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Home Affairs Committee

Terrorism and Community Relations

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Home Affairs Committee

The Home Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Home Office and its associated public bodies; and the administration and expenditure of the Attorney General's Office, the Treasury Solicitor's Department, the Crown Prosecution Service and the Serious Fraud Office (but excluding individual cases and appointments and advice given within government by Law Officers).

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Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Dr Robin James (Clerk), Mr Mark Etherton (Second Clerk), Kate Akester (Adviser (Sentencing Guidelines)), Dr Ben Morris (Committee Legal Specialist), Mr Ian Thomson (Committee Assistant), Sarah Verrinder (Secretary) and Mr John-Paul Flaherty (Senior Office Clerk).

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Footnotes

In the footnotes of this Report, references to oral evidence are indicated by 'Q' followed by the question number. All oral evidence for this inquiry is printed in Volume III. References to written evidence are indicated by the page number as in 'Ev 12' (written evidence published in Volume II is indicated as in 'Ev 12, HC 165–II', and evidence published in Volume III is indicated as in 'Ev 12, HC 165–III').

Contents

Summary

In this report we consider how the threat of international terrorism has affected relations between communities in this country.

We outline existing problems of community relations, examining developments since the riots in the summer of 2001. We recall government policy initiatives based on analyses such as the Cantle report, as well as issues such as asylum and immigration, which although separate from community relations, have frequently been confused with them. We also note efforts to tackle racism in police forces, following the Stephen Lawrence inquiry.

We look at developments since 9/11, briefly recalling terrorism-related incidents, such as arrests, in this country and abroad, before setting out the anti-terrorism powers created by recent legislation and the way in which they have been used. We make clear that we deliberately did not examine the detention powers created by the Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 or the control orders brought in by the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, since for the period of the inquiry they were the subject both of other official inquiries and of parliamentary debate.

We stress that although, after a brief overview of minorities in the United Kingdom, we focus on issue affecting the Muslim community, we do not wish to add to the stereotyping of this community: but Muslims in Britain are more likely than other groups to feel that they are suffering as a result of the response to international terrorism. We consider whether community relations have got worse since 9/11, looking at Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and other issues of minority relations. We conclude that community relations have indeed deteriorated, although not universally and that there are positive elements. We call for much greater recognition for the problems of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism and for all communities to tackle them. In comparison with France and the Netherlands, this country's experience of discussion of community issues is a strength; on the other hand, those countries seem more ready to recognise the central importance of Muslim communities and their future development.

We look at what central and local government can and should do. The Home Office should review the links between its work on community cohesion and anti-terrorism. Schools have a vital role. We were impressed by the energy and imagination shown by some local councils and stress the importance of central Government reinforcing their work through a strategy to explain national policy and encourage local discussion. Community leaders, including faith leaders, can make an important contribution: we call on them to build bridges to other communities, including by dropping defensive and reactive stances to create a climate of tolerance and mutual respect. Diversity in police forces, local government and the media is important for its own sake, because it shows minorities are valued and because it provides role models. We note that public policy affecting British Muslims must recognise both their common identity and their diverse backgrounds.

We consider reactions from minority communities to the application of the anti-terrorism legislation. We do not believe that the Asian community is being unreasonably targeted by

stops and searches, but accept that Muslims perceive that they are being stigmatised by the legislation. The police and Government should make special efforts to reassure Muslims and the Muslim community should be involved in independent scrutiny of police intelligence. We call for detailed and accurate statistics and information on terrorism-related detentions, arrests, charges and trials.

We examine issues that need to be addressed in order to combat terrorism and build cohesive communities. It is essential that British Muslims are engaged as soon as possible in the review of new and existing anti-terrorism powers and that a coherent strategy be developed with them and other communities for tackling extremism. A broader anti-terrorism strategy should include measures to support British Muslim leaders to resist extremists. We reject any suggestion that that Muslims are in some way more likely to turn to terrorism. We endorse the Cantle report's conclusion that there should be a national debate about a modern British identity

We examined how media coverage has affected issues of international terrorism and community relations: the overwhelming evidence was that it had had a powerful and often negative impact. Representatives of the media appeared unaware or dismissive of this. We believe that the media must live up to their responsibilities to report fairly and accurately. We also conclude that suggestions that there has been a Government strategy to manipulate media coverage of terrorism are unfounded. The Government should develop a strategy to ensure that the extent and limitations of the proposed offence of incitement to religious hatred are understood by all.

Overall, we conclude that the United Kingdom is well placed to deal with the issues we considered. But this will require active leadership at all levels.

1 Introduction

The Committee's inquiry

1. We decided to inquire into terrorism and community relations, taking evidence on the impact the threat of terrorism is having on community relations and social cohesion, including public concerns about the terrorist threat, the impact on relations between different sections of the community, any rise in and exploitation of racial tension, and the consequences of anti-terrorist measures. Particular topics we considered included:

- the stigmatisation of minority groups publicly 'associated' with terrorism;

- the incidence of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other forms of prejudice;

- media coverage of these issues; and

- civil liberties/policing issues.

2. In the course of our inquiry we took oral evidence on seven occasions and received 55 memoranda. A list of those who gave oral evidence is annexed. We also visited France and the Netherlands.

3. We would like to thank the two Specialist Advisers appointed to assist the inquiry: Professor Humayun Ansari of Royal Holloway, University of London, and Professor Conor Gearty of the London School of Economics.

2 Community relations: existing problems and policies

4. Concern about community relations did not begin with 9/11. The growth of international terrorism, and the Government's response, has had an impact on what was already a complex issue. Whilst Britain is rightly seen as having a relatively successful record in tackling racism and promoting strong community relations, and whilst some minority communities were becoming increasingly successful and prosperous, others continued to suffer higher than average levels of deprivation. The Stephen Lawrence inquiry had emphasised the progress that still needed to be made in tackling institutional racism in public institutions.

5. In the summer of 2001, before the twin towers attacks, a series of disturbances had hit northern cities. Subsequent inquiries highlighted a number of underlying problems and tensions that were seen as relevant much more widely than the towns directly affected. In the same summer, public concern about asylum reached unprecedented heights following widespread publicity about the Sangatte camp near Calais.

6. It is clear the Britain would have faced difficult challenges in building better community relations even without the terrorist attacks and the necessary responses to them. Our report has focussed on international terrorism and its impact on community relations. It is difficult however to separate these issues entirely from the wider background problems.

Indeed, the concern expressed by many witnesses about the common if irresponsible media association of Muslims, asylum seekers and terrorists underlines how intertwined these issues have become in public discourse.

7. For this reason, we have begun with a brief history of the major events of the past five or six years, including the Government's analysis of the riots and its subsequent response; the development of asylum policy; racism and diversity in the police; and the reaction to 9/11, new terrorist legislation and its subsequent use. We also recall statistics on minorities in the UK, focusing in particular on the Muslim community and the disadvantages they suffer.

The Cantle report

8. The first outbreak of serious disorder in 2001 was in Bradford on Sunday 15 April. This was followed by similar disturbances in Oldham, on 26-29 May and Burnley, on 24-26 June, and finally by a second outbreak in Bradford on 7-10 July. Serious disturbances also occurred in Leeds on 5 June and Stoke-on-Trent on the weekend of 14-15 July. The disorders involved hundreds of mainly young people, inflicted injuries on over 400 police officers, and caused millions of pounds worth of damages.

9. Some areas, such as Oldham and Burnley, established local enquiries to find out more about the particular circumstances in their own communities which gave rise to these events. The Home Secretary's response was to set up a Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion to examine and consider how national policies might be used to promote better community cohesion, based upon shared values and a celebration of diversity. He also established a Review Team, led by Ted Cantle, previously Chief Executive of Nottingham City Council, to seek the views of local residents and community leaders in the affected towns and in other parts of England on what the issues were that needed to be addressed to bring about social cohesion, and also to identify good practice in the handling of these issues at local level.[1]

10. Among the main themes of the report was the separation between communities:

> "Whilst the physical segregation of housing estates and inner city areas came as no surprise, the team was particularly struck by the depth of polarisation of our towns and cities. The extent to which these physical divisions were compounded by so many other aspects of our daily lives, was very evident. Separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, means that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives. These lives often do not seem to touch at any point, let alone overlap and promote any meaningful interchanges."[2]

11. The report identified a number of contributing factors, including lack of leadership and of readiness to confront issues and find solutions. It also noted that "where high levels of poverty and unemployment were found community cohesion was unlikely to be very evident", but observed that correlation with disaffection and social unrest was not always

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1   Home Office, *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team Chaired by Ted Cantle*, December 2001 (the Cantle report)

2   The Cantle report, para 2.1

straightforward.[3] Another factor was under-representation of black and ethnic minorities, particularly in supervisory and managerial posts, in some local authorities and police forces.[4] The role of schools in breaking down barriers—or failing to do so—was also underlined. The report made 67 recommendations to tackle the problems it had identified. At the top of the list was the need for clear identification of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, based on an honest and open national debate.[5]

Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order

12. The Ministerial Group reported soon after the Cantle report and the other local enquiries noted in paragraphs 9 and 14, setting out action already taken by the Government and ways in which existing programmes would be refocused to promote more cohesive communities. Drawing on the analyses in the other reports and additional sources, it concluded that the most important factors had been:

- the lack of a strong civic identity or shared social values to unite diverse communities;

- the fragmentation and polarisation of communities - on economic, geographical, racial and cultural lines - on a scale which amounted to segregation, albeit to an extent by choice;

- disengagement of young people from the local decision making process, inter-generational tensions, and an increasingly territorial mentality in asserting different racial, cultural and religious identities in response to real or perceived attacks;

- weak political and community leadership;

- inadequate provision of youth facilities and services;

- high levels of unemployment, particularly amongst young people;

- activities of extremist groups;

- weaknesses and disparity in the police response to community issues, particularly racial incidents; and

- irresponsible coverage of race stories by sections of the local media.[6]

13. **We believe that the analysis in the Cantle report remains valid. Key issues in the report, such as the importance of leadership, especially at a local level, the need to overcome segregation, the role of schools and the importance of opportunities for young people and the need for clarity over what it means to be British, are central to the problems discussed in this inquiry. The threat of international terrorism brings a new**

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3   The Cantle report, paras 4.5 and 4.12

4   *Ibid*, para 4.7

5   *Ibid*, Chapter 6

6   Home Office, *Building Cohesive Communities: a Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion*, December 2001, para 2.6

dimension to existing issues, and perhaps makes their resolution even more pressing—it does not change them.

Developments in policy on community relations

14. Community cohesion has been the subject of a number of reports and inquiries since the summer of 2001. As well as the Cantle report, discussed in paragraphs 9-11, Lord (then Sir Herman) Ouseley reported on inter-community relations for Bradford Council,[7] David Ritchie on Oldham[8] and Lord Clarke on Burnley.[9] The Home Office also lists as key documents on these issues the report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order,[10] the report of the Community Cohesion Panel[11] and the Local Government Association's action guide to community cohesion,[12] in addition to guidance on housing asylum seekers and refugees, community cohesion education standards for schools, guidance on measuring cohesion and on building a relationship with the media and a Home Office/ODPM action plan aimed at mainstreaming community cohesion in Government policy on housing.[13] The Select Committee on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has reported on social cohesion,[14] while in January this year the Government set out their strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion.[15]

The Community Cohesion Panel report

15. The independent Community Cohesion Panel was set up in April 2002 to work with and advise Ministers on the development of community cohesion at national and local levels. Its final report, published in July 2004, made a number of recommendations, covering a wide range of issues, which were summed up in the introduction to the report:

> "We need more integration, but we also want each community to feel proud of its heritage and traditions—in other words we need a type of multi-culturalism in which everyone supports the values and laws of the nation, whilst keeping hold of their cultural identity.

> "To achieve this everyone must have a real sense of belonging and they must share common values. […] much more needs to be done to make this a reality, though we applaud some of the recent efforts to develop citizenship at a national level and the actions of local authorities and their partners to create more unity locally. We now need to step up a gear and particularly to overcome some of the tensions created by wider international divisions. All citizens, whether by birth or naturalised, White or

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7 *Community Pride not Prejudice – Making Diversity Work in Bradford*, Sir Herman Ouseley, July 2001.

8 Government Office for the North West, *Oldham Independent Review: One Oldham, one Future*, December 2001

9 Burnley Task Force, *Burnley Speaks, Who Listens? Burnley Task Force Report*, December 2001

10 Home Office, *Building Cohesive Communities: A Report of the Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion*, December 2001

11 Home Office, *The End of Parallel Lives?: The Report of the Community Cohesion Panel*, July 2004

12 Local Government Association, *Community Cohesion – an action guide*, November 2004

13 http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/cohesion/keydocs.html

14 Committee on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Sixth Report of Session 2003-04, *Social Cohesion*, HC 45

15 Home Office, *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society: The Government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion*, January 2005.

from a Black and minority ethnic (BME) group, whatever their faith, need to be able to see themselves as 'British', whether or not they add their cultural identity to the term.

"Citizenship is not just an issue for newcomers. Some form of new ceremony or event should be used to mark every 18 year old's transition to democratic participation. The heritage of all communities – including the host community – should be celebrated.

"The Government should audit progress on building cohesion and take action to fill in the gaps. It must also ensure every central Government department sees community cohesion as a Government priority and not 'just a Home Office issue'. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) should monitor the concentration and segregation of communities and use the information to inform policy."[16]

The ODPM Select Committee report

16. The ODPM Committee's inquiry into social cohesion, and in particular into progress since the disturbances of 2001, was announced in May 2003, and the report was published in May 2004. The Committee stressed the over-arching nature of the issue:

"Social cohesion should be seen as a long term issue to be considered by all agencies. It has been brought to prominence by the disturbances in 2001 but it should not be seen predominantly as a law and order issue. Social cohesion requires the securing of improvements in the quality of life for all citizens and should be addressed in all policies and services developed by public agencies."[17]

Other recommendations made by the Committee covered local services, regeneration programmes, education, youth provision, the needs of vulnerable people, the role of the community and voluntary sectors, and central government, including the ODPM, the Home Office and the Department of Health.

Current government policy

17. The Government's strategy is described in the most recent strategy paper as being based on a vision of Britain in which:

- young people from different communities grow up with a sense of common belonging

- new immigrants are integrated

- people have opportunities to develop a greater understanding of the range of cultures that contribute to our strength as a country

- people from all backgrounds have opportunities to participate in civic society

- racism is unacceptable

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16   Home Office, *The End of Parallel Lives?: The Report of the Community Cohesion Panel*, July 2004, page 8

17   Committee on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Sixth Report of Session 2003-04, *Social Cohesion*, HC 45-I, para 13

- extremists who promote hatred are marginalised.[18]

18. The Home Office also say that a cohesive community is one where:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities

- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued

- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities

- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.[19]

19. Current policies focus on reducing race inequalities through a comprehensive cross-Government Public Service Agreement target to monitor and reduce race inequalities between 2005 and 2008, including specific goals to reduce perceptions of discrimination in a wide range of public services, reduce employment inequalities and monitor the progress of minority ethnic communities across major public services, from education to housing.

Regional Development Agencies

20. The eight Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) set up in the English Regions are non-departmental public bodies. According to the DTI, their primary role, along with that of a ninth RDA, the London Development Agency, is as strategic drivers of regional economic development in their region. The RDAs aim to co-ordinate regional economic development and regeneration, enable the regions to improve their relative competitiveness and reduce the imbalance that exists within and between regions.

21. Under the Regional Development Agencies Act 1998, each Agency has five statutory purposes, which are:

- To further economic development and regeneration

- To promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness

- To promote employment

- To enhance development and application of skill relevant to employment

- To contribute to sustainable development

22. The RDAs' agenda includes regional regeneration, taking forward regional competitiveness, taking the lead on regional inward investment and, working with regional partners, ensuring the development of a regional skills action plan to ensure that skills training matches the needs of the labour market.[20]

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18 *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society*, pp 11-13

19 http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/cohesion/index.html

20 http://www.consumers.gov.uk/rda/info/

23. The Regional Development Agencies' mission is "to transform England's regions through sustainable economic development" by improving their relative economic performance and reducing the deep-seated social and economic disparities within regions. Their work plays an important role in the government's efforts to promote community cohesion because they identify and address the issues that cause communities and individuals to be dissatisfied with where they live and the quality of their lives.

24. This is done by developing a Regional Economic Strategy (RES) with partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors, which sets out a plan for the development of the region over a 10-25 year period. The RES is owned by the region and identifies the priorities for investment and regeneration activities. The RDAs' Corporate Plans demonstrate what the agencies themselves will do to contribute to the implementation of the strategy.[21]

25. The London Development Agency, South East of England Development Agency and Yorkshire Forward have successfully piloted the use of an Equality and Community Cohesion Impact Assessment framework, which identifies the effect funding policies and strategies will have on community cohesion before projects are fully developed. The report on the pilot and recommendations for taking this work forward will be shared across the RDA network.

Asylum in the United Kingdom

26. The number of people seeking asylum in the UK increased in the late 1990s and peaked in 2002, at 84,130. The number has now fallen for several successive years (the figure for 2004 was 33,930).[22] The Government has reduced asylum applications by taking various measures including stricter border controls (involving use of new technology to detect illegal entrants, closure of the Sangatte refugee camp, and closer working with other European countries), fast-tracking of certain applicants, restriction of benefits to failed asylum seekers, and increasing (albeit from a very low base) the number of removals of failed asylum seekers.[23] The Government has also recently announced policies aimed at integrating successful asylum seekers, i.e. those who have been granted refugee status, within the national and local communities. Two white papers issued in March 2005 "set out the rights and responsibilities of refugee status and put an emphasis on gaining the skills to give something back to the community".[24] However, public concern about asylum remains high.

27. The alleged involvement of failed asylum seekers in terrorist activities in the UK and elsewhere and suggestions that some extremist Islamic preachers have also entered the country by seeking refugee status have undoubtedly led to wider and unjustified public concerns about a more general link between asylum and terrorism.

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21   Both the strategies and the Corporate Plans are available on the agencies' websites: www.englandsrdas.com.

22   Home Office, *Asylum Statistics: 4th Quarter 2004 United Kingdom*, published 22 February 2005, p 1

23   For more details on these policies, see Home Affairs Committee, Second Report of Session 2003–04, *Asylum Applications*, HC 218-I.

