The West and the Muslim World:

A Conflict in Search of a Peace Process

UK Study

A short report

By

Dr. Colin Irwin

Institute of Governance
Queen's University Belfast

And

Institute of Irish Studies
University of Liverpool

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About the poll

This public opinion poll was undertaken to explore and better understand the underlying causes of increasingly poor relations between the West and the Muslim World and to find out what needs to be done to effectively deal with this problem. The first, in what will hopefully become a series of studies was carried out in the UK by Dr. Colin Irwin of Queen's University Belfast and the University of Liverpool, Muslim Voice UK (MVUK - Birmingham) and Global Market Insite, Inc. (GMI - Seattle and London). The questions were collected from all sections of British society, both Muslim and non-Muslim. This survey was conducted online within the United Kingdom between April13 and May 2, 2006 among a nationwide cross section of 1,360 adults (aged 18 and over). Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and religion were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. For more information regarding GMI online methodology, please contact Kenneth Pick at kpick@gmi-mr.com and for further information about the organisations conducting this survey please visit their web sites:

http://www.peacepolls.org
http://www.mvuk.co.uk
http://www.gmi-mr.com

Introduction

Nine surveys of public opinion were conducted in support of the Northern Ireland peace process between April 1996 and February 2003. Critically the questions for eight of these polls were drafted and agreed with the co-operation of party negotiators to enhance the peace process by increasing party inclusiveness, developing issues and language, testing party policies, helping to set deadlines and increase the overall transparency of negotiations through the publication of technical analysis and media reports. This approach to conflict analysis and public diplomacy has now been extended to the Balkans and Middle East. Necessarily these polls included exploring community relations and when it came to the design of these polls all manner of persons were involved in drafting the questions. Not just politicians but also civil servants, university lecturers, community leaders etc. The same approach has been taken here through a programme of in-depth interviews undertaken in the United Kingdom between January and April 2006.

These same research methods and techniques can also be used to explore the demographic profile of alienated Muslims, their extent, attitudes and values, the social and political problems associated with alienation and the remedies that can be put in place to mitigate such problems. It should be noted that following the events of '9/11' the British Home Office initiated a programme of public opinion research to explore some of these issues. However, this government sponsored research failed to meet the objectives identified in this research because many of the most important issues that needed to be addressed, from a British Muslim community perspective, were not dealt with. By actively engaging with the Muslim community in the UK and making them part of this research project this critical failing can be avoided and hopefully this project has taken some significant steps in this most essential direction.

In Northern Ireland it was possible to identify alienated groups simply by asking them which political party they supported. But alienated Muslims in the UK do not have a political party that represents their views in such a clear way. With this point in mind everyone who filled out the questionnaire was invited to comment on their views of the London Bombings in question 11.5. Specifically those Muslims who strongly agreed with the statement that 'Much of the violence that is labelled by the West as terrorism is simply the Muslims fighting back for legitimate causes' have been recognised as a special interest group in this poll and report, as it is only by dealing with their 'problems' and 'solutions' that the process of Muslim alienation can be adequately addressed.

But this poll is first and foremost a 'peace poll'. So the most important objective is not only to find 'solutions' to 'problems' identified by alienated Muslims or even the wider UK Muslim community. The primary objective here is to find 'solutions' to 'problems' that everyone can 'sign up' to. With this point in mind comparisons are made between the general UK public, the Muslim community, those in the Muslim community who strongly agreed with the statement in question 11.5 and finally the UK Jewish community as an additional point of reference. When all these communities can agree on the way ahead then government policy can follow. On the most important issues to be dealt within this poll such agreement exists.

Part 1 – The Problems

When the interviews for this poll were started it seemed quite natural to focus on 'problems' from, on the one hand, a distinctly domestic perspective and then, on the other hand, from an international perspective. But the problems put forward from the Muslim community did not neatly fit into these two apparently clear classifications. After several weeks of interviews the broad categories listed below emerged as the major issues to be dealt with:

1. Islamophobia and the 'clash of civilizations'
2. Discrimination and integration
3. The Muslim community
4. Relations between the West and Muslim states
5. Extremism and the 'War on Terror'

Islamophobia and the 'clash of civilisations' is distinctly both a domestic and international problem, while, for example, discrimination and integration is more domestic and relations between the West and Muslim states, is more international. The point to be made here is that this conflict has gone global. Northern Ireland and the 'Troubles' were, by comparison, a local conflict and the wars in Bosnia, Serbia and Kosovo engulfed the region known as the Balkans.

The international complexity of the conflict between the 'West and the Muslim World' makes it very difficult to solve as so many parties to the conflict are involved. Fortunately this clear and obvious point of difficulty is compensated for by the fact that there is a great deal of consensus about the solutions to this problem and how this conflict can be resolved, at least in the UK. Hopefully that consensus will be found to extend to other states so that an international consensus can be built around the essential elements of what must necessarily become a peace process.

1. Islamophobia and the 'clash of civilisations'

The Question

First, with regards to Islamophobia and the 'clash of civilizations' please indicate which possible problems you consider to be 'Very Significant', 'Significant', 'Of Some Significance', 'Of Little or No Significance' or 'Not Even True'.

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

From a list of twenty two items suggested as problems in relation to Islamophobia and the 'clash of civilizations', the top five items recorded as very significant for the UK as a whole and the Jewish and Muslim communities is given in the table below. For both the UK and Jewish community increased Islamophobia after the 9/11 and 7/7 London bombings is listed at number one and number two (40% and 37% very significant for the UK and 61% and 59% for UK Jews). These same items are 3rd and 5th on the Muslim list at 64% and 53% very significant preceded by the negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists first at 74% very significant and then Muslims collectively being blamed for acts 'done in their name' at 64%. Muslims and non-Muslims not knowing and understanding each other is 4th on the UK list at 34% very significant, 5th on the Jewish list at 43% and 7th on the Muslim list at 42%. Clearly there is a great deal of mutual understanding about the problems that have to be addressed here right across the full spectrum of British society and this is a very good foundation upon which to build a peace process.

	All UK per cent	Very Significant	Jewish per cent	Very Significant	Muslim per cent	Very Significant
1st	Increased Islamophobia after the 9/11 bombings	40 %	Increased Islamophobia after the 9/11 bombings	61 %	The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	74 %
2nd	Increased Islamophobia after the 7/7 London bombings	37 %	Increased Islamophobia after the 7/7 London bombings	59 %	Muslims collectively being blamed for acts 'done in their name'	70 %
3rd	Double standards in condoning free speech	35 %	The Muslim World views the West as the enemy	46 %	Increased Islamophobia after the 9/11 bombings	64 %
4th	Muslims and non-Muslims not knowing and understanding each other	34 %	Radical Muslims using the Danish cartoons to agitate Muslims	45 %	The West using the Danish cartoons of the Prophet to agitate Muslims	63 %
5th	Radical Muslims using the Danish cartoons to agitate Muslims	33 %	Muslims and non-Muslims not knowing and understanding each other	43 %	Increased Islamophobia after the 7/7 London bombings	53 %

But there are also some major points of disagreement or misunderstanding that will have to be addressed. For example 8th on the Muslim list is the suggestion that the West views the Muslim World as the enemy at 41% 'very significant' while 12% of the UK population and 9% of UK Jews do not even believe this to be true. The top five 'Not Even True' items, for each community polled, is listed below. Both the general UK population and Jewish community put the West using the Danish cartoons of the Prophet to agitate Muslims at the top of their lists at 13% and 29% not even true while 63% of Muslims believe this is a 'very significant' problem. It is 4th on their problems list. Similarly 51% of Muslims do not believe the growth of Islam is a threat to the peace and security of the world while only 11% of the wider UK community share this view. But this kind of mistrust or lack of understanding is something many of those polled can appreciate. For example although 16% of Muslims do not believe Sharia law is even a problem 41% of the general UK

population were honest enough to admit that they simply did not know. This, at least, is a starting point for dialogue.

	All UK per cent	Not Even True	Jewish per cent	Not Even True	Muslim per cent	Not Even True
1st	The West using the Danish cartoons of the Prophet to agitate Muslims	13 %	The West using the Danish cartoons of the Prophet to agitate Muslims	29 %	The growth of Islam being a threat to the peace and security of the world	51 %
2nd	The West views the Muslim World as the enemy	12 %	The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	19 %	The Muslim World views the West as the enemy	32 %
3rd	The growth of Islam being a threat to the peace and security of the world	11 %	Problems with Fundamentalist Judaism ignored by both Western and Jewish leaders	16 %	The growth of Islam being a threat to Western culture	26 %
4th	The growth of Islam being a threat to Western culture	10 %	The West views the Muslim World as the enemy	9 %	Sharia Law	16 %
5th	The 'clash of civilisations' being created to replace the war with Communism	9 %	Double standards in condoning free speech	9 %	Radical Muslims using the Danish cartoons to agitate Muslims	11 %

Alienated Muslims

So almost everyone can agree about the major problems as they relate to Islamophobia and the 'clash of civilisations' and when it comes to misrepresentations, or just plain 'not knowing', most people seem to have the capacity to understand that too. But what about that section of the UK Muslim community that strongly agreed with the statement that 'much of the violence that is labelled by the West as terrorism is simply the Muslims fighting back for legitimate causes.' Are their views on all these points radically different? In general the answer is no. For the most part the top items on their problems list are the same as for the rest of the Muslim community except that they tend to feel more strongly about all of these issues. Their number one item was the negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists at 86% very significant. The same item was first at 74% very significant for the wider Muslim community but down to 13th and 16th on the UK and Jewish lists at only 23% and 22% very significant. Similarly the suggestion that the West views the Muslim World as the enemy was up from 41% to 60% very significant for this section of the Muslim community and the West using the Danish cartoons of the Prophet to agitate Muslims was up from 63% very significant to 81%. Clearly these misrepresentations, or misunderstandings, or what some would classify as conspiracy theories, need to be addressed through perhaps, some sort of public inquiry or discourse that can transparently get at the truth of all these matters in a way that can generate maximum public confidence in the Muslim community.

