

PRESS RELEASE PRESS RELEASE

NEW RACE REPORT DENOUNCES 'CHRISTIANS AFRAID TO OFFEND ANYONE'

Report attacks 'Whites who want to abolish Christmas and all other expressions of British culture'

A hard hitting new study into race relations in Britain highlights a culture of fear among some ordinary people to speak out about immigration in case they are branded as racists and a world where political correctness has 'gone mad'.

It reveals that extremists have hijacked religious agendas, so that a great religion of peace like Islam is perverted in the mindsets of extremists, and argues that key British values, including the freedom to criticise religion, should be defended.

The report attacks preachers of hate, allegedly operating in 'Londistan' who, it claims, have perverted the teachings of their faith and the minds of their followers.

The report to be published this week is not from a right-wing think tank but from an editorial team that includes two Muslim authors.

Asaf Hussain has co-written the study with Tim Haq and Bill Law. The Intercultural State follows on from a previous study entitled Engagement with Cultures: From Diversity to Interculturalism.

Professor of Political Studies at the University of Leicester John Benyon, who has written the foreword for the study, states: "The Intercultural State particularly examines the failure of the policy of multiculturalism favoured by successive British politicians and policy makers. The authors argue that this policy has led to a country divided by race and religion and, in extreme circumstances, by terrorism.

"The study finds that most politicians, journalists and commentators, of whatever political hue, have advocated multiculturalism and failed to appreciate the adverse effects that such a policy would have. In particular, the authors highlight the failure to realise how divisive different religions could be and the conflicts that could arise – and this despite the experiences in Northern Ireland.

"The report also advocates other key British values that must be promoted and defended. These are loyalty to the state, respect for the monarchy, acceptance of pluralism, obedience to the rule of law, and support for basic democratic principles.

“What comes over clearly is the wish of the authors to promote a tolerant and liberal society, in which people are entitled to basic freedoms, but not the ‘freedoms’ to threaten others or abuse their rights as citizens. Everyone’s first obligation must be to the common values that unite the country, notably the rule of law and democratic processes, not the right to elevate their own religious beliefs above the laws of the land and their duties as a British citizen.”

The report highlights the views of people upon which the authors have commented. They state:

“We believe that the biggest threat faced by Britain is from any sort of religious extremists – currently extreme Islamists – a very small proportion of Muslims – a proportion that most Muslims are against and who they should disown and campaign against at all levels. We also believe that there is an equally dangerous group – Christians who are afraid to offend anyone, the Whites who want to abolish Christmas and all other expressions of British culture. They want to abolish any British tradition or celebration of our tolerant country. They are the other side of the coin. Most immigrants oppose them.

“One key and new message in this report is that there are three essential values which arise from secularism in the Western world: Freedom of religion, freedom from religion, and freedom to criticise religion.

“The most important values that need to be internalised by every British citizen are the acceptance of Secularism and Pluralism in British society. If Christianity has accepted other faiths to exist then other faiths have to accept others faiths as well in British society. If one faith does not accept the Other’s faith then there can be conflict in British society. It would threaten integration. It is important then to know that faiths could also contribute to the reinforcement of integrated citizenship, provided they accept the three freedoms of religion. Equally every citizen has to accept people who claim that they do not believe other faiths. These are the secularists. No one should object if a person does not believe in the Other’s faiths. It is a key part of British tradition and culture that all faiths can be challenged. It is this key issue that multiculturalism has failed to address, and which Interculturalism must.”

Commenting on the London bombings, the authors state: “It should be made clear that multiculturalism does not necessarily breed terrorism, but neither does it breed any loyalty either to the British multicultural society or state either. Those bombers merely lived in our society doing their own things and felt they owed allegiance to Allah, to become his Warriors. Even if the ideas had come from abroad, how could the British born terrorists commit acts of terrorism to kill strangers of their society who are their fellow citizens in which they had grown up, and their families had improved their economic conditions? Some blame for that must go to Saudi Arabia, whose Wahabi preachers are spreading the fundamentalist message in mosques, and are being funded by Saudi, as revealed in Channel Four’s documentary about the preachers of hate. Much of the blame must also go to government, who naively allowed terrorists to stay, preach, and plot, in Londistan, on the naïve assumption that they had reached an agreement that those terrorists would not bomb Britain.

“The time therefore has come to seriously rethink what is the multicultural state and citizenship. To do this one has to deeply explore the complexity of what it means to be ‘British’ or ‘citizens’ of Britain’ and ask: Do the migrants understand what their duties and obligations as British citizens are? While in the 20th Century British society had been transformed into a multicultural society and the state policy of multicultural had made it into a multicultural state, a new transformation

is needed in the 21st Century if it is to transform multicultural society and state into intercultural society and state, a state with less divisions and more cohesion.”