24   Home Office, *Integration Matters: The Home Office's Refugee Integration Strategy* and Department of Work and Pensions, *Working to Rebuild Lives: the DWP's Refugee Employment Strategy*, published 9 March 2005

28. Further concerns about migration have been linked to the growth in economic migration. In combination with measures to combat illegal immigration, the Government has sought to make the case for managed legal migration as being beneficial to the nation. In a speech in 2003 the then Home Secretary, Rt Hon David Blunkett MP, pointed out that legal migrants made up 8% of the UK's population but generated 10% of its GDP. He argued that "effectively managed legal migration is vital to Britain's economic and social interests".[25]

29. Concern was expressed in the press in early 2004 as to the likely consequences of EU enlargement on 1 May 2004 in terms of economic immigration to the UK. Home Office statistics show that just under 91,000 nationals from the eight EU accession states registered for work in the UK between May and September 2004. The Government noted that up to 45% of these had been in the country before 1 May, and that their presence as legally registered workers "alleviat[ed] recruitment difficulties in sectors such as hospitality and agriculture, and legalis[ed] those who had previously not been paying taxes".[26]

30. Whilst there have been no suggestions of a link between economic migration and terrorism, this issue adds a complicating factor to community relations.

Policing

31. The police investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence by a group of white youths in April 1993 was the subject of an inquiry led by Sir William Macpherson. The report, published in February 1999, criticised the Metropolitan Police Service for 'institutional racism', which it defined as:

> "The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people."[27]

32. One of the issues underlined by the Lawrence inquiry was the gap between the police's view of their own activities and perceptions of those activities by minority communities. Commenting on a series of public hearings in London and around the country, the report noted:

> "Wherever we went we were met with inescapable evidence which highlighted the lack of trust which exists between the police and the minority ethnic communities. At every location there was a striking difference between the positive descriptions of policy initiatives by senior police officers, and the negative expressions of the minority communities, who clearly felt themselves to be discriminated against by the

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25   Home Office press notice 309/2003, Effectively managed migration is good for Britain—Home Secretary, dated 12 November 2003

26   Home Office press notice 351/2004, New figures show accession workers working for the UK, dated 10 November 2004

27   *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny*, CM 4262-I, February 1999, para 6.34

police and others. We were left in no doubt that the contrast between these views and expressions reflected a central problem which needs to be addressed."[28]

33. In January 2004, the Metropolitan Police Authority launched an independent inquiry, headed by Sir Bill Morris, into professional standards and employment matters in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). The report noted that extensive work had been undertaken in developing the policies of the MPS in the area of diversity and in trying to implement them across the organisation. But it expressed concern that there was no common understanding of diversity within the organisation and that it was not embedded in the culture of the MPS. The report also noted evidence that managers lacked confidence in managing other issues of difference, whether of gender, disability, sexual orientation or faith, and that insufficient priority had been given to differences other than race.[29]

34. A formal investigation by the Commission for Racial Equality into the police forces of England and Wales reached similar conclusions in March 2004. Sir David Calvert-Smith, the former Director of Public Prosecutions who led the investigation, observed that there was no doubt that the Police Service had made significant progress in the area of race equality in recent years. But he believed there was still a long way to go to a service where every officer treated the public and their colleagues with fairness and respect, regardless of their ethnic origin. He also observed that willingness to change at the top was not translating into action lower down.[30]

35. **We are aware that the police, and particularly the Metropolitan Police Service, have made significant efforts to overcome the institutionalised racism criticised in the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. But we are concerned by continuing gaps between the police and minority communities in perceptions of police work and by evidence that there is still much work on diversity to be done in the police. We have made recommendations on diversity in the police in our recent report on Police Reform.**

3 Developments since 9/11

Terrorism-related incidents in the United Kingdom

36. Events in the united Kingdom linked to the threat of international terror and al Qaeda include the death of three young British Muslims (two of them from Luton) during American bombing at the start of the campaign in Afghanistan in October 2001. For attempting to blow up a transatlantic flight in December 2001 with a bomb concealed in his shoe, Richard Reid, a British citizen, was sentenced to life imprisonment in the United States in February 2003. In January 2003 it was claimed that ricin had been found in a flat in Wood Green and four men were later charged with chemical weapons offences. In February 2003 troops and tanks were stationed around Heathrow following an alert. Other high-profile operations included the arrests in March 2004 of eight young men following raids on 24 addresses in the south of England, which led to the seizure of 600 kilos of

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28   *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*, para 45.6

29   *The Case for Change: People in the Metropolitan Police Service*, December 2004, paras 1.20 – 1.25

30   CRE press release, 8 March 2005 and The Police Service in England and Wales, Commission for Racial Equality, March 2005

ammonium nitrate: six men were later charged with terrorism offences. In April 2004 there was widespread coverage in the British media of the arrests on suspicion of terrorism of 10 Iraqi Kurds in Manchester: all were released without charge ten days later. Most recently, at the end of February, a young Briton, Saajid Badat, pleaded guilty to conspiring to blow up an aircraft: Badat, who had been arrested in November 2003, had planned to blow up a flight with a shoe bomb, like Richard Reid, but had not gone ahead with this action.

International terrorist incidents involving Britain and the EU

37. Since 9/11, British citizens have been the victims of international terrorist attacks in Bali and Islamabad. Although no British citizens were killed in the Madrid bombings in 2004, the attack in an EU city brought home the possibility of similar events in the UK.

New anti-terrorism powers

38. In response to 9/11, and against the background of a potential terrorist threat, new anti-terrorism powers have been created. These, and how they have been used in practice, are reviewed here. We shall later consider perceptions among minority communities of the legislation itself and how it has been used. It is clear that such perceptions are crucial, since measurable events can only provide a partial indication of the effects of these measures on communities.

The legislation

39. The Terrorism Act 2000 not only consolidated existing law but (together with the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001) gave the police new powers to fight terrorism. For example, under section 41 of the Terrorism Act, "a constable may arrest without warrant a person whom he reasonably suspects to be a terrorist". The reason for having a special power of arrest in connection with terrorist cases is that "experience continues to show that it is necessary to make provision for circumstances where, at the point when the police believe an arrest should take place, there is not enough to charge an individual with a particular offence even though there is reasonable suspicion of involvement with terrorism".[31] The power of arrest is accompanied by powers of detention that differ from powers under ordinary criminal law in a number of important respects. The power to detain a suspected terrorist for up to 14 days without charge is particularly significant, and it should be noted that the maximum period of detention without charge was originally seven days, but was extended to a total of 14 days by the Criminal Justice Act 2003.[32]

40. The table on the following page lists some of the rights curtailed by the Act. The comparison is with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, as amended (PACE 1984):

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31   Home Office Circular 03/2001

32   Criminal Justice Act 2003, section 306 andthe Criminal Justice Act 2003 (Commencement No. 2 and Saving Provisions) Order 2004 (S.I. 2004, No 81 (C2))

	PACE 1984	**Terrorism Act 2000**
Length of detention without charge	• Once someone has been arrested, he or she can be detained for up to **24 hours** without charge. This can be extended for a further 12 hours by a sufficiently senior officer if this is thought necessary to secure relevant evidence. • This period can be extended by a warrant for further detention for up to another 36 hours, and at the end of that period can be extended once more for up to **4 days** from the time of arrest.	• Once someone has been arrested, he can be detained for up to **48 hours** without charge. • This period can be extended by a warrant for further detention for up to 7 days, and at the end of that period can be extended once more for up to another 7 days, making a total of **14 days** from the time of arrest.
Access to solicitor	• Suspect has a right to see a solicitor that can only be delayed by an officer (of at least the rank of a superintendent) in the case of a serious arrestable offence for up to **36 hours**.	• An officer (of at least the rank of superintendent) can authorise a delay of up to **48 hours** in permitting the detainee to consult a solicitor. • Under Sch 8, para 9, a senior police officer (at least assistant chief constable) can require detainee's consultation with lawyer to be **within sight and hearing of an officer** (of at least rank of inspector and not involved with the case).

41. Section 42 of the same Act provides a power for the police to search premises. It is dependent on the grant of a warrant by a justice of the peace on the basis of reasonable grounds for suspecting that a person whom the constable reasonably suspects to be a terrorist is to be found there. Section 43 provides a power for the police to search someone reasonably suspected of being a terrorist for the purpose of discovering relevant evidence. A police officer can seize and retain anything discovered in the course of the search which he or she reasonably suspects may constitute evidence that the person is a terrorist.

42. Sections 41-43 of the Act all rely on the notion of reasonable suspicion. A guide to what this should entail, drawn from PACE Code A, is appended.

43. Under section 44(1) of the Act police officers in uniform may, when authorised to do so in the specified area or place, stop and search any vehicle and its occupants. Under section 44(2) a similar power applies in respect of pedestrians and anything they are carrying. The powers are exercisable on the written or oral authorisation of an officer of substantive or temporary ACPO rank. The relevant Home Office guidance is appended.

44. Section 46 effectively created the possibility of continuously rolling authorisation of Section 44 stops and searches (see paragraph 46). This survived a challenge in the Court of Appeal, although the judgment showed some anxiety over the potential for automatic renewal.[33]

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33   R (Gillan) v Metropolitan Police Commissioner [2004] EWCA Civ 1067

45. The distinguishing feature of the powers under section 44 is that a police officer is authorised to stop and search a person without having to have any suspicion that that person is a terrorist. PACE Code A gives the following guidance to police officers:

> "2.25: The selection of persons stopped under section 44 of Terrorism Act 2000 should reflect an objective assessment of the threat posed by the various terrorist groups active in Great Britain. The powers must not be used to stop and search for reasons unconnected with terrorism. Officers must take particular care not to discriminate against members of minority ethnic groups in the exercise of these powers. There may be circumstances, however, where it is appropriate for officers to take account of a person's ethnic origin in selecting persons to be stopped in response to a specific terrorist threat (for example, some international terrorist groups are associated with particular ethnic identities)."

Part 4 of the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001: detention and control orders

46. We did not seek evidence on the detention powers created by the 2001 Act, nor on the control orders intended to replace them, as set out the Prevention of Terrorism Act. This was not because we regard these powers as unimportant—they were clearly strongly resented by a number of witnesses, who saw them as stigmatising Muslims.[34] We have therefore taken such concerns into account in our consideration of the issues. But the powers have been widely debated and reported on (for example by the Newton Committee of Privy Councillors and by Lord Carlile in his annual reviews of their operation)[35] and subject to Parliamentary scrutiny.[36] Legislation to replace them, following the House of Lords judgment of 16 December 2004, has been the subject of intense debate, inside and outside Parliament. We therefore believe that there was little that this Report could usefully have added at this stage.

The use of these powers

Stops and searches

47. Authorisations of stops and searches under section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000 (see paragraphs 42-44) have been fairly common, although there have been wide variations between regions. In London, for instance, there were rolling 28 day authorisations for the whole of the area policed by the Metropolitan Police and the City of London Police. London is the only city to have had continuous section 44 authorisations. However, following a review of the use of the section 44 powers, since the end of 2004, section44 has not been authorised in eight London boroughs—although areas within them may be covered by other authorities, such as the British Transport Police.

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34   Ev 66, HC 165-II

35   Privy Counsellor Review Committee, *Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 Review: Report*, 18 December 2003, HC 100 and Lord Carlile of Berriew QC, *Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 Part IV section 28 Review 2004*

36   Joint Committee on Human Rights, Eighteenth Report of Session 2003-04, *Review of Counter-terrorism Powers*, HL 158/HC 713

48. Overall, 944 stop and search authorisations have been confirmed between February 2001 and February 2005, with 18 instances where the powers were not confirmed by the Secretary of State. The Home Office submission to the Home Affairs Committee for a single evidence session in July 2004 on anti-terrorism powers listed the factors that are taken into account by Ministers:

> "i)   the geographic extent of the location in which the power will be used;
>
> ii)   the justification for authorising the powers, and information on their prospective use;
>
> iii)   the ongoing general assessment of the terrorist threat;
>
> iv)   threat assessments for particular events or locations, and
>
> v)   the briefing and training of officers involved in the use of the power."[37]

49. There are wide variations between police forces in the use of stops and searches under the Terrorism Act. For example, 15,535 of the 29,407 stops and searches carried out in 2003-04 were carried out by the Metropolitan Police (52.8%) and a further 7,252 by the City of London Police (24.7%). 19 forces carried out no such stops and searches in that period and a further 8 carried out fewer than 12.[38]

50. Stops and searches are not recorded by religion. The Home Office justify this on the grounds that they do not regard the religion of a suspect as relevant to the offence for which they have been arrested.[39] It is therefore impossible to tell how many Muslims have been stopped and searched under the Terrorism Act. Figures are, however, available by ethnicity for England and Wales for the years 2001-02 to 2003-04

Ethnic Group	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
White	6,629	14,429	20,637
Black	529	1,745	2,704
Asian	744	2,989	3,668
Other/Not recorded	618	2,414	2398
TOTAL	8,550	21,577	29,407

Source: HC Deb, 1 November 2004, cols 55-60W and *Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System—2004*

51. Thus between 2001-02 and 2002-03 stops and searches increased for all ethnic groups, with rises of 118% for whites and 302% for Asians. Asian stops and searches rose from 8.7% to 13.8% of the total. In the following year stops and searches of white people went up by 43% and of Asians by 23%. Asians stops and searches were 12.4% of the total in 2003-04.

52. Stops and searches as a whole in England and Wales, under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) and the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, as well as

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37   Home Affairs Committee, *Anti-terrorism Powers*, HC 886-I, Ev 21

38   Home Office, *Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System—2004*, February 2005, Table 4.6, www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds

39   Ev 48, HC 165-II

under the Terrorism Act, rose from 713,700 in 2001-02 to 869,164 in 2002-03 (up 22%). 58,831 (7% of the total) were of Asian people, an increase of 36% on the previous year. In 2003-04, the total fell by 15% to 738,016. Asian stops and searches fell by 8.1% to 54,083 (7% of the total). In each year the most common reason given for stops and searches of Asians was suspicion of the possession of drugs (56% in 2001-02, 58% in 2002-03 and 59% in 2003-04 the highest in each year for any ethnic group).[40]

Arrests under the Terrorism Act

53. In 2003-04 13% of all stops and searches resulted in an arrest, the same figure as the year before. The percentage of Asian stops and searches resulting in an arrest fell from 13% to 11%. There were 8,120 stops and searches of pedestrians under Section 44(2) of the Terrorism Act in 2003-04, 1,097 (13.5%) of which were on Asians. These resulted in 5 arrests in connection with terrorism (0.06%)—all of whites—and 112 for other reasons (1.4%), of which 18 (16.1%) were of Asians. Thus fewer than 1.5% of stops and searches of pedestrians under the Terrorism Act resulted in an arrest.[41]

54. When the disparity in the proportion of stops and searches resulting in arrests between those carried out under Section 44 and those carried out under other legislation was put to ACPO, Assistant Chief Constable Beckley noted that the main aim of the power was disruption and deterrence of terrorism, rather than detection. He added "this is a power to be used to put people off their plans, hence it is used in a pretty random way" and argued that there was evidence from some forces to suggest that it might well be having the intended disruptive effect. He also argued that there were very strong safeguards against indiscriminate use of the power, and that ACPO briefing had been significantly changed to ensure the community context was taken into account.[42]

55. According to the Home Office, between 11 September 2001 and December 2004 there were 701 arrests under the Terrorism Act 2000; 119 of those arrested were charged, and 45 of those 119 were charged with other offences as well. A further 135 were charged under legislation other than the 2000 Act (including terrorist offences that are already covered in general criminal law, such as murder, grievous bodily harm and use of firearms or explosives), and 17 have been convicted under the Terrorism Act. The Home Office gave the following information (see table on facing page) on the remaining 448:[43]

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40   *Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System—2004* and *2003*

41   *Home Office, Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System—2004*, February 2005, Tables 44 and 4.8,

42   Qq 342-343

43   HC Deb 14 March 2005, cols 63-66W

Transferred to Immigration Authorities	59
On Bail to Return	22
Cautioned	7
Dealt with under Mental Health Legislation	7
Awaiting Extradition	1
Returned to Prison Service Custody	1
Released Without Charge	351

These figures add up to 702 arrests. Home Office officials have told the Committee that this, rather than the publicised figure of 701, is the correct total.

56. The Institute of Race Relations, a think-tank that researches race issues in the UK and elsewhere, noted that 609 people had been arrested for offences under the Terrorism Act between 11 September 2001 and 30 June 2004. The Institute believed that 99 of them had been charged and 15 convicted under the Act. The Institute researched 11 of the 15 convictions and believed that six were white non-Muslims, all members of proscribed Loyalist groups, while only three were Muslims (two of whom had been given leave to appeal). The Institute argued that this showed the inaccuracy of high-profile media coverage linking Muslims to terrorism.[44] An item on BBC Radio's *Today* programme reported that according to ACPO 180 arrests were for domestic terrorism. The report also suggested that of the 17 convictions, 3 were for Irish Republican terrorism, 4 Loyalist, 2 Sikh and 1 Tamil, while 3 could be described as Islamist. The programme was unable to establish the nature of the remaining 4 convictions.[45]

57. The Director of Public Prosecutions told us that the Irish cases were a declining proportion of terrorism-related cases. There were a number of cases which had come to trial, some of which were being tried, and some extremely serious cases would come up over the next year or so. He argued that it would be necessary to wait before making judgments about conviction rates in international terrorism cases.[46]

58. We express in paragraph 160 our concerns about the lack of detailed information about terrorism-related arrests, charges and convictions. **Despite the current lack of information about terrorist cases, it is our view that in due course the majority will probably prove to have been related to international terrorism.**

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44   www.irr.org.uk/prf/anti_terror_arrests.pdf

45   www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/today/listenagain, 11 March 2005, 07.17

46   Qq 369-370

Racially and religiously motivated crimes

59. The Metropolitan Police said that racist incidents rose from 10,883 in 1998/99 to 22,875 in 1999/2000, an increase of 110% , but that the figure for 2002/03 (15,453) was 47% above the 1998/99 level.[47]

60. Information provided by the Crown Prosecution Service on prosecutions for racially and religiously aggravated offences is set out in the following table:[48]

Prosecutions for racially and religiously aggravated offences

	FY 2001-02	FY 2002-03		FY 2003-04	
	Prosecutions	Prosecutions	Conviction rate	Prosecutions	Conviction rate
Racially aggravated	2674	3116	85%	3616	86%
Religiously aggravated offences	[Offence came into effect on 14 December 2001]	18	55%	44	77%

In 2003-04 the actual or perceived religion of the victim in 22 of the religiously aggravated 44 cases was Muslim. In the remaining cases, the victims were Christian (8), Jewish (5), Hindu (3), Sikh (2), Jehovah's Witness (1), and unknown (4). A guilty plea was submitted in 50% of offences with an overall conviction rate of 77%. In both racially and religiously aggravated cases the most common offence appeared to be public order.[49]

4 Britain's communities and community relations

Minorities in the United Kingdom

61. After this brief overview of Britain's minority communities, much of this report does focus on issues affecting the Muslim community. The Committee is itself not entirely comfortable with this emphasis, as we do not wish to add to the stereotyping of the Muslim community, of which we heard much criticism during our inquiry. Nor do we wish to diminish the importance of issues faced by other communities.

