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ARE YOU A VICTIM OF THE LABEL "NON-VIOLENT EXTREMIST"?

Challenging Loaded Concepts Found in These Newfangled, Sound-Bite Buzzwords



Have you ever been labelled as a 'non-violent extremist', simply because you share core beliefs, which are presumed to be extreme, with radical Muslims who follow the ways of the deviant Khawārij?

Have you ever been branded as a 'Wahhabi' or 'Saudi-Salafi' by a non-Muslim who has no real idea of the concepts that give synthetic life to these buzzwords? Do you ever wonder why these ad hominem bywords are so frequently used in the media and on social networking sites whenever a Muslim or Islamic issue arises? Despite these buzzwords just being labels, why do they possess the power to marginalise, destroy credibility and reputations? To what extent do these pejorative labels shape the thoughts of those who constantly hear them and to what degree do they psychologically affect their targets? Are you fully aware that these labels,

ARE YOU A VICTIM OF THE LABEL ‘NON-VIOLENT EXTREMIST’? CHALLENGING LOADED CONCEPTS FOUND IN THESE NEWFANGLED, SOUND-BITE BUZZWORDS¹

PART ONE

“But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought.”

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been labelled as a ‘non-violent extremist’, simply because you share core beliefs, which are presumed to be extreme, with radical Muslims who follow the ways of the deviant Khawārij sect? Have you ever been branded as a ‘Wahhabi’ or ‘Saudi-Salafi’ by a non-Muslim who has no real idea of the concepts that give synthetic life to these buzzwords? Do you ever wonder why these ad hominem bywords are so frequently used in the media and on social networking sites whenever a Muslim or Islamic issue arises? Despite these buzzwords just being labels, why do they possess the power to marginalise, destroy credibility and reputations? To what extent do these pejorative labels shape the thoughts of those who constantly hear them and to what degree do they psychologically affect their targets? Are you fully aware that these labels, which come loaded with highly negative connotations, are the root cause that lead to the justification and implementation of new government policy that impinges on our current civil liberties?

In our view, terms such as ‘non-violent extremist’ and ‘Wahhabi’ are not coined to establish a truism per se; rather they are also coined to arm the easily agitated masses with ad hominem verbal weaponry to character assassinate anyone who fits their open-to-interpretation definitions. Many of us Muslims undermine the power of labels and downplay the detrimental psychological effects they can have on an individual or on a community. The point of a well-crafted, ad hominem label can plunge deep into a person’s mental tissue, leaving scars that do not easily heal. Labels carry

¹ Paper compiled by Abū Amīnah AbdurRahmān Bennett.

concepts and when these concepts go airborne in the minds of the masses, they contaminate at an alarming rate.

Ad hominem labels, such as ‘non-violent extremist’ and ‘Wahhabi’ are louder in the digital world than the real world because worlds that are separated geographically are colliding digitally on the domain of the internet. It seems that nowadays the corporate news media is the propagandist drum that marches many to the electronic battlefields of YouTube and many other social networking combat zones. And then, like times bygone, ritual war duels are first fought in the video presentation and then armies on each side rage towards each other in the comment sections with an array of weapons forged from the steel of language. However, the scariest thing about the deafening noise of war that is taking place in the digital world is that when we (in the West) enter into the real world that exists outside of our front doors, the clinking and clanging of verbal arms is nowhere to be heard and everything seems so serene and peaceful.

In this paper, we will undertake the challenge to query the validity and usage of three of the most notorious neologisms² that are aimed at Muslims today. We will endeavour to dissect the anatomy of these newfangled terms and expose them for what they truly are and for what they conceptionally represent to all parties involved.

² The introduction or use of new words or new senses of existing words.

NOTORIOUS NEOLOGISM # 1: ‘NON-VIOLENT EXTREMIST’

TERMINOLOGY IN THE MAKING

This game-changing phrase is the newest arrival on the block but, in spite of that, it has wasted little time in introducing itself brazenly into the psyche of the masses. Although this phrase is still in its infancy, it is hands-down the most dangerous of all new-age terminology because (a) this term has the broad capacity to include Muslims who faithfully follow Islam correctly and (b) it is highly suggestive of a direct correlation between ‘non-violent extremism’ and violent extremism. Professor Arun Kundnani, an Adjunct Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication at New York University, who teaches terrorism studies at John Jay College, states in his paper *A Decade Lost: Rethinking Radicalisation and Extremism*.

A 2010 study conducted by Jamie Bartlett and colleagues at the Demos think tank is one of the few to include a control group in its design. It specifically set out to examine the difference between violent and non-violent radicals – a distinction that is routinely blurred in the official narrative and yet is crucial to any effective counter-terrorism policy-making. The study, *The Edge of Violence*, compared the cases of 58 individual terrorists in Europe and Canada with 28 individual radicals not involved in terrorism. It found that “al-Qaeda inspired terrorism in the West shares much in common with other counter-cultural, subversive groups of predominantly angry young men”. From this perspective, specific kinds of extremist ideology associated with Islamism appear incidental rather than essential to the turn to violence. Having a belief in “extremist” Islam, however defined, does not correlate with involvement in terrorism.³

³ <http://www.claystone.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Claystone-rethinking-radicalisation.pdf>

This new broad phrase ‘non-violent extremist’ offers to ‘teach’ the general public the similarities between a ‘non-violent extremist’ and a violent extremist. What it does not teach the masses, however, is *who* and *what* gets to define a ‘non-violent extremist’.

‘Non-violent extremist’ is a phrase that is being moulded to conveniently fit Muslims who cannot be labelled as violent extremists. Although lack of correlation exists in the term ‘violent’, this is quickly made up for by drawing parallels through shared ideology which paves the way for generic application of the term ‘extremist’. Thus, even though victims of this phrase cannot be directly associated with violent extremists, the phrase still strongly suggests that ‘non-violent extremists’, due to shared ideology, have the inbuilt potential to become violent extremists, which creates a level of paranoia and scepticism towards those who suffer the burden of this label. Right now, Salafis are suffering the burden of this ad hoc label, which has all the hallmarks of a smear campaign. Smear tactics are achieved by converging two dissimilar identities through a common denominator until they lose all individual recognition and are then labelled en masse as one. The more a thing can be associated with another objectionable thing, the more you can argue a shared reality for both things.

When we think of a violent extremist, our minds effortlessly conjure up images of fringe groups like al-Qaeda, ISIS⁴ and Boko Haram⁵ who, with impunity, commit atrocities against Muslims and non-Muslims all around the world. Thus, the term ‘violent extremist’ requires very little introduction because we already have real-time definitions of what a violent extremist is. No one needs to teach the Muslims, and non-Muslims for that matter, the definition of a violent extremist because many Muslims around the world learn its harrowing definition at first hand. However, despite violent extremism being a global reality, the reality of the root cause of violent extremism cannot be entirely sourced back to ideology or a failure to embrace western values and ideals, as the government’s official narrative would have us believe.⁶ Besides ideology, there are other factors

⁴ The ISIS Papers: <http://www.salafimanhaj.com/?p=318>.

