



THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL COHESION

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December Email Update

Welcome to the MONTH email update from The Centre for Social Cohesion. The CSC is the first think-tank in the UK to specialise in studying radicalisation and extremism within Britain. The Centre is an independent, non-partisan think tank.

Publications

The Centre published its latest report, [*Victims of Intimidation: Freedom of Speech within Europe's Muslim Communities*](#), on 10th November 2008. Written by Douglas Murray, the Centre's Director, and Johan Pieter Verwey, *Victims of Intimidation* tells the stories of nearly 30 Europeans of Muslim background - some believing and others not - who have been threatened by Muslim extremists. Based on interviews with many of these individuals, the report details the substantial threats and violence they have faced as a result of critical inquiry into aspects of their faith or lifestyle. *Victims of Intimidation* received coverage from a variety of news sources, including [BBC News](#), [Press Association](#) and the [Western Standard](#), as well as numerous internet sites, including [Conservative Home](#), the [National Secular Society](#) and [IT News](#).

Douglas Murray, CSC Director and co-author of the report, also wrote an opinion piece for the [Sunday Times](#) detailing some of the cases covered in *Victims of Intimidation*. Murray commented in the article that "Muslim reformers, whether believers or not, are not extended the same rights that the rest of us enjoy. They find themselves stuck between reactionary, self-appointed Muslim spokesmen and a European artistic and political establishment which is either too cowed or too misguided to notice that it is applying a different standard to people born here to Muslim parents."

The Centre in the Press

CSC issued a [press release](#) on Heroes' Day, an event glorifying the tactics of the proscribed terrorist group the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), aka the Tamil Tigers. The event took place on the 27th November at the London ExCeL Centre in defiance of UK laws which prohibit the glorification of and support for terrorism. The CSC called on the government to show more consistency in enforcing its Terrorist Acts. The CSC press release on the Tamil Tigers event led to an article on Heroes' Day in the [Independent](#), who quoted Dominic Whiteman, a Tamil Tigers specialist based at the CSC. The story was also followed up on in [The Times](#).

The Centre also issued a [press release](#) in response to reports of a British connection to the terrorist atrocities that took place in Mumbai, India, last week. The CSC highlighted previous involvement of UK citizens taking part in jihadist terrorism abroad, citing cases as far back as 1995.

The CSC's recent [press release](#) criticising the government's decision to work with the Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS) to try to better understand Muslim student attitudes also continued to receive coverage.

CSC Director Douglas Murray was quoted in the [Daily Telegraph](#) on the government's decision to offer Sharia-compliant pensions, commenting that "It's a great mistake for the Government to think this is desirable or even necessary." Murray also wrote a piece for the *Daily Express* on the possible British connection to the Mumbai terrorist atrocities, saying that "Britain is developing a reputation as one of the biggest exporters of Islamist terrorists."

In his monthly article for [Standpoint](#), the political and cultural magazine, Douglas Murray reflected on student opinion surrounding Islamic extremism and terrorism at UK universities following the lectures and debates he has undertaken as part of the CSC's national campus tour. Murray said:

"Campuses in the UK are not what they were even eight years ago. Jewish and Israeli groups in particular find themselves besieged ... Islamic societies, meanwhile, try to claim that their own record is above reproach even after the London School of Economics produced the murderer of Daniel Pearl and King's College, London, the bombers of Mike's Place in Tel Aviv."

Robin Simcox, a researcher at the CSC, wrote an article for the [Henry Jackson Society](#) on recent government legislation passed in an attempt to prevent forced marriage in the UK, saying the idea that forced marriage is "just a symptom of the cultural differences that will inevitably occur in a multicultural society is to write off the wishes, ambitions and aspirations of the thousands of girls who are its victims."

Media & Public Appearances

Douglas Murray twice appeared on the BBC Two's Daily Politics show, speaking once on Sharia law with Geoffrey Robertson QC, and also as Guest of the Day, where he commented on topical issues such as the arrest of Damian Green MP. He also appeared on the Jeremy Vine show on BBC Radio 2, as well as LBC radio, discussing the then-forthcoming US presidential elections.

Murray spoke to a capacity audience at the National Theatre on attitudes towards homosexuality in Islam and Christianity as part of a panel discussion to accompany the theatre's current production, *To Be Straight With You*. Murray spoke alongside the Mayor of London's cultural advisor Munira Murza, and the event was chaired by Dolan Cummings of the Institute of Ideas. Murray also debated alongside Gina Khan against Anjem Choudary and Stephen Hockman QC on the subject of 'Whether the UK should have full Sharia Law'. The event was hosted by the Birkenhead Debating Society and held at the National Liberal Club in Westminster. The event was covered in the [Daily Telegraph](#) and the [Daily Express](#).

CSC's director also spoke on a variety of topical domestic and foreign policy issues at a lecture at the Military Academy at Sandhurst, and addressed Kingston Grammar School alongside former UK ambassador to Washington, Peter Jay.

Campus Tour

Douglas Murray continued to speak at a variety of university campuses. In November he debated Sharia law at the National University of Ireland against Liberal Democrat candidate Ajamal Masroor, and spoke against Philippe Sands QC and Shami Chakrabati at a debate at the Cambridge University Union. He also spoke at the 'Beyond Words' festival at the University College School, Hampstead, on a panel that included former Labour MP Stephen Twigg and which was hosted by Claire Fox, Director of the Institute of Ideas.

Upcoming

The Centre's director will continue his tour of UK campuses, speaking on issues of terrorism and Islamism to student unions at the UCL and the University of Oxford, as well as the Union of Jewish Students. He will also address a legal conference at Strasbourg on Sharia law.

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The Centre for Social Cohesion is an independent think tank

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