62. Nonetheless, many of the issues highlighted by the Cantle Report particularly concerned the Muslim community and its relations with the wider community. The fact that international terrorists have claimed Islamic justification has caused huge problems for the overwhelmingly law-abiding Muslim community. On the evidence we received,

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47   Ev 61, HC 165-II

48   Ev 21-22, HC 165-II

49   "CPS racist and religious crime data published", Crown Prosecution Service press release 106/05, 17 January 2005

Muslims in Britain are more likely than other groups to feel that they are suffering as a result of the response to international terrorism.

63. The following tables, drawn from the 2001 census of England and Wales, give figures for the minority ethnic population—of which the census category of Asian or Asian British is the largest element—and for religion, drawn from a voluntary question, answered by 92% of those to whom it was put, as well as for ethnic origins of Muslims and religion of Asians or Asian British.

	Numbers	% of total population
Total population in England and Wales	52,041,916	100%
Total minority ethnic	4,521,050	7.9%
Asian or Asian British	2,273,737	4.0%

	Numbers	% of respondents
Christians	37,338,486	71.75%
Muslims	1,546,626	2.97%
Hindus	552,421	1.06%
Sikhs	329,358	0.63%
Jews	259,927	0.50%
No religion	7,709,267	14.81%

	White	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese or Other Ethnic Group
% of total Muslims	11.62%	4.15%	73.65%	6.88%	3.70%

	Muslim	Hindu	Sikh	Christian	Other[50]
% of total Asian or Asian British	50.1%	23.46%	13.93%	4.06%	8.45%

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50   "Other" includes Buddhist, Jewish, any other religion, no religion and religion not stated.

64. Most of the White Muslims fall into the category of "Other White", which would include, for example, Turks—although it is worth noting that 4% of Muslims, more than 60,000 people, described themselves as White British.[51] Smaller Muslim groups include Algerians, Bosnians, Jordanians, Kurds, Lebanese, Mauritians, nationals of the Gulf Emirates, Nigerians, Palestinians, Sudanese, Syrians and Tunisians.[52]

65. By and large, minority ethnic groups have a younger age structure than the White population, reflecting past immigration and fertility patterns. In the Bangladeshi community, for example, 38% were aged under 16, as were 35% of Pakistanis—the equivalent figure for the White group is 19%.[53]

66. The vast majority of Muslims live in England, 60 percent of them in the south-east (mainly in Greater London), but there are also sizeable Muslim groups elsewhere. Scotland's Muslim community is currently estimated to be between 40,000 and 60,000,[54] while according to the 2001 Census the Muslim population of Northern Ireland totalled 1,943.[55] There is also a small number of predominantly Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims in Wales.

67. The 2001 census shows that half the entire Black and minority ethnic (BME) population is in London, and 76% in London, the West Midlands and three other areas. Further, while every area has BME residents, and almost all have seen an increase in BME residents between 1991 and 2001, there are still many parts of the United Kingdom which are largely mono-cultural in terms of residents.

68. Some ethnic minorities out-perform the majority community in a number of ways. For example, Indians and Chinese are, on average, doing well and often better than Whites in schools and in the labour market: Chinese and Indians do better than Whites at GCSE, while Indian men now earn more than Whites. As the Cabinet Office Strategy Unit point out, their success shows that there are no insuperable barriers to successful economic and social integration.[56]

British Muslims: a disadvantaged community?

69. The major ethnic communities that are predominantly Muslim suffer disproportionately from unemployment. For example, in 2001-02, Bangladeshis had the highest male unemployment rate in Great Britain at 20%: four times that for White British or White Irish men. The picture is similar for women: Bangladeshi women had the highest unemployment rate of all at 24%, six times greater than that for White British or White Irish women. For all ethnic groups unemployment was highest among young people aged under 25. Over 40% of young Bangladeshi men were unemployed, while young Pakistani men and women had unemployment rates above of 20%. The comparable unemployment

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51   www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001

52   Minority Rights Group International, *Muslims in Britain*, August 2002

53   www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001

54   Muslim Council of Britain press release, 23 March 1999, and www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/webguide/religion. The Guardian, estimated that there are 60,000 Muslims in Scotland (17 June 2002 quoted in *Muslims in Britain*)

55   www.nisra.gov.uk/census/start.html

56   Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market*, March 2003

rate for young White British men and women were 12% and 9% respectively.[57] The relationship between religion and employment is not clear-cut, as the following extract from a Cabinet Office report shows:

Religion and employment

"Cultural or religious attributes may also influence the labour market position of ethnic minorities, although quantitative data in this field is limited. The relationship between religious groups and employment outcomes is not simple and it should not be assumed that a "religious effect" necessarily exists. Religion may simply be a proxy for other factors determining employment, such as education and fluency in English. However, it has been found that unemployment risk does vary significantly by religion. Even after controlling for a range of factors, Sikhs and Indian Muslims remain almost twice as likely to be unemployed as Hindus. Pakistani Muslims are more than three times as likely as Hindus to be unemployed.

"There is also evidence of divergent experiences between religious groups in terms of employment profiles and income differentials. Sikhs, Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims experience particular under-representation in professional employment, with this area showing higher concentrations of Hindus and Indian Muslims. In terms of earnings, Muslim men and women are over-represented in the lowest income band. Almost a quarter earned less than £115 per week, compared to around one in ten Sikhs and Hindus. Yet despite over-representation among low earners, Indian Muslims actually record the highest share within the highest income band.

"Judging whether religion is a factor that affects the employment chances of a given individual is complex. It is clear that Indian Muslims are strikingly different from Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims in their labour market achievements, suggesting that far more is at play than just religious effects: problems might well be linked rather more to specific group circumstances, for which religion is a proxy, than to religion itself."

Source: *Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market*, Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, March 2003

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70. Muslims are also subject to other disadvantages. They are largely concentrated in areas of multiple deprivation, living in dwellings designated as unfit or in serious disrepair. They experience disproportionate rates of unemployment, illness and disability and dependence on means-tested benefits. A recent report by the Open Society Institute noted:

"Compared to other faith communities, Muslim men and women in Great Britain had the highest rate of reported ill health in 2001. A total of 13% of Muslim men and 16% of Muslim women described their state of health as "not good" compared to around 8% for the population as a whole. Taking into account age structures,

Muslims also had the highest rates of disability. Compared to households of other faith groups, Muslim households are the most likely to be situated in socially rented accommodation, to experience overcrowding and to lack central heating. Compared to other religious groups, Muslims had the highest proportion of people in the working-age population without any qualifications."[58]

71. Another significant area of disadvantage is education. In 1999, a higher proportion of girls than boys in each ethnic group achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C (or equivalent). Indian pupils are more likely to get these qualifications than other ethnic group, with 66% of Indian girls and 54% of Indian boys doing so in 1999. This contrasts with only 37% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi girls and 22% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi boys. Between 1997 and 1999 all ethnic groups, with the exception of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, saw a rise in achievement of five or more A*-C grade GCSEs by sixteen year olds. This meant that the gap between the lowest and highest achieving ethnic groups widened over this period.[59]

72. The number of Muslim prisoners went up by over 190% between March 1993 and June 2003, when 6,136 of the 73,657 prisoners in England and Wales (8.3%) were Muslim.[60] Evidence from the 2000 British Crime Survey showed that ethnic minorities run greater risks of crime than white people. According to the survey, "Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, in particular, are more likely than others to say that they felt 'very unsafe' at night, both in their homes and walking alone in their neighbourhood".[61]

Have community relations got worse?

73. As we noted in paragraph 13, terrorism clearly brings a new dimension to existing issues. Witnesses were divided on whether community relations had deteriorated since September 2001. Some felt that there had not got significantly worse, particularly when set against the racist violence of the 1970s and 1980s.[62] Others argued that the situation varied from place to place and from community to community.[63] The Minister of State at the Home Office, Ms Hazel Blears MP, cited the 2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey, according to which 71% agreed that their local area was a place where people from different backgrounds got on well together and 17% disagreed: she described this as "a fairly high level of cohesion".[64] But she also noted that the positive figures were higher in the South and South-East than in the North and lower (64%) in the most deprived areas than in more affluent ones (77%): there was thus both a North/South divide and an income divide.[65]

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58   *Muslims in the UK: Policies for Engaged Citizens*, Open Society Institute/EU Monitoring and Advocacy Programme,www.eumap.org, pp66-67

59   http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001

60   Home Office Statistical Bulletin, *Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2003*, December 2004

61   *Muslims in the UK*, p 67

62   Q 265 [Mr Esser and Mr Satchwell]

63   Q 178

64   Q 460

65   Q 460

74. But most believed that the situation <u>had</u> got worse and that divisions between communities <u>had</u> increased. The Muslim Council of Britain said that over 76% of their members felt that the attitude of the general public towards Muslims had changed for the worse since September 2001.[66] The Director of Public Prosecutions, Ken MacDonald QC, told us:

> "terrorism is creating divisions between communities, which of course is one of its purposes; it is intended to do that. We have evidence from our point of view of an increase in […] low-level tensions […] One is talking about racially and religiously aggravated crimes involving racist and religiously motivated abuse of cab drivers at night, shop owners, people in the street, that sort of low level aggressive criminal conduct which we find has increasingly been accompanied by that sort of abuse, so it was a feeling which my front line prosecutors have that there are increasing tensions at that sort of low level which are probably inspired or contextualised by the threat of international terrorism."[67]

75. PeaceMaker, "an anti-racist youth development organisation that aims to bring together young people from a diversity of backgrounds in positive environments to foster active citizenship and social responsibility", and which carried out a consultation programme for the Committee, noted that both Muslim and non-Muslim young people spoke of an increase in segregation:[68]

Predominantly Muslim groups of young people:

Are attitudes to minorities amongst white people worse than before 9/11?

- Muslim young people feel that other groups now have an excuse to be racist towards them
- They feel there is more violence towards Muslim people
- The media stirs up trouble by creating stereotypes of Muslim terrorists
- As a consequence, Muslim young people feel that white people think all Muslims are terrorists

What are the practical consequences for Muslim young people?

- They are scared
- They are angry
- Life has become very difficult and confusing for Muslim young people
- There has been an increase in racism towards Muslim young people
- Communities appear to have become more segregated and insular
- Many Muslim young people have become more serious about practising their religion and feel they need to do more for their religion

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66   Ev 70, HC 165-II

67   Q 336

68   Ev 128-129, HC 165-III

Predominantly White Groups of young people:

Are attitudes to minorities amongst white people worse than before 9/11?

- White young people feel that most white people are quicker to judge minorities after 9/11
- Some white young people clearly stated that they did not like Muslim people
- Many white young people appear to be scared of Muslims
- They feel that there is more racism since 9/11
- White young people state that people blame ordinary Muslims for not doing anything to stop terrorism

What are the practical consequences for Muslim young people?

- They feel that Muslim young people will be worried about what white people think
- Some white people may feel that Muslims should get out of Britain
- They feel that Muslim young people keep a lower profile than before 9/11
- White young people feel that Muslim young people "stand out" more now
- White young people feel that Muslims now follow their religion more seriously
- They feel that Muslim young people are scared

Islamophobia

76. The Muslim Council told us that more than 76% of their members felt that the attitude of the general public towards Muslims had changed for the worse since 2001 and that Islamophobia was increasingly becoming acceptable and was already a legitimate form of discrimination.[69] It is also clear from PeaceMaker's evidence that young Muslims felt that they were worse treated than before September 2001: indeed most of the young people in the survey believed that the overall attitude towards Muslims had worsened.[70] Work by bodies such as the Islamic Human Rights Centre,[71] the Minority Rights Group and the Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia[72] also points to an increase in Islamophobia.

77. Mr Khan, of the Muslim Council of Britain, told us that it was clear that there had been a rise in Islamophobic attacks; he believed that this had led also to attacks on Hindus and Sikhs, who had been mistaken for Muslims.[73] Neither Sikh nor Muslim witnesses were able to provide other than anecdotal evidence to support this view,[74] but we think it is a reasonable assumption.

78. The Home Office told us that although Muslim organisations monitored incidents of Islamophobia, there was no independent or central data collection organisation.[75] The Minister of State did not believe that it would be appropriate to set up a statutory body, but

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69   Ev 70, HC 165-II

70   Ev 119, HC 165-III

71   www.ihrc.org

72   *Islamophobia – issues, challenges and action* (Trentham Books, June 2004)

73   Q 112

74   Qq 118 and 221

75   Ev 48, HC 165-II

pointed to a number of models on which it would be possible to build.[76] One of these was the Community Security Trust, which advises and represents the Jewish community on matters of security and anti-Semitism, and which has helped the Hindu Forum monitor anti-Hindu incidents.[77]

Anti-Semitism

79. According to the Community Security Trust, there have been rising levels of anti-Semitic incidents since 1997. The figure for 2004—the most recent year for which statistics were available—was 532, the highest since the current system was introduced in 1984. (The second highest figure was 405, in 2000; the Board of Deputies put this down to the start of the current Palestinian-Israeli violence.)[78] Gerry Gable, the publisher of *Searchlight*, also believed that there had been a rise in attacks on the Jewish community since 2001.[79]

80. Both the Board of Deputies and Mr Gable linked attacks on Jews to international developments, particularly in the Middle East, and noted that some attacks were carried out by Muslims. The President of the Board, Henry Grunwald QC, also drew our attention to the specific threat by al-Qaeda to attack Jews anywhere in the world.[80] Sadiq Khan, the Chair of the Muslim Council of Britain's Legal Affairs Committee, accepted that anti-Semitism from some elements in the Muslim community was an issue, especially in universities.[81]

81. Mr Khan's point about universities was echoed by evidence from the Parliamentary Committee against anti-Semitism and the Union of Jewish Students (UJS).[82] The UJS believed both that there had been a noticeable rise in academic intolerance and anti-Semitism and that there was a constant presence on or around campus of extremist groups who were either anti-Semitic or had a history of anti-Semitic behaviour.[83] The UJS also pointed out that student unions were not covered by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which imposes a duty to promote good race relations.[84]

82. The UJS cited a case of anti-Semitic material on an Open University message board as an instance in which university authorities had responded neither quickly nor appropriately to complaints by the Union about anti-Semitic material.[85] The University denied this, arguing that the complaint had been dealt with fully and in a reasonable

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76   Q 482

77   Ev 5-9 and 42, HC 165-II

78   www.thecst.org.uk/incidents_statistics.htm and Ev 8, HC 165-II

79   Q 37

80   Q 102 [Mr Grunwald]

81   Q 105

82   Ev 83, HC 165-II

83   Ev 97-98, HC 165-II

84   Q 246

85   Ev 97-98, HC 165-II

timescale and that disciplinary action had been taken.[86] The University's response was contested by the Union, whose comments on it were in turn rejected by the University.[87]

83. The Parliamentary Committee against anti-Semitism believed that the existence and extent of anti-Semitism in the United Kingdom were not widely recognised.[88] Mr Grunwald noted that the Mayor of London's submission to this inquiry made no reference to anti-Semitism.[89]

Other issues

84. The Metropolitan Police noted the existence of tension within and between minorities:

> "Monitoring initiated post Sept 11th has revealed some evidence of internal Muslim tensions, for example between Moroccan and Algerian groups, and between groups of Somali Muslims resulting in, for example an ongoing turf war in the Lewisham area. Hostilities between Muslims and Hindus have also been evidenced. An incident includes pro-Hindu graffiti and vandalism of a Muslim Society building."[90]

Mr Gable also believed that hostility against Muslims was building in the Hindu and Sikh communities.[91]

85. The evidence we received indicated that for the most part the causes of inter-minority tensions lay outside the United Kingdom. The Board of Deputies of British Jews believed that "tension in the Middle East, both between Israel and the Palestinians and in the Middle East generally, inevitably results in an increase in anti-Semitic violence in Britain, and elsewhere in Europe."[92] The Hindu Forum told us that "major terrorist attacks on temples and places of worship in India usually lead to higher levels of security concerns in the UK."[93] The Muslim Council agreed that, for example, conflict in Kashmir sometimes had repercussions in the United Kingdom.[94] Detective Superintendent Tucker of the Metropolitan Police Diversity Directorate also pointed to events in India which had led to attacks on the Hindu Community in Britain. However, he noted that improvements in police work in the past ten years meant that recent inter-communal violence in India had not been followed by incidents in the United Kingdom.[95]

86. Witnesses from minorities were generally anxious to foster good relations with other communities in this country, despite tensions abroad. For example, although the Muslim Council argued that Muslim liberation movements had been wrongly proscribed under the

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86   Ev 159, HC 165-III

87   Ev 160-166, HC 165-III

88   Ev 83, HC 165-II

89   "We all deserve an apology", The Guardian, 2 March 2005, page 26 and Ev 55-59, HC 165-II

90   Ev 62-63, HC 165-II

91   Q 47

92   Ev 6, HC 165-II

93   Ev 40, HC 165-II

94   Q 163

95   Q 381 [Detective Superintendent Tucker]

Terrorism Act and that a disproportionate number of the world's oppressed were Muslims,[96] Mr Khan told us that "problems that occur overseas should stay overseas".[97]

The Neasden Hindu Temple

87. An example of the way in which relations between communities can be adversely affected is the case of the Neasden Hindu Temple. Mr Jagdeesh Singh of the Sikh Community Action Network, when giving oral evidence to the Committee, alleged that the Temple allowed the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), which Mr Singh characterised as a terrorist organisation, to operate from its premises.[98] This allegation of complicity in terrorism, protected by parliamentary privilege from action in the courts, understandably caused great offence to the Trustees of the Temple, who submitted evidence to the Committee to prove their contention that both the Temple and the charity that runs it, the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission, are entirely peaceful and law-abiding.[99] This submission also provided details of a number of prominent figures, including the Prince of Wales and the Prime Minister, who had visited the Temple. In addition to the material submitted by the Temple, which included letters from the local police and local councils, we received a range of submissions in their support, including from Members of the House of Commons,[100] the Mayor of London[101] and representatives of the Sikh community.[102] The Hindu Forum defended the Temple, in both written and oral evidence,[103] and argued that "most of the Hindu community in the UK and the world consider the VHP to be a peaceful organisation".[104] The Muslim Council of Britain, which had described the VHP as among "well-known terrorist organizations with anti-Muslim ideologies",[105] nonetheless noted "the excellent work carried out by the Neasden Temple in promoting understanding and community relations in the country".[106] The Home Secretary told us that the Mission "makes an important contribution to the promotion of interfaith relations in the UK" and that the VHP, "an international Hindu Nationalist organisation", was not proscribed in the UK.[107] He added that no allegation that the Temple was involved in terrorism had ever been raised with the Home Office.