⁵ Boko Haraam in Nigeria: <http://www.salafimanhaj.com/?p=44>

⁶ Professor Arun Kundnani in his section on what causes terrorism states the following:

that play an equally important role in breeding violent extremism or terrorism. Professor Arun Kundnani expounds on another causative factor of violent extremism that has had a historical role throughout the decades:

This relational aspect [between “the West” and “radical Islam”] requires us to investigate the ways in which Western states themselves “radicalised,” as much as “Islamist” political movements, both becoming more willing to use violence in a wider range of contexts. By analysing the interaction between the different parties in the conflict and how each constructs an interpretation of the other’s actions, it becomes possible to coherently explain the violence of the last decade. This line of thinking returns the current debate on radicalisation back to the older work on the causes of terrorism, such as that of Martha Crenshaw, which regarded political context and organisational decision-making to be as important as individual motivation and ideology.

He then goes on to say,

In this light, recent threats of terrorism inspired by al-Qaeda are not exceptional but fit a longer historical pattern. The structure of causation of al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism in Britain is not all that different from that of the anarchist bombers of the late nineteenth century or the Provisional Irish Republican Army from the late 1960s, even though the goals and organisational structures of these various groups differ significantly. In all these cases, understanding the roots of violence requires recognising the way that oppositional movements decide to turn to violence in the face of state violence: for the anarchists, it was the violent suppression of the Paris Commune in 1871, in which tens of thousands were killed, that triggered the turn to dynamite and assassination across Europe; for the Provisionals, it was the British army’s violent suppression of the nationalist civil rights movement in Northern

In the official narrative, the political context and the internal decision-making within an insurgent social movement are largely irrelevant in explaining why terrorist violence occurs. Instead the official narrative implies that, once an individual has adopted an extremist religious ideology, terrorism will result, irrespective of the political context or any calculation on the part of an organisation or social movement.

Ireland; for the 7/7 bombers, it was the images of mass violence and torture in Iraq. Likewise, the recent flow of foreign fighters to Syria is likely to be linked at least as much to images of repression of the opposition movement by President Bashar Assad’s regime as to adherence to any kind of extremist ideology. The “new terrorism” thesis tends to obscure these connections by assuming that, since the 1990s, religious ideology has begun to directly cause terrorism, independently of political and social contexts.

Based on the historical patterns of terrorist violence throughout the decades, or even the centuries, it becomes pretty clear why the government’s official narrative predictably fails to identify a crucial cause in the development of terrorist violence because that would require the unimaginable from the government – disclosing to the public that it plays a central role in generating terrorist violence. So let us now turn our attention to the phrase ‘non-violent extremist’, pull out the scalpel and dissect the anatomy of this unclassified species.

RUSSIAN NESTING DOLLS

Using Russian nesting dolls as a metaphor fits perfectly with the concept found in the new-age phrase ‘non-violent extremist’. The outer doll is representative of non-violent extremist groups, like al-Muhajiroun, who condone and legitimise the violent methods used by groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS. At this stage of the metaphor, Salafis would agree that groups like al-Muhajiroun are indeed a swinging door that not only swings inwards towards violent extremist Muslim groups, it also swings outwards towards non-Muslim extremist groups, like the EDL.⁷ Not only were the

⁷ In the month of March, 2009, the merry men of al-Muhajiroun decided to shoulder the lofty responsibility of performing a public act of enjoining good and forbidding evil. Armed with weapons of syllable structure and provocative placards, they merrily marched together to the town centre of Luton. The mission was plain and simple: “when the Royal Anglian Regiment marches through Luton town centre, we shall stand in defiance and shout at the top of our voices anything inflammatory in order to whip up passions of a pernicious nature. We will persist in this until members of the public foam at the mouth and try to attack us, even if they are [old age pensioners](#) and women. Then we’ll make a quick exit surrounded by a “*taqbiit*” police escort for our own protection, return to our secret headquarters, chalk this down as ‘mission accomplished’ and then upload videos to YouTube with self-adulating titles, such as “the Lions of Luton”.

Whilst al-Muhajiroun were mutually patting each other on their backs for *another* good day’s work, back in the real world, something sinister was left behind to germinate – and why not, given that all external and internal factors were present: extremist Muslims, anger, hatred and the key property: xenophobia – all the basic elements needed for the

Salafis effectively branding groups like al-Muhajiroun as ‘non-violent’ extremists, due to their noxious ideology, Salafis were refuting ‘non-violent extremists’, like al-Muhajiroun, long before they gained notoriety on UK shores.⁸ The Salafis have produced books, articles, pamphlets, leaflets and have organised conferences for the sole purpose of refuting the toxic da’wah of al-Muhajiroun. No one inside or outside of Islam has done more to expose the rancid reality of al-Muhajiroun than the Salafis. And for this reason alone, the Salafis should not be branded as ‘non-violent extremists’. So why is it that the next Russian doll that pops out of the main one (e.g. al-Muhajiroun) has a label around its neck saying ‘Saudi-Salafi’ or ‘Saudi-Wahhabi’?!

ARE DEFINITIONS KNOWN BY THEIR LABELS OR ARE LABELS KNOWN BY THEIR DEFINITIONS?

Based on how the phrase is currently used in the media, which influences how terminology is perceived amongst the masses, a ‘non-violent extremist’ can accommodate for two meanings:

1. **A non-violent extremist** who holds extreme beliefs and advocates or condones violence which leads directly to violent extremism.⁹
2. **A non-violent extremist** who holds beliefs that are deemed extreme because they conflict with western liberal definitions of morality, ethics and moderation.¹⁰

growth of another extreme fungus. This extreme fungus, initially, went by the name of “the United People of Luton” but now it is better known by the notorious name “English Defence League (EDL)”.

⁸ Salafis were actively warning against al-Muhajiroun long before the noble term “al-Muhajiroun” was being abused and misused by these bandits. Back in the day, when they were still members of another misguided group called ‘Hizbut Tahrir’, the Salafis were exposing their fraudulent beliefs and fraudulent call.

⁹ Even this definition is debatable, as argued by Professor Arun Kundnani, who authored a paper on extremism and radicalisation which challenges the Government’s narrative on extremism. In his paper, Kundnani argues that the Government’s counter terrorism prevent strategy conveniently overlooks the real causes of terrorism and focalises all blame on extremist ideology. He quotes extensively from terrorism experts. From them John Horgan - director of the International Center for the Study of Terrorism at Pennsylvania State University - who states,

The idea that radicalization causes terrorism is perhaps the greatest myth alive today in terrorism research ... [First], the overwhelming majority of people who hold radical beliefs do not engage in violence. And second, there is increasing evidence that people who engage in terrorism don’t necessarily hold radical beliefs.

¹⁰ Professor Arun Kundnani states in his paper (p. 11) *A Decade Lost: Rethinking Radicalisation and Extremism*.

