruments and extra-judicial means to pressurise the Muslim community.

This latter tactic of ‘extra-judicial’ means currently appear to have more prominence. It includes media smear campaigns, the radicalisation of British people against Muslims and intimidation at a local level by police and councils.

We believe that Muslims should:

1. Understand and resist this anti-Islamic agenda
2. Understand how to respond when it comes to those Islamic issues that are attacked in the media and by politicians
3. Define a positive agenda, built upon Islamic values, of how to live in the UK
4. Trust that Allah SWT will help them if they remain steadfast on Islam, seeking only His Pleasure.
Muslims in Europe

For many years the British government has had increasingly hostile policies towards Muslims in Britain.

The phenomenon is not unique to Britain, as countries across Europe have all hardened their positions towards Muslims - and other minorities.

In France, they banned the Hijab and later the Niqaab, and have developed a harsh stance towards the Roma Gypsies, in order to promote greater adoption and adherence to French secular values.

In Holland, there has been an increased support for those who are anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant, like Geert Wilders.

In Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel has spoken out against multiculturalism [1], and said Muslims and others should accept the Judeo-Christian values of Germany.

Muslims in Britain

The British government’s plans became apparent in the aftermath of the ‘Satanic Verses’ episode. Initially they wanted a unified body that could be engaged with, manipulated and used to carry their agenda to Muslims in Britain, in order to encourage westernization.

In 1997, they hoped that the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) would play this role, but by 2001 they had hit several obstacles. It became clear that the MCB did not have the penetration into the community they had hoped for. Also, they found that some elements within the MCB were not as compliant as they would have liked and for a period even boycotted them. [2]

In 2001, the government embarked upon project ‘Contest’, which aimed to diversify the number of ‘government-friendly’ Muslims in the UK. In documents leaked to the Times in 2004 they named Tariq Ramadhan, Hamza Yusuf, MPAC-UK and others they hoped they would use to achieve their aims. However, this agenda also proved unsuccessful. [3]

This plan was later replaced with the ‘Prevent’ strategy, also known as ‘Contest-2’ [4], which aimed to create a reformed British version of Islam [5]. The goal was again to westernise Muslims, so that their absolute loyalty would be to Britain and that they would adopt secular liberal values [6]. Under the Prevent strategy, they threw money at Muslims at a local community level, in an attempt to bribe and manipulate the community, by applying conditions to this funding - including encouraging Muslims to spy on one another [7].
However, as details of the spying emerged and as Muslims rejected the idea of reform, the Prevent strategy became discredited. Consequently, prior to the general election in 2010, Labour had hoped to rebrand ‘Prevent’ [8] - widening it to include far-right groups (even though the findings of the investigation by the DCLG into Prevent, published on 31.3.2010, Charles Farr, Director General of the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism, admitted that the government’s ‘Contest’ strategy had been about ‘Muslim extremism’ and not about far right terrorism).

The Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition Plans

The initial Coalition agreement was vague about the government’s Muslim strategy [9].

In November 2010, Home Secretary Theresa May proposed a policy review [10], even though the actions and statements from Conservative politicians before and after assuming office clearly revealed their aims.

Their statements and policy actions put more emphasis on a French style approach towards minorities, rather than promoting a reformed version of Islam.

Under their agenda, Muslims will be given two choices:

Those who fully adopt the State-promoted values and who show absolute loyalty to Britain by supporting its wars, who condemn any resistance to those wars, and who embrace secular liberal values, will be deemed as those who should be engaged with.

Conversely, those Muslims who do not fully adopt their values and loyalty tests, should not expect to have their concerns addressed, nor expect to receive any state funding, and should expect to be the subject of political and media vilification for their Islamic beliefs.

The present government’s thinking towards Muslims can be summarised as:

1. Continuing the agenda of westernisation by:
   - Forcing the adoption of secular liberal values
   - Forcing loyalty to the State’s anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim policies

2. Reward those who serve their agenda with favourable engagement

3. Bullying and silencing those who oppose their agenda – including the use of legal clampdowns on those who oppose their agenda.
Continuing the Agenda of Westernisation

The current government believes in the same aims and strategy as the last.

Security Minister, Pauline Neville-Jones, said when in opposition:


At a fringe meeting at the 2009 party conference, she said:

‘What we share with the government: We agree that the counter-extremism framework — the Contest strategy — is a good and intelligent one. We will base our own policies on it...Our areas of criticism lie more in delivery rather than ideas’. [12]

The ‘Contest’ strategy mentioned here was entirely concerned with westernising Muslims. It was revealed in a leak to the Guardian newspaper that, under Project Contest, the ‘extremism’ they wanted to abolish were those Islamic values that conflicted with secular liberal values.

Forcing the adoption of secular liberal values under the name of ‘Britishness’

At the Conservative Party conference 2010, the Home Secretary Theresa May said:

" ... We will make sure that everybody integrates and participates in our national life." [13]

This radical agenda to enforce a State-defined identity was also Labour’s policy under Tony Blair.

Under Blair and Brown, there were attempts by Labour to define a values based ‘Britishness’ that never achieved a consensus [14].

From the centre-right of British politics, organisations like the conservative-leaning think-tank Civitas have addressed the issue saying there should be more emphasis on a shared view of history [15] - a view that seems to have been adopted by Conservative Education Secretary Michael Gove [16].

Civitas made the link between identity, cohesion and ‘terror’ in their paper ‘The West, Islam and Islamism’ when they wrote:

“It is not enough for the vast majority of decent, peaceful, law-abiding Muslims to renounce terror in principle...If they choose to live in Western liberal democratic
societies, they must accept the values of liberal democracy-as Jews, Sikhs, Hindus and others have done for many years” [17].

The agenda of westernisation involves forging an identity of ‘Britishness’ that hitherto has not existed. Consequently, this agenda has not progressed very far. Citizenship programmes in schools and for immigrants under Labour had attempted to deal with this. However, this government has decided to develop these further.

Rewarding those who serve their agenda with favourable engagement

At the Conservative Party conference 2010, the Home Secretary Theresa May said:

"We will work only with those with moderate voices."

The prime example of such Muslims who have been labelled ‘moderate’ by these politicians are the MPs promoted within the Conservative Party. Each one of them voted for maintaining British troops in Afghanistan in a House of Commons vote in 2010 [18].