88. **We conclude that community relations have deteriorated, although the picture is by no means uniform, and that there are many positive examples to set against our overall**

96   Ev 68, HC 165-II

97   Q 111

98   Q 164

99   Ev 95, HC 165-II

100   Ev 59, HC 165-II and Ev 117, HC 165-III

101   Ev 117, HC 165-III

102   Ev 74, HC 165-II and Ev 142-143, HC 165-III

103   Ev 42, HC 165-II and Q 204

104   Q 207

105   Ev 69, HC 165-II

106   Q205

107   Ev 112-113, HC 165-III

assessment. International terrorism and the response to it have contributed to this deterioration, particularly in relations between the majority community and the Muslim community. However, the problems are by no means only associated with these communities or with international terrorism; we have seen that international events, such as communal violence in India, the Kashmir dispute and the Israel-Palestine conflict can be reflected in deepening tensions in this country.

89. **Much greater recognition should be given to the problem of both Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. All communities, including the majority community, have a responsibility to tackle such problems, condemning without reservation prejudice, discrimination and violence against other communities. Whilst all communities will be sensitive to attacks upon them, no community should turn a blind eye to prejudicial actions by members of its own community.**

90. **Islamophobic incidents should be treated as seriously as any other form of racism. Islamophobia is not only an issue for Muslims: it is a problem that can only be resolved by the majority community in this country, who must acknowledge its existence.**

91. **It is unfortunate that there is as yet no reliable central collection of data on Islamophobia. We urge the Muslim community to follow the example of the Hindu Forum in seeking to draw on the experience gained by the Community Security Trust in monitoring anti-Semitism.**

92. **The rise in anti-Semitic incidents since September 2001 is extremely disturbing and should be acknowledged as such by all. Anti-Semitism among some members of the Muslim community is also worrying. We welcome the condemnation of anti-Semitic attacks by leaders of the Muslim community: it is important that they should continue to do so, forcefully and unequivocally.**

93. **We are also concerned by anti-Semitism on campuses. We urge university authorities to act swiftly when cases are brought to their attention. The duty to promote good race relations imposed on other bodies by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 should also apply to student unions, subject to the provisions on free speech at universities of the Education Act (No 2) 1986.**

94. **We note that the allegations that either the Neasden Hindu Temple or the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission, or both, are associated with terrorism have <u>not</u> been substantiated. These allegations are new to the Home Office and are disputed by a wide range of authoritative witnesses, both in the Neasden area and nationally.**

The situation in other countries

95. In early 2005 we visited France and the Netherlands to see how two other European countries tackled problems very similar to those facing the United Kingdom. We met politicians, officials and representatives of minority communities, including Muslims. In both countries we also visited local councils (Saint-Denis, near Paris, and De Baarsjes, a borough of Amsterdam), where we had discussions with local politicians and faith leaders and visited schools. The contrasts and similarities between all three countries were instructive.

France

96. The over-riding French principle of 'laïcité', or secularism, means that there are no official figures for religious belief in France. It is, however, generally accepted that Muslims are the largest minority, and it was suggested to us that France has the most Muslims of any Western European country. The FCO website puts them at 3% of a population of 61.2 million: we were also quoted a figure of between 4 and 6 million. French Muslims are generally secular: we were told that only 22% were practising. Overwhelmingly they are of North African origin, a legacy of France's colonial past. There are about 600,000 Jews, 1% of the population.

97. Among the most significant recent developments had been the passing of a law to ban the wearing of obvious signs of religion in schools. Although this affected kippas, Sikh turbans and large crucifixes, it was widely taken to be aimed at Muslim girls wearing headscarves. We were told that only a few children had been excluded from school as a result of the ban. Some of our interlocutors said, however, that it was too early to tell whether the law had contributed to an increase in the alienation of Muslim youth.

98. We learnt the principle of laïcité meant that the concept of communities was not officially recognised—indeed, 'communautarisme' had a negative connotation. Some of those we met felt that the lack of reliable data on ethnicity and religion meant that it was difficult to craft appropriate and effective policies: there might, for instance, be problems with the work of a new anti-discrimination body. But a council of French Muslims had recently been elected, at official instigation, to represent Islam in its dealings with the state and mirroring existing Jewish and Christian bodies. However disputes over how representative the council was had led to new elections being called.

99. We were also briefed on the way the French legal system tackled terrorism, including through the use of specialised judges and prosecutors. We were told about procedures for handling intelligence, including phone-taps, in judicial proceedings and heard how the system allowed for accused people to be held for up to four years before trial.

100. In our visit to Saint-Denis we heard from local councillors and faith leaders about how they approached community cohesion in an ethnically very mixed area—more than 26% of the population in 1999 did not have French nationality—that suffers from high unemployment: 25% of those between 20 and 25 were unemployed.

The Netherlands

101. The Dutch Ministry of Justice told us that there are over 900,000 Muslims in the Netherlands (which has a population of 16.2 million). We also heard that Muslims form 13% of the population of Amsterdam, where up to 60% of those under 18 were from ethnic minorities. The Muslim population of the Netherlands rose ten-fold between 1970 and 1997: many came as guest workers, mainly from Turkey and Morocco (countries which were never colonies of the Netherlands and with which there had not been significant exchanges). Asylum policies had also been a significant factor in immigration.

102. All our interlocutors agreed that the rise of Pim Fortuyn, which led to the questioning of the prevailing consensus on integration and immigration, and the murder of Theo van

Gogh, of which a Dutch-born Muslim was accused, had radically altered Dutch approaches to the integration of ethnic and religious minorities and community relations. The desire to bring minorities into the mainstream of Dutch society was now an important political issue. There was a widely held view that what had earlier been seen as Dutch tolerance had in fact been a failure to confront the challenges that had now been identified.

103. We also heard about the measures taken to encourage integration: these included language lessons for foreign imams and stricter regulation of asylum and dual nationality. Some felt that the lack of social cohesion could not be ascribed only to the threat from terrorists and extremists—there was a lack of dialogue between different parts of Dutch society and there was a problem of Islamophobia in the majority community. The media were also criticised for stigmatising communities. Representative of the mainstream Dutch media told us they were doubtful how successful they were in reaching minority communities.

104. In De Baarsjes, like Saint-Denis a multi-ethnic community (52% of foreign descent) suffering from social deprivation, we heard from community and faith leaders about their efforts to build community cohesion and inter-faith dialogue and the considerable progress they had made.

105. **It is clear that the problems faced by France and the Netherlands have both similarities and differences to those faced here.**

106. **On the positive side, this country has a long tradition of race relations legislation and reasonably frank and open discussion of community and race relations. At local and national level there is a habit of dialogue, if sometimes patchy, on which solutions can be constructed. Our impression was that neither France nor the Netherlands have explicitly considered these issues in the recent past (though for different reasons) and this meant that, at national level at least, there was some real uncertainty about the most effective way forward.**

107. **On the other hand, in both countries there was a more explicit willingness, particularly at local level, to recognise the central importance of the Muslim communities and their future development within national society. In France, too, counter-terrorism powers were more developed than our own—possibly because of their longer experience of dealing with this form of international terrorism.**

5 Central and local Government

108. It is clear that both central and local Government must seek to bridge the divisions between communities set out in paragraphs 10-12. In this section we examine their efforts to do so.

109. The Home Office's written submission to our inquiry did not cover community cohesion, although it did touch on police engagement with minority communities. The Minister of State accepted that more needed to be done about dialogue with Muslim communities: she mentioned raising Muslim achievements in schools, encouraging Muslims to take more of a place in civil and public life and to make public services more

sensitive.[108] The Minister also stressed the importance of talking to minority communities at local levels as well as nationally, perhaps through using regional offices. She cited the independent Community Panel of the Stop and Search Action Team, where, in a departure from normal practice, an effort had been made to get young people from the regions to sit on a national body, as a successful model to be followed.[109]

110. The Muslim Council of Britain were very positive about the Home Office's efforts at dialogue. The Chair of their Legal Affairs Committee told us:

> "the relationship we have with the Home Office is infinitely better now than it ever has been and that dialogue is fostered by regular meetings with not just the Home Secretary but Fiona Mactaggart and other ministers in the Home Office."[110]

111. **We welcome the positive comments about the role of the Home Office, but we fear that the absence of a direct reference to community cohesion in their evidence to this inquiry suggests that the Home Office does not yet appreciate that the implementation of its community cohesion strategy is central to its ability to deal with the community impact of international terrorism. We recommend that the Home Office review the links between its work on community cohesion and anti-terrorism.**

Schools and young people

112. Witnesses from PeaceMaker,[111] themselves young people, were clear about the important role of schools, including primary schools, in combating prejudice.[112] They also emphasised the need to ensure that education was effective:

> "They say "Do not be racist" and "Do not be prejudiced and discriminate against people", but they do not give them [young people] a reason not to be; they do not educate them enough at an early age for them to understand in secondary school why not to be it."[113]

113. Other witnesses stressed the dangers of *de facto* segregation in schools. In a number of cases, schools were effectively mono-ethnic: for example, in three of Luton's twelve secondary schools and eight of the 61 primary schools over 90% of the pupils were from ethnic minority backgrounds.[114] (Overall, 44% of pupils in Luton were from ethnic minority backgrounds.)[115] Furthermore, although 22.5% of the BME population were economically active, only 10.5% of teachers in Luton came from BME communities.[116] Dr Nazia Khanum, Chair of the Luton Multicultural Women's Coalition, also observed that in

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108 Q 474

109 Q 475

110 Q 160

111 See paragraph 74 and Ev 117-118, HC 165-III for a description of this organisation.

112 Q 234

113 Q 236 {Ms Bailey]

114 Sticking together, pages 17-18

115 Q 446

116 Q 447

many of the rural schools just outside Luton both teachers and pupils were almost entirely white.[117]

114. PeaceMaker told us that in some schools teachers as well as pupils had little or no knowledge of terrorism:

> "Mr Miah: […] What was really interesting was that in some of the schools we went in the teachers had no understanding of what was taking place, never mind the young people themselves, and we found that surprising.
>
> Ms Gomm: Some people that we worked with, adults that we worked with, did not know the differences between Osama Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. It was at that level."[118]

They also commented that some schools were resistant even to discussing issues related to terrorism:

> "What is really interesting from doing this piece of work for you was the difficulty we had in getting into a number of schools and the barriers that were put up by schools that were fearful of these discussions taking place within their schools. We spent longer trying to get into schools than actually doing the work."[119]

115. The Home Office's Community Cohesion Panel also expressed concern about the limited impact of citizenship education in schools and believed that it should be fundamentally reviewed so that it dealt with real priorities.[120]

116. The Minister of State accepted the need to develop expertise in the teaching of the citizenship curriculum, but admitted that there was no specific guidance on extremism and Islam, only on racism, bullying, tolerance and respect.[121]

117. **We are impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm of a number of young people we met, including those who worked with PeaceMaker. We agree with their view that schools have a vital role to play in the building of tolerant and cohesive communities.**

118. **But if Peacemaker's small consultation proves representative of young people across the country there is clearly a major problem of perception and understanding to be tackled. We are alarmed that some schools are reluctant to discuss these issues. We are also concerned by the absence of explicit central Government support that would enable and encourage schools to promote discussion about these sensitive issues. Both the Home Office and the DfES should share responsibility for developing a coherent cross-Government approach.**

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117 Ev 116, HC 165-III

118 Q 247

119 Q 237

120 Home Office, *The End of Parallel Lives?: The Report of the Community Cohesion Panel*, July 2004, p 13

121 Qq 508-509

Local communities and local leadership

119. It is implicit in the phrase 'community cohesion' that much of the work must be done at local level. We received interesting evidence from Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, Burnley Borough Council and the Chief Superintendent of Lancashire Constabulary (Pennine Division) and Leicester City Council.[122] We also held an oral evidence session with a range of witnesses from Luton, a town with a population of nearly 185,000, according to the 2001 census, of whom nearly 30% were from ethnic minorities (18% Asian, mainly Pakistani and Bangladeshi) and nearly 15% Muslim.

120. Witnesses from Luton did not try to disguise the problems facing the town. Dr Khanum noted the serious socio-economic deprivation in neighbourhoods in which the Muslim population was largely concentrated and argued that all indicators, including health, education, income, housing, employment and longevity, suggested that Luton's minority ethnic communities were more deprived than the white communities. She also warned that that there were few teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds and that some schools were effectively segregated.[123] Mr Zafar Khan, the Chairman of the Luton Council of Faiths, believed that 9/11 had dealt "a body blow" to the spirit of cooperation in the town and created "a fresh and more sinister climate of fear, suspicion and defensiveness among many people".[124]

121. But our witnesses were also clear that existing contacts and patterns of co-operation between community leaders had enabled the town to get through these difficulties. The Chief Executive of the Borough Council, Mr Darra Singh, spoke of a sense of common purpose to improve community relations, while Mr Zafar Khan told us that community groups had lead the way and that this had only been because good practice had already been in existence. Chief Superintendent Ivor Twydell, Borough Police Commander, also mentioned dialogue and engagement between communities and the authorities, including the police, as a factor in what he saw as the "very effective and very pro-active response to events that actually are outside of our control within the town".[125]

122. As part of this response, in late 2001 the Council established a Community Cohesion Scrutiny Panel to consult on the issues arising from the Ouseley report on Bradford. The Panel's report, *Sticking together*, was published in January 2003; it identified a number of key issues and put forward recommendations for tackling them.[126] Among the problems highlighted in the report were widespread ignorance and misunderstanding of the cultures of others and the need for clear factual information about the services and resources to dispel suspicion and misinformation. The report stressed the importance of perceptions, particularly when there were significant disparities between them and reality. One strength of Luton was that although levels of cultural understanding between communities might be poor, Luton did not have the levels of segregation of some towns in the North of

122 Ev 4-5, 10-11, 54-55, HC 165-II

123 Ev 114-116, HC 165-III

124 Ev 113, HC 165-III

125 Q 407

126 Luton Borough Council, *Sticking together – Embracing diversity in Luton: Report of the Community Cohesion Scrutiny Panel*, January 2003

England—perhaps because, as Dr Khanum pointed out, Luton is the third most densely populated place in England outside London.[127]

123. Witnesses from Luton told us about the ways in which external events affected developments in the town. Chief Superintendent Twydell noted that anti-terrorist operations were led by the Metropolitan Police, rather than Bedfordshire Police. (He was also quoted by a national newspaper as later saying "When the anti-terrorism squad leaves town, we have to deal with the aftermath.")[128] Mr Singh and Mr Zafar Khan recalled the attention from the national and international media when two young men from Luton had been killed in Afghanistan.[129] Dr Khanum pointed out that reports of rises in national figures for stops and searches led many to assume that they were mirrored in Luton.[130] Mr Tahir Khan, of the Bangladesh Youth League, and Dr Khanum spoke of difficulties in getting central government funding for youth projects or to redress inequalities in health provision.[131]

Other local councils in Britain and abroad

124. The themes highlighted in Luton of the need to break down barriers and for communities to work together were echoed in other submission from local councils. For example Blackburn with Darwen cited their "Belonging" campaign for community cohesion, involving a range of public private and voluntary organisations in promoting citizenship values, pride in the Borough, positive images of the main ethnic groups and disabled people and a sense of belonging and having a stake in the area.[132] Burnley Borough Council and the Pennine Division of Lancashire Police stressed the Police's systematic approach to relations with communities and the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Cohesion Group's work on building good community relations. An important part was also played by the local inter-faith network. The Police and Council had also worked to build up links with the press and radio which had contributed to helpful and positive reporting and comment on race, religion and community relations issues.[133] The Chief Executive of Leicester City Council believed that it was a key principle that any particular community that was facing criticism or hatred should be supported publicly by the other community leaders and not left to defend themselves. He also pointed to the difficulties faced by communities facing a sudden influx of new migrants without additional central Government funding—in Leicester's case the arrival from the Netherlands of some 10,000 Somalis since 2001.[134]

125. We saw similar activity in France and the Netherlands. For example, De Baarsjes had introduced a "Contract with Society", according to which the Council and local Mosques agreed to defend freedom of speech, to monitor extremist behaviour and to look for

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127 *Sticking together*, p 41 and Ev 114, HC 165-III

128 *The Observer*, 6 March 2005, p 11

129 Qq 408-411

130 Q 426

131 Qq 434-435

132 Ev 4-5, HC 165-II

133 Ev 10-11, HC 165-II

134 Ev 54-55, HC 165-II

partners to extend cooperation. As a result of anti-Semitic demonstrations by Moroccan youth at a Remembrance Day ceremony in 2003, the following year Turkish, Jewish and Moroccan organisations held a joint service which included a commemoration of nineteen Moroccans killed in the liberation of the Netherlands at the end of the War. Other projects included a Moroccan-Jewish football tournament, youth clubs and Dutch language classes that included long-term residents. In Saint-Denis local churches were asked to lend church halls for emergency housing for the homeless. The Council also sought to encourage participatory democracy through an active programme of meetings and contacts with residents. A programme for tackling joblessness envisaged helping to create jobs in the private and voluntary sectors, including by covering 80% of the cost to the employer of the new job, reducing over five years.