Muslim per cent 11.5 Strongly Agree	Very Significant
1. The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	86 %
2. Muslims collectively being blamed for acts 'done in their name'	82 %
3. The West using the Danish cartoons of the Prophet to agitate Muslims	81 %
4. Increased Islamophobia after the 9/11 bombings	79 %
5. Double standards in condoning free speech	67 %

2. Discrimination and integration

The Question

Second, with regards to discrimination and integration in the UK please indicate which possible problems you consider to be 'Very Significant', 'Significant', 'Of Some Significance', 'Of Little or No Significance' or 'Not Even True'.

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

With regards to the domestic UK problems of discrimination and integration there seems to be a very real gulf in understanding between the UK population and Jewish community, on the one hand, and the Muslim community on the other. The top ten items for both the UK population and Jewish community are almost identical with Muslims not being proud to be British at the top of both of their problems lists at 30% and 35% very significant respectively followed by Muslims are excluding themselves from mainstream society at 23% and 25%. Failure of Muslims and non-Muslims to engage in meaningful discussions is 3rd on these lists but fortunately Muslims agree on this point with this item 5th on their list at 35% very significant. But the Muslim list is preceded by detaining Muslims without charge and trial under the Terrorism Act in Bellmarsh 1st on their list at 52% very significant followed by the failure of government to protect the human rights of Muslims at 43%, then Muslims not being accepted as entirely British at 40% and failure of non-Muslims to appreciate the contribution Muslims have made to civilization at 38% very significant.

	All UK per cent	Very Significant	Jewish per cent	Very Significant	Muslim per cent	Very Significant
1st	Muslims not being proud to be British	30 %	Muslims not being proud to be British	35 %	Detaining Muslims without charge and trial under the Terrorism Act in Bellmarsh	52 %
2nd	Muslims are excluding themselves from mainstream society	23 %	Muslims are excluding themselves from mainstream society	25 %	Failure of government to protect the human rights of Muslims	43 %
3rd	Failure of Muslims and non-Muslims to engage in meaningful discussions	19 %	Failure of Muslims and non-Muslims to engage in meaningful discussions	24 %	Muslims not being accepted as entirely British	40 %
4th	Islamic dress code	18 %	Islamic dress code	21 %	Failure of non-Muslims to appreciate the contribution Muslims have made to civilization	38 %
5th	Multiculturalism is preventing integration	14 %	Muslims not being accepted as entirely British	15 %	Failure of Muslims and non-Muslims to engage in meaningful discussions	35 %

These very different sets of perceived and real problems of the Muslim community and wider UK society with regards to integration and discrimination are reflected in their very different list of problems that they do not believe to be true. At the top of this UK list is discrimination against Muslims by the health service at 42% not even true. On this particular point 23% of Muslims agree. Then comes discrimination against Muslims by employers with 30% of the UK population saying this was not even true. This time only 11% of Muslims agree and then with regards to discrimination by the police 29% of the UK population do not think this is true while only 8% of Muslims agree. But a significant 31% of Muslims also do not think that it is even true that they are not proud to be British while both the UK population and Jewish community put this problem at the top of their respective problem lists.

Fortunately, and perhaps this is slightly 'grasping at straws' everyone shares the view that they do not engage in meaningful discussions. These discussions clearly need to start as a matter of some urgency.

	All UK per cent	Not Even True	Jewish per cent	Not Even True	Muslim per cent	Not Even True
1st	Discrimination against Muslims by the Health Service	42 %	Discrimination against Muslims by the Health Service	50 %	Muslims not being proud to be British	31 %
2nd	Discrimination against Muslims by the police	30 %	Failure of government to protect the human rights of Muslims	40 %	Muslims are excluding themselves from mainstream society	28 %
3rd	Discrimination against Muslims by employers	29 %	Discrimination against Muslims by employers	36 %	Low school achievement of Muslim pupils due to lack of parental involvement	26 %
4th	Failure of government to protect the human rights of Muslims	28 %	Low school achievement of Muslim pupils due to lack of parental involvement	28 %	Discrimination against Muslims by the Health Service	23 %
5th	Lack of integration in schools	21 %	Discrimination against Muslims by the police	27 %	Multiculturalism is preventing integration	22 %

Alienated Muslims

Again the views of that group of Muslims being clustered together here as 'alienated' are not very different to the views of the wider Muslim community. They just feel more strongly about all the problems they have been asked to give their opinions on. 74% place the failure of government to protect the human rights of Muslims and detaining Muslims without charge and trial under the Terrorism Act in Bellmarsh at the top of their problems list (43% and 52% for Muslims in general). This is followed by, Muslims not being accepted as entirely British, at 61% very significant and at 4th on their list is too narrow a definition of 'Britishness' at 54% very significant. Some Muslims I had an opportunity to discuss this problem with told me they were sometimes accused of not being British simply because they are Muslim. This problem is perhaps more serious than it may at first appear to be and needs to be addressed.

Muslim per cent 11.5 Strongly Agree	Very Significant
1. Failure of government to protect the human rights of Muslims	74 %
2. Detaining Muslims without charge and trial under the Terrorism Act in Bellmarsh	74 %
3. Muslims not being accepted as entirely British	61 %
4. Failure of non-Muslims to appreciate the contribution Muslims have made to civilization	58 %
5. Too narrow a definition of 'Britishness'	54 %

There are also some significant differences of opinion across all groups on some of the issues raised in this question. 13% of the UK population, 12% of Jews and 18% of Muslims believe the lack of integration in school is a very significant problem while 21% of the UK population, 22% of Jews and 10% of Muslims do not think this is even true. As with several other items on this list of mostly domestic issues perhaps the experience of people is significantly different in different parts of the country. If this is true then policies need to be put in place to make sure everyone has the best possible opportunity to experience the best possible social outcome.

3. The Muslim community

The Question

Third, with regards to the Muslim community please indicate which possible problems you consider to be 'Very Significant', 'Significant', 'Of Some Significance', 'Of Little or No Significance' or 'Not Even True'

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

Fortunately the lack of understanding across the communities on matters of integration and discrimination is largely reversed when it comes to problems relating to the Muslim community itself. Here there is complete agreement on the most critical issues. At the very top of the UK, Jewish and Muslim lists of problems comes misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence at 46%, 62% and 47% very significant respectively. This is followed by Islam is being defined by extremists at 39%, 56% and 47% very significant for the UK, Jewish and Muslim communities.

	All UK per cent	Very Significant	Jewish per cent	Very Significant	Muslim per cent	Very Significant
1st	Misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence	46 %	Misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence	62 %	Misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence	47 %
2nd	Islam is being defined by the extremists	39 %	Islam is being defined by the extremists	56 %	Islam is being defined by the extremists	46 %
3rd	Discrimination against women in the Islamic faith	32 %	Alienation and radicalization of young Muslims in the UK	46 %	Imams from overseas not understanding the social and cultural problems of young British Muslims	30 %
4th	Discrimination against women in Muslim culture and society	32 %	Imams from overseas not understanding the social and cultural problems of young British Muslims	41 %	Alienation and radicalization of young Muslims in the UK	30 %
5th	Imams from overseas not understanding the social and cultural problems of young British Muslims	31 %	Lack of self criticism by Muslims	36 %	Conflict and lack of unity between different Muslim sects and nationalities	29 %

In general the UK population and Jewish community do not consider many of the points raised in this question not to be true. More generally they do express their lack of knowledge on some of these points. For example 28% of the UK population say they do not know if the Koran being taught in Arabic without its meaning in UK mosques is a problem. However, the answers given to these questions in the Muslim community often illustrate real divisions of opinion on a number of the issues raised here. For example 19% of Muslims considered it to be a very serious problem that the Koran is taught in Arabic without its' meaning in UK mosques while 29% did not think this was even true. Similarly 18% of Muslims thought discrimination against women in Muslim culture and society was a very significant problem while 32% thought this was not even true.

	All UK per cent	Not Even True	Jewish per cent	Not Even True	Muslim per cent	Not Even True
1st	Lack of self criticism by Muslims	6 %	Drug taking and dealing in UK Muslim communities	6 %	Discrimination against women in the Islamic faith	45 %
2nd	Discrimination against homosexuals	6 %	Alienation and radicalization of young Muslims in the UK	5 %	Discrimination against women in Muslim culture and society	32 %
3rd	Failure to reform Islam	5 %	Failure to reform Islam	4 %	Failure to reform Islam	30 %
4th	Failure to educate young Muslims to be active representatives of their community in the UK	5 %	Failure to educate young Muslims to be active representatives of their community in the UK	4 %	The Koran is taught in Arabic without its meaning in UK mosques	29 %
5th	Discrimination against women in the Islamic faith	5 %	Discrimination against women in the Islamic faith	4 %	Discrimination against homosexuals	16 %

Alienated Muslims

Again there is no significant difference of opinion between the wider UK Muslim community and that group of Muslims identified as 'alienated' here. They place Islam is being defined by the extremists at the top of their problems list at 53% very significant followed by misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence, 2nd, conflict and lack of unity between different Muslim sects and nationalities, 3rd, alienation and radicalization of young Muslims in the UK, 4th and Imams from overseas not understanding the social and cultural problems of young British Muslims 5th in the top five list of problems.