The most high profile of these politicians is Sayeeda Warsi, Conservative Party Chairman and Cabinet Minister. Her promotion from parliamentary candidate, to Shadow spokesman, to member of the House of Lords, to Party Chairman and Cabinet Minister has been in exact proportion to how much she changed her views on Islam and ‘extremism’ over the years.

Five years ago she was arguing after 7/7 that government needed to engage with ‘extreme’ voices [19] and spoke up about the treatment of Muslims in Kashmir [20]. Since that time she has diluted her words on Kashmir, taken the Tory line on Islam and ‘extremism’, and gone as far as condoning ‘civil partnerships’ [21]. In 2010, it was reported that under instruction from leader David Cameron, she did not attend a Muslim conference that she had accepted to address [22].

Bullying or silencing those who oppose their agenda by labelling them ‘extremist’

The Conservative party has made it clear that any Muslims who do not display slavish loyalty to the State, and wholly adopt secular liberal values will be labelled as ‘extremists’ or ‘Islamists’.

Security Minister Pauline Neville-Jones explained that her party would:

“...draw up a register of extremist individuals and organisations that will be made available to public bodies and authorities, so that public money and facilities are not provided to them.” [23]
David Cameron, when speaking to the Community Security trust, as leader of the opposition criticised the government of the time saying:

‘The government has allocated hundreds of thousands of pounds to local authorities to improve community cohesion. But there are worrying signs that ministers have taken their eyes off the ball. Tower Hamlets council has received extensive funding for such projects. But it has now been revealed that one of the organisations it has given thousands of pounds to is a front for the Muslim Brotherhood called the Cordoba Foundation’. [24]

Muslims and Muslim organisations will continually be bullied, labelled as ‘extreme’ and excluded unless they display comprehensive subjugation and loyalty to the government’s agenda.

In 2010, the television station ‘Islam Channel’ was vilified in the media for espousing Islamic beliefs regarding the married life of Muslims. The Conservative government banned its politicians from attending their conference [25]. Their response to the bullying was welcomed by one of their detractors who said ‘there are encouraging signs that the channel is now making efforts to improve its output and to give greater airtime to a wider range of more mainstream Muslim voices’. [26]

Another example came in October 2010, when the UK Home Secretary Theresa May told the Conservative Party conference: “Foreign hate preachers will no longer be welcome here”, reinforcing her first act to this effect by banning the mainstream Muslim preacher Zakir Naik from entering the UK on the grounds of “numerous comments” he had made and his “unacceptable behaviour”. [27]

**Perpetuating the lie that Islam promotes violence**

David Cameron first endorsed the false idea that Islam promotes violence when he stood for leadership of his party in August 2005. He ignored the role of British foreign policy and argued that Islam was the cause of terrorism.

“The driving force behind today’s terrorist threat is Islamist fundamentalism. ... The struggle we are engaged in is, at root ideological.” [28]

He described ‘Islamist thinking’ - the label attached to Islam’s political ideas as totalitarian – equating it with Nazism and Communism - saying there needed to be an ‘ideological’ struggle with ‘Islamist fundamentalism’:

“They have opposed the secular Egyptian Government and the House of Saud, as well as demanding an end to any Western presence on Islamic soil…. They work, like Trotskyist “transitional demands”, to rally support among the disaffected and radicalise them for the greater struggle. This is the establishment of a single, puritan, fundamentalist strain of Islam across the Muslim world, and the eventual ad-
An admission that this is part of a global campaign against Islam

His Security Minister, Pauline Neville-Jones echoed his thoughts:

“Underlying this is the ideological challenge of political Islam especially in certain key countries. How we deal with that directly affects the likelihood of winning the ideological challenge at home. They are linked.” [30]

Moreover, many people – including Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, David Miliband and Charles Clarke have commented on the purpose of British Military plans in the Muslim world as being in order to counter the rise of Islam, albeit with the same lies about Islam and violence. One of the most clear was David Cameron’s own defence adviser, former Chief of Defence Staff and now Conservative Member of the House of Lords, Retired General Richard Dannatt. On 5th December 2009 he wrote in the Daily Telegraph about the war of occupation in Afghanistan:

“For those who are brave enough to acknowledge it, the Islamists’ long-term objective is clear, although deliberately understated: the restoration of the historic Islamic caliphate, running through South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and up through south and south-east Europe. The problem is that it is not time-dependent: they are prepared to follow a timetable far longer than those in liberal democracies can accept. As the insurgents often say, we may have the watches, but they have the time. This is why, while I welcome President Obama’s statement of intent – that we will succeed – the talk of a time-line for withdrawal was misjudged.”

Targeting Islamic Ideology, not violence, under the label of ‘extremism’

In 2009, Pauline Neville-Jones said that responding to and preventing acts of terrorism was:

“...just part of the approach...it will act as a conveyor belt leading people to violence. So we believe that it is necessary to tackle extremism itself. We realise that this is both more controversial – since whereas we can agree more or less about what constitutes violence, we can disagree about what is extreme and about the extent to which it should in any case be permitted as part of legitimate activity in a democratic society “ [31]

Hence, she has laid out that it is ideology and not terrorism her party planned to deal with; that they believe in the ‘conveyor belt’ theory, which has been discredited by many (and is now simply used as an excuse for those who wish to use it as a
political tool); that there is no agreed definition of ‘extremism’, although they persist in formulating policy (despite the lack of such a definition); and that they were considering clamping down on activity they had deemed ‘extremist’, even though it was not violent.

The government-linked think tank, the Policy Exchange, recently proposed a definition of ‘extremism’ as those who:

- Support or condone the deliberate targeting for attack of civilians (as defined by the Geneva Conventions) anywhere in the world.
- Call for, or condone, attacks on British service personnel and their allies anywhere in the world or against any forces acting under a UN mandate.
- Call for or condone the destruction of UN member states.
- Give a platform to deniers of, or apologists for, crimes against humanity, including genocide.
- Support or condone terrorism anywhere in the world.
- Discriminate or advocate discrimination on the basis of religion, religious sect, race, sexual orientation or gender in any aspect of public life or public policy.
- Oppose armed forces’ recruitment. [32]

It is unlikely they would support the application of this definition in any manner that opposes their own political agenda.