Tackling difficult issues on the local level

126. It was clear from the evidence we received that it is important for communities to face up to discussion of difficult issues, such as terrorism. It is also important that central Government have a strategy for ensuring that their actions in this and other areas are understood in local communities. Without such a strategy, there is a danger that councils may seek to avoid challenging discussions. PeaceMaker, for example, told us that only two of the ten local authorities in the Greater Manchester area had replied to their telephone calls and e-mails about their consultation programme.[135] We were therefore disappointed when the Minister of State told us :

> "In terms of engagement with the community, it is quite difficult to go and have a discussion about terrorism with somebody. […] I think it needs to be a broader conversation than simply about the terror threat because anybody just having a conversation about that is going to find that quite difficult."[136]

127. **We were struck by the energy and imagination shown by some local councils in this country and in France and the Netherlands. Their readiness to confront difficult issues is to be applauded and we detected an optimism sometimes lacking at the national level. But such readiness should be reinforced by a concerted central Government strategy to explain national policy and to encourage local discussion, including discussion of challenging issues such as the response to terrorism. We did not see clear evidence of such a strategy. Indeed it appears some of the necessary actions of central authorities, such as raids by anti-terrorist police, are carried out without a proper appreciation of the effect on local communities and organisations, such as the local police.**

128. **One of the issues frequently raised in this inquiry, and stressed by the Cantle report, is the importance of local leadership. As the Chief Executive of Leicester City Council put it, "the role of community leaders—formal, informal, civic, faith, the media—is critical".[137] We believe that this holds true on the national level as well. Community leaders should support each other and seek to build bridges with other**

135 Ev 119, HC 165-III

136 Q 474

137 Ev 54, HC 165-II

communities: in some cases this will mean giving up defensive and reactive stances in order to create a climate of tolerance and mutual respect.

Community relations and inter-faith dialogue

129. The importance of inter-faith dialogue was stressed to us by several witnesses, many of whom were professionally involved in it; in particular, they emphasised the need for dialogue at the local level, rather than between national organisations. As the Defence Director of the Board of Deputies of British Jews told us:

> "… the bottom up dialogue is probably more effective and continuing, less subject to strains as a consequence of international affairs. We do not control it and half the time we do not necessarily know what is going on. We receive reports continuously of synagogue/mosque longstanding relationships. There are half a dozen continuing initiatives at street level, one in Stamford Hill where you have a strictly orthodox community rubbing up against a growing north African community which has been working for some years, a very effective one in Manchester and any number of other local initiatives between Jews and Muslims which I think are probably more effective in the long run because they are creating real bonds of contact and friendship at that local level, rather than something imposed from the top down by people like ourselves."[138]

130. The Church of England's Interfaith Adviser, Canon Guy Wilkinson, believed, on the basis of a recent survey carried out by the Church, that there was "a remarkably high level [of] interaction".[139] However, only one of the sixty respondents to a survey conducted by the Forum against Islamophobia and Racism knew of an inter-faith dialogue group.[140] The Reverend Katei Kirby, General Manager for the African and Caribbean Evangelical Alliance described inter-faith dialogue as 'fragmented', although she argued that it was important where it did occur. Others agreed, saying it was 'patchy', and it was suggested that that there were particular difficulties in ensuring that both sexes and all denominations of, for example, Christians were represented.[141] But there was a consensus on the importance of inter-faith dialogue and the need for it to be supported.

131. **Faith leaders have an important role to play in community relations. Although it is clear that in some places this responsibility has been accepted, whether through inter-faith work or by educating their own communities about other faiths, much more needs to be done both to bring such work to all areas and to ensure that larger numbers of people are involved. We encourage them to develop these activities and to challenge prejudice and encourage tolerance both locally and nationally.**

Role models

132. An important part of integration is the provision of role models for young people. One aspect of this is adequate representation of Black and minority ethnic people in local

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138 Q 113

139 Q 184

140 Ev 331, HC 165-II

141 Q 185 [Father Sumner, Dr Horrocks]

authorities, the police and the media. This was not an issue on which we were able to consult widely, but the Society of Editors drew our attention to a report by their Training Committee on the employment of minority ethnic journalists in newspapers.[142] The introduction to the report notes that a survey in October 2002, covering a very broad workforce in a range of media, showed that 96% of journalists were white, and commented that the survey "did not give the detail for a true picture of employment in newspapers, which was probably worse, particularly in the regional press." Figures for the ten local papers covered in the report range from one minority ethnic staff out of 10 (Uxbridge Gazette) and seven out of 93 (7.5%, Birmingham Evening Mail) to two out of 65 (3%, Bradford Telegraph and Argus) and none out of 68 (Yorkshire Evening Post).[143] The report also noted that the broadcast media had a better record: for example, in January 2004 the BBC announced that it had hit its initial target of 10% of all staff and 4% of senior management from minority ethnic communities (the new target, for 2007, is 12.5% of all staff and 7% of senior management).[144]

133. In 1999 the then Home Secretary set targets for the recruitment, retention and progression of minority ethnic staff within the Home Office and its linked agencies and services. The target for the Police Service was that at least 7% of police officers and staff should be from a minority ethnic background by 2009. The latest figures on progress towards these targets were issued in January 2005. The Police Service has seen a rise in representation from 3% in 1999 to 4.3% in 2004.[145]

134. Chief Superintendent Twydell, Luton Borough Commander, told us that about 6% of his police officers were from minority communities and believed that Bedfordshire Police was in the top four forces in the United Kingdom in terms of the proportion of police officers and staff from ethnic minority communities. He accepted that the proportion of minority ethnic communities in Luton (approaching 30%) was much greater and that Luton's minority police officers were mainly African-Caribbean with a small number from Asian backgrounds.[146]

135. As we observe in our recent report on Police Reform, in which we consider the issue of diversity in the police in more depth, despite recent increases in recruitment from minority ethnic groups, many police forces remain unrepresentative of their wider communities.[147] The same is clearly true of some newspapers. It may also be the case in some local authorities. **Diversity is important in police forces, local authorities and the media, not only for its own sake, but because it can provide clear evidence that ethnic and religious minorities are valued in this country. The presence of individuals from minority backgrounds at all levels in such organisations—and, indeed, in political parties—also provides role models for young people and thus helps integration.**

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142 Society of Editors, *Diversity in the Newsroom*, October 2004

143 Ibid, pp 7 and 41

144 Ibid, p 38

145 HC Deb, 19 January 2005, col 40–41WS; see also Home Office, *Race Equality—The Home Secretary's Employment Targets: Milestone Report 2004* (January 2005).

146 Qq 422-424

147 Home Affairs Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2004-05, *Police Reform*, HC 370-I, para 146

British Muslims: identity and diversity

136. Our inquiry brought the extent to which British Muslims are likely to have multiple identities of faith, cultural or national background, national and local identity. These vary for person to person and community to community, as does the extent to which individuals are likely to say that they are comfortable or uncomfortable with their identity.

137. This complex situation is too often over-looked in discussions of community cohesion or the much narrower issue of violent extremism. Indeed, while it is quite right to recognise the 'Muslim community' in the context of a unifying faith, in other situations the main factors shaping a particular part of that community may be the heritage of the original country of immigration, of social class, or of the town or city in which they live.

138. The importance of understanding these differences, as well as the common identity of Muslims, was reinforced by our visits to France and the Netherlands. In both, there were marked differences of experience amongst Muslims, shaped both by religion and the quite different experiences of communities which come from a range of countries (typically, Morocco, Algeria and Turkey).

139. In our inquiry we found that this diversity was much better recognised—or at least more openly acknowledged—at local level than by witnesses for national organizations. In many ways, the local level is most important, but this perspective needs to be supported nationally.

140. **Public policy which recognises the common identity of British Muslims but which does not recognise or respond to their diverse backgrounds is unlikely to be successful in developing full community cohesion.**

6 Use of the anti-terrorism powers

141. Evidence from Muslim witnesses was unanimous in considering both the anti-terrorism legislation and its application to be detrimental to community relations and contributing to the stigmatisation of Muslims.[148] In addition to the detention of foreign Muslims at Belmarsh—an issue which we did not examine for the reasons set out in paragraph 45—witnesses particularly cited the rise between 2001-02 and 2002-03 of over 300% in stops and searches of Asians—see paragraphs 49-51. (The figures for 2003-04 came out too late for witnesses to comment on them to us.) In this section we look first at Muslim perceptions and official views of the use of stop and search powers, then we briefly consider detention before release without charge before moving on to perceptions of arrests under the Terrorism Act. We conclude by looking at other issues of relations between police and minorities.

Stops and searches

142. The Muslim Council of Britain expressed deep concern over stops and searches. They believed that those stopped and searched were unclear as to why they had been stopped

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148 Ev 29-32, 65-67, 73, 87-88, HC 165-II

and that officers of the MPS themselves "are under-trained and not clear as to how, why and when they should be using these powers".[149] The Metropolitan Police rejected this criticism, saying that officers, both as recruits and throughout their careers, were trained in how to exercise stop and search powers; Detective Superintendent Tucker of the Metropolitan Police Diversity Directorate added:

> "We are now trying to bring in a new type of training that aims to emphasise what a good stop is, which is looking at what the outcomes are and a key point of that is leaving the person who has been stopped, if they are not arrested, with a very good impression of the officer, so that we do not create difficulties for ourselves in the future."[150]

143. The MCB also drew our attention to the Metropolitan Police Authority's scrutiny of stops and searches carried out by the MPS.[151] This concluded that stops and searches in London had a disproportionate impact on Black and minority ethnic people and made a number of recommendations to the MPS and other bodies. Detective Superintendent Tucker, of the MPS Diversity Directorate, told us that four of the 31 recommendations to the police had been implemented and that work was in progress on the remainder, in co-operation with the Authority and with community groups. He argued that, and although more would be implemented within a year, other recommendations were long term and could not be implemented as quickly.[152]

144. ACPO argued that the figures for stops and searches on Asians (cited in paragraphs 49-51) was not unreasonable given that 80% of the stops and searches were in London, where the Asian population is 13%, and were mainly carried out in "parts of London surrounded by large Asian populations".[153] The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) observed that 90% of the stops and searches in London took place in four specific areas.[154] ACPO also argued that stereotyping of Muslims as terrorists was "bad policing" and likely to be counter-productive and said that their guidance to officers and staff warned against Muslim profiling. They described the use of Section 44 stops and searches to disrupt and deter terrorist reconnaissance of potential targets as "of critical importance".[155] Chief Constable Baggott also pointed to the City of London as an example of a large number of stops and searches being carried out with only a 'handful' of complaints, all of which had been resolved informally or withdrawn.[156]

145. The Home Office said that they were concerned about any issues of disproportionality and that they had responded to community concerns with the creation of a Stop and Search Action Team to look at these issues in relation to stop and search powers generally.[157] The Minister of State added that there was now an independent Community

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149 Ev 67, HC 165-II

150 Q 334

151 *Report of the MPA Scrutiny on MPS Stop and Search Practice*, May 2004

152 Qq 345-346

153 Ev 2, HC 165-II

154 Q 334

155 Ev 2, HC 165-II

156 Q 352

157 Ev 48, HC 165-II

Panel as part of the Action Team, which included Muslim representatives, who, she had no doubt, "will be saying some fairly robust things to us about operation and that is exactly as it should be."[158]

Tip-offs

146. The MCB also noted that when the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police had been urged to investigate the tip-offs to the media before the arrests of Iraqi Kurds in April 2004, he had concluded that it was impractical to investigate, although he acknowledged that the source might well have been members of his force. The Council concluded that:

> "The blithe manner in which complaints from the Muslim community are dealt with give the strong impression that they are being discriminated against and that their rights can and will be breached with impunity."[159]

147. The Editor of the *Daily Mail* told us "it is frequently in the political interests of the police or the government that the media reports arrests of terror suspects and our attention is deliberately drawn to such activity."[160]

148. Police witnesses acknowledged the damaging effects of such tip-offs. Chief Constable Baggott observed that such investigations were "incredibly difficult", because of journalists' reluctance to reveal their sources, while Detective Superintendent Tucker believed that there had been comparatively few leaks, despite a number of cases last year that would have been of considerable interest to the media.[161] On the particular case mentioned by the MCB, the Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police had told us in July 2004 that he did not believe that it made it more difficult to have a productive relationship with the Muslim community and that links with the Kurdish community had improved "quite drastically"; he argued that lessons had been learnt and that a similar operation later had been carried out without publicity. He also said that the publicity had been "hugely damaging" and that he had been "incandescent with rage" to learn of it.[162]

Recording stops and searches by religion

149. The Muslim Council were concerned about the fact that stops and searches are not recorded by religion, suggesting that this added to suspicions that Muslims were being profiled.[163] The Commission for Racial Equality, in their evidence for the July 2004 single evidence session on anti-terrorism powers mentioned in paragraph 147, said it was essential that data be collated by race and faith for a range of activities, including stops and searches, arrests, convictions and releases without charge.[164] Similarly, the Police Federation described current collection of monitoring data on stops and searches as

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158 Q 478

159 Ev 68, HC 165-II

160 Ev 11, HC 165-III

161 Qq 378-379

162 Home Affairs Committee, *Anti-terrorism Powers*, HC 886-I, Qq 62-84

163 Ev 67, HC 165-II

164 Home Affairs Committee, *Anti-terrorism Powers*, HC 886-i, Ev 31

'simplistic', arguing that it obscured issues of sexuality, age, religion or disability, and observed: "the reality is that discrimination may be occurring but we are not looking in the right places".[165]

150. As noted in paragraph 49, the Home Office submission defended the current system on the grounds that the religion of a suspect is not relevant to the offence for which they have been arrested. But the Minister of State told us that the independent Community Panel of the Home Office's Stop and Search Action Team would be looking at the issue in the near future and that she awaited their recommendations with interest. She believed, however, that this was a controversial issue. Not only did some people feel religion was a private matter which they would not wish to declare, but also in cases in which people had been asked to declare their religion, there had been "perverse reactions". The statistics that were gathered might therefore not be robust enough.[166]

Police intelligence

151. The Muslim Council also suggested that the intelligence used by the police should be subject to independent scrutiny.[167] We asked police witnesses whether this was feasible: ACPO told us that although the idea presented some practical difficulties, they had already discussed it with the Muslim Safety Forum.[168] Chief Constable Baggott added:

> "The issue of public confidence is such that if you could have some degree of confidential, independent assessment that did not undermine the fundamental human rights of the sources and other issues of grave operational importance we would be very open to that and support that."[169]

152. **We note that the stop and search powers under the Terrorism Act have been used very varyingly by forces across England and Wales and that the large majority of such stops and searches have been carried out by the Metropolitan Police Service: in these cases the proportion of Asians stopped and searched is very close to their proportion in the population of London. We also note that the proportion of Asians stopped and searched under the Terrorism Act fell in 2003-04. We do not believe that the Asian community is being unreasonably targeted by the police in their application of Section 44 of the Terrorism Act or of the other legislation enabling stops and searches.**

153. **Nonetheless, we accept that there is a clear perception among all our Muslim witnesses that Muslims are being stigmatised by the operation of the Terrorism Act: this is extremely harmful to community relations. We recognise the efforts being made by police forces, notably by the Metropolitan Police Diversity Directorate, to engage with minority communities. But we believe that special efforts should be made by the police and Government to reassure Muslims that they are not being singled out unfairly.**

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165 Ev 85, HC 165-II

166 Q 480

167 Q 122

168 Q 355

169 Q 357

154. **We have no doubt that this perception is fuelled by the high profile reporting of some police raids and arrests. Such coverage also helps to fuel more widespread fears of the Muslim community. It is particularly damaging when little coverage is given when suspects are subsequently released without trial. It seems clear that some of the most sensational coverage has sometimes been caused by unauthorised briefing from within the police service. It is essential that police forces take firm action against any officers or staff involved.**

155. **We believe that there should be independent scrutiny, involving the Muslim community, of police intelligence and its use as a basis for stops and searches and arrests. We do not recommend adding religion to extensive information already required on stops and searches, but do believe that some additional research could be carried out into the impact of these police tactics on different religious groups.**

156. **It may also be the case that stops and searches of Asians under legislation other than the Terrorism Act are nonetheless perceived by Muslims—but not by Hindus or Sikhs—as being related to terrorism. This possibility should be examined by the Home Office's Stop and Search Action Team.**

Detention before release without charge

157. Statistics on the length of time that individuals are held under the Terrorism Act before released without charge are not collated centrally. These are important since they might indicate whether the counter-terrorism detention powers were being used to harass minority communities—the evidence is that this sort of detention was a significant factor in alienating Irish opinion in the days of IRA terrorism.[170]

158. **We believe that statistics on the length of time that individuals are held under the Terrorism Act before being released without charge should be collated centrally and published as soon as possible, since they will be an important indicator of whether the counter-terrorism detention powers are being misused. They should also show whether the extension of the period of detention without charge to 14 days, permitted since early 2004, is being used.**

Arrests under the Terrorism Act

159. Muslim witnesses emphasised their view that stops and searches under the Terrorism Act led to a disproportionately small number of arrests and charges; the research by the Institute of Race Relations (noted in paragraph 55) was also cited as evidence that anti-terrorism powers were being used to discriminate against Muslims.