Ends

FOR INTERVIEWS CONTACT:

Asaf Hussain is the founding member of the Society for Intercultural Understanding Leicester, SICUL, which presents intercultural programmes for the public at the same time raising funds for charity. He also teaches at the Institute of Lifelong Learning at the University of Leicester, modules on Interculturalism and Islamic Civilisations. At the University's Vaughan College he also teaches a popular course entitled 'Multicultural Mosaic' to persons and groups of various professions in the city. The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office have appointed him Diversity Champion. Asaf is the author of a number of books on Middle Eastern politics and also writes on Islamic Fundamentalism and Terrorism in Britain and other countries. **Contact: 07968390897**

Bill Law, BA (Hons), Dip PM, 1st Dan Black Belt Tae Kwon Do is a founding member and project director of East Midlands Economic Network, EMEN. He specialises in Community Economic Development, Community Cohesion and Bridge Building. He is currently responsible for Belgrave Memories an oral history heritage project looking at Belgrave, an area of Leicester that has seen considerable change between 1945 and 2005. Bill has led trade missions to Düsseldorf, Germany and Dallas, USA as well as participating in one to Budapest, Hungary. He was also responsible for securing the first voluntary sector led Single Regeneration Budget programme for Braunstone, Leicester in the East Midlands and took the lead in creating the Braunstone Partnership, which brought £50 million of regeneration money to Braunstone where he lives. **Contact: 07915641292**

Tim Haq a Member of the Institute of Business Consulting is a social entrepreneur, journalist and urban regeneration specialist who has been described as an intercultural innovator. He is an executive member of Leicester's Cultural Partnership and specialises in working in some of the most disadvantaged areas developing Community Bridge Building schemes that create understanding and community cohesion. Working with Leicester Asian Youth Association and artist Paul Barrand, he has just completed Leicester's first ethnic comic book, Flavours of Leicester and is already developing a second. Working with Bill he has developed Belgrave Memories into an exhibition that will be shown at Leicester's New Walk Museum and a book Tales of Belgrave. Tim has taken the lead in developing business support services for the regions minority businesses and has headed up such well known organisations as Leicestershire Asian Business Association and Minority Enterprises East Midlands. **Contact: 07861688844**

Key Recommendations:

1. Britain is a secular state, with a place for religion, but where religion is only one facet of the national life. As a secular state, we have freedoms of religion that apply to everyone in this country. Those are the freedom to practice any religion that does not breach the criminal law (for example one that uses human sacrifice). Secondly, we have the freedom to practice no religion; we can be atheist, agnostic or just awkward. Third, we have the freedom to criticise religion

and its institutions and we cannot be threatened with murder where we practice that freedom. Anyone who does not understand those freedoms and want to deny them to us is a religious extremist.

2. A key factor in creating a national identity is a common language, cohesion, integration, and community bridge building is impossible in a Tower of Babel, no one understands anyone else, so we must all speak a common language. Britain has many languages, Gaelic (Irish, and Scottish), Welsh, English, and many others. However the official language of Britain is English and all who choose to live in Britain must learn that language. That official language must be used throughout the whole of the United Kingdom if it is to remain united, integrated, and cohesive.

3. The ideal is that people learn the language before they settle here. The practicalities are that many will not, or cannot. The debate that is needed must therefore look at how we can ease the transition to all Britons speaking English, how quickly that can be done, who should bear the cost, and how we deal with people who are too old to learn a new language, there will be some who are in that position and they are best dealt with by transition clauses for the elderly. Those questions however should not be used to avoid us all having a common language – English.

4. The issue of translating information into foreign languages must also be addressed. The Commission on Integration and Cohesion did so, and their conclusions were not only that the cost was too high, but that the signal it sent out about separate and parallel lives was antithetical to an integrated and cohesive society. We fully support that, and include it in our recommendations.

5. A further conclusion of that same Commission was that funding monocultural organisations or issues under the banner of multiculturalism was in fact creating divisions and had to stop. They found some exceptions where it could continue to build the capacity of newly formed organisations and where that funding was granted it should be exceptional, time limited, and publicly explained. We fully support that recommendation.

6. We should create an intercultural identity, based first on being British and second on our individual country of origin, not our religion. The first identity has to be rooted in Britain and the second identity in the Country of Origin or their Ethnicities. This is the important step that needs to be taken by every citizen but officially accepted and encouraged by the state. Such identities have to be British-Pakistanis or British-Indians just to give two examples. They should not be British-Muslim or British-Hindu. The connection has to be between land to land or land to ethnicity but not land to religion.

7. Key other values are loyalty to the state, respect for the monarchy, acceptance of pluralism, obedience to the rule of law, and the internalisation of the value of democratic principles.

8. One final recommendation concerns measuring how far we are, or have travelled towards an Intercultural State where most aspects of our life are not dividing us but driving us towards communities that celebrate what they have in common. That measurement cannot be made by looking at what is going on and changing in middle class society, it must include measuring change at the working and underclass levels, because those are the levels where multiculturalism has failed so badly, and it is those levels that must change if we are to become integrated and cohesive