**Imposing a legal clamp down on those who oppose their agenda**

At the Conservative Party conference 2010, the Home Secretary Theresa May said:

"Foreign hate preachers will no longer be welcome here. Those who step outside the law to incite hatred and violence will be prosecuted and punished. And we will stand up to anybody who incites hatred and violence, who supports attacks on British troops, or who supports attacks on civilians anywhere in the world. We will tackle extremism by challenging its bigoted ideology head-on. We will promote our shared values. We will work only with those with moderate voices. And we will make sure that everybody integrates and participates in our national life.” [33]

In this speech Theresa May laid out an intention to prohibit, prosecute and punish not merely those who break laws on inciting violence, but also included incitement to ‘hatred’ (a relative concept easily open to political manipulation); and voicing support or justification of liberation struggles against British occupation.

Moreover, she has linked this to their agenda to coerce Muslims to accept liberal values.
Added to this, Pauline Neville-Jones explained that her party would

“...review the list of proscribed organisations...” [34]

What to Expect in the Future

It is likely they will try to pressurise Muslims to adopt secular liberal values and display loyalty to the state by using a mixture of legal instruments and extra-judicial means - the latter including media smear campaigns against Islam; the radicalisation of British people against Muslims, which could be both by groups like the English Defence League, but also through a more widespread suspicion and hostility; and intimidation at a local level by councils and police.

In summary what we may see over the coming months and years is:

1. A rising climate of hatred against Islam and Muslims

   The state propaganda, which has made it open season against Islam and the Muslims in the media, has been the precursor to the rise of groups like the English Defence League (EDL).

   As the media, driven on by politicians, continues to misrepresent and smear Islamic beliefs and Muslims who carry them, we will most likely see a rise in suspicion and hatred of Islam.

   This will add to the bullying of Muslims to conform to the State-promoted values and voice displays of slavish loyalty.

2. Anti-Muslim attacks from ‘extra-state’ actors rather than from ministers

   Alongside the aforementioned English Defence League, we may see anti-Muslim feeling exploited by backbench MPs, rather than government ministers.

   For example, former Labour MP and minister Phil Woolas had become well known for playing the anti-Islam card as a means to garner support. He has been joined by Philip Hollobone MP who tabled a Private Member’s Bill proposing to make it illegal for people to cover their faces in public which would have a big impact on those Muslim women who wear full-face Islamic veil (niqaab). He has previously described wearing a burqa as like “going round with a paper bag over your head”. [35]

   With more attacks coming from backbench MPs rather than the government, the government can portray itself, and consequently the British state, as being tolerant and pluralistic.
In truth the voices of MPs like Hollobone and Woolas, as well as the EDL, fuel the cycle of generating and then responding to public opinion, which governments of all persuasions can then be seen to be responding to, so piling more pressure onto the Muslim community.

**A national ‘citizenship’ strategy**

The Conservative party want a national ‘citizenship’ strategy, which will be more similar to the French-style approach to minorities.

They will dictate ‘shared values’, through government, media and schooling.

In May 2010, in Pauline Neville-Jones’s first interview after being appointed Secretary of State for Security by the new coalition government, she confirmed that there will be a national strategy to “bring people together as Brits” – more proof that the cohesion agenda and security agenda has been merged into one and the same thing. In November 2010, Theresa May echoed this when she said ‘**Stopping radicalisation depends on an integrated society. We can all play a part in defeating extremism by defending British values and speaking out against the false ideologies of the extremists**’. She later attacked multiculturalism in a speech to the Brookings Institution in the USA in October 2010.

The Conservative Party’s approach seems to have borrowed a lot from think tanks like the Policy Exchange, with whom they share many links (Michael Gove is former chairman of the Policy Exchange). Among the numerous recommendations in one of their reports, the Policy Exchange recommended that the definition of extremism should be expanded to those that oppose the wars that the British government are engaged in:

> “The state should rightly be concerned about groups that try to dissuade young Muslims from joining the armed forces or the police. Muslims are currently under-represented in both, and it should encourage, not discourage Muslims to join. Supporting groups or individuals who dissuade Muslims from joining the police or armed forces vitiates the policy of increasing the representation of ethnic and religious minorities in those institutions. Provisions must be made for conscientious objectors, but only in cases where an individual believes that all wars are wrong. Government must not engage with organisations that oppose armed forces’ recruitment because they selectively oppose wars that the state, under the authority of the democratically elected parliament, is currently fighting.” [36]

This think tank has decided to dictate who should be allowed to oppose wars, and has concluded only pacifists can do this. They have recommended that the government should not engage with any such groups that oppose wars selectively.

Here, the merit in engagement with the government is not the issue. The issue is that those Muslims who do, for their own reasons, want a dialogue with the government have, uniquely amongst people in Britain, been given a series of conditions
they must fulfil, and those will be what values they carry, and how loyal they are to Britain’s military adventures in the Muslim world.

**A continuation of the policy of spying and ‘de-radicalisation’**

Whilst the new government will not be funding Muslims to spy upon Muslims, it will expect the police to continue projects like the ‘Channel’ project, where they look out for Muslims who they deem as ‘vulnerable’ and ‘extreme’, based on their own criteria, which is values based and not security based.

**Attempts to enforce legal bans wherever possible.**

This would be in line with that mentioned above. Such legal injunctions will be on visitors to the UK, who the government deem to contradict their agenda for Muslims, and perhaps upon groups that oppose their radical and aggressive agenda for Muslims.

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**The Muslim Response**

*We believe that Muslims should:*

1. **Understand and resist this anti-Islamic agenda** – both the local element that affects them, and their families on a day-to-day basis – as well as the global dimension to oppose the desire of Muslims to replace their dire political situation with Islam, and the Caliphate.

   To remain silent on this would be nothing more than to support the miserable and oppressive status quo in Muslim countries – corruption, tyranny, poverty and occupation.

2. **Understand how to respond when it comes to those Islamic issues, which are consistently attacked in the media and by politicians.**

   To ignore these attacks is to consent to persistent attacks on the Aqeedah and Ahkam of Islam, and this is unacceptable for Muslims.

   Muslims must recognise these attacks for what they are and be able to respond in a robust intellectual manner.
Define a positive agenda, built upon Islamic values, of how to live in the UK. For the last few years Muslims have been reeling under these pressures in the UK.

Some have been forced into isolating themselves further hoping the pressures will ease. This is no solution.

Some have succumbed to the pressures, and remained silent on major issues, not responding to the attacks on Islam.

