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REFLECTIONS ON *LONDONISTAN*

*Melanie Phillips*

I wrote *Londonistan* as a warning, as I believed Britain was deeply in denial over the threat of radical Islamism.

Despite a shift in the public mood over the past few months, I believe this is still the case. Many are still blind to the nature and scale of what is being attempted by the Islamic jihad, and also to the possibility that they may succeed – principally because of this state of denial.

“Londonistan” was a term of abuse coined by the French for a Britain that had allowed itself to become the European hub of al-Qaeda. To me it’s also a state of mind, when people not only seek to appease but come to believe and absorb the ideas and assumptions of the enemy that intends to destroy them.

It’s a state of mind that applies not just to Britain, not just to Europe, but also to sections of America and Israel. Throughout the free world, people are refusing to face up to the reality of the jihad because they can’t bring themselves to accept what must follow. It’s so much easier to take refuge in alternative explanations, particularly ones that blame themselves for their own victimization. And just as they embrace their enemies, so they turn against their allies.

They refuse to accept that we are in the throes of a holy war waged upon the western world for more than 25 years – with Israel the proxy target well before that – without our even recognizing it because it doesn’t fit our definition of war. It is a world war being fought in many disparate theatres with many proximate causes, but all with one single coherent aim: to defeat western civilization, establish Islam as the dominant power in the world and restore the medieval Islamic caliphate.

Looking back, it’s clear that a key development was when Ayatollah Khomeini established his theocracy in Iran and declared his intention to wage war upon the west and subjugate it to Islam. This ignited political Islamism around the world, gave rise to the rival Wahhabi version in Saudi Arabia, and exported Islamic rule as a global project.

At the same time, Britain and Europe experienced a mass influx of Muslims as the borders opened and the poor south migrated en masse to the north. The problem was that, unlike other immigrant groups, successive generations of Muslims have failed to integrate and instead try to colonize their host countries – a program for Europe explicitly laid out by the MB more than 20 years ago.

We can see the outcome: in the daily violence in the French suburbs, sanitized by the French government but described by French police as a permanent intifada; in the similar violence in Belgium; in the murder of Theo van Gogh in the Netherlands and the terrorization of Dutch politicians who speak out; in the global riots, kidnappings and murders after the re-publication of the Danish Mohammed cartoons; and in the fact that the British security service is now monitoring some 30 terrorist plots by British Muslims against the British state, with 1600 known terrorists, most of them British Muslims, in Britain, trying to get hold of a nuclear or dirty bomb to use against it.

Yet little of this is reported, and when it is, it is generally presented as the fault of those being terrorized. Thus the French riots are blamed on French prejudice towards immigrants; the cartoon riots on media insensitivity towards Muslim feelings; and recent riots in royal Windsor, after a Muslim tried to turn his 'Medina' dairy into a mosque and where worshippers in this unlawful mosque reportedly beat up local protesters, was reported – only briefly – as white racists attacking innocent Muslims.

There certainly are many innocent Muslims, and there are those who are truly moderate. But this immediately poses the question: what is a moderate? In Britain, it appears that only those who openly endorse the murder of fellow Britons are not moderate. Those who endorse the murder of Israelis or coalition forces in Iraq are merely exercising 'resistance' and so are classified as moderate.

Worse still, there is an alarming number of Muslims in Britain whose views are not moderate by any reasonable definition, even though they may abhor violence. Opinion polls suggest that between 40 and 60% of British Muslims would like to live under sharia law in Britain; almost a quarter say the 7/7 bombings can be justified because of the war on terror; nearly half think 9/11 was a conspiracy between the US and Israel; 46% think the Jewish community is 'in league with the Freemasons to control the media and police'; 37% think the Jewish community in Britain is a legitimate target 'as part of the ongoing struggle for justice in the Middle East'.