Muslim per cent 11.5 Strongly Agree	Very Significant
1. Islam is being defined by the extremists	53 %
2. Misrepresentation of Islam by minority Muslim groups to justify violence	49 %
3. Conflict and lack of unity between different Muslim sects and nationalities	44 %
4. Alienation and radicalization of young Muslims in the UK	42 %
5. Imams from overseas not understanding the social and cultural problems of young British Muslims	37 %

This consensus about the nature and significance of the most important problems listed in this question is a very necessary first step to finding an agreed solution. However, the answers given do not only suggest that there is an urgent need for a meaningful discussion on many issues of mutual concern between Muslims and non-Muslims in UK society but that divisions within the Muslim community also need to be addressed on many issues of particular concern to them.

4. Relations between the West and Muslim states

The Question

Fourth, with regards to relations between the West and Muslim states please indicate which possible problems you consider to be 'Very Significant', 'Significant', 'Of Some Significance', 'Of Little or No Significance' or 'Not Even True'

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

Out of a list of 24 items that deal with relations between the West and Muslim states it will come as no surprise that the top item in the problem list for the UK Jewish community is suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians at 82% very significant. This item is also at the top of the general UK list at 50% very significant but it is followed by Israeli military actions that kill Palestinian civilians at 47%. This item is 6th on the Muslim communities list at 57% very significant. The top item for them Is the invasion of Iraq at 70% very significant followed by the Western desire to control Middle East oil at 67% and US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world at 66%. The Invasion of Iraq is 3rd on the UK list at 38% very significant and 6th on the Jewish list at 34% while the Western desire to control Middle East oil is 4th on the UK list at 33% and 8th on the Jewish list at 25% very significant. Although Jewish and Muslim priorities are, as would be expected, a little different, all sections of UK society do recognise the same set of international problems as problems that must be addressed.

	All UK per cent	Very Significant	Jewish per cent	Very Significant	Muslim per cent	Very Significant
1st	Suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians	50 %	Suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians	82 %	The invasion of Iraq	70 %
2nd	Israeli military actions that kill Palestinian civilians	47 %	Muslim states that do not recognise the state of Israel	62 %	Western desire to control Middle East oil	67 %
3rd	The invasion of Iraq	38 %	Lack of democracy in Muslim countries	45 %	US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world	66 %
4th	Western desire to control Middle East oil	33 %	Muslim states failing to have good relations with non-Muslim states	42 %	The invasion of Afghanistan	64 %
5th	US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world	33 %	Israeli military actions that kill Palestinian civilians	41 %	Protests against the war in Iraq were ignored by the British government	60 %

There are however also some differences of opinion on some of these issues in the general UK, Jewish and Muslim communities. For example 25% and 8% of the Jewish and wider UK community do not think it is even true that the only nuclear power in the Middle East is Israel (perhaps there has been some confusion here between nuclear power and nuclear weapons power?). Also 22%, 21% and 20% of the Jewish community do not think it is even true that the UK, US and EU lack commitment to create an independent Palestinian state while 17%, 19% and 18% of the Jewish community also believe that this is a very significant problem. In the Muslim community 20% thought a lack of democracy in Muslim countries was a significant problem while 12% did not think this was even true. 13% also thought it was not even true that Muslim states that do not recognise the state of Israel was a problem while 21% considered this problem to be very significant. Perhaps, in these

matters, it is largely a question of which Muslim states are being referred to and these particular questions need to be more carefully refined in future polls.

	All UK per cent	Not Even True	Jewish per cent	Not Even True	Muslim per cent	Not Even True
1st	The only nuclear power in the Middle East is Israel	8 %	The only nuclear power in the Middle East is Israel	25 %	Muslim states failing to have good relations with non-Muslim states	16 %
2nd	Protests against the war in Iraq were ignored by the British government	6 %	Lack of commitment by UK to create independent Palestinian state	22 %	Muslim states that do not recognise the state of Israel	13 %
3rd	US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world	6 %	Lack of commitment by US to create independent Palestinian state	21 %	Lack of democracy in Muslim countries	12 %
4th	Western threats to Muslim states being felt as a threat to all Muslims	6 %	Lack of commitment by EU to create independent Palestinian state	20 %	The only nuclear power in the Middle East is Israel	6 %
5th	Iran and other Middle Eastern Muslim states not being permitted to have nuclear weapons	5 %	Israel failing to have good relations with Muslim states	19 %	Suicide bombings that kill Israeli civilians	5 %

Alienated Muslims

As has been the case with other questions asked in this poll 'alienated Muslims' identify the same set of problems as the wider UK Muslim community as very significant but feel more strongly about them. This group place the Western desire to control Middle east oil at the top of their list at 84% very significant followed by the US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world at 84% and the invasion of Iraq at 82% and then 4th Western threats to Muslim states being felt as a threat to all Muslims at 81% very significant. Although the wider UK population clearly understand this point, 25% of them agree that this problem is very significant, they do not perhaps understand the full intensity of Muslim feeling when other Muslims are, or appear to be, threatened.

Muslim per cent 11.5 Strongly Agree	Very Significant
1. Western desire to control Middle East oil	84 %
2. US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world	84 %
3. The invasion of Iraq	82 %
4. Western threats to Muslim states being felt as a threat to all Muslims	81 %
5. The invasion of Afghanistan	79 %

There is perhaps no significant statistical difference between the views of the UK public that killing Israeli civilians (50%) or Palestinian civilians (47%) is a very significant problem. Clearly if either Israel or Palestine want to carry significant influence with the British public in all matters of concern to them then stopping the killing of civilians would go a very long way in this regard.

5. Extremism and the 'War on Terror'

The question

Fifth, with regards to extremism and the 'War on Terror' please indicate which possible problems you consider to be 'Very Significant', 'Significant', 'Of Some Significance', 'Of Little or No Significance' or 'Not Even True'

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

Although the intensity of feelings about issues relating to extremism and the 'war on terror' are different across the different communities polled there is a considerable amount of general agreement about what the problems are. For example, first on the UK list is religion being deliberately manipulated for political and economic gain at 43% very significant. From a list of 20 this same item is 3rd on the Jewish list at 49% very significant and 4th on the Muslim list at 63% very significant. At the top of the Jewish list is a lack of condemnation of extremist groups and terrorists by Muslim leaders in the UK at 60% very significant. The same item is 2nd on the UK list at 39% very significant and 14th on the Muslim list but also at 39% very significant. Only 10% of UK Muslims do not believe this is even true. Muslim terrorists being identified by their religion is at the top of the Muslim list at 65% very significant. This item is 4th on both the UK and Jewish lists at 31% and 36% respectively. Similarly the rise of political extremists and human rights abuses at Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib etc. etc. are all seen as problems that need to be dealt with by all groups to varying degrees. As is often the case with this kind of research the people seem to be ahead of many of their elected politicians in their understanding of the issues that must be addressed.

	All UK per cent	Very Significant	Jewish per cent	Very Significant	Muslim per cent	Very Significant
1st	Religion being deliberately manipulated for political and economic gain	43 %	Lack of condemnation of extremist groups and terrorists by Muslim leaders in the UK	60 %	Muslim terrorists being identified by their religion	65 %
2nd	Lack of condemnation of extremist groups and terrorists by Muslim leaders in the UK	39 %	The rise of extremist political groups in Muslim states	55 %	The prison camp in Guantanamo Bay	63 %
3rd	The rise of extremist political groups in Muslim states	33 %	Religion being deliberately manipulated for political and economic gain	49 %	Abuses at Abu Ghraib Prison	63 %
4th	Muslim terrorists being identified by their religion	31 %	Muslim terrorists being identified by their religion	36 %	Religion being deliberately manipulated for political and economic gain	63 %
5th	Abuses at Abu Ghraib Prison	29 %	The mistrust of the British police by Muslims	36 %	Powerful states deliberately misrepresenting terrorism, state terrorism and wars of liberation	62 %

There are some significant differences, however, between the Muslim and other communities when it comes to problems often characterised, rightly or wrongly, as 'conspiracy theories'. Although 23% of the UK population believe the war on terror is a war on Islam 30% believe this is not even true while only 10% of Muslims share this view. Similarly 23% of the UK population do not believe the war on terror has been created to replace the war with Communism while only 5% of Muslims would agree. But views are clearly more divided on the idea that the war on terror is a war to control the world's oil. 23% of the UK population believe this is a very significant

problem (17% not even true) while 22% of the Jewish community think this is a very significant problem and 22% of them think it is not even true. Needless to say the Muslim community have few doubts on this point at 58% very significant and only 3% not even true. The point to be made here is that the credibility of Western intentions in the Middle East is not limited to the Muslim community alone.

	All UK per cent	Not Even True	Jewish per cent	Not Even True	Muslim per cent	Not Even True
1st	The war on terror is a war on Islam	30 %	The war on terror is a war on Islam	39 %	The war on terror is a war on Islam	11 %
2nd	The war on terror being created to replace the war with Communism	23 %	The war on terror being created to replace the war with Communism	37 %	Lack of condemnation of extremist groups and terrorists by Muslim leaders in the UK	10 %
3rd	The war on terror is a war to control the world's oil	17 %	The war on terror is a war to control the world's oil	26 %	The mistrust of the British police by Muslims	5 %
4th	The failure of the international community to protect the human rights of Muslims	13 %	The failure of the international community to protect the human rights of Muslims	25 %	The war on terror being created to replace the war with Communism	5 %
5th	Failure by the British government to acknowledge their Security and Foreign Policy is alienating and radicalising young Muslims	9 %	Absence of a public enquiry into the London Bombings is fuelling conspiracy theories	14 %	Muslim terrorists being identified by their religion	4 %

Alienated Muslims

Human rights issues top the list of problems for 'alienated Muslims' at 79% very significant for the failure of the international community to protect the human rights of Muslims followed by the prison camp in Guantanamo Bay, abuses at Abu Ghraib Prison and then the use of evidence gained through torture all at 75% very significant. Clearly, as a matter of some urgency, the international community must cooperate to bring an end to these violations.