160. ACPO noted that yearly figures showed a fall in arrests and told us that a 50% charge rate against arrests was "pretty good".[171] The Director of Public Prosecutions said that this proportion was "about right for serious crime" and argued that conviction rates would be high (as had traditionally been true for terrorism offences), but, as noted in paragraph 55,

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170 Paddy Hillyard, *Suspect Community—People's Experience of the Prevention of Terrorism Act in Britain*, Pluto Press (1993)

171 Qq 335 and 366

that because cases were now working through the criminal justice system, it would be up to two years before reliable figures would become available.[172]

161. **We are concerned by the lack of detailed information about arrests under the Terrorism Act. To maintain public trust, it is vital that statistics about arrests, charges and convictions under the counter-terrorism legislation be as detailed and reliable as possible. In particular, cases involving domestic terrorism should be clearly distinguished from those arising from international terrorism.**

162. **Within the constraints of the *sub judice* rule and any reporting restrictions, the Government should also examine ways of publicising the number of current trials for terrorism-related offences.**

Relations between the police and minorities

163. The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) expressed particular concern over police accountability. They pointed to a survey they had conducted which suggested that 39% felt there would be no benefit in complaining to the police and noted that the rise in stops and searches of Asians was not accompanied by a commensurate rise in complaints to the Independent Police Complaints Commission.[173] Mr Nick Hardwick, Chair of the Independent Police Complaints Commission, told us that Asians generally had the least confidence in the complaints system and least confidence that if they did complain, the matter they complained about would be dealt with effectively and seriously.[174]

164. The Hindu Forum said that concerns were growing in the Hindu community that security issues involving them were not treated as seriously as those involving other communities.[175] Both ACPO and the Metropolitan Police told us about their contacts with the Hindu and other communities, and Detective Superintendent Tucker denied that security issues affecting the Hindu community were treated less seriously than those involving Muslims: he did acknowledge that in one high-profile case the police could have looked more broadly at the impact on the community as a whole.[176]

165. Submissions from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), the City of London Police, the Metropolitan Police Diversity Directorate and the Crown Prosecution Service listed a number of ways in which these various bodies were seeking to engage with minority communities, particularly Muslims.[177] Burnley Borough Council and the Chief Superintendent of the Pennine Division of Lancashire Constabulary told us in a joint submission of their efforts to ensure that police operations contributed to community relations.[178] The Chief Superintendent of Luton also spoke about the efforts his force made to engage with minority communities, both on a regular basis and in the course of an anti-

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172 Qq 368 and 370

173 Ev 67-68, HC 165-II and Qq 139-141

174 Q 358

175 Ev 40, HC 165-II

176 Qq 381-382

177 Ev 2-3, 18, 23, and 60, HC 165-II

178 Ev 4, HC 165-II

terrorist operation[179]—these efforts were recognised and appreciated by the local Muslim community.[180] Similarly, the Muslim Council of Britain acknowledged that the Metropolitan Police was making efforts to engage with the Muslim Community. The Chair of the MCB's Legal Affairs Committee told us:

> "As I say, the police have a hard time and we recognise that. I think that the Met Police deserve a mention. You have a Met Police Authority which is holding to account its police officers and you have a police force that has set up a Muslim Safety Forum that meets regularly with Muslim groups. There are issues about who is on there and the accountability stuff but I think those are issues of detail. The main thing is that you have senior members of the Met Police meeting with Muslim communities and coming along to meetings. […] It is also working very hard on recruitment and retention, so I think there are good examples of the Met Police doing some good work but there is clearly more that can be done."[181]

166. The Minister of State for Community Safety, Crime Reduction, Policing and Counter-Terrorism in the Home Office, Hazel Blears MP, mentioned the four strands of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy: prevent, pursuit, prepare and protect.[182] ACPO argued that an opportunity had been missed by not adding 'communities' to the list. Chief Constable Matthew Baggott, Second Vice-President of ACPO and Lead on Race and Diversity, told us that the police had nonetheless made significant progress in deploying officers in vulnerable communities to build relationships and confidence. He added:

> "I think that is an incredibly important part of any terrorist strategy because it is about the hearts and minds of people; it is about accessibility, it is about a whole range of confidence building issues that simply have to be the bedrock of what is built upon it."[183]

167. When asked if she believed that Government attempts to reassure the Muslim community were successful, the Minister of State said:

> "Dealing with the terrorist threat and the fact that at the moment the threat is most likely to come from those people associated with an extreme form of Islam, or falsely hiding behind Islam, if you like, in terms of justifying their activities, inevitably means that some of our counter-terrorist powers will be disproportionately experienced by people in the Muslim community. That is the reality of the situation, we should acknowledge that reality and then try to have as open, as honest and as transparent a debate with the community as we can. There is no getting away from the fact that if you are trying to counter the threat, because the threat at the moment is in a particular place, then your activity is going to be targeted in that way. "[184]

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179 Qq 425 and 410

180 Q 426 and Ev 116, HC 165-III

181 Q 135

182 Q 462

183 Q 405

184 Q 474

168. These remarks were criticised by some in the Muslim community as "demonising and alienating" the community and as "thoroughly unhelpful" and by the National Black Police Association, which described them as "intemperate and inconsiderate".[185] The Minister responded to the Muslim Council with assurances that the counter terrorism powers were aimed at terrorists, whatever their background, not at any community, religion or ethnic group.' She added that stop and search powers would not be disproportionately used against members of any particular community.[186]

169. **There is no doubt that the authorities face a real challenge in acting against terrorist suspects from within particular communities, without been seen as targeting—or stigmatising—that community. We do not believe that the Government has yet found an answer to this question, as the reaction to the Minister's comments illustrates. More needs to be done to reach agreement both on tactics and strategy and the way in which these are to be described.**

7 Tackling international terrorism, building cohesive communities

170. In this section we examine some of the issues which need to be addressed if we are to tackle terrorism and to build cohesive communities.

The Government's anti-terrorism strategy

171. It was suggested to us that previous British governments had not been able to combat terrorism without alienating the Irish community. For example, the freelance journalist Paul Donovan believed that the operation in the 1970s of Prevention of Terrorism Act had sent the Irish community back into itself, creating resentment toward the state and its various agencies. He believed that little if any evidence had ever been produced to suggest that the anti-terror law actually stopped or helped prevent terrorism and that much of the terrorism that was prevented came about as a result of routine policing which caught terrorists in the act. Similarly, the Muslim Council argued that one of the results of the police treating the Irish as a suspect community had been that the public were encouraged to do the same.[187]

172. Throughout the inquiry we heard much encouraging evidence that British Muslims have become increasingly engaged with local and national government since 9/11. Despite the concerns about the use of anti-terrorism powers, there is a widespread view that police-community consultation and relations have improved considerably since 9/11.

173. However, it does seem that more needs to be done to ensure that these discussions reach deep into Muslim communities. It is not clear, for example, that sufficient effort is being made to ensure that measures like control orders are being explained and discussed in the wider community. Although we believe that the Minister's comments on the use of

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185 *The Guardian* and *The Times*, 2 March 2005

186 Ev 168, HC 165-III

187 Ev 32-24 and 66, HC 165-II

counter-terrorist powers and the Muslim community (see paragraph 166) were widely misquoted and reported out of context, the impression left by the media will inevitably have been that Muslims would be targeted because of their faith. In such situations it is essential that swift and effective communication channels exist to counteract such mis-information.

174. **The Government has now made a commitment to new anti-terrorism legislation and a review of existing powers. It is essential, in our view, that British Muslims are engaged fully in this review from the earliest possible moment. We believe that this should be made an explicit responsibility of the reviewer of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. In parallel, the Home Office should initiate its own consultations.**

175. **However, it is not clear that there is a coherent strategy, developed with the Muslim community for tackling extremism, still less that these issues have been addressed with other communities. We can contrast this, perhaps, with the broad consensus that exists amongst the police, political parties and local and national government in tackling a terrorist organisation like the Provisional IRA or a racist organisation like the BNP.**

Prisons

176. Interlocutors in both France and the Netherlands raised recruitment by extremist groups in prisons. Given the rise in numbers of Muslim prisoners since 1993 (see paragraph 71), we asked the Minister of State if a similar problem existed here. She said that "a small number" of prisoners might well be subject to such influences, whether from other prisoners or from imams working in prisons. Efforts were therefore being made to ensure that there were properly trained imams in the prison service, but she agreed that this was an area in which more work should be done.[188] **If recruitment of prisoners to extremist groups is a problem in both France and the Netherlands, it is likely to be one here. The Government should examine the issue as a matter of priority.**

Extremism

177. There are undoubtedly extremists in every religion.[189] **We reject any suggestion that Muslims are in some way more likely to turn to terrorism than followers of other religions. It is clear from the evidence presented to us that there are some individuals who advocate violence against others in the name of a number of faiths. Faith leaders must condemn, without equivocation, those of their co-religionists who advocate violence. It is perhaps important to note that there is a distinction to be made between the expression of what might be seen in a western European context as reactionary social views, but which falls within the bounds of free speech, and the advocacy of terrorism or other forms of violence. However, we are concerned that preachers from other countries, who have a reputation for extremist views, can during their visits to**

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188 Q 506

189 "Extremism" in a religious context can mean an exceptionally strict interpretation of rules or guidelines on physical appearance and behaviour, without any link to violence. In this report, however, we use it to mean an interpretation of a religion that allows or encourages violence against those who do not conform to that interpretation.

Britain harm community relations. We refer more generally to foreign-born imams who reside here in paragraphs 193 and 194.

178. We do not share the Minister's anxiety about discussing terrorism with the Muslim communities (see paragraph 125). In our inquiry and our informal conversations we found many people anxious to discuss the issue and, in particular, the complex factors which could lead a young British person down that road. Provided, therefore, that any discussions also embraced wider issues, we believe it would, though sometimes difficult, be a productive discussion process.

179. **It follows from what we say that the new terrorism legislation cannot and must not simply be a set of police and judicial powers. It must be part of an explicit broader anti-terrorism strategy. In the context of international terrorism, it must explicitly and specifically set out how British Muslim leaders will be supported in assisting British Muslims in resisting extremist views.**

180. **It is clear that a number of issues need to be tackled. Among the first priorities are those organising and propagating extremist ideas sympathetic to terrorism. They must be identified and dealt with effectively—not only by the authorities, but most importantly by the Muslim community itself.**

181. Witnesses had a range of views about the reasons that lead a few young Britons to involvement in terrorism. Young Muslim women from Bolton with whom we had a short informal discussion appeared unanimous that a sense of rejection by British society led young people to turn to Islam: a few of them would move to extremism. Similar views were expressed to us in the Netherlands, and we were told of a range of initiatives in Amsterdam to integrate minority communities, and imams, including targeted courses in citizenship.

182. Other witnesses argued that the answer was to create more effective leadership in communities or to tackle the causes of deprivation.[190] Greater cross-cultural contact in education was also called for.[191] The Minister of State effectively admitted that she did not know:

> "I could not honestly say that I have a convincing and complete explanation for what I think is a complex set of issues about the influences that people are exposed to during the course of their lives."[192]

183. Part of the Government's strategy must be a more open debate about why a small number of devout Muslims may be drawn into terrorism. Our inquiry could not reach definitive conclusions. However, our discussions in the UK, France and the Netherlands lead us to reject simplistic, mono-causal explanations like social exclusion. Whilst the economic disadvantage and social deprivation of Muslim communities is well documented, active terrorists are at least as likely to come from prosperous families or be personally well-educated and successful.

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190 Q 442

191 Q 443

192 Q 462

184. On the other hand, the social exclusion of Muslim communities, coupled to a continuing experience of racism, is likely to make it difficult for many young Muslims to feel fully part of wider British society. Many find it equally difficult to identify fully with the culture of their historic country of origin. In this situation it is not surprising to find that a devout Islam offers an important sense of identity. There are many aspects of this development which are very positive and the Government have repeatedly stressed that importance of faith communities in building a wider society.

Identity

185. In 2003, the Bangladeshi Youth League published a reflection on the issue of identity within the Bangladeshi community:

> "Who am I? Many Bangladeshi youths are faced with this identity crisis. We are not fully accepted as being British even though we were born in Britain. Nor are we fully accepted as being Bangladeshi even though we have the same skin colour and can speak the same mother tongue language, which is Bengali.

> "If the first generation were asked 'What is your nationality?' they would probably say with no hesitation that they are 100% Bangladeshi. If the same question were asked to the second generation there would probably be a sense of confusion running through their minds. When they finally answer the question there is a doubt in their answer. The second generation have not fully accepted the term British or Bangladeshi in their identity. […]

> "It is evident that they have no fixed identity, their identity is constantly floating, being defined, modified and redefined in society. There is a culture clash emerging in the Bangladeshi communities. The traditional culture and behaviour of the first generation are only marginally changed in many aspects of their social life. In comparison the second generation are faced daily with the question of identity, if they don't make certain changes in their cultural identity, appearance and their traditional views they find it hard to fit into British society."[193]

186. There is much evidence that these uncertainties in Muslim communities about identity are widespread, particularly, but not only, among young people. For example, a Minority Rights Group International report notes a variety of attitudes among British Muslims and observes that for some young Muslims Britishness "is frequently described in terms of citizenship, rather than an emotional and cultural bond shared with the rest of the population".[194] Dr Khanum told us that many young Bangladeshi women identified themselves as Muslim: this had been a surprise to her as their parents identified themselves as Bangladeshi.[195]

187. *Sticking together* noted that while some young people in Luton did not identify with being British or English, they did feel they had a Luton identity.[196] A Best Value

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193   Bangladesh Youth League Annual report, 2002-2003, page 7, available on www.byl.org.uk

194   Minority Rights Group International, *Muslims in Britain*, August 2002

195   Q 452

196   *Sticking together*, p 16

Performance Indicator survey of residents of Luton had shown that of those who described themselves as white 57.8% belonged to Luton, while for Black and minority ethnic (BME) communities the figure was 79.6%. When asked if they felt they belonged to England the figures were 85.4% of whites and 75.1% of BME respondents, and if they belonged to Britain 80.5% and 75.1% respectively.[197]

188. Not all young Muslims were concerned by uncertainties over their identity. Dr Khanum quoted some young people as saying:

> ""Why do you bother about identity? We have multiple identity and according to mood and circumstance we call ourselves Bangladeshi, British, Muslim or Lutonian or whatever."[198]

189. We were struck during our visit to France by the way in which the widely understood concept of the French citizen and their rights and duties was a starting point for discussion of these issues (although we were not able to assess how valuable this will prove to be). We did not detect similar certainty in the Netherlands. We are sure it does not exist in the United Kingdom. The Cantle report called for a clearer idea of what it means to be British: the first two of the 67 recommendations in the report were:

> "The rights—and in particular—the responsibilities of citizenship need to be more clearly established [...] This should then be formalised into a form of statement of allegiance.

> "However, this should follow an honest and open national debate, led by Government and heavily influenced by younger people. We believe that this should be initiated very quickly and lead directly to a programme of action."[199]

190. We asked the Minister of State whether there should be such a debate. She said:

> "In terms of opportunities for everyone and mutual expectations, it is very much the agenda that we talk about across government, whether it is opportunity, security, rights and responsibilities, that sense of mutual inter-dependence. That is not necessarily just about Britishness; that is about the core values that are the glue that holds us together. [...] I think there is a need for a great debate about what those mutual inter-dependencies are, and the relationship between rights and responsibilities and opportunities in this country. I think there is a need to re-establish some norms of behaviour, what I would call the essential standards of decency, but I do not think there is necessarily a need for a great debate about Britishness.[200]

191. There is perhaps a danger, however, that if the alienation from the wider society is too great, a small number of people will be drawn to extremist interpretations of their faith. **The development of a deeper faith amongst young British Muslims should be entirely compatible with a secure and comfortable British identity**.

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197 Q 453 [Mr Singh]

198 Q 452

199 Cantle report, p 46

200 Q 520

192. **It is important to stress that this is not a debate for Muslims alone, nor, indeed, for other minority communities. Part of the problem is the racism and rejection which is experienced from some parts of the majority community in which unjustified fear, suspicion and simple lack of understanding play a large part. An inclusive British identity for the 21st century can only be created by the full participation of all parts of society.**

193. **Questions of identity may be inextricably linked with the reasons which may lead a small number of well-educated and apparently integrated young British people to turn to terrorism. No one should be forced to choose between being British and being Muslim and we do not believe the two are in any way incompatible. The relationship between rights and responsibilities and opportunities in this country cannot be separated from the concept of Britishness. These issues were raised by the Cantle Report in 2001. They have not lost their relevance today, and we endorse the Cantle Report's conclusion that a wider debate, in which young people must play a leading role, about a modern British identity should be developed.**

Foreign ministers of religion

194. The issue of foreign-born imams, who might espouse extremist positions and who would be unlikely to have much understanding of the host country—thus increasing segregation—was raised with us more than once in France and the Netherlands. We have only anecdotal and media evidence to suggest that this is a significant problem in this country. The Minister told us about the progress of, and consultation on, regulations to ensure ministers of religion from abroad have a knowledge of English and of British life:

> "There are two stages. We have brought in the first stage and now they [foreign ministers of religion] have to show they can use spoken English to Level 4 in the International English Language Testing system, which is described as a limited user. Over the next two years that will be raised to Level 6, so people will have to be more proficient in English when they first come in. We are just about to launch a second stage of consultation with faith communities on taking some further measures to try and ensure ministers of religion from abroad can play a full role in the community. That means non-spoken language, it includes things like civic knowledge, engagement in communities, pre-entry qualifications, and we want to explore with the faith communities what ought to be the range of skills and abilities that people who want to come into this country as ministers of religion should possess."[201]

We note that the Government has no plans to follow the Dutch example of providing funding to the Muslim community for education of local-born imams.[202]

195. **We welcome the Government's efforts so far to ensure that foreign ministers of religion have the language skills and knowledge of this country to make a contribution to communities here. The success of these efforts should be kept under review and, if necessary, ideas from other countries should be studied.**

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201 Q 502—the second stage of consultation was launched on 3 March 2005.