For non-Muslims and Muslims who have an agenda against the Salafis, keeping both definitions in circulation works heavily in their favour. The first of the two definitions is the one they wish to be implanted in the minds of the masses, but if that fails then the second definition acts as a fail-safe and prevents any damage to the “integrity” of those who peddled the first definition. In other words, even if the first definition cannot be applied to the Salafis, they are still extremists anyway because they have **“reactionary attitudes to gender equality and gay rights”**; show **“contempt for parliamentary democracy”**; have **“disdain for other faiths”** *ad nauseam*. Thus, even if Salafis do not promote violence or advocate it, they are still worthy contenders for the title of ‘non-violent extremist’ because they fit the description of the second definition. However, a distinction must be made between fitting a description and fitting a valid description. Descriptions are not infallible and immune to scrutiny, especially descriptions that are based on a shifting ethical and moral paradigm that is a product of a certain place and time.¹¹

So what exactly is it that requires the Salafis to be labelled as ‘non-violent extremists’? And what we mean here by ‘non-violent extremist’ is extremism that can quickly mutate into a violent strand of radicalism. We already know how this rapid mutation works with groups such as al-Muhajiroun, who are effectively PR spokesmen and apologists for violent extremist groups, like al-Qaeda and ISIS. Not only do they share pernicious Khawārijī ideology, they also share “scholars” and radical speakers. So forthcoming are al-Muhajiroun in their support of violent extremism, they even

Another linked argument, made consistently by governments over the last eight years, is that the extremism underpinning terrorism is encouraged by a failure to celebrate and promote the values upon which British society is seen as resting. A positive defence of such values is regarded as a necessary part of the “battle of ideas” against extremism in Britain. Lack of allegiance to these British values creates, according to the official narrative, a cultural environment in which extremism, and therefore terrorism, is more likely. It follows that there needs to be a public campaign to promote British values. This might involve the requirement that new citizens declare an oath of allegiance to those values or requiring that immigrants pass tests of their values before being admitted. More generally, though, this is an appeal to commentators, journalists, academics and the general public to become more forceful in defending Britishness. The chief barrier to such a celebration of British values is thought to be the doctrine of multiculturalism.

¹¹ Challenging the second definition requires a paper in and of itself. This is because it requires an investigation into what ultimately makes one set of ethics more morally superior over a competing set of ethics so that objective conclusions can be drawn in defining good and evil, morality or immorality. Perhaps a paper which is better suited for this is [Who owns the universal rights to the terms “Moderation” or “Moderate Muslim”?](#)

praised the 7/7 bombings and other atrocities committed around the world. But the clearest example has to be the murder of Lee Rigby in broad daylight by Michael Adebolajo, who was a member of al-Muhajiroun, and the subsequent refusal of Anjem Choudary to condemn it on Newsnight 24th May 2013. Thus, groups like al-Muhajiroun are open and shut cases when it comes to establishing a direct correlation between the extremist beliefs/methodology of armchair Jihadis (e.g. al-Muhajiroun) with violent acts of extremism by the likes of ISIS and al-Qaeda.

So why must Salafis be dumped amongst these rotten apples? Do the Salafis advocate beliefs that stem from the oldest sect in Islam, the Khawārij? Do we call for the toppling of governments or for the mass spilling of innocent Muslim or non-Muslim blood? Do we call for shar’iah law to be implemented on British soil? Do we fail to speak out against atrocities that are committed domestically¹² and globally? Do we call for the Khilāfah to be established in the UK or do we even acknowledge the so-called Islamic state in Iraq and Sham?¹³ Do we fail to speak out against radical speakers who help to breed radicalism¹⁴ in our communities?¹⁵ Do we even protest or stage

¹²<http://www.islamagainstextremism.com/articles/ztyclwj-revolutionary-and-jihadi-ideologies-of-hizb-ut-tahrir-and-al-muhajiroon-are-behind-the-woolwich-killing.cfm>

¹³ [The So-Called ‘Islamic State of ’Irāq and Shām](#)

¹⁴ The term ‘radicalism’ is an interesting term because it focuses all observations on the individual and not on the factors external of the individual. This point is eloquently summed up by the historian Mark Sedgwick:

The concept of radicalisation emphasizes the individual and, to some extent, the ideology and the group, and significantly deemphasizes the wider circumstances – the “root causes” that it became so difficult to talk about after 9/11, and that are still often not brought into analyses. So long as the circumstances that produce Islamist radicals’ declared grievances [e.g. western foreign policy] are not taken into account, it is inevitable that the Islamist radical will often appear as a “rebel without a cause”.

<http://www.claystone.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Claystone-rethinking-radicalisation.pdf>

Following this quote, Professor Arun Kundnani adds,

Instead the official narrative implies that, once an individual has adopted an extremist religious ideology, terrorism will result, irrespective of the political context or any calculation on the part of an organisation or social movement.

¹⁵ [A Critique of Shakeel Beggs](#) [The Savage Barbarism of Abou Qataadah](#) [A Message to Anjem Choudary](#) [Refutation of Mizanur Rahman Abu Baraa](#) [A Critique of the Methodology of Anwar Al Awlaki](#)

demonstrations on the streets on Britain (or anywhere else for that matter), running around with pathetic placards and foaming at the mouth? How many Salafis are currently locked up in prison for inciting violence or anything else remotely related to violent extremism? These are just a few of the things Salafis do not do; how about some of the things which Salafis *do* do that incontrovertibly proves we have nothing to do with the indiscriminating term ‘non-violent extremists’. We have already mentioned above that the Salafis have been fighting on all fronts (including grassroots)¹⁶ against non-violent and violent extremists long before these divisionary tactical terms came into existence. So, if there is nothing (and there is nothing) that requires Salafis to be labelled as ‘non-violent extremists’, in the first definition, then that only leaves the second definition which is a millennia-old, on-going argument, not just against the Salafis but against most Muslims¹⁷ and Islam itself! No matter how hard we attempt to free ourselves from the first definition of a ‘non-violent extremist, opposing socio-religious views require that we be eternally seen as ‘non-violent extremists’. Thus, due to mutually exclusive beliefs, we should expect the second of the two definitions to haunt us wherever we go, particularly when the places we go are governed by ethics that fundamentally conflict with Islam. Muslims in the West need to wake up and smell the aroma of the new reality - the days of having our Western cake and eating it are long

¹⁶ Before it became a fashion trend post 9/11, the Salafis were at the forefront within Muslim communities in condemning extremism and the Jihadi-Takfiri narrative. Not only were the Salafi scholars writing against Bin Ladin from the mid-1990s before Bin Ladin became a household name, but also within the UK the Salafi communities of Luton, Brixton and Birmingham were already countering the propaganda of Jihadi theorists such as Abu Qataadah, Abu Hamza al-Misri, Abdullah El-Faisal al-Jamayki, Omar Bakri and many others. It is thus a great disservice, as well as being grossly ignorant of trends amongst the Muslims, to somehow conflate the Salafi tradition with the methodology of ISIS, al-Qaeda and the Takfiris and regard them as being an offshoot from the Salafi ethos. Hence, in the UK the Salafis have been involved in community outreach wherein those who may harbour extreme ideas are directly challenged and confronted (this incidentally has not been, and cannot be, carried out in a knowledge-based way by any other segment of the Muslim community), engaging hard to reach Muslim youth, prison projects with both adults and young offenders which provide Islamic rehab. Moreover, it has been the Salafis who have been producing and publishing literature against such extremist ideas and disseminating such material among the Muslim youth in the UK.