Muslim per cent 11.5 Strongly Agree	Very Significant
1. The failure of the international community to protect the human rights of Muslims	79 %
2. The prison camp in Guantanamo Bay	75 %
3. Abuses at Abu Ghraib Prison	75 %
4. The use of evidence gained through torture	75 %
5. Powerful states deliberately misrepresenting terrorism, state terrorism and wars of liberation	75 %

The 'Top Ten' problems for 'alienated Muslims'

However, when all the problems reviewed in the first part of this poll are put together the failure of the international community to protect the human rights of Muslims only comes in at number eight. At the top of this list is the negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists at 86% very significant followed by a Western desire to control Middle East oil and US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world both at 84% and then the invasion of Iraq and Muslims collectively being blamed for acts 'done in their name' both at 82% very significant. There is much for the international community, British Government and Muslim community to do in all of this, but, perhaps surprisingly, there appears to also be much for the media to do by way of their contribution to a peace process.

Muslim per cent 11.5 Strongly Agree	Very Significant
1. The negative portrayal of Islam in the media by irresponsible journalists	86 %
2. Western desire to control Middle East oil	84 %
3. US foreign policy being a threat to peace and security of the world	84 %
4. The invasion of Iraq	82 %
5. Muslims collectively being blamed for acts 'done in their name'	82 %
6. The West using the Danish cartoons of the Prophet to agitate Muslims	81 %
7. Western threats to Muslim states being felt as a threat to all Muslims	81 %
8. The failure of the international community to protect the human rights of Muslims	79 %
9. Increased Islamophobia after the 9/11 bombings	79 %
10. The invasion of Afghanistan	79 %

The British press are to be congratulated on not publishing the Danish cartoons. Their publication led to many deaths around the world. But the British press could do very much better and in this regard there is much that they could learn from their colleagues in Northern Ireland. Editors there have long been aware that careless reporting can, at best, make a bad situation worse, and, as with the Danish cartoons lead to deaths. It is important that while objectively reporting events journalists must realise they are in a position to add to a peace process through their reporting or fan the flames of hatred and violence. The latter, regrettably, has commercial benefits. To be more specific it is well worth noting that the *Belfast Telegraph* published 9 'peace polls', like this one, as part of the Northern Ireland peace process. Critically all these polls asked both communities for their views on all the issues raised and dealt with not just attitudes and values but problems and solutions that could be translated into constructive policy. Most of the polls published since 9/11 and 7/7 have failed to do this. Hopefully this poll sets a higher standard that all British newspapers will now follow.

Part 2 – The Solutions

6. Islamophobia and the 'clash of civilisations'

The Question

With regards to what could be done to deal with the problem of Islamophobia and to improve understanding between Western and Islamic civilization please indicate which possible solutions you consider to be 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable'.

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

For both the UK population as a whole and the UK Muslim community the top priority is that the civilizations of the West and Muslim World should appreciate each others differences and learn from them at 52% essential and 71% essential respectively. This item is joint first on the Jewish list at 47% essential along with effective laws to prevent incitement to hatred for all religious groups, which is second on the UK and Muslim lists at 46% and 66% essential respectively. This is followed by balance freedom of speech with responsibility and judgement 3rd on the UK list at 38% essential, 4th on the Jewish list at 33% essential and 3rd again on the Muslim list at 59% essential and so on.

	All UK per cent	Essential	Jewish per cent	Essential	Muslim per cent	Essential
1st	The civilizations of the West and Muslim World should appreciate each others differences and learn from them	52 %	Effective laws to prevent incitement to hatred for all religious groups	47 %	The civilizations of the West and Muslim World should appreciate each others differences and learn from them	71 %
2nd	Effective laws to prevent incitement to hatred for all religious groups	46 %	The civilizations of the West and Muslim World should appreciate each others differences and learn from them	47 %	Effective laws to prevent incitement to hatred for all religious groups	66 %
3rd	Balance freedom of speech with responsibility and judgement	38 %	Open up dialogue with all groups including those with radically different views	33 %	Balance freedom of speech with responsibility and judgement	59 %
4th	Open up dialogue with all groups including those with radically different views	30 %	Balance freedom of speech with responsibility and judgement	33 %	Statutory body to monitor and report on Islamophobia in the UK media	55 %
5th	The Muslim community should pro-actively engage in British politics	20 %	The Muslim community should pro-actively engage in British politics	21 %	The Muslim community should pro-actively engage in British politics	52 %

The critical question to be asked here is not so much what policies can the different communities in British society agree on, because there is little difficulty about this. But rather where are there some points of resistance to any of the proposed policies that might potentially make their introduction difficult for government. The table below lists all the proposed policies in order of UK preference with levels of 'unacceptable' next to them for the UK as a whole, the Jewish community and the Muslim community.

UK policy priorities		UK Essential	UK Unacceptable	Jewish Unacceptable	Muslim Unacceptable
1.	The civilizations of the West and Muslim World should appreciate each others differences and learn from them	52 %	2 %	1%	0%
2.	Effective laws to prevent incitement to hatred for all religious groups	46 %	5 %	5%	1%
3.	Balance freedom of speech with responsibility and judgement	38 %	4 %	5%	0%
4.	Open up dialogue with all groups including those with radically different views	30 %	5 %	8%	0%
5.	The Muslim community should pro-actively engage in British politics	20 %	6 %	5%	1%
6.	Teach the Muslim contribution to civilisation in schools (maths, science, etc.)	15 %	7 %	8%	0%
7.	Bring regulations for UK print journalism in line with stricter TV and radio standards	15 %	15 %	25%	4%
8.	Statutory body to monitor and report on Islamophobia in the UK media	14 %	15 %	16%	3%
9.	Anti-Islamophobia campaign in the UK	13 %	17 %	17%	9%
10.	International exchange programme for scholars from centres of Islamic learning	9 %	8 %	11%	1%
11.	Extend student exchange programmes to the Muslim World	8 %	9 %	12%	0%
12.	Employ more Muslims in the UK media	8 %	11 %	17%	0%
13.	Scholarships for Muslims entering the UK media	4 %	20 %	29%	2%

It should be pointed out that levels of 'unacceptable' would often go above 50% in Northern Ireland and in these circumstances such items in one community would have to be 'horse traded' with different items in the other community. These kinds of difficulties do not arise here, so, thankfully, the British UK/Muslim society does not have to be classified as 'deeply divided' at this time. The opportunities for peace making, with a little generosity of spirit, are wide open. However, while bearing this point in mind it should be pointed out that 15% of the UK population and 25% of the Jewish community find it unacceptable to bring regulations for UK print journalism in line with stricter TV and radio standards. There are also similar reservations with regards to the introduction of scholarships for Muslims entering the UK media. It would seem to be the case that almost everyone wants the media to be more responsible than they have been but are concerned about interfering with the freedoms of the media in any pro-active way. Clearly the media need to be seen to regulate themselves with greater firmness and rigour.

7. Discrimination and integration

The Question

With regards to what could be done to improve relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in the UK please indicate which of the following possible solutions you consider to be 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable'.

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

With regard to discrimination and integration there is complete agreement across UK society about what needs to be done. First on this list of policy options is the proposal that all religions should be treated the same under British law at 50% essential for the UK as a whole, 65% essential for the Jewish community and 71% essential for Muslims. This is followed by an anti-discrimination campaign at 32%, 43% and 59% essential for the UK, Jews and Muslims respectively. Third on the Muslim list is legislation to protect Muslims against discrimination in housing, education and public services at 55% essential. But if all religions are treated the same under British law then this problem should be solved.

	All UK per cent	Essential	Jewish per cent	Essential	Muslim per cent	Essential
1st	All religions should be treated the same under British law	50 %	All religions should be treated the same under British law	65 %	All religions should be treated the same under British law	71 %
2nd	Anti-discrimination campaign	32 %	Anti-discrimination campaign	43 %	Anti-discrimination campaign	59 %
3rd	Create integrated schools for children living in Muslim and non-Muslim areas	30 %	Provide government support for inter-faith school activities	33 %	Legislation to protect Muslims against discrimination in housing, education and public services	55 %
4th	Define 'Britishness' more inclusively	28 %	Do business with people from the 'other' community	33 %	Promote Muslim role models representing success amongst the young	54 %
5th	Provide government support for inter-faith school activities	27 %	More police from ethnic minorities	32 %	Introduce best practice for community and human rights policing	53 %

Wider UK society want Muslims to be part of the mainstream. Third on their list is create integrated schools for children living in Muslim and non-Muslim areas at 30% essential followed by define 'Britishness' more inclusively 4th at 28% essential. The Jewish community have do business with people from the other community 3rd on their list at 33% essential followed by more police from ethnic minorities at 32% essential. There is general agreement on all these points so where, again, might the government meet some resistance with the introduction of such policies. What, if anything, is unacceptable and for whome? As has already been noted in the 'problems' questions there seems to be a basic misunderstanding about British identity and the Muslim community. With regards to the suggestion that there should be a day to celebrate 'Britishness' 11% of the general UK sample find this unacceptable, 15% of the Jewish community share this view but only 9% of Muslims are similarly concerned. Muslims, it would seem, want to be 'more British than the British'.