Others have developed (perhaps well-intentioned) strategies that are trying to use Western institutions and values to resist the hostile atmosphere, and hope to further Muslim interests by doing this. It might be that some in the Muslim community feel the community can make political gains using such tactics, without realising the implications of their actions in terms of weakening the adherence to fundamental Islamic principles and beliefs. However, this is a dangerous game. It adopts the very criteria and value system that Muslims are being pressurised to adopt; it flirts with matters that violate Islamic principles.

Trust that Allah SWT will help them if they remain steadfast on Islam, seeking only His Pleasure.

The next two sections will address some of these issues and we welcome feedback and thoughts on all these matters at press@hizb.org.uk.
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The Future for Muslims in Britain

Part 2 – Responding to the Ideological Attacks: Standing for Islam
Muslims have faced relentless attacks on Islam since 2001, distorting and demonising Islam, labelling as ‘extremist’ such things as Shariah, women’s dress and political aspects of Islam.

The media and political attacks have sometimes mixed legitimate Islamic beliefs and values with distortions or examples of incorrect actions of Muslims.

The effect has been that some Muslims have felt pressurised to deny some parts of Islam or remained silent when Islam is attacked, for fear of being perceived as ‘extremists’.

Muslims should be aware that there are some ‘red lines’ that should not be crossed when faced with these pressures.

These include:

1. Speaking out against attacks on our noble Prophet (SAW) or on the Quran; remaining silent in the face of such attacks is to appease them.
2. Upholding the Shariah as the correct code for human behaviour, despite the attacks that smear this noble and principled legal code.
3. Upholding Islamic values regarding relations between Men and Women, despite the imposition upon the rest of the world that secular liberal values are the standard that must be adhered to.
4. Supporting the right of Muslims to defend their land in places under military occupation; even though people label such defence as ‘insurgency’ or ‘terrorism’.
5. Upholding our identity as part of the worldwide Muslim Ummah.
6. Supporting the work to re-establish the Khilafah in Muslim countries.

Instead of falling into the trap of distancing themselves or condemning Islamic beliefs and values, Muslims should explain these issues in a manner that is truthful, principled, uncompromising, and wise; and expose the attacks for what they are.

We do not seek to impose the Islamic belief on anyone, but neither can we ever find it acceptable that our sacred beliefs - Islam, the Prophet (SAW) and the Quran – are ridiculed, insulted and vilified. We should always speak out against this. Such insults say more about the values of others who find lies and cheap insults easy than it does about this noble deen.
Introduction

In the last section in the series we explained the British state’s policy to bully Muslims into fully adopting secular liberal values and a loyalty to the State that wholly accepts British policy towards Islam and Muslims.

We have argued that this is an ideological agenda, and not the security agenda that it is made out to be.

These ideological attacks have had the aim of extracting a compromise on the support for Islam by Muslims, through intimidation by labelling them as ‘extremists’.

Given that this is the case, it is vital that Muslims recognise it as such and develop an ideological resilience that is appropriate to the challenge.

Some in the Muslim community might feel intimidated and fearful of labels of ‘extremism’ and so distance themselves from the issues that are frequently attacked. They fail to realise the implications of their actions in terms of weakening their adherence to fundamental Islamic principles and beliefs.

Hence, when formulating our responses to these propaganda attacks, there is a need to adhere to some ‘red lines’. These red lines must not be compromised in the face of the media and political onslaught, as well as pressures from society in general, and simply collapse under the pressures that face us.

Some of the examples that will be addressed illustrate that, when the pressure is on, it is all too easy to make mistakes or well-meant compromises regarding sensitive matters in the Aqeedah and Ahkam of Islam.

Some distinct areas that need addressing

The various attacks on Islam that we have seen have been on the following areas:

a) The Aqeedah of Islam
b) The issue of Shariah
c) Islam’s penal code (Hudood)
d) The Islamic relationship between men and women
e) Muslims resistance to military occupation (Jihad)
f) The relationship with the worldwide Ummah
g) The relationship of Muslims with non-Muslims
h) The issue of Khilafah

This list is not exhaustive, but by studying these examples lessons can be learned about the nature of such attacks and what they are trying to target, in order to know how best to respond.
Examples of Attacks

Aqeedah:
- Attacking Muslims because they believe Islam is the truth (e.g. Panorama Nov 2010)
- The offensive cartoons regarding the Prophet (SAW) in Denmark and across Europe
- The offensive drawings of the Prophet (SAW) on Facebook
- The proposed burning of the Quran and insult to Quran from people like Geert Wilders
- Books that contain offensive portrayals of the Prophet’s (SAW) family and the Sahabah

Shariah:
- The onslaught over the comments of the Archbishop of Canterbury re Shariah
- On-going media fabrications that Muslims seek to enforce Shariah in the UK
- The leaked government definition of ‘extremism’ including the desire to implement Shariah in the Muslim world

Hudood:
- Stories about the implementation of the Hudood in Nigeria and Iran
- The case of the teacher in Sudan who named a toy bear ‘Muhammad’, which was then used to ask Muslims to condemn hudood
- BBC Panorama Nov 2010 attacking the hudood punishment

Men-Women relations:
- The leaked government definition of ‘extremism’ that includes the Islamic belief that homosexuality is a sin
- Criticism by Jim Fitzpatrick MP of the East London Mosque regarding gender segregation

Muslim Women’s Dress:
- Negative stories about Niqaab and Burka following the banning in Europe

Jihad:
- Leaked definition of ‘extremism’ regarding support for Jihad resisting occupation
- Constant mis-association of Jihad and ‘Terrorism’ in the media

Ummah:
- Criticism of Muslims because they believe in a universal bond with the Ummah
Non-Muslims:

- Misrepresenting and distorting negative views of Islam towards non-Muslims such as in the Undercover Mosque programme or BBC Panorama’s attack on Muslim schools.

Khilafah:

- Statements by British politicians like Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, David Milliband and Charles Clarke that the Khilafah is ‘non negotiable’, an ‘evil ideology’ and linked to terrorism.

Many of these criticisms of Islam were labelled as ‘extreme’ in a leaked memo to the Guardian regarding ‘Contest 2’, although the definition is a subject of quite some debate in policy circles.

This article said that a Muslim was ‘extreme’ if:

- They advocate a caliphate, a pan-Islamic state encompassing many countries.
- They promote Shariah law.
- They believe in jihad, or armed resistance, anywhere in the world. This would include armed resistance by Palestinians against the Israeli military.
- They argue that Islam bans homosexuality and that it is a sin against Allah.
- They fail to condemn the killing of British soldiers in Iraq or Afghanistan.