¹⁷ We say ‘most Muslims’ as opposed to all Muslims because organisations like the Quilliam Foundation are an exception to the general rule. Majid Nawaz has disembowelled the core contents of his Islam so much so that he is even accepted by insipid individuals like Douglas Murray and Sam Harris. Such is the budding relationship between Harris and Nawaz, Harris has even donated money to the Quilliam foundation and intends to co-author a book with Nawaz. Think about that for a moment... Sam Harris, who said **“and so, while religious people are not generally mad, their core beliefs absolutely are...”** and he also said, **“Islam, at this moment, is the mother lode of bad ideas,”** is authoring a book with Majid Nawaz. The Prophet (sallallāhu alaihi wa sallam) said, *“A Man is on the religion of his friend, so you should be careful whom you take for friends.”* (At-Tirmidhi and Abu Dāwūd) The only problem here is that we are not quite sure which of the two buddies needs to be more careful!

gone; we now live in a post 9/11, belligerent climate and this climate takes no hostages unless they unconditionally surrender. The worrying thing here is that many Muslims in their desperation to unshackle themselves from the first definition, are also unshackling themselves from the second definition!

At this point, let us remind ourselves of the two possible definitions and designated targets of the label ‘non-violent extremists’:

<p style="text-align: center;">NON-VIOLENT EXTREMIST (LABEL #1)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NON-VIOLENT EXTREMIST (LABEL #2)</p>
<p>A non-violent extremist: one who holds extreme beliefs and advocates or condones violence which leads directly to radicalism and violent extremism. This label is not an exact science because it fails to take into consideration all causative factors that lead to radicalism and violent extremism, such as Western foreign policy.</p> <p>Who legitimately fits this label? Anyone who fits its measurements, such as al-Muhajiroun and anyone of their ilk. Salafis do not warrant this label because there is nothing in the least that links them to radicalism or terrorism. Such is the genericity of this label, it can even be applied to non-Muslims and even to those who spawned such labels, as we will see in the next section.</p>	<p>A non-violent extremist: one who holds beliefs that are deemed extreme because they diametrically oppose western liberal definitions of morality, ethics and moderation. This label is not a nailed-down label because definitions of morality, ethics and moderation are not inherently owned by the West.</p> <p>Who fits this label? Just being a nominal Muslim is enough to warrant this label. However, with consummate ease, the same charge could be made by Muslims against non-Muslims or even non-Muslims against other non-Muslims because right now there are no universally accepted standards that unite mankind in their concepts of morality, ethics and moderation. Therefore, before labelling people can commence, definitions behind the labels are required to be justified. Pinning on labels is an easy exercise; making them stick is where constructive debate needs to take place between opposing paradigms. However, given</p>

	the hostile attitude of the media and its fanaticism in promulgating government policy, it is next to impossible to find a media environment that allows Muslims to coherently and constructively challenge these labels. ¹⁸
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DAVID CAMERON AND HIS DEFAMING DEFINITION OF A NON-VIOLENT EXTREMIST

The worst types of politically motivated definitions are those that (purposely) fail to define with any precision. There is nothing worse than a definition that is broad in its scope and vast in its implications, especially when the definition is used for purposes of defaming. On the 25th September, 2014, David Cameron gave his closing speech at the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). During this speech the cryptic phrase ‘non-violent extremist’ was given its second voyage with the sending off of these words:

As evidence emerges about the backgrounds of those convicted of terrorist offences, it is clear that many of them were initially influenced by preachers who claim not to encourage violence, but whose world view can be used as a justification for it. We know this world view.

The peddling of lies: that 9/11 was a Jewish plot or that the 7/7 London attacks were staged. The idea that Muslims are persecuted all over the world as a deliberate act of Western policy.¹⁹ The concept of an inevitable clash of civilisations.

¹⁸ Once again, we have another cautionary tale of what happens when you enter the lion’s den to negotiate with a lion who only sees you as a threat and a potential enemy. On this perilous occasion, it was Ibrahim Hewitt who thought he would take up the fatal challenge. The lion’s den was *Newsnight* but this time there were two lions waiting for Hewitt: Newsnight Presenter, Jeremy Paxton and the lion for hire, Majid Nawaz. In vain, Hewitt tried his best to negotiate and reason with the lion in his den but, due to the nature of the beast which Hewitt should have been aware of, he was savagely attacked and thus it required the sacrifice of a few limbs in order to escape with his life. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JlUMY8l6bE>

¹⁹ The loaded word here is ‘deliberate’ which implies that only deliberate attempts to destabilise certain Muslim countries can be argued as a causative factor for fanning the flames of radicalism and terrorism. This is inherently

He goes on to state,

We must be clear: to defeat the ideology of extremism²⁰ we need to deal with all forms of extremism – not just violent extremism. For governments, there are some obvious ways we can do this. We must ban preachers of hate from coming to our countries. We must proscribe organisations that incite terrorism against people at home and abroad. We must work together to take down illegal online material like the recent videos of ISIL murdering hostages. And we must stop the so called non-violent extremists from inciting hatred and intolerance in our schools, our universities and yes, even our prisons.

Keeping in mind the dual-nature of the label ‘non-violent extremist’, when Cameron states “**we must stop the so called non-violent extremists from inciting hatred and intolerance in our schools, our universities and yes, even our prisons**” what definition of non-violent extremist does he intend? If he intends definition number one then we say without a shred of hesitation that your usage of the label in this regard cannot apply to Salafis. If, however, he intends the second of the two definitions then we say what we have been saying throughout this paper: that the legitimacy of this label depends upon who owns the rights to age-old concepts of morality, ethics and moderation. Imposing your own definitions through appropriation does not unconditionally hand over to you the universal rights to what constitutes morality, ethics and moderation.

The keywords in Cameron’s opening paragraph, as far as Salafis are concerned, are “**those convicted of terrorist offences,**” which immediately raises the same question which we asked earlier: how many Salafis have been convicted of terrorist offences? Cameron is establishing a connection between radical speakers (e.g. Choudary) and radicalised Muslims who have been

false. Moreover, when propaganda war slogans are globally used, like ‘War on Terror’, followed by the deployment of foreign troops in various Muslim countries and a subsequent pattern of human rights violations against Muslims (e.g. Abu Ghuraib) ensues along with religious transgressions against Islam, it is pretty hard for the Muslims to maintain a distinction between ‘a war on terror’ and a war on Muslims or Islam.

²⁰ Once again, we have that oversimplified, government rhetoric that terrorism and radicalisation all boils down to ideology.

convicted of terrorist offences (e.g. Adebolajo and Richard Dart). However, when Salafis enter the equation, not only are they free of any speakers who condone or advocate terrorism, there are also no Salafis who have been convicted of terrorist offences because the Salafi Da’wah is against extremism, let alone radicalism and terrorism.

Another important section in this opening paragraph are the words **“it is clear that many of them were initially influenced by preachers who claim not to encourage violence...”** This is the section that lays the groundwork for the first definition we spoke of earlier: **“A non-violent extremist who holds extreme beliefs or condones extreme actions that lead directly to violent extremism.”** Based on this definition, can a single Salafi be named who has been **“influenced by preachers who claim not to encourage violence”**? If one ‘Salafi’ is named, we guarantee you he is not Salafi. He is either a Jihadi/Takfiri wolf in Salafi clothing or he has been mislabelled as ‘Salafi’ for political convenience or ignorant conflation.

