



The UK Government's Counter Extremism Agenda to Secularise Muslim Youth

Within the last decade British Muslims have been subject to an excessive level of propaganda and scrutiny. This has led to the amendment of existing terror laws and the introduction of the first all-encompassing social policy, which targets almost every aspect of Muslim life. The PREVENT agenda was presented as a vehicle to countering extremism. It went beyond labeling individuals and organizations as 'extreme' and for the first time Muslims saw many core Islamic principles attacked as intolerant, undemocratic, oppressive and therefore inconsistent with British values.

The PREVENT strategy was followed in 2015 by the Counter Terrorism Bill (CTS) which extended the collaboration of police and social workers, to all civic sector employees, creating a legal obligation for schools, colleges, universities and even health care workers to seek out and report so called extremism. These draconian policies oblige the monitoring of students from nursery to university level, as well as patients and employees. Thus compromising any prior confidentiality or privacy between students and teachers, health care professionals and employers, thus enabling an atmosphere of mutual distrust and suspicion to ferment.

The CTS bill is the first of its kind in the way it directly allows for the criminalization of children. Its Channel programme mandates close collaboration of youth agencies with Police so that simple comments and the childhood games of Muslim children are scrutinized for signs of 'radicalization'. The 'de-radicalization' unit deals with children referred to this programme, and any refusal on the part of the parents can see their children removed from the said family and taken into state care.

Furthermore under the guise of safeguarding children, a so-called counter-extremism survey consisting of undeniably loaded questions has been set for primary schools. Aimed at discerning their religious, ethical and even patriotic beliefs, it has been lauded as essential in assessing signs of extremism. Given the nature of the questions about tenets of Islam such as jihad, homosexuality, gender segregation and alcohol, it is obvious to all that the survey targets Muslim children. So given the CTS bill is determined by the exhibition of certain behaviors and values displayed by children that the government has identified as 'radical', the survey is tantamount to categorizing all Muslim children as potential 'extremists'.

The CTS bill views so-called signifiers of 'extremism' amongst children to be based on symbols of religiousness or an increased religiosity, such as wearing the hijab or jilbab, or to observe the daily prayers at school, or for girls and boys to not play or sit together. This kind of assessment of a child or youth's personal opinion or behavior is beyond shallow; it is a fabrication on the government's part to knowingly conflate religiosity with extremism and invariably forge a link to terrorism.

Muslim parents are regularly confronted at the school gates by teachers with concerns about their children, for playing with toy guns or tanks; for their ignorance about homosexuality, for asking to pray or fast at school, for not wanting to hold hands with girls. Even a two year old who said she dreamt of fireworks was deemed as suspicious, as was a four year old who's pronunciation of the word cucumber sounded like 'cooker bomb' to the staff who actually referred him to the deradicalisation programme. Similarly a ten year old child's misspelling of 'terraced', as 'terrorist' was the justification for sending police to his home; as with the child whose class project was about the golden age of Islam.

Official figures published by the National Police Chief of Council indicate that over 4,000 children had been referred to the Channel programme by March 2016; nearly triple the number of the previous year, an average of 11 referrals a day.

This despite Britain's largest teachers' union, the National Union of Teachers, slamming the venture as "smothering the legitimate expression of political opinion" and calling for "requirements of teachers to report children deemed at risk of being drawn into terrorism to be dropped".

The online activity of Muslim students whilst at school is under equal scrutiny. The 'radicalization keywords' library has been developed in collaboration with the Quilliam Foundation, a counter-extremism organization of reformist Muslims that is closely aligned with the government. It consists of more than 1,000 trigger terms including 'apostate', 'jihadi' and 'Islamism' with accompanying definitions. Searching for words such as 'caliphate' and the names of Muslim political activists on classroom computers risk being flagged as potential supporters of terrorism and phrases specifically associated with online propaganda like jihadi brides, ISIS and YODO (you only die once) also sends 'violation triggers' to teachers on their mobile phones, to screenshot as evidence.

Children adopting the Islamic dress code or sporting Palestine wristbands, scarves and badges are referred almost immediately and those collecting charity for the Muslim world have been vilified as well.

However most insidious is the expectation for older students to repeatedly condemn every terrorist act and distance themselves from any rational discussion about its causes, or to question the identity of the said perpetrators. A leaflet circulated by Camden, a London council, which came to light earlier this month suggested "appearing angry about Government policies, especially foreign policies" or "showing mistrust towards mainstream media" were also potential warning signs of radicalization".