202 Q 507

8 The media

Coverage of terrorism and minority issues

196. There were complaints from most of our witnesses about media coverage of terrorism and Islam. Particular concern was expressed over the use of phrases such as 'Islamic terrorist' or 'Muslim terrorist'—the Muslim Public Affairs Committee, among others, made the point that the term 'Catholic terrorism' had never been used during the period of the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland.[203] Another criticism, raised by the Muslim Council of Britain and other Muslim witnesses, was that arrests on terrorism-related charges received significant media coverage, but if those arrested were later released without having been charged, coverage was minimal.[204] A further complaint, again raised by a number of witnesses, concerned tip-offs to the media, presumably by the police, of impending arrests. The case of arrests of Iraqi Kurds in Manchester in April 2004, all of whom were later released without charge, was frequently cited in this context.[205] These and similar points were made not only by Muslim witnesses, but also by the Church of England,[206] the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales,[207] the Evangelical Alliance[208] and the Mayor of London.[209]

197. The Home Office noted the risk of stigmatisation of minority communities and said that the Government understood "the extreme concern within Muslim communities that the extensive coverage of the views of extremists by some newspapers offers a misleading image of Islam that is not countered by positive coverage of the support that Muslim communities have given to the Police service in the fight against terrorism or the contribution which our Muslim citizens make to the UK".[210] The Minister of State also thought that "the language used [by the media] has sometimes not helped to create the kind of tolerant and inclusive society we would all want to see".[211]

198. Complaints about media coverage of minority communities were not confined to the Muslim community. The Hindu Forum told us that the national media had been largely indifferent to anti-Hindic attacks;[212] similarly the Sikh Community Action Network believed that there was not enough coverage of the issues facing the visibly Sikh community.[213] The Board of Deputies of British Jews argued that while anti-Semitism and

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203 Ev 72, HC 165-II

204 Q 119

205 Ev 68, HC 165-II

206 Ev 15, HC 165-II and Q 193

207 Q 193

208 Ev 27, HC 165-II

209 Ev 58, HC 165-II

210 Ev 49, HC 165-II

211 Q 495

212 Ev 42, HC 165-II

213 Ev 89, HC 165-II

anti-Semitic incidents were covered sympathetically, coverage of the Israeli-Palestine conflict was often 'one-sided and superficial'.[214]

199. None of those who criticised the media sought to impose censorship, although some argued that the laws relating to contempt of court and race relations should be applied more rigorously. It was also suggested that the Press Complaints Commission had failed to tackle the issues. [215]

Local and national media

200. Some witnesses believed that local and regional newspapers provided better coverage of minority communities than did the national press.[216] In at least one case we were told there had been a significant improvement, not to say a transformation, in coverage by a local newspaper.[217] Some also believed that local media were significant as a barometer of opinion, for example through the letters column.[218] Others felt that there were no significant differences,[219] or that national newspapers were more influential.[220] Witnesses from the media believed that differences were exaggerated, but pointed out that coverage of a particular incident in local media might well be in greater depth and more prolonged than in their national counter-parts.[221]

Broadcast and print media

201. A number of witnesses emphasised the importance of television, rather than newspapers, in their local communities.[222] For example, Father Philip Sumner, a Catholic priest from Oldham, told us:

> "Certainly from my experience in Oldham, every time there has been some terror attack a number of people refer to me, […] who almost presume that whatever happens on their television screens is happening on a much wider basis than it actually is. [...] When something is put on the television screen I hear far more comments from my own parishioners, for example, concerning the Muslim community, the presumption being that terrorism is everywhere and that the Muslim communities are responsible."[223]

202. The Home Editor of the BBC told us that the Corporation were "acutely aware" of the "enormous power" of television.[224] He also acknowledged the inherent difficulties of

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214 Ev 8, HC 165-II

215 Ev 70, HC 165-II and Qq 51 and 120

216 Q 121

217 Q 193

218 Q 414 [Mr Zafar Khan]

219 Q 414 [Mr Singh, Chief Superintendent Twydell]

220 Q 411

221 Qq 321-323

222 Q 233

223 Q 175

224 Q 276

covering the threat of international terrorism in a medium that relied on pictures. As he put it:

> "You are dealing with briefings with people who are certainly not going to go on television about events which you do not see."[225]

We note that the Faith Practitioners group of the Home Office's Community Cohesion Panel believed that broadcast media were generally more responsible than their press counterparts:

> "The Group were generally impressed by the degree of care that the broadcast media seems to take over faith matters. The Group commend many of their publications and handbooks. The Group were more disturbed by the quality of newspaper journalism. This was patchy – there were examples of good practice and examples of very unhelpful reporting that would do nothing for community cohesion."[226]

What the media said

203. When planning our inquiry, we had not intended to hold an oral evidence session specifically focussing on the media. However, such was the degree of concern expressed over their role, that we decided to ask representatives of local and national newspapers, and the broadcast media, for their views. Unsurprisingly, all denied that they reported irresponsibly. Newspaper editors argued that it made no sense for them to alienate potential readers in minority communities,[227] and the Executive Managing Editor of the *Daily Mail* made the additional point that a high proportion of newsagents were run by Muslims, whose support was thus crucial for newspaper distribution.[228] Representatives of broadcast and print media alike told us that they now avoided phrases such as 'Muslim terrorist' and that they tried to make clear the distinction between terrorists and followers of Islam.[229] We were also told that they made efforts to maintain contacts with the Muslim community.[230]

204. Witnesses recognised that there was a difficulty with reporting the release without charge of suspects whose arrest had been covered in some detail: the BBC acknowledged that "terrorist arrests in themselves are more newsworthy than somebody who is subsequently released".[231] But they also argued that there was a tendency to blame the messenger when newspapers reported unwelcome news,[232] and that minority communities

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225 Q 324

226 Home Office, *The End of Parallel Lives?: The Report of the Community Cohesion Panel*, July 2004, p 33

227 Ev 111 and 143, HC 165-III

228 Q 269

229 Qq 270 and 273

230 Qq 271 and 275

231 Q 294

232 Q 269

should be less sensitive to criticism[233]—a similar point was made by the Evangelical Alliance.[234]

205. None of our non-media witnesses disputed the presence of Islamist extremists in the United Kingdom, although many, such as the Forum against Islamophobia and Racism noted that some of those in their survey believed that radical elements received a disproportionate amount of media coverage, to discredit Islam.[235]

206. Robin Esser, Executive Managing Editor of the *Daily Mail*, disputed this, arguing that his paper had sought to expose extremists and to emphasise that they were not typical of Islam, including by running pieces by Muslim leaders.[236] The Home Affairs Editor of the BBC, Mark Easton, admitted that when the extremist cleric Abu Hamza had preached in the street and not in a mosque, he had been on television a "lot more". Mr Easton argued that there had been a real news event, but accepted that the availability of pictures had made the story more attractive to national news.[237]

The importance of language

207. Throughout the inquiry Muslim witnesses consistently criticized the use in the media of terms like 'Islamic terrorism'. Some witnesses recognised the sensitivity of the issues, and Home Office guidelines discourage the use of such terms. At the same time, the expression remains widely used in the media. It is clear that many people cannot understand why, if the leadership of Al Qaeda claim Islamic justification for their actions, the expression is not appropriate.

208. It is necessary to tease out the different strands of this important debate.

209. In the British context, the term is likely to be unhelpful in developing good community cohesion. At the present time at least, too few British people have much personal knowledge of Islam as a faith or of Muslims as fellow citizens. The identification of Islam with terrorism is likely to create a prejudicial view of the faith as a whole. We heard evidence to this effect from, for example, Father Sumner (see paragraph 200), a parish priest in Oldham.

210. In time this may change. The Oklahoma bomber claimed Christian inspiration but the term 'Christian terrorist' would have little impact simply because most people in this country have enough knowledge and experience of Christianity to know that this would be an extreme and perverted view of the faith. As community cohesion develops the same will become true of Islam and the sensitivity of language will diminish. **The Committee believes that the loose use of terms like 'Islamic terrorism' should be discouraged and care taken to distinguish between the claims made by the terrorist groups and the faith of the vast majority of Muslims.**

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233 Ev 111, HC 165-III

234 Ev 27, HC 165-II

235 Ev 31, HC 165-II

236 Qq 301-304

237 Q 324

211. There is a second reason for recognizing the sensitivity of language. Accepting that a small number of British Muslims have become involved in terrorism has been a very painful experience for a community that has been and is overwhelmingly peaceful and law abiding. But that acceptance is critical to the development of successful strategies for tackling terrorism. In our inquiry, most Muslim witnesses accepted that this issue had to be addressed. The use of terms of sweeping terms like 'Islamic terrorism' constantly place senior Muslims on the defensive; having to justify their faith over and over again and possibly making it more difficult for them to address the small but serious problem of extremism.

212. **Of course we reject the idea that British Muslims are not actively opposed to terrorism. It is clear that extreme views are challenged every day of every week within Muslim communities. Nonetheless, this work needs to be developed in the years to come and it is important that public policy supports those people who will shoulder the responsibility of doing so.**

213. **It is also clear that some anti-Semitic attacks are being perpetrated by young Muslims. This is almost certainly quite a distinct phenomenon from international terrorism but must also be tackled: leadership from within Muslim communities will again be key, and those leaders must be supported in that work.**

214. **We have sympathy with the view that everyone, and not just minority communities, should be more tolerant of comment they dislike. But the concerns about media coverage of terrorism and community relations expressed forcibly by a wide range of witnesses should not be ignored.**

215. **We received overwhelming evidence that media coverage of international terrorism and community relations has a powerful and often negative impact. Whilst some criticism was directed at particular publications, it is also clear that television coverage has a significant impact. We found representatives of the media unaware or dismissive of their importance in this issue. We believe that the media must live up to their responsibilities to report fairly and accurately. In particular, to link terrorists, asylum seekers and Muslims, whether explicitly or implicitly, cannot be a useful contribution to debate.**

Is there a Government media management strategy?

216. Some witnesses suggested to us that there was a concerted Government strategy to manage media coverage of terrorism issues, either to divert attention from unwelcome news items or to create a climate of fear. For example, Mr Les Levidow of the Campaign against Criminalising Communities spoke of "the Government's mass media strategy" to exaggerate and fabricate terrorist threats.[238] The freelance journalist Mr Paul Donovan cited a suggestion that 'terror alerts' were used to divert attention from other political

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238 Q 11

news.[239] Some support appeared to be given to these suggestions by the written submission from the Editor of the *Daily Mail*, noted in paragraph 146.[240]

217. In the oral evidence session, witnesses from the media were clear that on the one hand individual policemen or politicians might see advantages in tipping off the media about, for example, an impending arrest, and on the other that mechanisms existed, such as the Media Emergencies Forum, for the media and government to discuss coverage of terrorism. However, they were equally clear that, as the Home Editor of the BBC put it:

> "I certainly do not believe that there is some kind of co-ordinated office somewhere in Whitehall trying to change our coverage of terrorism matters."[241]

218. **We are satisfied that there is no Government strategy to manipulate media coverage of terrorism, whether to foster a climate of fear or to divert attention from other issues.**

Incitement to religious hatred

219. A recurring issue was the possible new offence of incitement to religious hatred, set out in the Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill. Many of our witnesses were ambivalent about the proposal, largely on grounds of freedom of speech;[242] at least one, the National Secular Society, was frankly hostile.[243] By contrast the proposal was supported by, for example, the Muslim Council of Britain[244]—although others in the Muslim community were less certain.[245] The Home Office said that "the Government does not believe that the current legislative framework is sufficient to counter the Islamophobia and prejudice that some Muslim people experience".[246]

220. The proposal is currently receiving separate consideration in this Parliament as part of the scrutiny of the Government's Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill. There is therefore little that we can usefully say about its substance. But we were struck by the warnings given by the Director of Public Prosecutions, who said:

> "I think the main issue around that is managing expectations. […] One of the dangers around incitement to religious hatred is that communities – and indeed representatives of the Muslim communities have said this to me – believe somehow this is going to protect them from people being offensive or rude about Islam. It is not going to do that. You are perfectly free to be offensive or rude about any religion, there is no law against it. The danger is that if people think it is going to protect them from that and it does not they feel very let down by us, by the police, by the Government and by everybody else, and we get accused of being racist or

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239 Ev 24, HC 165-II and Qq 55-59

240 Ev 111, HC 165-III

241 Q 325

242 Qq 197-200 and Q 227

243 Ev 74-80, HC 165-II

244 Ev 71-2, HC 165-II, and Qq 123-4

245 Q 225

246 Ev 47, HC 165-II

incompetent, or a combination of the two, when in fact we are just applying the law. So it is very important that people understand what that offence will achieve: it will stop the grossest sort of conduct, but it is not going to stop people being rude about Islam."[247]

221. The Crown Prosecution Service's written submission noted that, between 2001 and 2004, 84 cases of incitement to racial hatred had been referred to them. There had only been two convictions. The CPS commented:

"Such cases prove very difficult to prosecute and raise a number of key issues around free speech and the evidence threshold required. Most crucially in terms of community relations these cases can create an expectations gap between communities understandable concerns to see cases brought to justice and the limitations on what can be prosecuted. Communities can become frustrated with decisions not to prosecute and CPS is often criticised as incompetent or discriminatory in its handling of such cases. Given the seriousness attached to handling such cases CPS is confident that this is not an area of service underperformance—rather the challenge lies in prosecuting the cases referred."[248]

222. The Minister of State argued that there had been extensive debate in the House of Commons and elsewhere over the new legislation and that there were a range of provisions that would prevent its abuse. She believed that the Government had been "crystal clear" what it sought to prevent, that a range of faith groups now supported the proposed law and that the Muslim Council understood its scope. She nonetheless accepted that dialogue would have to continue with faith groups to ensure they too were clear about what could and could not be done.[249]

223. **We are concerned that, although leaders of the Muslim community may have an accurate appreciation of the limits of the proposed legislation on incitement to religious hatred, this is not shared by their community as a whole. It is vitally important not to raise unrealisable expectations in minority communities, and rather than trusting to dialogue with leaders of faith groups, the Government should develop a strategy to ensure that the extent and limitations of the proposed offence are fully understood by all. We suspect that the extent of the legislation, and how often it is likely to be used, may also be misunderstood by some who oppose it. It is of course important to emphasise, as Ministers have tried to do, that such a change in the law should not be seen as a ban on criticism of any particular religion. The right to practice a religion, to criticise religious practices or to propagate non-religious belief is a basic right in a free society.**

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247 Q 398

248 Ev 22, HC 165-II

249 Qq 483-490

9 Overall conclusions

224. **The United Kingdom is well placed to deal with the issues covered by this report. Our acceptance of religious and ethnic communities is a strength, not a weakness. Issues of integration and diversity have been part of our political discourse for longer than in some other EU countries and we believe that this country is further down the road to accepting that Britons of all faiths and none and of all ethnic backgrounds have a part to play in our society. But experience shows that to reach this goal will require active leadership at all levels: crossing our fingers and hoping for the best will not work.**

225. **We saw greater confidence at local levels than nationally. The task now is to create an infrastructure for dialogue that will enable that confidence, and that experience of tackling difficult problems together, to make a difference on a national scale. The Government's proposals for action on community cohesion should be implemented with vigour. A forward looking programme should include measures to ensure that central policy is properly understood at local levels, as well as work to establish what may be the causes of a very small number of young Britons turning to violently extremist groups and measures to address them and a programme to engage schools and young people in discussion of these issues. In particular, the Government must engage British Muslims in its anti-terrorist strategy.**

Conclusions and recommendations

Community relations: existing problems and policies

1. We believe that the analysis in the Cantle report remains valid. Key issues in the report, such as the importance of leadership, especially at a local level, the need to overcome segregation, the role of schools and the importance of opportunities for young people and the need for clarity over what it means to be British, are central to the problems discussed in this inquiry. The threat of international terrorism brings a new dimension to existing issues, and perhaps makes their resolution even more pressing—it does not change them. (Paragraph 13)

2. We are aware that the police, and particularly the Metropolitan Police Service, have made significant efforts to overcome the institutionalised racism criticised in the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. But we are concerned by continuing gaps between the police and minority communities in perceptions of police work and by evidence that there is still much work on diversity to be done in the police. We have made recommendations on diversity in the police in our recent report on Police Reform. (Paragraph 35)

Developments since 9/11

3. Despite the current lack of information about terrorist cases, it is our view that in due course the majority will probably prove to have been related to international terrorism. (Paragraph 58)

Britain's communities and community relations

4. We conclude that community relations have deteriorated, although the picture is by no means uniform, and that there are many positive examples to set against our overall assessment. International terrorism and the response to it have contributed to this deterioration, particularly in relations between the majority community and the Muslim community. However, the problems are by no means only associated with these communities or with international terrorism; we have seen that international events, such as communal violence in India, the Kashmir dispute and the Israel-Palestine conflict can be reflected in deepening tensions in this country. (Paragraph 88)

5. Much greater recognition should be given to the problem of both Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. All communities, including the majority community, have a responsibility to tackle such problems, condemning without reservation prejudice, discrimination and violence against other communities. Whilst all communities will be sensitive to attacks upon them, no community should turn a blind eye to prejudicial actions by members of its own community. (Paragraph 89)

6. Islamophobic incidents should be treated as seriously as any other form of racism. Islamophobia is not only an issue for Muslims: it is a problem that can only be

resolved by the majority community in this country, who must acknowledge its existence. (Paragraph 90)

7. It is unfortunate that there is as yet no reliable central collection of data on Islamophobia. We urge the Muslim community to follow the example of the Hindu Forum in seeking to draw on the experience gained by the Community Security Trust in monitoring anti-Semitism. (Paragraph 91)

8. The rise in anti-Semitic incidents since September 2001 is extremely disturbing and should be acknowledged as such by all. Anti-Semitism among some members of the Muslim community is also worrying. We welcome the condemnation of anti-Semitic attacks by leaders of the Muslim community: it is important that they should continue to do so, forcefully and unequivocally. (Paragraph 92)

9. We are also concerned by anti-Semitism on campuses. We urge university authorities to act swiftly when cases are brought to their attention. The duty to promote good race relations imposed on other bodies by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 should also apply to student unions, subject to the provisions on free speech at universities of the Education Act (No 2) 1986. (Paragraph 93)

10. We note that the allegations that either the Neasden Hindu Temple or the Swaminarayan Hindu Mission, or both, are associated with terrorism have <u>not</u> been substantiated. These allegations are new to the Home Office and are disputed by a wide range of authoritative witnesses, both in the Neasden area and nationally. (Paragraph 94)

11. It is clear that the problems faced by France and the Netherlands have both similarities and differences to those faced here. (Paragraph 105)

12. On the positive side, this country has a long tradition of race relations legislation and reasonably frank and open discussion of community and race relations. At local and national level there is a habit of dialogue, if sometimes patchy, on which solutions can be constructed. Our impression was that neither France nor the Netherlands have explicitly considered these issues in the recent past (though for different reasons) and this meant that, at national level at least, there was some real uncertainty about the most effective way forward. (Paragraph 106)