At this point in our critique of Cameron’s words, we will allow disgruntled non-Muslims²¹ to challenge Cameron’s next words: **“The peddling of lies: that 9/11 was a Jewish plot or that the 7/7 London attacks were staged.”**²² Peter Drew, who writes for GlobalResearch.ca, states in ‘An Open Letter’ to David Cameron:

‘British PM David Cameron: ‘non-violent extremists’ Including “9/11 Truthers” and “Conspiracy Theorists” are Just as Dangerous as ISIL Terrorists’²³

Putting aside the direct issue of ISIL for a moment, I find this position on 9/11 evidence to be quite incredible. It is a position that is either extremely ignorant, or it is a position that goes against freedom and democracy in British society to such

²¹ “An Open Letter” by Peter Drew: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/british-pm-david-cameron-non-violent-extremists-including-911-truthers-and-conspiracy-theorists-are-just-as-dangerous-as-isil-terrorists/5405059>

²² As for conspiracy theories then they are akin to getting lost in a maze without exits. Regardless of who perpetrated the 9/11 atrocity, the “official” story will always be that it was done by Muslims. In a world of disinformation, it is not what you know that counts any longer; it is what you can prove to dispel mass perception that matters. Good luck with that!

²³ Salafimanhaj.com has no affiliation and does not support globalreaserch.ca; the aim here was to merely show the obscurity of the phrase ‘non-violent extremists’ and its far reaching implications.

an extent that it is scarcely believable. Huge numbers of extremely credible and professional people across the world are now bringing forward incontrovertible facts and evidence showing us that the events of 9/11 have been systematically covered up, and that the public has been deceived and manipulated on this issue at a quite incredible level. Just like the public was deceived and manipulated about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

But yet you have just stated to the world that you consider members of the public to be 'non-violent extremists' and a part of the ISIL challenge if they merely wish that these facts, evidence, and information about 9/11 be made available to the wider public and that appropriate investigations are held.

I repeat my previous point. To make that statement to the world as you did, you are either extremely ignorant about this issue, or you are attempting to take a position which is so at odds with a decent, free society that it beggars belief. I find it difficult to believe that the Prime Minister of Britain would be unaware of what I have stated here, and therefore I have to believe that it is the latter scenario that is most likely.

When you have disgruntled non-Muslims challenging the label 'non-violent extremists', this clearly shows the far-reaching implications of this blanket label. Such is the trajectory of this label that it can even have a boomerang effect. Would it not be from the purest of irony that Cameron and his predecessor, Tony Blair are both prime candidates for the label 'non-violent extremists'? Actually, investigative journalist, Dr. Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed takes my question to its logical conclusions by asking **"Is David Cameron a Violent Extremist?"**²⁴

CHARACTER ASSASSINATION THROUGH GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

Hastiness (or deliberateness) in generalisation can quickly lead to a typical guilt by association fallacy: **Major premise:** ISIS are violent extremists with Islamic beliefs. **Minor Premise:** Salafis have Islamic beliefs. **Conclusion:** Salafis are non-violent extremists. Some people who single out the Salafis for unmerited negative attention, do so by this crude form of syllogism, loaded with

²⁴ http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/dr-nafeez-mosaddeq-ahmed/david-cameron-extremism_b_5919516.html

false properties. A good example of this can be found in an entry written in the *Huffington Post*²⁵ by Azim Ibrahim, who is described as **“a Research Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School’s International Security Program and a World Fellow at Yale University.”** This particular entry by Ibrahim is titled **“How Did Richard Dart Become a Terrorist?”** In this entry, Ibrahim provides his version of events that led to the radicalisation of Richard (aka Salahuddin) Dart and his subsequent arrest and imprisonment for six years for terrorism offences. Ibrahim, who obviously has an agenda against Salafis, links Dart’s descent into radicalism to **“the conservative belief of Wahhabism”**. Not content with just that blatant fabrication, he then goes on to define the **“doctrine of Wahhabism”**:

Alienated youth in Western and Middle Eastern countries are attracted to the message of violent action and Muslim converts can be dangerous activists if influenced by radical well-funded Islamist movements.²⁶

Significant blame lies with the ideological foundation of such groups - which comes in the form of the conservative belief of Wahhabism - the official state doctrine of Saudi Arabia. Though the Saudi government does not explicitly promote terrorism,²⁷ its official state doctrine of Wahhabism advocates anti-Semitism, misogyny, interaction with non-Muslims only in cases of necessity and the ex-communication

²⁵ <http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/azeem-ibrahim/>

²⁶ It is a common myth that Salafis are well-funded by the Saudi state but the reality could not be further from the truth. The slogan at the end of this myth is fuelled by two different factions. First, you have the Jihadi/Takfeeri smear campaign which has been accusing the Salafis for decades of being funded by the Saudi state. Secondly, you have the anti ‘Salafi’ brigade amongst the Shia/Sufis/non-Muslims who herd various, conflicting groups of Muslims into the pen labelled ‘Salafi/Wahhabi’ and then claim mass funding for all by the Saudi state. The second accusation is more absurd than the first because (bear with us) this mass labelling also includes those who label the Salafis as ‘Saudi sell-outs’ (e.g. Takfeeris), who have an acute hatred for the Saudi state, but, despite that, they are also being funded by the people that they despise?! The simplest way to debunk this myth is through the fact that no Salafi masjid on British soil is funded by the Saudi state or any state for that matter. Truth be told, the Salafis struggle when it comes to acquiring funding outside of private donations.

²⁷ The words **“Though the Saudi government does not explicitly promote terrorism”** ties in with David Cameron’s words **“it is clear that many of them [convicted of terrorist offences] were initially influenced by preachers who claim not to encourage violence”**.

(takfir) of many Muslims who do not subscribe to their extreme interpretation of Islam.

This train-track of lies starts at the station 'Wahhabism' and then onto 'anti-Semitism' and then 'misogyny' and terminates at 'ex-communication of many Muslims who do not subscribe to their extreme interpretation of Islam'. However, just before this catalogue of accusations, there is a false statement that lends credence to the umbrella term 'non-violent extremist': 'Though the Saudi government does not explicitly promote terrorism...' For anyone who wants an honest appraisal on events taking place in Saudi and how Saudi Arabia also suffers from terrorism and extremism like anywhere else around the world then we strongly recommend that you read this paper: [Does Saudi Arabia Preach Intolerance and Hatred in the UK and the US?](#)

The term 'Wahhabism' will be examined in this paper in due course. As for the term 'misogynist' then this just shows us how far these sycophants will go in their pursuit of 'fellow' acceptance. So what is 'misogyny', according to its current definition? We say 'current' because terms and their definitions are constantly appropriated by dominant ideologies (e.g. Marxism) and socially engineered constructs (e.g. feminism). In most modern dictionaries, misogyny is defined as

...the hatred or dislike of women or girls. Misogyny can be manifested in numerous ways, including sexual discrimination, denigration of women, violence against women, and sexual objectification of women.

Even if misogyny can manifest in all of the above examples, it does not mean that (1) all types of sexual discrimination are misogynistic; (2) everything perceived as denigration is necessarily denigration, let alone misogynistic; (3) all violence against women is misogynistic and (4) sexual objectification of women, which Islam deplors, is misogynistic. The definition of misogyny is 'the hatred or dislike of women or girls', which means the hatred of women as a whole. Keep repeating its definition and the magnitude of the accusation grows bigger each time. However, the counter argument against this would be that its dictionary or antiquated definition is not how it is understood in the current climate. But this is exactly the problem – the current climate can cater for an array of definitions that source back to competing ideologies and social constructs. Moreover, many people are still unfamiliar with the meaning of misogyny and thus when they go

to the dictionary they see **'the hatred or dislike of women or girls'**. How can that deeply troubling definition not leave a lingering impression? Would it be equally fair to label anyone who sexually objectifies women (and this would require a rather large label) as misogynistic too? Or does the practice of absolutism in labelling only apply to 'Wahhabis'?