In each case, these matters are usually vilified or lampooned such that Muslims with an inadequate understanding of these matters would feel unable to respond – or even embarrassed by the way the so-called Islamic issue has been presented.

Their aim is for Muslims to transfer their trust from Islam and into trust of secular liberal values for life’s affairs.

What should the Muslim response be?

Muslims should be aware of their aim when these issues are attacked - i.e. to have them distance themselves from legitimate Islamic issues.

Muslims should be aware that the attacks in the media often conflate legitimate areas for self-criticism within our community with attacks upon Islam. For example, they will address issues where a Muslim man will oppress his wife in an un-Islamic way, but characterise this as Islamic behaviour, and report the issue in a manner that mixes the way Islam defines roles and responsibilities of men and women in marriage, with the incorrect behaviour of
the husband. The media then expects the Muslim viewer to distance themselves from both the Islamic values and the un-Islamic behaviour together.

Attacks on legitimate Islamic issues should be defended robustly, but with wisdom, through argument and (if appropriate) political protest.

When the matter under attack is a distortion of Islam, or an example of bad Muslim practice, this should be explained, and exposed for what it is.

The following table aims to highlight some of the issues that are commonly attacked, show some examples of how they are attacked, and suggests some responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Nature of Attack</th>
<th>Nature of Response from Muslims</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aqeedah</td>
<td><strong>Muslims should leave the idea that Islam is the truth for the idea that Islam is ‘one of many truths’</strong>&lt;br&gt;Muslims should tolerate attacks on the Prophet and Quran in the name of free speech and free expression&lt;br&gt;Muslims and other religions are backward and ignorant because they do not accept scientific theories of the origins of life and the origins of the Universe</td>
<td>Rational understanding of Aqeedah would lead one to conviction that it is indeed the truth.&lt;br&gt;Attacks on the Prophet (SAW) and the Quran are <em>munkaraat</em> that should be answered by argument or, if necessary by political protest.&lt;br&gt;Moreover, those societies that accept the mockery of religion, of the Creator and the Prophets have become characterised where disrespect, anti-social behaviour and incivility are commonplace.&lt;br&gt;Understand the speculative nature of scientific theories of the origins of the Universe and life on earth.&lt;br&gt;Know what, within these theories, contradicts with Islam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shariah</td>
<td><strong>Muslims should leave any aspirations for Shariah as it is inconsistent with modern secular values</strong>&lt;br&gt;Muslims should accept Islam and the Shariah are out of date for today’s world</td>
<td>Muslims should understand Shariah is from Allah (SWT), and hence, the best legal system; That it is comprehensive and has a track record of promoting civilisation and technological advancement.&lt;br&gt;Muslims should understand that Islam has relevance in all times, places and issues; and that <em>ijtihad</em> is the process by which rules are understood on new issues and realities.&lt;br&gt;Muslims should know which aspects of the modern world are neutral to ideology – for example most aspects of technology – and which aspects are related to ideologies that contradict Islam e.g. political systems like communism and liberal democracy.</td>
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<td>Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hudood</td>
<td>Muslims should view Hudood as outdated or even ‘barbaric’ from a secular viewpoint</td>
<td>Muslims should understand Hudood are from Allah (SWT); that they are subject to conditions; that they can only be implemented by the correct Islamic authority which is the Khilafah; that they act to protect the lives, property, honour, minds and beliefs of the people. Muslims should challenge others to think about the problems that exist in societies where the Shariah judicial and penal system is not implemented – like crime and disorder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men-Women Social relations</td>
<td>Muslim should accept secular norms of interaction between men-women and Sexual Relationships</td>
<td>Islam has distinct norms of relationships between men and women, which encourages separation when there is no appropriate relationship or condition. Islam promotes marriage as the bedrock of family life, and the fundamental unit of society and community and does not condone sexual relations outside this or that which undermines it. Muslims should challenge others to think about the problems in western society since the decline in the family as the fundamental unit upon which society is built. Muslims should challenge people to think about how women in western societies are treated and exploited as economic commodities. Muslims should understand the Ahkam Shariah addressed men and women the same, except in a small number of areas – which is not surprising since they share in their human characteristics in most areas, but differ in several ways.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jihad</td>
<td>Muslims should abandon a view of Jihad as fighting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Muslims should oppose Jihad that works against British policies and interests</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Islam is the cause of ‘terrorism’ – and this is synonymous with Jihad – hence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Muslims need to denounce all ‘terrorism’ and all Jihad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Muslims should understand Jihad authentically, so that they can evaluate these</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ideological attacks.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Resisting colonial occupation is legitimate Jihad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Muslims should explain to people in the west how their governments promote</td>
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<td>policies that have been the cause of the deaths of hundreds of thousands of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>innocents in recent years.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Muslims should reject the associations of Jihad and ‘terrorism’, as well as Islam</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and ‘terrorism’.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Islam does not accept the ‘terrorism’ they blame it for, but the real Jihad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>feesabilillah is a noble matter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ummah</td>
<td>Muslims should prioritise national and regional identities and loyalties over</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>their Ummah identity and loyalty</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW) made this Ummah one Ummah. This does not</td>
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<td>mean Muslims do not have duties to the rest of humanity, but the bond of Ummah</td>
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<td></td>
<td>is a fundamental command motivating concern and brotherhood.</td>
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<td>Muslims should highlight that many people in the world today are looking at</td>
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<td>identities that transcend nation state boundaries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Muslims</td>
<td>Muslims should distance themselves from any Islamic idea that makes a distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim and embrace an idea of a ‘brotherhood of man’.</td>
<td>Islam defines our view of every matter including non-Muslims. Muslims can be in no doubt that the only deen acceptable to Allah (SWT) is Islam.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>But Islam allows good and friendly relations with non-Muslims who do not oppress you for your deen. Moreover, Islam commands Muslims to be just and decent to neighbours and others regardless of faith.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>However, Islam does not allow political alliances and trusting friendships with hostile states and governments.</td>
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<td>Islam has a track record of helping people in difficulties – both in the sense of Muslims as individuals or in the sense of the Caliphate representing the whole Ummah e.g. the Ottoman Caliph sending aid to Ireland when people were suffering during the Irish potato famine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khilafah</td>
<td>Muslims should abandon aspirations for Khilafah in favour of secular democratic political models and the existing world order.</td>
<td>Muslims should know that the Khilafah is an obligation from Allah (SWT) and the instruction of the Prophet (SAW), and, as such, should always be an aspiration.</td>
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<td>Muslims should support the call for Khilafah in the Muslim world and explain that it offers the only alternative to the despots and corrupt politicians currently ruling; and hope to the whole world as an example of an alternative to the hegemony of global capitalism.</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Muslims should highlight that many people in the world today are looking at identities that transcend nation state boundaries; in particular in the future, countries will dominate the world that have large populations and land masses – e.g. China, India, Russia, Europe and the United States.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

It is essential that Muslims recognise these attacks for what they are.