This is the ultimate goal of the CTS bill and the Prevent initiative; whereby Muslims in Britain submissively accept the government narrative of Islam itself as the ultimate cause of terrorism and therefore consent to the need for its overhaul and complete reformation. The ambiguity of terms like extremism and British values are grossly misapplied by people unaware and misled by the government about Islam. Unsubstantiated reporting based on paranoia and fear is resulting in increased detention, the criminalization of the entire Muslim community and mutual distrust and fear

To understand the purpose of the CTS bill and its desired outcomes for the Muslim youth, we must put it into the context of the global strategy western nations have towards the Muslim world.

The Islamic revival of the 1980's saw Muslims renew the call to jihad and question monarchical states and dictatorships, as concern for the global Ummah grew. These tenets of Islam, buried with the colonial occupations of the 19th century were being revived and with them came the aspiration and conviction in Islam as the only and true solution to the declined state of the Muslim Ummah.

The GMEI (Greater Middle East Initiative) was drafted by Francis Fukoyama, forging an American foreign policy to subvert Islam in response to this pure idea; even before 9/11. Since then, the US has led the western nations in the gradual destabilization of the entire Muslim world. The Iraq war and actions in Afghanistan paved the way into Pakistan and a permanent US presence in the Middle East. Under the guise of peacemakers delivering democracy, plans to divide nation states and remove dictators were played out. To justify the pipelines, embassies, airbases and underground intelligence agencies, a perpetual state of war was waged, killing and displacing millions of innocent Muslims. Torture and rendition,

imprisonment and humiliation, were eventually called out and many interpreted this as a failure.

These events were finally trumped by the success of America in railroading the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions towards democracy. And the present day catastrophe is the devastated sincere Syrian revolution for Islam; which is the maelstrom of horrendous bombing campaigns, atrocities and a bloodthirsty pack of global players, each supporting the American/Russian agenda to resist the inevitable Islamic revival at any cost.

It must be understood that the CTS bill exists to debunk the pure Islamic thought and revival, at home and abroad. Actions to label and criminalize undeniable and undisputed tenets of Islam here in the West enable the establishment of secular systems being supported and developed in the Muslim world without question. In the Middle East, Afpak and MENA regions, secular governments are encouraged through all manners of economic venture and the Capitalist free market to create societies based on secular liberal values. Freedom, democracy and human rights are championed as the peak of civilization; and are actualized by pushing the western lifestyle, popular culture and a riba based economy within Muslim society. By waging war, aggression and state sponsored terrorism, support of dictators and nation building on the one hand; as well as supporting and developing government agents who exist only to facilitate western interests on the other. The Muslim Ummah is once again being physically and psychologically colonized.

This global agenda is pivotal to the criminalization of the Muslim youth we witness at home; which too is only one part of the larger collective punishment the British government is enacting upon the Muslims in Britain. Schedule 7 has seen Muslims turned away from embarking on flights to holiday destinations, and permitted interrogation without reason or evidence for up to nine hours, without the right to have a lawyer present. Likewise the CTS has made a mockery of British justice by legitimizing trial without the defendant having the right to know what evidence has been bought against him. Over 150 Muslims have already been subject to this travesty of justice in the past ten years. Reversing the burden of proof, making one guilty until proven innocent.

It is imperative that we view ourselves as one global Ummah. We are all being subjected to an orchestrated policy and agenda, which allows the systematic alienation, demonization or detention at best; and torture, war, sectarian unrest and displacement of populations, ill fated to become a mass movement of refugees at worst.

The Muslim youth can be a global force for change, this fact alone is clearly enough for the colonialist occupiers to raise hell on earth. We are witnessing “the destruction of civilization, by the civilization of destruction”, as our beloved Rasool Allah (saw) had predicted. Only with the return of the Khilafah (Caliphate) on the methodology of the Prophethood can we return to our former ideological might and challenge the forces of evil that surround us and threaten the capability of our youth.

﴿بَلْ نَقْدِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُ فَإِذَا هُوَ زَاهِقٌ وَلَكُمُ الْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ﴾

“Nay, We hurl the Truth at falsehood so that it (the Truth) crushes it (falsehood), and lo! it (falsehood) vanishes. Woe to you for what you utter!” [Surah Al Anbiya: 18]

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