



**THE CENTRE FOR
SOCIAL COHESION**

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January Email Update

Welcome to the January 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.

The Centre in the Press

CSC issued a [press release](#) revealing that Asghar Bukhari, co-founder and spokesman for the Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK (MPAC UK), had made comments glorifying terrorism. Bukhari has contributed money to Holocaust-denier David Irving and MPAC UK is currently banned from university campuses for anti-Semitism. Despite this, Bukhari is regularly consulted by the mainstream media, including the BBC, on Islamic issues.

Responding to comments by another contributor on a public Facebook discussion forum, Bukhari said that:

"Muslims who fight against the occupation of their lands are 'Mujahadeen' and are blessed by Allah. And any Muslim who fights against Israel and dies is a martyr and will be granted paradise."

"The concept of Jihad is a beautiful thing, and logical to those with a sincere heart. It tells the human being to stand up and fight against those who bring evil and oppression on this earth, and by standing up - roll back that oppression until the people are free from it."

"There is no greater oppressor on this earth then [sic] the Zionists, who murder little children for sport."

The CSC has passed its findings on to the police.

The Centre's discoveries were picked up by the [Daily Telegraph](#), with *Telegraph* journalist Damian Thompson describing the CSC as "the most formidable of the think-tanks monitoring Islamic extremism." The story was also covered by the [Spectator](#) and the [Jerusalem Post](#), who quoted CSC Researcher Robin Simcox as saying "Bukhari's incitement and likely illegal public comments should be a matter of grave concern to broadcasters and others who have repeatedly given him and his organization a platform."

The Centre also exclusively revealed that the East London Mosque was hosting an array of extremist speakers on New Year's Day at an event called 'The End of Time'. The event included a video lecture by Anwar al-Awlaki, an alleged spiritual adviser to three of the 9/11 terrorists and accused by the US Department of Homeland Security as using video lectures to "encourage terrorist attacks." The event's poster showed meteors falling on New York, setting the city on fire and partially destroying the Statue of Liberty.

The Centre's discovery was highlighted in an article in the [Daily Telegraph](#), who quoted CSC Researcher Robin Simcox as saying "That these extremist speakers are being given a platform by such an allegedly mainstream mosque, in one of the most Muslim-populous areas in the country, should be cause for serious concern."

CSC also [highlighted](#) how Wes Streeting, president of the National Union of Students (NUS), was seemingly increasing the NUS's links with political Islam by meeting Muhammad Abdul Bari, Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB). Streeting praised the group, despite their extensive links to Jamaat e-Islami, a radical Islamist organisation, and Bari's controversial comments on issues such as freedom of speech, homosexuality and suicide bombings.

Media Appearances

CSC Director Douglas Murray spoke on Channel 4 News discussing their decision to allow Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad deliver their 'alternative' Christmas message. Murray also commented on the story to the [Jerusalem Post](#), saying that "All I can assume is that as its viewing figures plummet, Channel 4 has decided they would try to attract controversy. But this is the first time [the guest] is a Holocaust denier who would like to create another [Holocaust] and is destabilizing a region of the world."

Murray was quoted in a [Daily Telegraph](#) article discussing Islam in the UK, saying that "I have been told off by three members of the shadow cabinet for using the phrase 'Islamist terrorism' when I have appeared with them." Murray was also quoted in a [Daily Telegraph](#) blog discussing the Conservative Party's policies on Islam.

For Murray's monthly contribution to the political and cultural magazine [Standpoint](#), he posed the question "Let's pretend it really is all about our foreign policy. So what do we do?" in response to journalists and commentators who attempted to explain the Mumbai terrorist attacks as being in response to western foreign policy. Murray noted that "Islamic fundamentalism has a propulsion quite of its own", highlighted the dangers of withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan and criticised the urge in the west "to pretend [jihadist terrorists] do not commit their acts of terror in order to satiate their infidel-hatred, imperial ambitions and caliphate-nostalgia."

Murray also argued as to why ideology was a good thing in politics in a debate in [Total Politics](#) magazine, saying that "Assaulted across the globe by the ideology of Islamism...our political class is stuck. They do not have an ideology, so how can they believe that their enemies do?"

Murray wrote a blog for [Conservative Home](#) which highlighted that rather than being the result of "anti-Israeli sentiment by impartial, sympathetic observers", the demonstrations outside the Israeli embassy in response to the situation in Gaza were actually co-ordinated by the likes of the British Muslim Initiative in conjunction with other Islamist and Hamas-linked groups, many of whom have previously spoken out against Israel's right to exist.

Finally, the CSC's director additionally wrote an article for the [Spectator](#) on atheism, religion and Islam.

Campus Tour and Public Appearances

Douglas Murray appeared at the University College London, speaking alongside Timothy Stafford of the Henry Jackson Society for the motion that 'this House would take any measure necessary to prevent Iran becoming a nuclear state'. He also addressed the Oxford University Conservative Association's annual Christmas dinner.

The Centre's Director addressed leading opinion formers, government officials and police authorities regarding the recent CSC report [Victims of Intimidation: Freedom of Speech within Europe's Muslim Communities](#) at a Defence Academy conference titled 'Understanding Islam in the 21st Century'. In addition he spoke at a legal conference organised by the Federalist Society in Strasbourg on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and proposed blasphemy legislation. The event was attended by leading law-makers from across America and the EU.

The CSC also attended the 'One Law For All' launch event, which seeks to curb the influence of Sharia law in Britain. Murray is a signatory to the campaign, which was launched to coincide with International Human Rights Day.

New Website

December saw the CSC's new website go live. The new layout allows easier access to CSC's publications, press releases and blogs, as well as forthcoming sections highlighting media appearances and recommended reading from CSC staff.

Upcoming

Douglas Murray will be hosting a discussion with Jonah Goldberg, author of *Liberal Fascism: The Secret History of the American Left from Mussolini to the Politics of Meaning*, for the New Culture Forum on 26th January at Portcullis House, Westminster. He will also be addressing student societies and university campuses with speeches at the University of Oxford, the University of York, Imperial College London and the University of Liverpool.

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The Centre for Social Cohesion is an independent think tank

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