The last of the four accusations **"ex-communication (takfir) of many Muslims"** is not only intensely false but it even diagnoses Ibrahim with an acute case of double-standards because later on in his writings he states: **"It is clear that Wahhabism isn't Islam - it is a cult movement which uses Islamic terminology and has hijacked the religion using Saudi petro-dollars."** If 'Wahhabism' is not Islam then that can also be understood as a type of **"ex-communication of Muslims"**! This slander is a longstanding slander; so much so that Muhammad ibn AbdulWahhāb himself was falsely accused of the same thing that Ibrahim is accusing the Salafis (Wahhabis) of today:

وأما الكذب والبهتان، فمثل قولهم: إنا نكفر بالعموم، ونوجب الهجرة إلينا على من قدر على إظهار دينه، وأنا نكفر من لم يكفر ومن لم يقاتل، ومثل هذا وأضعاف أضعافه. فكل هذا من الكذب والبهتان الذي يصدون به الناس عن دين الله ورسوله.

Then as for these types of lies and slanderous false accusations then an example of this is their assertion that we make sweeping announcements of apostasy (takfir) and that we require from those whom can make apparent their religion to make hijrah to us. [They claim that] I declare as an apostate anyone who does not perform takfeer and who does not fight and so on and so forth. All of this amounts to lying and slanderous false accusations which diverts the people away from Allah's religion and His messenger.²⁸

Hindsight allows us to view this statement from Muhammad ibn AbdulWahhāb as a type of prospective refutation against Ibrahim himself! More importantly, Salafis do not take the issue of *takfir* lightly because to do so would be to expose oneself to the severe threats found in the following hadiths:

²⁸ *Ad-Durar as-Saniyyah* (p.104).

إذا قال رجل لأخيه: يا كافر، فقد باء بها أحدهما، فإن كان كما قال وإلا رجعت عليه.

"If a man says to his brother, 'O disbeliever', then it will apply to one of them. Either it is as he said or it will return to him."²⁹

In another hadith it states,

لَيْسَ عَلَى الْعَبْدِ نَذْرٌ فِيمَا لَا يَمْلِكُ وَلَا عِنُّ الْمُؤْمِنِ كَقَاتِلِهِ وَمَنْ قَذَفَ مُؤْمِنًا بِكُفْرٍ فَهُوَ كَقَاتِلِهِ.

"It is not for a slave of Allah to vow about something he does not own and cursing a believer is like killing him. And whoever accuses a believer of disbelief then it is like he has killed him."³⁰

Imam ash-Shawkāni said with respect to the issue of *takfir* and its dangers:

اعلم أن الحكم على الرجل المسلم بخروجه من دين الإسلام ودخوله في الكفر لا ينبغي لمسلم يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر أن يقدم عليه إلا ببرهان أوضح من شمس... ففي هذه الأحاديث وما ورد موردها أعظم زاجر وأكبر واعظ عن التسرع في التكفير...".

Let it be known that expelling a Muslim man from the religion of Islam and entering him into disbelief is not something befitting for any Muslim who believes in Allah and the last day except if he has compelling evidence that is clearer than the sun during the day... So contained in the hadith and others is the maximal deterrent and maximal legal admonishment against rushing into *takfir*.³¹

Once again, Ibrahim in his next paragraph attempts to connect 'Wahhabism' to violent extremism:

Emboldened by anarchy in failed and failing states, funded by petro-dollars and justified by fundamentalist ideology, extremist groups similar to Al Qaeda are seizing the moment and endeavouring to impose Wahhabi ideas wherever possible.

²⁹ *Sahih Bukhari and Muslim.*

³⁰ *At-Tirmidhi* (2636)

³¹ *As-Sayl al-Jarar* (4/578).

These words from Ibrahim are just simply ridiculous and his ignorance (or feigning of ignorance) surrounding the Salafis is dual-layered. **First layer:** ‘Wahhabis’ who are ‘**similar to al-Qaeda**’. **Second layer:** are funded by ‘**petrol dollars**’. This is just smear campaigning in its most crude form which preys on the general ignorance of the masses and their understandable inability to separate between Muslim factions. As for ‘Wahhabis’ being funded by ‘petro-dollar’ then, once again, Ibrahim relies on the assorted term ‘Wahhabis’ to attack indiscriminately with little care of collateral damage. There are no Salafi mosques in Britain that are funded by the ‘petro-dollar’ and that alone is enough to debunk the myth that Salafis receive funding from the Saudi state. However, if Ibrahim feels up to the task, he can challenge our denial of being funded by petrol-dollars by simply providing some evidence to substantiate his unfounded accusations.

Azeem Ibraheem’s ‘journalistic’ entry was meant to give us insight into how Richard Dart became a terrorist, but, inadvertently, the contents of Ibraheem’s article gives us an insight into the size of the axe that Ibraheem has to grind! Not one shred of evidence did Ibraheem provide to show his readers a tangible link between violent extremists and Salafis. All he did was hurl *ad hominem* attacks, hoping that some of the gooey stuff will stick in the minds of his impressionable masses.

DOES THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNISE ALL CAUSATIVE FACTORS THAT LEAD TO NON-VIOLENT AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM?

It seems that the government thinks (which is all rather too convenient) that by combating extreme ideology, it will, as a direct result, combat terrorism, which gives the strong impression that extreme ideology is the root cause (or the only cause) of all Muslim related terrorism. This line of reasoning fails miserably to take into account two important factors: (1) religious methodology and (2) domestic and foreign policy.

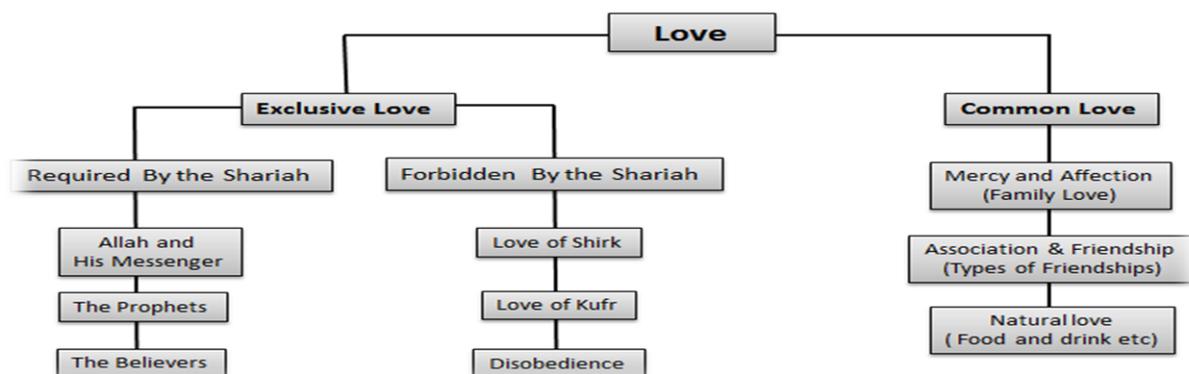
(1) Religious Methodology

For the sake of justice, we are required to make a bifurcation between extreme ideology and religious methodology that actualises extreme ideology (e.g. terrorism) or prevents its actualisation. In this particular setting, methodology can be defined as a system of rules, principles or techniques for regulating ideology. Thus, methodology, depending on its procedure or lack of it, can be an accelerant that speeds up the process of violent extremism, or inversely it can be an impediment that prevents violent extremism. By ignoring methodology and concentrating solely on ideology,

two groups who share core ideological components can be labelled as one despite them having highly contrasting methodology.