I see this as a continuum of extremism which acts as a conveyor belt to terror. Even those who don't support violence may endorse hatred of the West, Jews or Americans, or paranoid theories of victimization or grievance which are the drivers of terror. But the western liberal mind refuses to accept that such ideas are extreme. This is because the iron orthodoxy of multiculturalism and minority rights holds that it is axiomatically a racist act to condemn a minority belief or value system. That's why, throughout the West, the left takes the part of those preaching hatred or murder, to which inconvenient truths it simply closes its eyes.

Britain has now begun to question multiculturalism, which it blames for segregated communities. But segregation is not the issue; the 7/7 bombers went to ordinary schools and to university, where so many British Muslims are radicalized. It was the 7/7 suicide bombings themselves which produced a great spike in terrorist recruitment. Because what Britain and all the other western faint hearts fail to grasp is that the greatest single driver of terrorism is – terrorism, or to be more precise, the demoralized reaction to it.

For decades, Arab and Muslim terror has been principally fuelled not by poverty or oppression or dispossession, but by the fact that it works. That's why the middle-class Hindu convert to Islam Dhiren Barot, who was recently jailed in Britain for plotting synchronized atrocities including the use of poison and radioactive bombs, said the reason terrorism was an Islamic religious duty was that 'terror works'. That's because Britain, Europe, Israel and until 9/11, America, have all responded to unending Arab and Muslim terror by seeking to understand, accommodate or appease the demands behind it. The greater the terror, the greater the self-flagellation of its victims.

Britain still doesn't get this at all. Unable to grasp that what is driving this onslaught is religious fanaticism, the response of Britain's political and security establishment has been to appease. Its post-colonial mindset means it thinks all terrorism must be caused by discrete geopolitical grievances – Iraq, Israel/Palestine. The way to end Islamist terror, therefore, is to end these disputes. This is precisely the wrong way round. The way to end these disputes is first to end Islamist terror.

The establishment refuses to accept this is a religious war. To do so, it says, would be to stigmatize all Muslims. But this is a non-sequitur. Many Muslims do not subscribe to these murderous ideas; indeed, Muslims are the most numerous victims of the jihad worldwide. But we cannot understand what we are all up against unless we acknowledge that it is a global war in the name of Islamic conquest and subjugation of unbelievers, through both violent and cultural means.

Instead, the British government strategy to combat Muslim extremism seeks to tackle its underlying causes – defined as foreign policy, discrimination and poverty. So instead of challenging the paranoid and untrue grievance culture driving the terror, the government has chosen to endorse it and appease Islamist radicalism. So we now have sharia compliant mortgages, a blind eye to polygamy and to the forced marriage of 14 year old girls, and the police making intelligence available to the Muslim community before undertaking anti-terror raids. MB radicals have been brought into government as advisers on Islamist extremism; and on the site of the Olympic village the largest mosque in Europe is to be built symbolizing the dominance in Britain of Islam -- and financed by the Tablighi Jamaat, said by French intelligence and the FBI to be the biggest recruiters to al Qaeda in Europe.

Why is Britain getting all this so grievously wrong? Briefly, it's because for decades its intelligentsia and political class have hollowed out British identity and values, creating a vacuum which is being exploited by radical Islamism. Britain has not only

lost belief in itself as a nation, but European liberals have turned against the very idea of the nation itself. Rooted in the particulars of history, religion, law, language and tradition, the nation is seen as the cause of all the ills of the world, from prejudice to war. That's why supra-national institutions such as the UN, EU, International Court of Justice, International Criminal Court and the international and human rights law which they have invented, are held to be more legitimate than the structures of individual democracies.

So Britain's own culture has to give way to multiculturalism. Those wishing to uphold British national identity are vilified as racists. Some are. Most are not. They are instead democrats, who want to uphold their democratic right to express their own culture. Instead, they are told this must be replaced by a doctrine whose key tenet is that the values of every powerless minority group must be afforded equal status to those of the majority. This of course means there can no longer be a majority culture at all. To impose such a doctrine, and then to vilify those who dare protest, is simply a recipe for national suicide.