They are not merely xenophobic attacks, like anti-Semitism, racism or anti-immigration sentiments that are all growing in Europe today.

These are ideological attacks aimed to weaken the Muslims’ confidence in Islam, so they adopt the Western value system.

Hence, what is needed is an ideological resilience that recognises a series of ‘red lines’, and where *naseeha* is given to those who cross these lines so that they can stay true to the Islamic beliefs.

However, resisting the onslaught against Islam is not, in itself, enough.

We need to highlight the many weaknesses in their arguments and alternative ideological systems, which are rarely exposed in these debates.

What is also needed is to identify and articulate an Islamic way of living for Muslims in the west.

We can present the Islamic ideological principles to explain our way of life in a way that demonstrates the strength of the Islamic values as opposed to the values which are in practice today that have led to a ‘broken Britain’.

Finally, Muslims have a duty to carry the real message of Islam to others in this society. Whether they accept it or not is up to them, but it is incumbent upon us to fulfil our responsibility to convey Islam faithfully to each other, so that the ordinary people in the UK at least hear the truth about this *deen*.

The next section attempts to define a positive Islam-based agenda for Muslims living in Britain, which provides clarity amidst the mass of confusion and present a clear set of actions that can be agreed upon and pursued by the Muslims collectively.
The Future for Muslims in Britain

Part 3 – An Islamic Way Forward
OUR VISION FOR THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

In the previous sections, we have explained the UK Government’s agenda as regards Muslims; and also considered how we should respond to the ideological attacks we see launched against Islam.

However, we believe there are some clear principles that can guide the Muslim community in Britain, given our Islamic obligations and the challenges of the world we live in.

These principles are:

Adhering to Islam in all matters. This is the most important issue for a Muslim that wishes to worship Allah (SWT) in all areas of life, and all our relationships should be built upon this principle.

Building self-reliance and independence from the state is the only way that our institutions (Mosques, schools, etc) will retain their Islamic values. Dependency upon the government will mean they can dictate their values and policies through these institutions.

Maintaining independence from the secular party political system. Whilst Muslims should be engaged in their communities within the rules of Islam, the political system in Britain is built on secular capitalist values, and enshrined in its mainstream political parties. One cannot enter into this political system and retain Islamic ideological values. The price to enter the system is to adopt the values of the party you belong to - secular, capitalist and liberal – which are fundamentally at odds with Islam. The examples of Muslim MP’s bear testimony to this fact.

Based on these principles, we believe the main priorities for Muslims in the UK should be:

To secure the noble Islamic values in our families and communities - We must live according to these with each other, with our Ummah, and with other people in this society. This means securing our mosques, schools and madrasahs upon an Islamic basis and standing for Islam when it is attacked.

To support the work for re-establishing the Islamic Khilafah in the Muslim world - We are part of a wider Ummah that is struggling to free herself from oppressive corrupt rulers and systems in our countries. It is only with the establishment of a sincere Islamic leadership will we be able to address the multitude of problems facing the Ummah. This means voicing opposition to the regimes that currently rule over the Muslim world and discussion with those we know, especially those of influence, about this most vital issue.
To carry the message of Islam to the non-Muslims in the wider society –

Given the attacks on Islam, our main purpose should be to understand our deen, stand for Islam and carry the truthfulness of the message of Islam to the wider society – by word and through our deeds. This means opening our mosques to non-Muslims; answering questions for neighbours, colleagues and those we know; and responding to the media misrepresentations.

By following this path the community would be robust in maintaining its Islamic principles and would be in the best position to engage with others in western societies upon a positive basis, and contribute positively in a way that will, inshallah, please Allah (SWT). Hizb ut-Tahrir, as well as other organisations and individuals are actively working to encourage these activities.

Principle 1: Adhering to Islam in all matters

Allah (SWT) says: ‘But no, by Your Lord, they can have no (real) faith until they make you judge in all disputes between them and find in their souls no resistance against your decisions, but accept them with the fullest submission’ [4:65]

Even though there are huge pressures for Muslims to compromise our deen, obedience to Allah and His Messenger is a fundamental obligation upon every Muslim.

We cannot compromise our principles based on some kind of ‘cost benefit analysis’; nor adopt a different values system because of pressures upon us.

Over the coming years, it is likely that this pressure will increase on our communities – especially its leaders - in an attempt to weaken the Islamic values. Compromising the Islamic standards of halal and haram for some meagre benefit or fear of loss cannot be the basis of charting the path for the Muslim community.

Ultimately, success in any area of life is only with Allah (SWT), and that success is conditional on abiding by the Islamic Shariah.

Whatever other relationships or interests we have that affect us – and there are many - these are all informed by our Islamic beliefs and loyalty to Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW). ‘Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your spouses, or your kindred; the wealth that you have gained; the commerce in which you fear a decline, or the dwellings in which you delight – are dearer to you than
Allah or His Messenger, or the striving in His cause; then wait until Allah brings about His decision, and Allah does not guide the rebellious.’ [Surah Tawbah 9:24]

The Islamic Shariah obliges Muslims to obey all obligations and abstain from all prohibitions wherever they live.

With this in mind, this community needs to agree some Islamic principles or “red lines” that should not be crossed either by word or deed. Statements from Muslims that confirm the need to reform our Shariah principles or which further add scrutiny to areas of Islam already under attack need to be rejected, and at the very least viewed with suspicion.

Moreover, our leaderships need to have a stronger voice when Islamic principles such as Shariah, Khilafah, Hijab and Niqaab come under attack. Silence in these matters should not be viewed from the perspective of political expediency, since silence demonstrates an intellectual weakness inherent in our values.

Furthermore, issues such as Shariah and Khilafah that are routinely attacked and misrepresented should be explained correctly, and unashamedly, supporting the growing call in the Muslim world to adopt these as their basis of law and governance.