UK policy priorities	UK Essential	UK Unacceptable	Jewish Unacceptable	Muslim Unacceptable
1. All religions should be treated the same under British law	50 %	5 %	1%	1%
2. Anti-discrimination campaign	32 %	4 %	3%	0%
3. Create integrated schools for children living in Muslim and non-Muslim areas	30 %	7 %	7%	3%
4. Define 'Britishness' more inclusively	28 %	7 %	11%	5%
5. Provide government support for inter-faith school activities	27 %	7 %	7%	1%
6. Have a day to celebrate 'Britishness'	27 %	11 %	15%	9%
7. Do business with people from the 'other' community	26 %	2 %	2%	0%
8. More police from ethnic minorities	23 %	5 %	7%	0%
9. Introduce best practice for community and human rights policing	23 %	2 %	5%	0%
10. Introduce restrictions on wearing the face veil (Niqab) in schools, universities and work place	19 %	24 %	39%	51%
11. Legislation to protect Muslims against discrimination in housing, education and public services	17 %	16 %	19%	1%
12. Policies to promote 'social inclusion' of Muslims in mainstream society	16 %	5 %	4%	2%
13. Cultural and religious sensitivity training for service providers	16 %	6 %	7%	1%
14. Introduce restrictions on wearing the head scarf (Hijab) in schools, universities and work place	16 %	29 %	52%	67%
15. End government support for Muslim faith schools only	16 %	36 %	57%	63%
16. Provide government support for faith schools of all religious groups including Muslims	15 %	18 %	17%	5%
17. Provide religious education in state schools in accordance with parents wishes	15 %	12 %	19%	5%
18. Promote Muslim role models representing success amongst the young	15 %	7 %	9%	0%
19. Non-denominational prayer facilities for all faith groups in schools, universities and work place	14 %	10 %	12%	7%
20. End government support for faith schools of all religious groups	13 %	28 %	48%	47%
21. Apprenticeship fund for Muslim school leavers/unemployed	5 %	25 %	28%	3%

However, there are strong differences of opinion on issues relating to faith schools and traditional Muslim dress. While a significant percent of UK society believe government should end support for faith schools of all religious groups at 13% essential and another 13% desirable, 28% find this suggestion unacceptable. But, 48% of the Jewish community and 47% of the Muslim community also find such a policy unacceptable. Similarly significant percentages of UK society (29%), the Jewish community (52%) and Muslim community (67%) find restrictions on wearing the head scarf (Hijab) unacceptable while small but significant percentages in all these communities consider such restrictions essential or desirable. These minor points aside the list of policy options reviewed here provide government with numerous opportunities to deal with problems of integration and discrimination in both the Muslim and all other faith communities under the guiding principle of equality of treatment.

8. The Muslim community

The Question

And with regards to what could be done by the Muslim community to improve relations please indicate which possible solutions you consider to be 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable'.

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

Although the Muslim community policy question is dominated by actions that can only be initiated by the Muslim community it should be noted that the only policy, out of a list of 20 items, that the Muslim community have strong reservations about is the reform of Islam at 43% unacceptable (13% essential, 13% desirable, 9% acceptable and 6% tolerable). There is also some resistance to the idea of women only colleges at universities in the UK at 16% unacceptable. On all other points of action there is a strong positive consensus starting with teach the meaning of the Koran in English in the UK at 63% essential followed by protest and explain insults peacefully without doing harm to the social order at 59% essential. This item is 2nd on the UK list at 36% essential and 4th on the Jewish list at 41% essential.

	All UK per cent	Essential	Jewish per cent	Essential	Muslim per cent	Essential
1st	Muslims should not condemn difference but accept it with courtesy	43 %	Muslims should not condemn difference but accept it with courtesy	55 %	Teach the meaning of the Koran in English in the UK	63 %
2nd	Protest and explain insults peacefully without doing harm to the social order	36 %	Education for Muslims on difference between religious and cultural beliefs	43 %	Protest and explain insults peacefully without doing harm to the social order	61 %
3rd	Engage politically, socially and economically with the British mainstream community	35 %	Engage politically, socially and economically with the British mainstream community	42 %	Muslim parents should engage with children and schools to improve standards	59 %
4th	Education for Muslims on difference between religious and cultural beliefs	32 %	Protest and explain insults peacefully without doing harm to the social order	41 %	Establish a Muslim Commission to examine all of the problems reviewed in this poll	52 %
5th	Muslim parents should engage with children and schools to improve standards	32 %	Muslims should support, protect and defend human rights activists	38 %	Teach Arabic as a language so that students can understand the Koran in UK mosques	51 %

Significantly the suggestion that Muslims should not condemn difference but accept it with courtesy is 1st on both the UK and Jewish lists at 43% and 55% essential. 43% of the Muslim community also consider this proposal to be essential (23% desirable, 16% acceptable, 5% tolerable and 4% unacceptable). Everyone also shares a common understanding with regards to providing young Muslims with a good education. Muslim parents should engage with children and schools to improve standards is 5th on the UK and Jewish lists at 32% and 38% essential and 3rd on the Muslim list at 59% essential. No one wants the Muslim community to fail.

UK policy priorities		UK Essential	UK Unacceptable	Jewish Unacceptable	Muslim Unacceptable
1.	Muslims should not condemn difference but accept it with courtesy	43 %	2 %	1%	4%
2.	Protest and explain insults peacefully without doing harm to the social order	36 %	2 %	5%	1%
3.	Engage politically, socially and economically with the British mainstream community	35 %	2 %	3%	0%
4.	Education for Muslims on difference between religious and cultural beliefs	32 %	3 %	4%	2%
5.	Muslim parents should engage with children and schools to improve standards	32 %	3 %	2%	0%
6.	Muslims should support, protect and defend human rights activists	26 %	6 %	5%	0%
7.	Wealthy Muslim states should donate more to charitable causes around the world	25 %	3 %	4%	0%
8.	Establish a Muslim Commission to examine all of the problems reviewed in this poll	24 %	6 %	5%	0%
9.	Teach the meaning of the Koran in English in the UK	19 %	9 %	12%	0%
10.	A conference of Muslim scholars to establish a common Islamic position on Sharia law, freedom of speech, blasphemy, etc.	18 %	6 %	7%	1%
11.	Reform Islam	18 %	11 %	15%	43%
12.	Involve young Muslims and women in the running of UK mosques	17 %	4 %	5%	5%
13.	Interfaith conferences for Imams	14 %	5 %	7%	1%
14.	Comparative religion studies for Imams	14 %	6 %	6%	2%
15.	More Muslim youth workers in the UK	13 %	7 %	8%	0%
16.	British born Imams trained in the UK	11 %	5 %	8%	3%
17.	Teach Arabic as a language so that students can understand the Koran in UK mosques	10 %	14 %	13%	1%
18.	Offer a GCSE in Arabic and Islamic studies at UK schools	8 %	14 %	17%	1%
19.	Allow Muslim communities to use Sharia family law when it does not conflict with UK and international law	7 %	25 %	24%	4%
20.	Women only colleges at universities in the UK	2 %	47 %	58%	16%

There are, however, a few points of resistance in the wider UK society for some of the Muslim community policy suggestions listed here. 47% of UK society and 58% of the Jewish community are opposed to women only colleges at universities in the UK as unacceptable, but, as previously noted 16% of Muslims share this view. Also 25% of the UK and 24% of Jews are opposed to allowing Muslim communities to use Sharia family law when it does not conflict with UK and international law. There is also some resistance to offering a GCSE in Arabic and Islamic studies at UK schools at 14% unacceptable for the UK as a whole and 17% for the Jewish community. All of this seems to underline a strong consensus in British society that all faith groups should be treated the same and have the same opportunities but that special treatment, of one kind or another, can be problematic.

9. Relations between the West and Muslim states

The Question

And with regards to what could be done to improve relations between the West and Muslim states please indicate which possible solutions you consider to be 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable'.

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

Both UK society and the Jewish community place only the UK Parliament should be able to take Britain to war 1st on their list of policies to improve relations between the West and the Muslim World at 40% and 39% essential respectively. The Muslim community place this item 14th on their list also at 39% essential but 1st on their list is Western states should stop threatening Muslim states at 75% essential. Clearly rhetoric from some Western leaders may be doing more harm than may be thought and the perceived benefits of such rhetoric needs to be carefully assessed.

	All UK per cent	Essential	Jewish per cent	Essential	Muslim per cent	Essential
1st	Only the UK Parliament should be able to take Britain to war	40 %	Only the UK Parliament should be able to take Britain to war	39 %	Western states should stop threatening Muslim states	75 %
2nd	Enforce all UN resolutions without favour or discrimination	38 %	Israel should treat 'others' as Jews should be treated around the world	38 %	Greater awareness of the problems and history of the Palestinian people	64 %
3rd	Make all of the Middle East a nuclear weapons free zone including Israel	38 %	Enforce all UN resolutions without favour or discrimination	30 %	Enforce all UN resolutions without favour or discrimination	63 %
4th	Israel should treat 'others' as Jews should be treated around the world	35 %	EU policy to resolve Palestine/Israel conflict independent of US and UK policy	28 %	Do not allow UN resolutions to be vetoed by one state	60 %
5th	Do not allow UN resolutions to be vetoed by one state	34 %	Regional emphasis and negotiations on Middle East peace making	28 %	Fair trade with poor and developing Muslim states	58 %

Beyond these slightly different emphases on matters of war making and war mongering there is a general consensus about the need for Israel to treat 'others' as Jews should be treated around the world which is 2nd on the Jewish community list at 38% essential, 4th on the UK list at 35% essential and 7th on the Muslim list at 57% essential. Enforce all UN resolutions without favour or discrimination is 2nd on the UK list at 38% essential and 3rd on both the Jewish and Muslim lists at 30% and 63% essential respectively. Similarly do not allow UN resolutions to be vetoed by one state is 5th on the UK list and 4th on the Muslim list but only 10th on the Jewish list who are split on this point at 22% essential but 16% unacceptable. In general the Muslim community and wider UK public agree on most matters of international relations and justice while the Jewish community tends to be split on specific issues that might relate to the safety and security of Israel such as an EU policy to resolve the Palestine/Israel conflict independent of US and UK policy at 28% essential and 23% unacceptable.