Multiculturalism has produced two particularly lethal effects. First, it has left all immigrants abandoned, and none more lethally so than young Muslims. For if there is no longer an overarching culture, there is nothing into which minorities can integrate. Many young Muslims, stranded between the backward Asian village culture of their parents and the drug, alcohol and sex-saturated decadence that passes for western civilization, are filled with disgust and self-disgust – and are thus vulnerable to the predatory jihadis recruiting in youth clubs, in prisons and on campus, who promise them self-respect and a purpose to life based on holy war.

Second, and worse still, multiculturalism has reversed the notions of truth and lies, victim and victimizer. Since minorities can do no wrong, they cannot be held responsible for acts such as suicide bombings which must instead be the fault of their victims. This key confusion, which has caused intellectual and moral paralysis in the West, plays directly into the pathological Muslim victim culture which makes dialogue impossible. Because Muslims genuinely believe they are under attack by the West, which is a giant conspiracy to destroy Islam. So they perceive their own aggression as legitimate self-defense, and the West's defense as aggression.

This fundamental untruth, which lies at the very heart of Israel's difficulties with the Arabs, has created a dialogue of the demented. But instead of treating it as the mad discourse that it is and refusing to play along with it, Britain regards it as an extension of its own minority rights doctrine which routinely reverses victim and aggressor. So the untruths driving the terror are merely deepened – particularly since the left, which controls British culture, demonizes America and Israel. So the central Islamist perception of the Big and Little Satan, America and Israel, is echoed in mainstream British discourse where anti-Americanism is rampant and Israel is well on the way to being delegitimized altogether. This acts as an echo chamber for Muslim prejudice, reinforcing it and fuelling the sense of paranoia and victimization.

And it has also released the virus of Judeophobia, with the trope of the global Jewish conspiracy putting the world at risk now a staple of mainstream discourse.

This virulent irrationality has brought together left and right. The left – anti-American and pro-Third World – puts the blame for Islamist terror on America, Israel and the war in Iraq. The right – isolationist stability-fetishists who think the world is full of dangerous foreigners who would leave us alone if only we don't upset them – blames America, Israel and the war in Iraq.

What Britain fails to grasp is that the Jews are indeed central to Islamist terror – but in quite the opposite way to what it thinks. The work of Sayeed Qutb, the principal ideologue of modern Islamism, holds that not only that the West is conspiring to destroy Islam, but that the Jews are a metaphysical, cosmic evil who are the puppet-masters of the West.

Anti-Jewishness is thus central to the jihad. That is why Israel has such iconic status in the Islamist pantheon. Israel's fight is the West's own fight. If Israel goes down, the West goes with it. But Britain and Europe don't see it this way. They think Israel is the cause of the problem – a view greatly reinforced by the contributions of the Israeli left, whose revisionism and cognitive dissonance feed the venom in the British universities and media. That's why we have in Britain 1930s-style appeasement, the demonization of Israel and resurgent anti-Jewish hatred.

This in turn is causing the West to falter in its defense of the free world. In Britain, America and in Israel, we see a collapse of nerve along with a vacuum in political leadership. In Britain, a recent poll showed most people thought President Bush was a greater threat to world peace than Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The biggest danger to the West is the climate of defeatism, appeasement and cultural collapse now on display for the Islamists to see.

Since *Londonistan* was published last summer, there has been a shift in British thinking. We actually had a debate last autumn about whether it was right for women to wear the full face niqab veil in public offices. That was before we discovered that a prime male suspect for the murder of a police officer had walked unchallenged through Heathrow airport and escaped to Somalia because he was wearing such a veil. Tony Blair's government has realized that its strategy of appeasement has been a disaster – but it doesn't know what to do instead. He made a speech recently telling Muslims to adapt to British ways or get out – but then endorsed multiculturalism, which he appeared to think just meant being nice to people of different backgrounds. Oh dear.