Not to do so would leave unanswered the unashamed export by Western governments of their basis of laws and governance in our countries over many years in what they call the ‘battle for hearts and minds’ that is raging both in our community and the wider Islamic world.

Islam cannot be adopted selectively. We cannot promote parts we like and brush aside and ignore those bits that seem difficult when faced with pressures. We cannot abandon basic principles and remain silent after attacks upon the basis of pragmatism, a perceived political benefit, and fear of being called ‘extremists’ – even if the tests are challenging for us.
Principle 2: Building self-reliance and maintaining our institutions in dependent of the state

Building self-reliance and maintaining our institutions (Mosques, schools etc) independent from the state is the only way that our institutions will retain their Islamic values. Dependency upon government will mean they can dictate their values and policies through these institutions.

The British government has made a huge effort to control Muslim institutions such as mosques, schools and madrasahs, through funding attached with conditions.

In the past it has tried to do this through controlling and influencing through conditional financial grants and support; pressurising Muslim groups and mosque boards; using regulatory bodies like Ofsted and the Charities Commission; regulation through local councils; and pressure from the local police.

The net result has been pressurising Muslims to spy on each other; pressure to adopt State endorsed madrasah curricula; intimidating regimes of inspection through Ofsted; and threats to close Mosques if they voice any political viewpoints on international issues.

Muslims should learn from these past lessons and realise that use of government funds is something that weakens, not strengthens our institutions and our community. It breeds a culture of dependency, and allows others to dictate to us.

Creating financial dependency, and using it as a tool to apply political pressure is exactly how colonial governments influence weaker countries around the world.

Muslims should make as much effort as possible to maintain the independence and credibility of these institutions.

Over the last few decades the Muslim community has shown its ability when it has used its own resources.

- Over 1000 Mosques built
- Over 100 Muslim schools established
- Thousands of children attending madrasahs after schools and weekends
- Halal food business on hundreds of High Streets
- Muslim websites, newspapers, magazines, TV and Radio stations

These are just a few of the things that Muslims have achieved without recourse to the state. And these are the things the state would love to control and dictate according to secular liberal and capitalist values.
Principle 3: Maintaining independence from the secular political system

We believe Muslims should be engaged in their communities, acting at all times according to the rules of Islam. Engagement with non-Muslims should always be on the basis of Islamic thoughts and sentiments and not secular beliefs.

However, the political system in Britain is capitalist, built on secular values, and enshrined in its mainstream political parties. The democratic system, where MPs are legislators, deciding the halal and haram for society, fundamentally contradicts Islam.

Some Muslims might believe they can enter the system and influence for the benefit of Muslims and according to an Islamic agenda. They model their thinking on the view that the minority Jewish community has embedded itself into the British Establishment, and so influences Britain according to its interests.

However, we believe that you cannot enter into this political system and retain Islamic values. The price to enter the system would be to adopt the values of whichever political party you have joined - secular, capitalist and liberal – which are fundamentally at odds with Islam.

 Whilst some politicians maybe corrupt, secular or careerist from the outset, even those who are sincere gradually face pressures to submit their principles and the community’s interests to the interests of the political parties they affiliate to. This is because they rely upon them for campaign funding and administrative funding in their constituencies.

At each stage of the political ladder one would be forced to compromise a little more of ones principles such that, by the time a person reached a position to make even a small influence, they would be looking out for their party’s interests and would have adopted secular, liberal and capitalist values.

The example of Muslim MPs is ample proof. They have voted to retain British troops in Afghanistan; for unjust and oppressive anti-terror laws that have been the basis of a parallel system of justice for Muslims; they have voted in favour or remained silent on issues that fundamentally contradict Islam – like alcohol licensing laws, gambling laws and laws governing sexual relations between men and women. At a local level we see Muslims divided in local government according to party political interests: with Labour Muslims, Liberal Democrat Muslims and Conservative Muslims stabbing each other in the back, attacking and slandering each other all for the sake of whichever party they represent.

Muslims looking to engage in society, and influence things for the better according to Islam, should do so solely according to what Islam permits, and stay far away from that which Islam forbids.

‘And do not incline to those who do wrong or the Fire will seize you; and you have no protectors other than Allah nor shall you be helped.’ [Surah Hud 11-113].
WHAT THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY NEEDS TO DO IN BRITAIN

Based upon the above principles we believe Muslims in the UK should be doing the following:

1: Work to preserve our sublime Islamic values in our domestic and community life

There are huge pressures in the society around us to diverge from Islamic values – especially the way the Islamic Shariah addresses the areas of politics and those Islamic values that define the relations between men and women, which are persistently attacked in the media. Muslims are labelled as ‘extremists’ if they adhere to these values in order to pressure them into change.

The Shariah is a noble, just and decent legal code by which the Islamic society lives. It governs our worships, our family and neighbourly relations and our moral conduct. We seek to be guided by the Shariah wherever we are in the world. It also gives solutions for governance, economics, social life, law and order and international relations. Though we are not working to make Britain a Shariah state, we support the work to re-establish the Shariah as a system of law in the Muslim lands.

Islam views men and women of equal worth in the eyes of Allah (SWT), bound by largely the same rules and responsibilities, and that justice is for both fairly and equally. ‘Muslim men and women, and believing men and women, and the devout obedient men and women, and those men and women who tell the truth, and the men and women who are patient and constant, the humble men and women, men and women who give in charity, men and women who fast and deny themselves, men and women who guard their chastity, and men and women who remember Allah much, Allah has prepared for them all forgiveness and a great Reward’ [Surah Ahzab 33:35]

However, men and women are different in some ways, and Islam attributes distinct roles to each, which reflect these differences in terms of rules and responsibilities.

Furthermore, Islam generally separates men and women outside of family life, which leads to a much more wholesome communal atmosphere.

Islam demands respect and honour for women, not that they be treated as economic commodities.

Muslims have two choices:

One option would be to accept that our youth become affected by the same values that have sadly led to the culture of disrespect and antisocial behaviour; the breakdown of family life; the elderly being abandoned; the rise of individualism, consumerism and sexual permissiveness; the ‘commoditisation’ of women.
The other option would be that our youth carry the Islamic values that teaches fear of Allah, love for His Messenger, respect and care for parents, elders and teachers, the promotion of marriage, family life and decent morals; and the respect and honouring of women.