The amazing thing about the religious methodology that regulates Salafiyyah is that a Salafi could be (1) anti-British (whatever that means),³² (2) anti-foreign policy and (3) even hold beliefs and values that conflict with the values and social constructs of the society he lives in, but, in spite of all that, his uncompromising observance of the Salafi methodology would never allow him to become a radical, let alone a violent extremist! Even if we were to assume that some of our beliefs were extreme (which just translates to us having a set of beliefs that ‘radically’ differ from another set), our loyalty towards the Salafi methodology prevents us from being radicalised.

Just to demonstrate how nuanced our methodology is, the Islamic concept of love, which has various forms, is regulated so that it does not become an accelerant for the flammable substances of extremism. Islam categorises love as follows:



³² Professor Arun Kundnani brings to the political table some food for thought:

Moreover, the failure to assimilate to British values is now presented as a national security threat, adding an unprecedented intensity to questions of identity. The attempt to impose a particular version of national identity on fellow citizens in an aggressively top-down way is counter-productive. To tell young Muslims, who already feel British but on their own terms, that they need to somehow change their basic values to adjust to a society they were born into, is bound to appear undemocratic and alienating. Muslims in Britain have as much right to define the meaning of Britishness as anyone else.

The love that we nurture for Allah and His Messenger is a shari’ah type of love. Our love is not primarily based on emotion or affection, unlike common love, which can be impulsive and volatile. And this is why we find some Muslims, who fail to make an effective distinction between the two types of love, retaliating with clearly forbidden acts whenever the symbols of Islam are desecrated and dishonoured.³³ This type of love, which could be the love that bonds between family members or friends, helps to fuel this forbidden conduct because it is not the eemān-based love that is required by the shari’ah. If a Muslim truly loves Allah and His Messenger, he would place his love of obedience above His common love and do what the shari’ah requires of him in testing circumstances. And this is why the Salaf aptly named the following verse as ‘the verse of examination’:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبُّكُمْ اللَّهُ

Say, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you..."³⁴

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Sālih al-‘Uthaymeen states in his explanation of *al-Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah* when explaining the aforementioned verse:

The *ulamā* of the Salaf call this verse the verse of examination because there are people who claim to love Allah, so Allah instructed His Prophet to say to them “If You (really) love Allah then follow me”. And therefore this serves as an open challenge for anyone who claims to love Allah. So this challenge states that if you are true in your statement about loving Allah, then follow the Messenger. So he who brings something into the religion of Allah’s Messenger that has no precedent and then states, “I love Allah and His Messenger through what I innovated, then we say to him that he has lied! If your love for Allah were genuine, you would have resigned yourself to following the Messenger and not put yourself above him by enacting something new in his shar’iah. Those who adhere the most to Allah’s Messenger are the ones who are most beloved to Allah.

³³ Case in point: Charlie Hebdo affair.

³⁴ *‘Āli Imrān* (31)

He also goes on to state,

This requires us to exert the utmost effort in following the Prophet if we are to follow his footsteps on his path [i.e. his methodology]. We are neither to exit from it nor fall short in following it; we are not to add to it or take away from it. This attitude of ours will protect us from innovations, negligence, excessiveness and extremism. If we proceed with this sort of attitude, then watch how our behaviour, mannerisms, characters and acts of worship will be!

Another example of how our shari’ah-based love governs us in all of our affairs can be seen in our attitude towards public protests and demonstrations. There are non-Muslim factions in our society (think socialists) who show more vocal and physical dissent against British foreign and domestic policy than Salafis! Salafis, due to a strict religious methodology, are forbidden from participating in demonstrations or protests because besides them being nothing more than social pressure valves that allow disgruntled factions of the society to blow off steam without actually bringing about any change in government policy (think Iraq war), they are also a means (especially during these times) to anarchy, rebellion and other social upheavals, which violate the very ethos of Islam.³⁵

(2) Domestic and foreign policy

Now that the labels ‘violent extremist’ and ‘non-violent extremist’ have been stencilled out, given ‘legal’ definitions and, for the most part, hung around the necks of the Muslims, the next step is to formulate policy by using these definitions as a pretext, which more importantly could lead to

³⁵ Shaykh Salih al-Fawzān was asked about the permissibility of demonstrations and protests. He replied,

Demonstrations are not a part of the religion of Islam due to the evils which arise as a result of them, such as disuniting Muslims and dividing Muslims, along with destruction, bloodshed and other associated evils. Demonstrations are not a sound solution for [solving] problems, rather the solution lies in following the Book and the Sunnah. And the fitnah that took place in the past was worse than the fitnah taking place today. However, they solved those (problems) in light of the Divine Legislation and not in light of a non-Muslim system or the imported practice of demonstrations. This is not from the religion of Islam, for chaos is not from Islam. Islam advocates orderly conduct, patience, wisdom and referring matters back to the people of authority and to the scholars. [As Allah states] “And if you dispute in a matter refer back to Allah and the Messenger if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day.”

amendment in legislation that impinges on the civil liberties of any Muslim or non-Muslim who fits their definitions. Because these labels are linked to extremism and terrorism, any proposal for drafting legislation will be done by the British Home Office under **The Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill**.³⁶ Then we have the 116 page [Prevent Strategy](#) which was developed by the British Home Office as a counter terrorism strategy to **“reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence.”** However, claims of **“reduc[ing] the risk”** are undermined by the Government’s failure to recognise foreign and domestic policy as causative factors in radicalisation and terrorism, in spite of the claim that **“[w]e now have more information about the factors which encourage people to support terrorism and then to engage in terrorism-related activity.”** Until the government **“[p]ublicly acknowledges that foreign policy decisions are a significant factor in creating political contexts within which terrorism becomes more or less likely,”**³⁷ the claim that they **“now have more information about the factors which encourage people to support terrorism”** is largely irrelevant when the government remains in wilful denial of the geopolitical aftermath of its foreign policy over the last couple of decades. A worthy example of this wilful denial can be found on page twelve of the government’s Prevent Strategy:

We judge that radicalisation is driven by an ideology which sanctions the use of violence; by propagandists for that ideology here and overseas; and by personal vulnerabilities and specific local factors which, for a range of reasons, make that ideology seem both attractive and compelling.