UK policy priorities	UK Essential	UK Unacceptable	Jewish Unacceptable	Muslim Unacceptable
1. Only the UK Parliament should be able to take Britain to war	40 %	7 %	7%	12%
2. Enforce all UN resolutions without favour or discrimination	38 %	2 %	11%	0%
3. Make all of the Middle East a nuclear weapons free zone including Israel	38 %	9 %	36%	8%
4. Israel should treat 'others' as Jews should be treated around the world	35 %	4 %	11%	1%
5. Do not allow UN resolutions to be vetoed by one state	34 %	4 %	16%	2%
6. Fair trade with poor and developing Muslim states	30 %	3 %	5%	0%
7. Western states should stop threatening Muslim states	30 %	4 %	18%	0%
8. Greater awareness of the problems and history of the Palestinian people	27 %	2 %	12%	0%
9. Regional emphasis and negotiations on Middle East peace making	25 %	3 %	4%	0%
10. EU policy to resolve Palestine/Israel conflict independent of US and UK policy	24 %	4 %	23%	1%
11. The West should allow Muslim states to develop their own democratic accountable governments	24 %	4 %	6%	1%
12. Accurate independent body counts of all persons killed in Israel, Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan	21 %	3 %	7%	0%
13. The West should help the people of Kashmir to determine their own future	19 %	5 %	6%	3%
14. The West should support stability before democracy in Muslim states	18 %	5 %	11%	5%
15. Establish Muslim states with political systems in accordance with Islamic law (Caliphates)	7 %	10 %	28%	2%
16. Make all of the Middle East a nuclear weapons free zone except for Israel	6 %	48 %	18%	59%
17. The West should introduce Western style democracy to Muslim states	6 %	20 %	16%	37%
18. Allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons	2 %	59 %	77%	23%

Some suggested policies have high levels of resistance in all communities. For example 48% of the UK, 18% of the Jewish community and 59% of Muslims consider making all the Middle East a nuclear weapons free zone except for Israel (the status quo) to be unacceptable. Also 59% of the UK, 77% of Jews and 23% of the Muslim community consider it unacceptable to allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons. But only 4% of the Jewish community consider a regional emphasis and negotiations on Middle East peace making unacceptable and only 7% consider accurate independent body counts of all persons killed in Israel, Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan to be unacceptable. Clearly, on matters of justice in the Middle East the UK Jewish community speak as one voice with the rest of UK society including most of the Muslim community. However, on matters that may have implications for Israel's security the UK Jewish community are divided on questions of policy and the way ahead. Therefore, in the context of security guarantees there is everything to play for. This is how peace was made in Northern Ireland, through social justice and security. It is how peace is being made in the Balkans and how peace can be achieved for Israel and Palestine.

10. Extremism and the 'War on Terror'

The Question

And with regards to what could be done to deal with the problems of extremism and the 'War on Terror' please indicate which possible solutions you consider to be 'Essential', 'Desirable', 'Acceptable', 'Tolerable' or 'Unacceptable'.

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

With regard to extremism and the 'war on terror' the Muslim community place a ban on all groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK at the top of their list of 17 policy items at 65% essential. The same item is joint 2nd on the Jewish list at 71% essential and 3rd on the UK list at 61% essential. At the top of the UK and Jewish lists is deport foreign nationals who incite hatred and violence from the UK at 64% and 76% essential respectively. Although this item is 8th on the Muslim list it comes in at 54% essential with only 2% considering this policy to be unacceptable. 4th on the UK and Jewish list is the policy that there should be Muslim condemnation and isolation of those who preach and practice violence at 60% and 69% essential respectively. This item is 10th on the Muslim list at 53% essential and only 2% unacceptable. Clearly, although priorities are a little different the needs of all communities can be satisfied with these policies as there is very little opposition to most of them from any one community until the matter of identity cards is reached which is 9th on the UK list.

	All UK per cent	Essential	Jewish per cent	Essential	Muslim per cent	Essential
1st	Deport foreign nationals who incite hatred and violence from the UK	64 %	Deport foreign nationals who incite hatred and violence from the UK	76 %	Ban all groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	65 %
2nd	Ban Muslim groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	62 %	Ban Muslim groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	71 %	Close down the prison camp in Guantanamo Bay	65 %
3rd	Ban all groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	61 %	Ban all groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	71 %	Ban groups that incite hatred and violence against Muslims in the UK	60 %
4th	Muslim condemnation and isolation of those who preach and practice violence	60 %	Muslim condemnation and isolation of those who preach and practice violence	69 %	Fight terrorism using opinions and ideas through education	57 %
5th	Ban groups that incite hatred and violence against Muslims in the UK	57 %	Ban groups that incite hatred and violence against Muslims in the UK	66 %	Monitor and correct biases in the application of UK anti-terror legislation	56 %

UK opinion on the introduction of identity cards is mixed with 26% of the population suggesting it is essential while 20% say it is unacceptable. Similarly 27% of the Jewish community and 24% of the Muslim community find this policy unacceptable. After this the pattern observed for the previous question takes over with the UK and Muslim community largely in agreement and the Jewish community split on matters of security with, for example, opening up dialogue with all groups including those deemed terrorists at 18% unacceptable and close down the prison camp in Guantanamo Bay at 19% unacceptable.

UK policy priorities	UK Essential	UK Unacceptable	Jewish Unacceptable	Muslim Unacceptable
1. Deport foreign nationals who incite hatred and violence from the UK	64 %	1 %	1%	2%
2. Ban Muslim groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	62 %	1 %	3%	1%
3. Ban all groups that incite hatred and violence in the UK	61 %	1 %	2%	0%
4. Muslim condemnation and isolation of those who preach and practice violence	60 %	2 %	3%	2%
5. Ban groups that incite hatred and violence against Muslims in the UK	57 %	2 %	4%	0%
6. Public enquiry into 7/7 London bombings	37 %	3 %	2%	0%
7. Fight terrorism using opinions and ideas through education	35 %	4 %	3%	1%
8. Monitor and correct biases in the application of UK anti-terror legislation	29 %	3 %	4%	0%
9. Introduce UK National Identity cards	26 %	20 %	27%	24%
10. Open up dialogue with all groups including those deemed terrorists	25 %	10 %	18%	2%
11. Close down the prison camp in Guantanamo Bay	25 %	11 %	19%	0%
12. End extradition to the US and try terrorist suspects in UK courts	21 %	10 %	24%	1%
13. Record the faith and reasons for all arrests made in the UK	20 %	14 %	25%	5%
14. Fight terrorism using military means	20 %	8 %	6%	31%
15. Stop all immigration from Muslim countries into the UK	19 %	28 %	44%	61%
16. The British government should acknowledge their Security and Foreign Policy is alienating and radicalising young Muslims	18 %	13 %	23%	1%
17. Support all US policies in the war on terror	5 %	42 %	39%	62%

There is strong opposition to the suggestion that all immigration from Muslim countries into the UK should be stopped at 28% unacceptable for the UK population, 44% unacceptable for the Jewish community and 61% unacceptable for Muslims. Opposition to the idea that all US policies in the war on terror should be supported is equally robust at 42% unacceptable for the UK, 39% for Jews and 62% for Muslims. In this context it is not surprising to find support for fighting terrorism with military means, at 20% essential for the UK, is lower than support for fighting terrorism using opinions and ideas through education at 35% essential. Perhaps the conclusion to be drawn from all of this is that the British public do not consider the war on terror can be won through military means alone or even that military means are the best way to deal with this problem. Above all else everyone wants policies that can bring an end to hatred and violence and they have strong misgivings about policies that might have quite the opposite effect.

11. The London Bombings

The Question

Here are five statements that have been made about the London bombings. Please indicate which ones you 'Strongly Agree' with, 'Agree' with, 'Neither Agree or Disagree' with, 'Disagree' with, 'Strongly Disagree' with or 'Don't Know/Would Prefer Not to Answer this Question'.

The UK population, Muslim and Jewish communities

Although the primary intention of this question was to identify that set of Muslims who might be thought to be 'alienated' in some way it should be pointed out that although 22% of the Muslim community strongly agreed with the statement that much of the violence that is labelled by the West as terrorism is simply the Muslims fighting back for legitimate causes, 4% of the general UK population shared this view as did 1% of the Jewish community. As has happened with most of the other questions asked in this poll this group of 'alienated' Muslims share much of the same views as other UK Muslims but simply feel more strongly about the issues in question. For example 72% of this group believe the British Government bares some responsibility for the London bombings due to its foreign policy while only 38% of UK Muslims share this view compared with 11% of the wider UK population and only 9% of the UK Jewish community. 36% of the Jewish community strongly disagree with this statement while only16% of the UK population and 2% of the Muslim community are of this opinion.

'Strongly Agree' per cent	All UK	Jewish	Muslim	Muslim 11.5 Strongly Agree
1. The people who carried out the London bombings were not representative of any group in British society	25%	23%	49%	70%
2. The people who carried out the London bombings were representative of an extremist group within the Muslim community	37%	49%	23%	28%
3. British Muslims as a whole have been unfairly blamed for the London bombings	23%	26%	68%	88%
4. The British Government bares some responsibility for the London bombings due to its foreign policy	11%	9%	38%	72%
5. Much of the violence that is labelled by the West as terrorism is simply the Muslims fighting back for legitimate causes	4%	1%	22%	100%

Although, in nearly all violent conflicts, it is young men that get involved in violent actions, is it the case that these 'alienated' Muslims are significantly more male than female, younger rather than older and perhaps, in general, less well educated? The answer is that there is not a great deal of difference between them. Although young Muslim men may be more willing to become directly involved in reckless and dangerous acts the views that they may hold on matters of injustice or perceived injustices appear to be shared by others in all sections of their community and even by some members of the non-Muslim UK society in general.