This means:

- Establishing and securing our mosques, madrasahs and schools upon Islamic values
- Rejecting bribes and other attempts by the State to control these institutions
- Speaking out and standing for Islam when Islamic values and beliefs are attacked in the media
- Rejecting labels of ‘moderate and extremist’ based upon how much we adhere to Islam.

2. Support the work for re-establishing the Islamic Khilafah in the Muslim world and stand with the oppressed Ummah around the world

We are part of a wider Ummah that is struggling to free herself from oppressive corrupt rulers and systems in our countries. It is only with the establishment of a sincere Islamic leadership we will be able to address the multitude of problems facing the Ummah.

Nu’man ibn Basheer narrated that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: ‘The example of the believers in their mutual love, affection and compassion is like that of a body, when one part hurts the rest of the body responds in sleeplessness and fever.’ [Reported by Muslim]

Also, the Prophet (SAW) said ‘Whosoever dies without a bai’ah (to a Khaleefah) on his neck, dies the death of Jahiliyyah’ [Muslim]. This indicates the obligatory nature of restoring this Islamic institution.

Khilafah is the system of governance Islam obliges the Muslims to establish. This was the State that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) established where Islam was established as a system for society. The Khalifah Rashidun ruled the State after the Prophet (SAW’s) death. This Khilafah State continued to be the leadership of the Muslim Ummah till the Uthmaniyah Khilafah was finally destroyed at the hands of Mustapha Kemal with the help of the British in 1924.

Muslims worldwide are obliged to actively work for the re-establishment of this Khilafah. In
the Muslim countries the Muslim masses are struggling against the corrupt rulers to remove them and establish the Khilafah. Muslims in the West have an active role to play to support this work. Muslims living here come from all parts of the Muslim Ummah. Building a strong support for the call for Khilafah here will no doubt reach our Muslim brothers and sisters back home which will aid the work they are doing.

Furthermore, the West has launched an attack on Islam, creating fear and propaganda against Muslims wanting to live by the Shariah and Khilafah. This ideological war is part of their effort to weaken the call for Khilafah. Therefore as Muslims living here our work to counter these attacks on Islam and demonstrating what Islam is as a complete system for society is a very crucial contribution to the global effort for re-establishing the Islamic Khilafah State.

Muslims in the West can voice their aspirations, and their rejection and contempt for the current systems and regimes that exist – especially when representatives of these regimes visit the UK and are given ‘red carpet’ treatment.

- Khilafah is the vital issue of the Ummah.
- It is an obligation from Allah.
- It is the shield for the Ummah.
- It is the practical means of Muslim Unity in the world.
- It is the leadership required to address the pressing problems that afflict the Muslim world: Insecurity, instability, oppression, poverty, lack of technology, lack of education – and others.

Just as western governments work and plan to prevent the Islamic revival in the Muslim world and amongst Muslims in the West, the Muslim community in the UK cannot chart a path here detached from what is happening to the Muslim Ummah and Islam globally.

This means:

- Voicing opposition to the regimes that currently rule over the Muslim world
- Build support for the call for Khilafah both here and amongst the people of influence in the Muslim world
- Demonstrating our support when people in the Muslim world are attacked or oppressed.
- Using means such as the world wide web and global media to promote unity for the Ummah and re-establishing the Khilafah
- Demonstrate our support for Muslims to resist and defend themselves from foreign occupation.
3: Carry the message of Islam to the non-Muslims in the wider society

There are very obvious reasons for this as well as Allah’s command, Allah (SWT) says: ‘Call to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and good teaching; and argue with them in the most courteous way, for your Lord knows best, who has strayed from His Way, and who is rightly guided’ [16:125]

The propaganda attacks on Islam have hugely increased hostility and suspicion towards Islam and the Muslim community. This is not surprising because the majority population of Britain have little except the media lies upon which to base their impressions.

To do this we must aim to do 3 things:

- Understand our deen – for without understanding we cannot correct misconceptions or carry Islam to others.
- Stand for Islam: meaning to refute the attacks on Islam, carry the truthfulness of the message of Islam to the wider society, and make an honest comparison with western beliefs and values.
- Carrying Islam through intelligent reasoned argument and debate. This means engaging with people upon our distinct Islamic values; taking every opportunity to explain the Islamic message, correcting the misconceptions, and refuting the false propaganda that is all too prevalent in the media.

All of this is only possible if we work to establish and maintain solid Islamic values in our families and communities. These values should be manifest in our character and behaviour, showing others what it really means to live by Islam.

‘And who is better in speech than one who calls to Allah, works righteous deeds, and says, “Verily, I am of those who are Muslims” ’ [Surah Fussilat 41:33].

It is incumbent upon Muslims to carry the correct message of Islam to the wider society.

This means:

- Opening our mosques to non-Muslims to show them the beauty of Islam.
- Answering questions for neighbours, colleagues and those we know
- Knowing how to respond to the media misrepresentations and propaganda
- Studying Islam, how it came as a complete way of life, and the best deen for humanity
- Turning the argument around and addressing the ills of this secular society as the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) did
Conclusion

We believe these principles offer a vision of positive living according to Islam for Muslims in the UK and a basis upon which to fulfil our duties to Allah (SWT), to the Ummah, and to those around us; to engage and interact and make a positive contribution.

Upon this basis we propose a draft ‘charter’ for Muslims living in Britain that gives a positive agenda that can help to secure our Islamic identity.

We hope that this charter affords a basis for discussion and comment and something that pleases Our Lord – Allah Ta’ala, the Most High. All Praise is for Him.

Proposed Charter for Muslims Living in Britain

We Muslims, who believe in Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW), living in the UK, will strive always to:

1. Obey Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW) in all circumstances and all places
2. Work to preserve our identity as part of the Ummah of Muhammad (SAW).
3. Maintain our bonds of brotherhood and duties to the Ummah
4. Work to preserve our sublime Islamic values in our domestic and community life
5. Uphold the Shariah as the correct code for human behaviour
6. Work actively to refute the propaganda attacks against Islam and show the beauty of Islam as a Message for humankind
7. Work to build our community institutions i.e. our mosques, madrasahs and schools upon an Islamic basis and such that our community, not the State, controls them.
8. Work to promote the correct relationship with non-Muslims in Britain upon an Islamic basis. To safeguard for all citizens the sanctity of their property, blood, honour and religion.
9. Uphold that it is legitimate for Muslims to resist occupation in Muslim lands
10. Support the work to re-establish the Khilafah