13. On the other hand, in both countries there was a more explicit willingness, particularly at local level, to recognise the central importance of the Muslim communities and their future development within national society. In France, too, counter-terrorism powers were more developed than our own—possibly because of their longer experience of dealing with this form of international terrorism. (Paragraph 107)

Central and local government

14. We welcome the positive comments about the role of the Home Office, but we fear that the absence of a direct reference to community cohesion in their evidence to this inquiry suggests that the Home Office does not yet appreciate that the

implementation of its community cohesion strategy is central to its ability to deal with the community impact of international terrorism. We recommend that the Home Office review the links between its work on community cohesion and anti-terrorism. (Paragraph 111)

15.   We are impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm of a number of young people we met, including those who worked with PeaceMaker. We agree with their view that schools have a vital role to play in the building of tolerant and cohesive communities. (Paragraph 117)

16.   But if Peacemaker's small consultation proves representative of young people across the country there is clearly a major problem of perception and understanding to be tackled. We are alarmed that some schools are reluctant to discuss these issues. We are also concerned by the absence of explicit central Government support that would enable and encourage schools to promote discussion about these sensitive issues. Both the Home Office and the DfES should share responsibility for developing a coherent cross-Government approach. (Paragraph 118)

17.   We were struck by the energy and imagination shown by some local councils in this country and in France and the Netherlands. Their readiness to confront difficult issues is to be applauded and we detected an optimism sometimes lacking at the national level. But such readiness should be reinforced by a concerted central Government strategy to explain national policy and to encourage local discussion, including discussion of challenging issues such as the response to terrorism. We did not see clear evidence of such a strategy. Indeed it appears some of the necessary actions of central authorities, such as raids by anti-terrorist police, are carried out without a proper appreciation of the effect on local communities and organisations, such as the local police. (Paragraph 127)

18.   One of the issues frequently raised in this inquiry, and stressed by the Cantle report, is the importance of local leadership. As the Chief Executive of Leicester City Council put it, "the role of community leaders—formal, informal, civic, faith, the media—is critical". We believe that this holds true on the national level as well. Community leaders should support each other and seek to build bridges with other communities: in some cases this will mean giving up defensive and reactive stances in order to create a climate of tolerance and mutual respect. (Paragraph 128)

19.   Faith leaders have an important role to play in community relations. Although it is clear that in some places this responsibility has been accepted, whether through inter-faith work or by educating their own communities about other faiths, much more needs to be done both to bring such work to all areas and to ensure that larger numbers of people are involved. We encourage them to develop these activities and to challenge prejudice and encourage tolerance both locally and nationally. (Paragraph 131)

20.   Diversity is important in police forces, local authorities and the media, not only for its own sake, but because it can provide clear evidence that ethnic and religious minorities are valued in this country. The presence of individuals from minority backgrounds at all levels in such organisations—and, indeed, in political

parties—also provides role models for young people and thus helps integration. (Paragraph 135)

21. Public policy which recognises the common identity of British Muslims but which does not recognise or respond to their diverse backgrounds is unlikely to be successful in developing full community cohesion. (Paragraph 140)

Use of the anti-terrorism powers

22. We note that the stop and search powers under the Terrorism Act have been used very varyingly by forces across England and Wales and that the large majority of such stops and searches have been carried out by the Metropolitan Police Service: in these cases the proportion of Asians stopped and searched is very close to their proportion in the population of London. We also note that the proportion of Asians stopped and searched under the Terrorism Act fell in 2003-04. We do not believe that the Asian community is being unreasonably targeted by the police in their application of Section 44 of the Terrorism Act or of the other legislation enabling stops and searches. (Paragraph 152)

23. Nonetheless, we accept that there is a clear perception among all our Muslim witnesses that Muslims are being stigmatised by the operation of the Terrorism Act: this is extremely harmful to community relations. We recognise the efforts being made by police forces, notably by the Metropolitan Police Diversity Directorate, to engage with minority communities. But we believe that special efforts should be made by the police and Government to reassure Muslims that they are not being singled out unfairly. (Paragraph 153)

24. We have no doubt that this perception is fuelled by the high profile reporting of some police raids and arrests. Such coverage also helps to fuel more widespread fears of the Muslim community. It is particularly damaging when little coverage is given when suspects are subsequently released without trial. It seems clear that some of the most sensational coverage has sometimes been caused by unauthorised briefing from within the police service. It is essential that police forces take firm action against any officers or staff involved. (Paragraph 154)

25. We believe that there should be independent scrutiny, involving the Muslim community, of police intelligence and its use as a basis for stops and searches and arrests. We do not recommend adding religion to extensive information already required on stops and searches, but do believe that some additional research could be carried out into the impact of these police tactics on different religious groups. (Paragraph 155)

26. It may also be the case that stops and searches of Asians under legislation other than the Terrorism Act are nonetheless perceived by Muslims—but not by Hindus or Sikhs—as being related to terrorism. This possibility should be examined by the Home Office's Stop and Search Action Team. (Paragraph 156)

27. We believe that statistics on the length of time that individuals are held under the Terrorism Act before being released without charge should be collated centrally and

published as soon as possible, since they will be an important indicator of whether the counter-terrorism detention powers are being misused. They should also show whether the extension of the period of detention without charge to 14 days, permitted since early 2004, is being used. (Paragraph 158)

28.   We are concerned by the lack of detailed information about arrests under the Terrorism Act. To maintain public trust, it is vital that statistics about arrests, charges and convictions under the counter-terrorism legislation be as detailed and reliable as possible. In particular, cases involving domestic terrorism should be clearly distinguished from those arising from international terrorism. (Paragraph 161)

29.   Within the constraints of the *sub judice* rule and any reporting restrictions, the Government should also examine ways of publicising the number of current trials for terrorism-related offences. (Paragraph 162)

30.   There is no doubt that the authorities face a real challenge in acting against terrorist suspects from within particular communities, without been seen as targeting—or stigmatising—that community. We do not believe that the Government has yet found an answer to this question, as the reaction to the Minister's comments illustrates. More needs to be done to reach agreement both on tactics and strategy and the way in which these are to be described. (Paragraph 169)

Tackling international terrorism, building cohesive communities

31.   The Government has now made a commitment to new anti-terrorism legislation and a review of existing powers. It is essential, in our view, that British Muslims are engaged fully in this review from the earliest possible moment. We believe that this should be made an explicit responsibility of the reviewer of the Prevention of Terrorism Act. In parallel, the Home Office should initiate its own consultations. (Paragraph 174)

32.   However, it is not clear that there is a coherent strategy, developed with the Muslim community for tackling extremism, still less that these issues have been addressed with other communities. We can contrast this, perhaps, with the broad consensus that exists amongst the police, political parties and local and national government in tackling a terrorist organisation like the Provisional IRA or a racist organisation like the BNP. (Paragraph 175)

33.   If recruitment of prisoners to extremist groups is a problem in both France and the Netherlands, it is likely to be one here. The Government should examine the issue as a matter of priority. (Paragraph 176)

34.   We reject any suggestion that Muslims are in some way more likely to turn to terrorism than followers of other religions. It is clear from the evidence presented to us that there are some individuals who advocate violence against others in the name of a number of faiths. Faith leaders must condemn, without equivocation, those of their co-religionists who advocate violence. It is perhaps important to note that there is a distinction to be made between the expression of what might be seen in a western

European context as reactionary social views, but which falls within the bounds of free speech, and the advocacy of terrorism or other forms of violence. However, we are concerned that preachers from other countries, who have a reputation for extremist views, can during their visits to Britain harm community relations. (Paragraph 177)

35. It follows from what we say that the new terrorism legislation cannot and must not simply be a set of police and judicial powers. It must be part of an explicit broader anti-terrorism strategy. In the context of international terrorism, it must explicitly and specifically set out how British Muslim leaders will be supported in assisting British Muslims in resisting extremist views. (Paragraph 179)

36. It is clear that a number of issues need to be tackled. Among the first priorities are those organising and propagating extremist ideas sympathetic to terrorism. They must be identified and dealt with effectively—not only by the authorities, but most importantly by the Muslim community itself. (Paragraph 180)

37. The development of a deeper faith amongst young British Muslims should be entirely compatible with a secure and comfortable British identity (Paragraph 191)

38. It is important to stress that this is not a debate for Muslims alone, nor, indeed, for other minority communities. Part of the problem is the racism and rejection which is experienced from some parts of the majority community in which unjustified fear, suspicion and simple lack of understanding play a large part. An inclusive British identity for the 21st century can only be created by the full participation of all parts of society. (Paragraph 192)

39. Questions of identity may be inextricably linked with the reasons which may lead a small number of well-educated and apparently integrated young British people to turn to terrorism. No one should be forced to choose between being British and being Muslim and we do not believe the two are in any way incompatible. The relationship between rights and responsibilities and opportunities in this country cannot be separated from the concept of Britishness. These issues were raised by the Cantle Report in 2001. They have not lost their relevance today, and we endorse the Cantle Report's conclusion that a wider debate, in which young people must play a leading role, about a modern British identity should be developed. (Paragraph 193)

40. We welcome the Government's efforts so far to ensure that foreign ministers of religion have the language skills and knowledge of this country to make a contribution to communities here. The success of these efforts should be kept under review and, if necessary, ideas from other countries should be studied. (Paragraph 195)

The media

41. The Committee believes that the loose use of terms like "Islamic terrorism" should be discouraged and care taken to distinguish between the claims made by the terrorist groups and the faith of the vast majority of Muslims. (Paragraph 210)

42. Of course we reject the idea that British Muslims are not actively opposed to terrorism. It is clear that extreme views are challenged every day of every week within Muslim communities. Nonetheless, this work needs to be developed in the years to come and it is important that public policy supports those people who will shoulder the responsibility of doing so. (Paragraph 212)

43. It is also clear that some anti-Semitic attacks are being perpetrated by young Muslims. This is almost certainly quite a distinct phenomenon from international terrorism but must also be tackled: leadership from within Muslim communities will again be key, and those leaders must be supported in that work. (Paragraph 213)

44. We have sympathy with the view that everyone, and not just minority communities, should be more tolerant of comment they dislike. But the concerns about media coverage of terrorism and community relations expressed forcibly by a wide range of witnesses should not be ignored. (Paragraph 214)

45. We received overwhelming evidence that media coverage of international terrorism and community relations has a powerful and often negative impact. Whilst some criticism was directed at particular publications, it is also clear that television coverage has a significant impact. We found representatives of the media unaware or dismissive of their importance in this issue. We believe that the media must live up to their responsibilities to report fairly and accurately. In particular, to link terrorists, asylum seekers and Muslims, whether explicitly or implicitly, cannot be a useful contribution to debate. (Paragraph 215)

46. We are satisfied that there is no Government strategy to manipulate media coverage of terrorism, whether to foster a climate of fear or to divert attention from other issues. (Paragraph 218)

47. We are concerned that, although leaders of the Muslim community may have an accurate appreciation of the limits of the proposed legislation on incitement to religious hatred, this is not shared by their community as a whole. It is vitally important not to raise unrealisable expectations in minority communities, and rather than trusting to dialogue with leaders of faith groups, the Government should develop a strategy to ensure that the extent and limitations of the proposed offence are fully understood by all. We suspect that the extent of the legislation, and how often it is likely to be used, may also be misunderstood by some who oppose it. It is of course important to emphasise, as Ministers have tried to do, that such a change in the law should not be seen as a ban on criticism of any particular religion. The right to practice a religion, to criticise religious practices or to propagate non-religious belief is a basic right in a free society. (Paragraph 223)

Overall conclusions

48. The United Kingdom is well placed to deal with the issues covered by this report. Our acceptance of religious and ethnic communities is a strength, not a weakness. Issues of integration and diversity have been part of our political discourse for longer than in some other EU countries and we believe that this country is further down the road to accepting that Britons of all faiths and none and of all ethnic backgrounds

have a part to play in our society. But experience shows that to reach this goal will require active leadership at all levels: crossing our fingers and hoping for the best will not work. (Paragraph 224)

49. We saw greater confidence at local levels than nationally. The task now is to create an infrastructure for dialogue that will enable that confidence, and that experience of tackling difficult problems together, to make a difference on a national scale. The Government's proposals for action on community cohesion should be implemented with vigour. A forward looking programme should include measures to ensure that central policy is properly understood at local levels, as well as work to establish what may be the causes of a very small number of young Britons turning to violently extremist groups and measures to address them and a programme to engage schools and young people in discussion of these issues. In particular, the Government must engage British Muslims in its anti-terrorist strategy. (Paragraph 225)

Appendix: Official guidance on the Terrorism Act

PACE Code A provides the following guidance to the notion of reasonable suspicion:

"2.2: Reasonable grounds for suspicion depend on the circumstances in each case. There must be an objective basis for that suspicion based on facts, information, and/or intelligence which are relevant to the likelihood of finding an article of a certain kind or, in the case of searches under section 43 of the Terrorism Act 2000, to the likelihood that the person is a terrorist. Reasonable suspicion can never be supported on the basis of personal factors alone without reliable supporting intelligence or information or some specific behaviour by the person concerned. For example, a person's race, age, appearance, or the fact that the person is known to have a previous conviction, cannot be used alone or in combination with each other as the reason for searching that person. Reasonable suspicion cannot be based on generalisations or stereotypical images of certain groups or categories of people as more likely to be involved in criminal activity.

2.3: Reasonable suspicion can sometimes exist without specific information or intelligence and on the basis of some level of generalisation stemming from the behaviour of the person. For example, if an officer encounters someone on the street at night who is obviously trying to hide something, the officer may (depending on other surrounding circumstances) base such suspicion on the fact that this kind of behaviour is often linked to stolen or prohibited articles being carried. Similarly, for the purposes of section 43 of the Terrorism Act 2000, suspicion that a person is a terrorist may arise from the person's behaviour at or near a location which has been identified as a potential target for terrorists."

The Home Office provides the following guidance to stops and searches under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act:

"The authorisation should specify whether it applies across the entire force area, across a particular part of the force area, or only at a particular place (forces are asked to consider providing supporting intelligence on potential targets where the powers are restricted to a particular place). It must also specify the period for which the authorisation has effect, up to a maximum of 28 days. Each authorisation must be signed, dated and timed by the authorising officer. Where authorisation is given orally, the authorising officer must confirm it in writing as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

Section 45 is concerned with exercise of power. Searches under section 44, whether of vehicles or pedestrians, may be carried out only for the purpose of looking for articles of a kind which may be used in connection with terrorism. However, a search may be carried out whether or not a police officer has grounds for suspecting the presence of any such articles and he may seize and retain any items he discovers during the search which he reasonably suspects may be intended for use in connection with terrorism, A police officer may not ask anyone whom he stops and

searches to remove any clothing in public except the following: headgear, footwear, an outer coat, jacket or gloves.

An officer may detain a vehicle or pedestrian for as long as is considered reasonable to effect a search at or near the place where the initial stop takes place. Police are required to provide a written statement on application from the driver of a vehicle stopped under section 44(1) or from a pedestrian stopped under section 44(2). All requests must be made within 12 months from the date on which the vehicle or pedestrian was stopped.

Section 46 makes provision for the duration of authorisation. Any authorisation given under section 44 must end on the last date or at the time specified in the authorisation, and that time or date must fall within a period of 28 days beginning with the day on which the authorisation was given. An authorisation must also be confirmed by the Secretary of State within 48 hours of the time it was given or it will cease to have effect and render any further exercise of the powers under section 44 unlawful. The 'clock starts ticking' at the time at which the form is signed or from the moment the authorising officer gives oral authorisation. The Secretary of State may, when confirming the authorisation, stipulate a shorter period during which the authorisation is to have effect than that initially specified in the authorisation. The Secretary of State may also cancel the authorisation with effect from a time specified by him. The authorisation may be renewed in writing by the officer who gave it or by another officer of sufficient rank."[250]

250 Home Office circular 3/2001

Formal minutes

Members present:

Mr John Denham, in the Chair

Mr James Clappison	Mr John Taylor
Mr Gwyn Prosser	David Winnick
Bob Russell	

The Committee deliberated.

Draft Report (Terrorism and Community Relations), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Chairman's draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 225 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

A paper was ordered to be appended to the Report.

Resolved, That the Report be the Sixth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That the provisions of Standing Order No. 134 (select committee (reports)) be applied to the Report.

Ordered, That the Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee be reported to the House.

* * *

[Adjourned to a day and time to be fixed by the Chairman.

Witnesses (page numbers refer to Vol III)

List of written evidence

Written Evidence published in Volume II (HC 165–II)

Written Evidence published in Volume III (HC 165–III)

Reports from the Home Affairs Committee since 2001

The following reports have been produced by the Committee since the start of the 2001 Parliament. Government Responses to the Committee's reports are published as Special Reports from the Committee or as Command Papers by the Government. The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2004–05

First Report	Rehabilitation of Prisoners	HC 193 *(Cm 6486)*
Second Report	Work of the Committee in 2004	HC 280
Third Report	Home Office Target-Setting 2004	HC 320
Fourth Report	Police Reform	HC 370
Fifth Report	Anti-Social Behaviour	HC 80

Session 2003–04

First Report	Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Bill	HC 109 (*Cm 6132*)
Second Report	Asylum Applications	HC 218 (*Cm 6166*)
Third Report	The Work of the Home Affairs Committee in 2003	HC 345
Fourth Report	Identity Cards	HC 130 (*Cm 6359*)
Fifth Report	Draft Sentencing Guidelines 1 and 2	HC 1207 *(HC 371)*

Session 2002–03

First Report	Extradition Bill	HC 138 (*HC 475*)
Second Report	Criminal Justice Bill	HC 83 (*Cm 5787*)
Third Report	The Work of the Home Affairs Committee in 2002	HC 336
Fourth Report	Asylum Removals	HC 654 (*HC 1006*)
Fifth Report	Sexual Offences Bill	HC 639 (*Cm 5986*)

Session 2001–02

First Report	The Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Bill 2001	HC 351
Second Report	Police Reform Bill	HC 612 (*HC 1052*)
Third Report	The Government's Drugs Policy, Is it Working?	HC 318 (*Cm 5573*)
Fourth Report	The Conduct of Investigations into Past Cases of Abuse in Children's Homes	HC 836 (*Cm 5799*)