12. Plan of action

The Question

And finally do you want the international community, Muslim states, the British government and Muslim community in the UK to cooperate and implement a programme of policies that will deal with all the problems reviewed in this poll?

Recommendations and conclusion

80% of the UK population want the international community, Muslim states, the British government and Muslim community in the UK to cooperate and implement a programme of policies that will deal with all the problems reviewed in this poll. 4% said 'no' and 16% did not know. The 'yes vote' for this policy rose to 87% for the Jewish community, 92% for the Muslim community and, most importantly, 98% for those Muslims who have been classified here as 'alienated'.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
UK per cent	80	4	16
Jewish per cent	87	6	7
Muslim per cent	92	0	8
Muslim per cent 11.5 'Strongly Agree'	98	0	2

So there is every opportunity for discussion that can lead to policy, action and where required international negotiation. Although there are some serious points of disagreement on some issues covered in this poll between communities, and sometimes within communities, there is much more to agree about than to disagree about.

The analysis and comments made here on the results of this poll have only picked up on some of the major points of interest. But the principal results are to be found in the full report and accompanying tables. They can provide the reader with all the basic information required for an engaged discussion of all the issues at hand. This is how the results of similar peace polls run in Northern Ireland and the Balkans have been used there.

But the scope of subjects dealt with in this poll was very broad. Now that the first peace poll has been completed on this topic then more should be undertaken to explore some of the subtleties and anomalies around the most critical and more controversial issues as may be required until peace is achieved. This inevitably is an ongoing process.

But the conflict between the West and the Muslim World is not limited to the UK alone. All states with a Muslim population need to become involved across Europe, in America the Middle East and around the world as may be required. Such efforts should be coordinated wherever possible to allow for some common questions to be used that can facilitate comparisons.

In the past such programmes of pubic opinion research would have been considered prohibitively expensive. But this poll demonstrates the economic effectiveness of using internet polling methods to undertake such a programme of research. Since the

events of 9/11 the British government has spent millions of pounds on UK polls that try to explore some of the issues dealt with here. Although these polls are very accurate they are limited in their intellectual scope and do not engage with the relevant sections of the British public in the same way as a peace poll. The effectiveness of internet polling changes both the economics and interactive capacities of such applied undertakings and the British government should now reassess their priorities and methodologies in these regards. This poll clearly demonstrates that they can greatly improve the value of their research for the same amount of resources allocated to such work.

But governments alone cannot always be relied upon to commission independent polling research when they have a vested interest in the issues at hand. This is particularly true where matters of war and peace are concerned. In the past NGOs would have been reluctant to take on extensive programmes of polling research. The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust's support for the Northern Ireland peace polls was a notable exception. But the cost effectiveness of internet polling changes all of this. Both private and public organisations with an interest in peace making and peace building can now get involved in this area of activity that was previously limited to governments with extensive resources at their disposal.

There is a conflict between the West and the Muslim World. In its domestic, international and global complexity it is a conflict perhaps like no other that the world has had to deal with before. It is a conflict in search of a peace process. The capacity of the internet to provide extremists with a vehicle for their propaganda of hate and violence is well known. This poll clearly demonstrates the power of the internet to be used as a voice of moderation, reason and accommodation and it is increasingly available to all those who would wish to use it in this way. Peace polls are most effective when they are undertaken by and belong to the people and internet polling makes that ideal a reality today.

Summary

Those involved in the Northern Ireland peace process have often looked on with a sense of déjà vu, disbelief or perhaps, sometimes, even horror at many of the errors made by Government in the management of Muslim affairs in the UK and conflicts with Muslim states around the world. Internment and forces of liberation soon becoming forces of occupation come to mind. Critically a failure to identify and deal with the problems at the heart of such conflicts can lead to increased violence rather than a successful peace process. In this context the public opinion research commissioned by governments in the UK and elsewhere have not been used as an effective tool of conflict analysis and public diplomacy. Employing methods developed in Northern Ireland this 'peace poll' identifies both problems and solutions central to relations between the West and the Muslim World. Topics covered include: Islamophobia and the 'Clash of Civilizations'; discrimination and integration; the Muslim community; relations between the West and Muslim states; extremism and the 'War on Terror'; and Muslim alienation. The international complexity of this conflict makes it very difficult to solve. Fortunately this clear and obvious point of difficulty is compensated for by the fact that there is a great deal of consensus about the solutions to this problem, at least in the UK. Hopefully that consensus will be found to extend to other states so that an international consensus can be built around the essential elements of what must necessarily become a peace process.

Post Script: 'The first casualty of war is the truth'

August 2006

All my previous 'peace polls' have been conducted using conventional samples with face-to-face interviews. This was the first time that I have used inter-net polling and, perhaps inevitably, some parties who have wanted to disagree with some of my analysis and conclusions have suggested that they are flawed because the research methods are flawed. I take the view that the project was a great success in research/value for money terms so these points need to be addressed. I do not believe any conclusions have been drawn that are not validated by the data. However, as an exercise in public diplomacy directed at influencing government policy, both domestically and internationally, the project has not been as successful as I would have hoped. Mistakes were made in the management of the media aspects of this project and these need to be understood and lessons learnt. This Post Script is written to address these various points.

Methodological issues

My analysis of the 'alienated' Muslims turned out to be controversial for a number of reasons. If my analysis was in any doubt and/or if the conclusions were not, in my view, of considerable importance for the development of policy then I would have simply dropped this analysis from the report. But I consider the analysis sound and conclusions drawn significant so, in spite of the controversy surrounding them, I chose to keep them in.

The importance of the analysis, and the reason why it was made, goes back to my experience with the Northern Ireland conflict. It was not difficult to list and prioritise 'problems' and 'solutions' that could be actioned for both the Catholic and Protestant communities there as part of a peace process. However, such action would have had little practical impact if the most important 'problems' and 'solutions' of the more radical Republican and Loyalist sections of Northern Ireland society were not also dealt with. In research terms this meant analysing not only what Catholics and Protestants required but also what, for example, Sinn Féin voters wanted out of negotiations and an agreement. Fortunately both Sinn Féin voters and the wider Catholic community shared the same set of priorities. Equality issues and police reform always came out on top of their respective 'to do' lists. Consequently, by addressing these issues in the development of government policy and the Belfast Agreement peace could be achieved. If, for example, a united Ireland had been at the top of the Sinn Féin 'problems' and 'solutions' lists then it seems very likely that the Belfast Agreement would have failed. Fortunately this was not the case.

For these reasons, in this poll, I felt it necessary to take out a subset of the Muslim sample who felt most strongly about the issues that were troubling their community. As this could not be done by simply asking them their political affiliation a question had to be devised that would have a similar effect. After much discussion this was done with the following question:

Question 11: 'Here are five statements that have been made about the London bombings. Please indicate which ones you 'Strongly Agree' with, 'Agree' with, 'Neither Agree or Disagree' with, 'Disagree' with, 'Strongly Disagree' with or 'Don't Know/Would Prefer Not to Answer this Question'… (5) 'Much of the violence that is

labelled by the West as terrorism is simply the Muslims fighting back for legitimate causes'

Now, I wish to stress, this question makes no value judgements about the rightness or wrongness of such acts, nor was any value judgement intended. As someone who has worked with 'so called terrorists' in Northern Ireland, the Balkans and Middle East I would never make such judgements. Frankly I would not get far in my work if I did and if I was ever asked about my views on such matters, as often happened, I would simply take the position that I was opposed to all violence and that I was in the 'business' of peace making. All the 'so called terrorists' I have dealt with were satisfied with this response. However, it seems to be the case that some respondents to the MVUK sample were confused by this question as to which groups were being identified.[1] None were identified, that was deliberately left open, but perhaps, in future polls, it would be worthwhile extending this question to also include different identified groups as a series of additional questions. As with all such research, improvements and refinements can be made and I stress this point in the conclusion of my report.

In practice this question went through many drafts because it was considered so sensitive. As with all my previous work drafts of questionnaires were made at each stage of the qualitative work with notes on every change proposed. This questionnaire went through 17 drafts and the most detailed discussion of this particular issue is to be found at the end of draft 13 in question D6 below. Hopefully this extract from this draft will provide the reader with some insight into the care and thinking that went into these questions before they were agreed by MVUK and myself.

Extract from draft 16 of questionnaire - including footnotes

D6. The London Bombings[1]

~~*Example 1*~~

This example is taken from the *Sunday Telegraph* of February 19th. Similar questions have been asked in previous polls since 7/7. According to the *Sunday Telegraph* this particular question appeared to produce a 20 per cent 'Yes'. However, we do not think that we can use this question, as we know some individuals did not complete this questionnaire at all because this question was included in it! So the 'Don't Know' and 'Refused' rates for this question, given by the *Daily Telegraph*, are not reliable and we do not want to get into this situation ourselves. Here is the question they used:

Finally, irrespective of whether you think the London bombings were justified or not, do you personally have any sympathy with the feelings and motives of those who carried out the attacks?

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[1] This question is to be treated, for all intents and purposes, as a demographic question rather than an attitudinal question. The reason for asking this question is to provide an important key with which to analyse all the other questions in this poll. This will be done for the Muslim community as a whole, the non-Muslim community as a whole and how people respond to one of the questions below. In this way we will be able to quantify the levels of acceptance in all communities including those sections of the Muslim community who must be part of this peace process if it is to be a success. We have to identify this section of the Muslim community, some how, if we are to understand them and address their concerns.

Yes/No

Example 2

This example is a rewrite of the *Sunday Telegraph* question but in such a way as to make it not quite so offensive and intrusive:

Finally, irrespective of whether you think the London bombings were justified or not, the London bombings were an act of desperation.