FROM POORLY-DEFINED LABELS TO DISTINCT POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Now that the labels ‘violent extremist’ and ‘non-violent extremist’ have been stencilled out, given ‘legal’ definitions and, for the most part, hung around the necks of the Muslims, the next governmental step is to formulate policy by using these labels and their vague definitions as a pretext that will eventually lead to amendment in legislation. This legislation will fail miserably to

³⁶ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/2014-2015/0092/15092.pdf>

³⁷ The fifth point in Professors Arun Kundnani’s recommendations that he puts forth for countering terrorism without disrupting the societal cohesiveness which results in alienation and its knock on effects until you have a fully functioning vicious circle which may generate and spawn the very thing that the government has a duty to fight against.

eradicate radicalism and terrorism; but what it will not fail to do (because it is part of the agenda) is apply ‘muscular liberal’ pressure on Muslims to conform more to a patriotic definition of ‘Britishness’ that is sold to the masses through divisionary rhetoric like ‘our values’. It is no secret to anyone that values held dear by Muslims are not values that are held dear by the West; thus the phrase ‘our values’ wastes little time in delineating lines in the sand. Prior to 9/11, the co-existence of contrasting values was tolerable, but post 9/11 has seen a rapid rise in belligerent policy, both domestic and foreign. It was not so long ago when Salafis were being funded to fight extremism but now we have been governmentally herded amongst those who we have been waging a war against long before we received any financial aid.

It is getting to the point where denial or even partial denial is no longer an option for those Muslims who do not wish to confront the disturbing reality that lies ahead. How bad do things need to get before it dawns on us that we are not wanted here unless we are prepared to sacrifice our religion at the altar of secularism and capitalism? Have we forgotten what Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, told us in His Book over fourteen hundred years ago?

﴿١٢٠﴾ وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ

Never will the Jews nor the Christians be pleased with you till you follow their religion.

Do we think anything has changed since the revelation of this verse? If anything has changed it is certainly not a change that works in our favour. If you think about religion in those by-gone times and you think about religion today (including atheism), you will see that an awful lot has changed but not in a progressive sense but rather in a regressive sense. A major religion of this land is atheism which wants to do away with your belief in the existence of Allah, which consequently paves the way for doing away with everything that was put in place for man’s spiritual and physical wellbeing. The atheism we see today is heightened by technology that allows the insatiable soul to devour every vice known to man. These people (because they can) are taking atheism to its logical and destructive conclusion in the pursuit of hedonism and nihilism. However, the question is, what are we doing standing right in the destructive path of this tsunami with hopeless hope that it will verge from its set course. Truly, the times are nigh wherein the Prophet forewarned us of an approaching time:

يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ الصَّابِرُ فِيهِمْ عَلَى دِينِهِ كَالْقَابِضِ عَلَى الْجَمْرِ

*"There shall come upon the people a time in which the one who is patient upon his religion will be like the one holding onto a burning ember."*³⁸

So what political package can Muslims expect in the very near future? Well, Home Secretary Theresa May made an announcement conveniently just before the elections on the 23rd March 2015 in which she outlined a whole host of measures that the Conservative party would like to put in place after the elections. Before we quote from this proposed policy, we would just like to say that this proposed policy must appeal to a significant number of the society because they are hoping that they will be re-elected through it. It states in bold letters on the BBC website:³⁹

The UK will no longer tolerate the behaviour of Islamist extremists who "reject our values", Home Secretary Theresa May has said.

Then after the customary appeal to patriotism, May goes on to outline some of the more palatable elements of this carrot-dangling policy:

- **"banning orders" for groups which do not reach the current threshold to be banned as extremists**
- **civil "extremism disruption orders" to be used against individuals**
- **"closure orders" to shut down premises owned or used by extremists**
- **a "positive campaign to promote British values" to the public**
- **a review of supplementary schools, which are currently unregulated, to "protect children from extremists"**
- **HM Inspectorate of Constabulary reviewing how police forces have responded to "honour crimes", female genital mutilation and forced marriage**
- **new "extremism officer" roles in prisons to deal with extremist inmates and gangs**
- **a "full review of citizenship law" to make sure successful applicants respect British values**

³⁸ *Jami` at-Tirmidhi* 2260

³⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-32013794>

- a "sharp reduction" in funding for translation services and a "significant increase" in money for English language training

It is clear whom these proposed policies will effect; however, what is unclear is the term 'extremist', which is a consequential label of their liberalism being in a constant state of flux, due to its lack of clarity. Then the BBC website states:

“Mrs May also announced plans for a review of Sharia courts in England and Wales to examine whether they are compatible with British values.”

The term 'compatible' is an interesting term because we already know that many of our Islamic values are incompatible with Western values. As far as we are concerned, this is just one big announcement to let us know that the walls of duress are closing in and the only way you are going to escape these inbound walls is by shedding a few stones of Islam to delay the inevitable. And this is what many Muslims will have to do if they insist on standing between these walls, acting as if they have no other options. Speaking of options, what are our options in the grand scheme of things? We number them at five:

1. Unconditionally conform to their standards of what constitutes 'Britishness' or 'our values' but that will never be enough because Allah tells us that they will never be pleased with us until we follow their religion. Even Majid Nawaz and his Quilliam Foundation lost its government funding despite his total assimilation to their way of life. This makes you wonder about the sort of 'Islam' that would be accepted by the government, especially after May's statement, **“Islam is entirely compatible with British values and our national way of life while Islamist extremism is not, and we must be uncompromising in our response to it.”** Just the fact that this is an option for some Muslims out there shows us how woeful our current predicament is!
2. This option sits on the other side of the spectrum but is equally as evil (for different reasons) as the first. This option requires a belligerent stance towards the system by any means necessary, just like al-Muhajiroun (in word) and ISIS (in deed). For the upright Muslim this is not even remotely an option because we do not fight extremism with

extremism and we definitely do not adopt the beliefs and methods of Muslim deviant groups in our attempts to enjoin good and forbid evil.

3. This option is one by which many prominent Muslims attempt to alleviate an evil that is currently strangulating us. This daring stratagem requires a Muslim to enter into the arena of sound-bite political debate with an opponent that has an agenda to completely expose you by scapegoating you. The aim of the prominent Muslim is to prove to his host (opponent) and the on looking audience that he is not an extremist Muslim. However, because the host is more interested in exposing you and not in constructive dialogue, the prominent Muslim only succeeds in (1) pandering to Western values (2) standing his ground which proves that he is an extremist of sorts (even according to Islam) and (3) dabbling in double standards in his attempt to dodge the bullet, which conjures images of a duplicitous politician who is under the cosh. What is the point in attempting to enjoin a good or prevent an evil when these are your only options? It is amazing what the siege mentality will do when under duress.
4. This option requires Muslims to migrate to an area where there are tight-knitted communities of Muslims so that Muslims can feel a sense of belonging amongst his own and not the siege mentality that they are experiencing right now due to alienation created by hostile policy. However, even this might be a short-term solution for a long-term problem that will eventually require the fifth option for those who want to preserve their Islam. If we can lessen the siege mentality that we suffer from, perhaps we can coordinate and think more clearly and coherently and pull our resources together to create a niche in the media market that allows us, on our own terms and conditions, to productively voice our own narrative without it being sabotaged or misrepresented by Muslims or non-Muslims.
5. This option is sure not an easy option but it is the best option for those who have the capability. Leaving the lands of the non-Muslims and migrating to the Muslim lands is at least a strong recommendation in the best of times and an obligation in the worst of times.⁴⁰ Right now, it seems that we are moving rapidly to the second of the two because more and more of our religion is being labelled as extremism and incompatible with

⁴⁰ <http://islamqa.info/en/27211>

Western values. We need to remember that they are right from an anecdotal perspective and wrong from an objective observational perspective. We seem to think that because we have the ascendancy in the latter that this requires them to be more tolerant towards us in the former. This sort of counter-productive thinking is delusional and completely at odds with the current status quo.