Agree/Disagree

We could also possibly add the following qualification:

We understand that this may be the most sensitive question that we have had to ask you but it is important that we do so. With the answer to this question we will be able to identify the 'problems' of this section of the community as well as the 'solutions' that they believe to be most important.

Example 3

This example is an elaboration of Example 2 to include other views that might be held by some non-Muslims as well as Muslims. It is also written in the general style of the other questions in this questionnaire:

Finally here are five statements that have been made about the London bombings. Please indicate which ones you 'Strongly Agree' with, 'Agree' with, 'Neither Agree or Disagree' with, 'Disagree' with or 'Strongly Disagree' with.[2]

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The people who carried out the London bombings were not representative of any group in British society but simply criminal individuals					
2. The people who carried out the London bombings were representative of an extremist group within the Muslim community					
3. British Muslims as a whole have been unfairly blamed for the London bombings					
4. The Government bares some responsibility for creating the political circumstances in which the London bombings occurred through the nature of its foreign policy					
5. Much of the violence that is labelled by the West as terrorism is simply the Muslims fighting back for legitimate causes					

End of extract from draft questionnaire

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[2] Most people thought this was a good question and understood the reason to run it.

A couple more misconceptions need to be cleared up before explaining the significance of the results generated by this question, which, as hoped, produced the analysis required of it.

Firstly, in my report, I use the term 'alienated' for the group of Muslims identified by this question. Of course, as has been pointed out by others 'alienation' is a complex phenomena so I am only using this term here as a 'label' and that is why 'alienated' is placed in parentheses in the report. The government have also used the term 'anger'.[2] I am quite happy for the reader to use a different label if they are more comfortable with it.

Secondly, I suggest in my discussion of these issues that public opinion polls can be used:

'to explore the demographic profile of alienated Muslims, their extent, attitudes and values, the social and political problems associated with alienation and the remedies that can be put in place to mitigate such problems. In this way 'pools of alienation' can be identified and steps taken to reverse the process that leads to the creation of groups willing to tolerate, acquiesce, support, encourage or perhaps even actively participate in terrorist activity.'

Of course the extent to which this can be done in this poll depends very much on the extent of the sample (which was very limited) and the questions asked (which were very broad). At no time do I draw conclusions that cannot be drawn. For example both MVUK[3] and the Greater London Authority [4] have suggested I have greatly exaggerated the number of potential terrorist supporters within the British Muslim community. But I make no estimates in this regard because this sample cannot possibly allow me to do so. It is interesting to note that if one were to use the results of this question to wrongfully attempt such an exercise then 24% of the Muslim community who 'strongly agreed' with question 11.5 would translate into about 500,000 such individuals. However, 4% of the UK sample also 'strongly agreed' with this statement. After the Muslims are removed from this sample that leaves about 2 million non-Muslim 'potential terrorist supporters'! Clearly playing the numbers game with such statistics is a reckless and dangerous pursuit. So why have I kept the analysis of this question in my report and why is it so important?

Well, what could be done with this very broad set of social and political questions is to try and discover what social and political issues, in terms of 'problems' and 'solutions' were of importance to what are labelled here as 'alienated' Muslims. Two results are of considerable significance:

Firstly, the rank order of the 'problems' and 'solutions' for this group of Muslims is strikingly similar to the rank order of these same issues for the Muslim community as a whole. This pattern is to be found throughout the data and that is why I felt it so important to present the results as I have repeating them in each section of the report. The significance of this result, as with Northern Ireland, is that by addressing the problems identified by the wider Muslim community then one is also going to be able to address the problems of that section of the community identified here as 'alienated'. Conversely, if these problems are not addressed then increased 'alienation' or 'anger' can be expected. Critically, for the Muslim community in the UK the predominant issues identified here are centred on the media, human rights and foreign policy.

Secondly, the intensity of feeling on these issues, for this 'alienated' section of the Muslim community, is stronger across all of these issues. Again these results are presented throughout the relevant sections of the report to illustrate this point.

From a methodological point of view, if these results had not been so consistent across so many questions then I would have been reluctant to draw the conclusions I have made without much larger samples having been taken. But this is not the case. The results are consistent and therefore should be taken seriously, particularly as they have significant implications for government policy. Namely, if the problems associated with the media, human rights and foreign policy are properly addressed then positive social and political progress can be made. However, if these problems are not addressed, or if they are aggravated, then the social and political 'alienation' of the UK Muslim community can be expected to become worse than is presently the case.

Now it is important to point out here that I have not used the term 'radicalise' as this term is generally reserved for that very small section of the Muslim community that may become persuaded to undertake illegal and/or violent acts against persons and/or the state due to their 'alienation' or 'anger'. The government estimate this group to be less than 1% of the UK Muslim community[5] so clearly public opinion polls are seriously limited as an instrument of inquiry in this regard. How Muslims might be radicalised, or, for that matter, why certain persons might join the IRA or UVF in Northern Ireland, is not something I have ever attempted to do using public opinion polls.

But a relationship exists between what I have called here 'pools of alienation' and 'radicalised' individuals. The latter take their life from and are sustained by the former. Identifying radicalised individuals is very difficult; frequently this will not be possible, even for a vigilant intelligence service. However, addressing the 'problems' at the heart of 'alienated' groups to create a successful 'peace process' as has been done in Northern Ireland is possible and should be done in the UK and elsewhere with respect to the 'Muslim World'. Particularly, as is the case here, when the wider society support the policies that need to be pursued in this regard. Conversely, a failure not to do this is negligence as such omissions put innocent people and the state at risk of harm. In good conscience I could not leave this analysis out and I trust that the UK government and other states will now pursue programmes of similar research with vigour. Indeed I believe they are duty bound to do so.

Public diplomacy issues

Given the importance of this analysis and conclusion and the general success of this research project it is a matter of deep personal regret that the associated programme of public diplomacy has been handled badly and, thus far, has had little positive impact. Governments are not rushing to see if they can replicate this research. Regrettably quite the opposite seems to be the case.

The report was written with a view to publishing it in an edited version as a newspaper feature story over two days with 'Problems' on the first day and 'Solutions' on the second. The article was completed prior to my giving a paper in Jerusalem on May 23 at a conference on *Public Opinion, Democracy and Peace Making*, jointly organised by the Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research

and the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace.[6] The conference would have provided a good opportunity for both publication in the UK and international press coverage. But my partners in this project decided to wait until after the anniversary of the 7/7 London Bombings to give MVUK the opportunity to complete their own report with a view to jointly publishing our reports on July 18. This delay gave our competitors the time they needed to undertake their own polling projects on these issues and set the public agenda at the time of the 7/7 anniversary on July 7.

Subsequently the London *Times* published a two-day feature/poll on Tuesday July 4 and Wednesday July 5 undertaken by Populus in partnership with ITV News. Now, in addition to getting their story out earlier there are two other ways in which a polling/media organisation can out manoeuvre a competitor in public diplomacy terms. Firstly they can complete a larger sample and claim their poll is therefore more accurate/better. Secondly they can bias the results by only asking certain questions of one section of the community or the other thus preventing comparisons. Although all the polls on the UK Muslim community published in the press prior to this poll were undertaken with relatively small samples the London Times/ITV News/Populus poll unusually went to the expense of getting a weighted sample of 1,131 Muslims. So if they had wanted to they could have used the 'bigger is better' argument. But sample size becomes irrelevant when comparisons can't be made between different sections of the community because critical questions are only directed at one section of the community or the other.

This is what the London Times/ITV News/Populus poll frequently did with disastrous implications for the UK Muslim community. By using the results to questions only asked of Muslims or non-Muslims journalists and commentators were able to spin the story to arrive at the conclusion that dealing with the problem of Muslim extremism in the UK was largely a matter for the Muslim community with the role of the media, human rights and foreign policy hardly getting a mention.[7] Of course the Muslim community should do everything they can in this regard but asking their community leaders and Imams to effectively deal with this issue while not addressing problems associated with the media, human rights and foreign policy is as pointless and as potentially ineffective as asking the Catholic Church and Social Democratic and Labour Party in Northern Ireland to stop the IRA without also having a peace process in place that addresses their most deep felt concerns.

This seemingly obvious fact, that analysts in the Northern Ireland Office, Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office must know very well, begs the question as to why so much responsibility has unreasonably been placed on the Muslim community? Although I had not realised it at the time I had probably been confronted with the answer to this question when I was in Jerusalem in May. While there I invited the major Palestinian and Israeli polling/research institutions if they would like to undertake a 'peace poll' that would engage with the political parties elected to the Knesset and Palestinian Authority on all issues presently frustrating their peace process. The Palestinian organisations expressed enthusiasm with one of them offering to pay for the poll in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. The Israeli organisations declined. Negotiations, of any kind, it would seem, were not part of their agenda. In June Israel invaded Gaza and in July they invaded Lebanon.

Critically the two states that supported Israel's military adventures were the US and UK and this poll had been undertaken in the UK. The poll, it would seem, was a

casualty of war and its effective subversion by person or persons unknown and/or the Times/Rupert Murdock media interests was something I had not anticipated. I had not known, when I started this project that the state where the poll was to be carried out was about to embark on a foreign policy to reshape the Middle East. But, perhaps, someone knew and that is why the Metropolitan Commissioner of Police expects more attacks on London, the security services are being expanded and the Muslim community are being required to deal with the problem of extremism. If all else fails then they may be required to take much of the blame. In part the UK Muslim community have walked into this trap by denying they have a problem.[8] But then, perhaps, they are taking their lead from the UK Government who wish to deny the impact their policies are having on Muslims, particularly the youth. Following the release of this report in the House of Lords on July 18 one member of the audience, who was working amongst young Muslim offenders, privately told me he had undertaken a poll on similar issues with such young men and had got worse results than mine. His candour was refreshing. This conflict, in search of a peace process, has clearly got quite some way to go.

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