What should be done? Simply, this. We all have to grasp that terrorism is not the biggest threat we face. The biggest threat is the ideology that drives it. It's not enough to fight terror, vital though that is. The principal battleground is the world of ideas. The Islamists understand this. They understand that if they can hijack the human mind to the cause of hatred and lies, they have an army; and if they can further hijack the minds of their victims, they will win. They understand that

psychological warfare – the fomenting of paranoia, resentment, hysteria and demoralization -- is their most effective weapon.

But we haven't even understood that this is where the real battleground is. The liberal West, which worships at the shrine of reason and makes such a fetish of the power of intellect, does not understand that ideas can kill. As a result Britain, Europe, America and Israel have all left the battleground of ideas totally undefended, allowing the unhindered advance of falsehood and hatred. Worse still, our intelligentsia and media often act as an Islamists' fifth column.

It is only if we act against the ideology that is spreading such falsehood and hatred, and stop its advance under the umbrella of minority rights, that we have any chance of defending the free world. That means – while showing respect to Muslims who derive only spiritual sustenance from their faith – reasserting western values, and resisting any attempt to subvert them. It also means facing down in public the lies spread about the West. Only if we stop deluding ourselves and take such action necessary for our survival will we stop sleepwalking to defeat.

## ISLAMISM, MULTICULTURALISM AND BRITISH SOCIETY

*Robert S. Wistrich*

*Londonistan*, as Melanie Phillips points out in her compelling book, has become a safe haven in recent years for the hate-mongering of radical Islamic imams and even for the British-born and British-bred suicide bombers who killed 52 innocent civilians in London's underground in July 2005. Though this is now changing, it may already be too late.

Since 2001, the Muslim community in the United Kingdom has turned into a security nightmare for the authorities as far as jihadi terrorism is concerned. The capital city, London, has been transformed into a prime international hub for the recruitment, promotion and financing of global terrorism and radical Islamism.

According to *The Independent* newspaper, there are currently well over 700 supporters of Al-Qaida living in Great Britain. Scotland Yard and the security services now have a record 34 terrorist cases involving 99 defendants awaiting trial. A further 70 cases are under investigation. The sheer scale of the present threat to the U.K. was further underlined only a few months ago when two dozen British-born Muslim suspects were arrested in an Al-Qaida linked conspiracy to blow up five transatlantic airliners. This was a plot fully comparable in its ambition to 9/11.

I happened to be in London in August 2006 when British Home Secretary John Reid was obliged to impose crippling security measures following these arrests. I was able to personally observe demonstrators in Trafalgar Square, shouting "We Are All Hizbollah Now." Such slogans, and far worse, have indeed become a feature of Muslim and leftist street politics in the U.K. In February 2006, for example, at the time of the Danish cartoons crisis, one could find aggressive banners reading "Islam will dominate the world," "Behead those who insult Islam," "Butcher Those Who Mock Islam," or even "Be Prepared for the Real Holocaust!", a placard held up by a young Muslim woman wearing a *niqab*. There were placards with the macabre words: "Allah will destroy the Terrorist State of Israel." In Hyde Park, I noted that young British Muslims had a no less chilling message for the E.U.: Here are two characteristic examples: "Europe you will pay, your Extermination is on its way," or the charming rhyme: "Europe is the cancer. Islam is the answer."

Such incendiary radicalism flourishes despite the religious freedom and economic opportunity Muslims enjoy in Great Britain. But one would never guess this from the belligerent tone of some of their communal leaders. Thus, Mohammad Abdul Bari, Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Britain, actually declared in September 2006 that "if the demonization [of Islam] continues, then Britain will have to deal with two million Muslim terrorists – 700,000 of them in London."

The allegation of demonization is spurious. The British authorities have been, if anything, too tolerant of Islamist calls for violence and brazen attempts to change British foreign policy by terrorist blackmail. Unlike the French, the British authorities

have found it difficult to deport the more pernicious imams – often financed by Saudi Arabia in order to promote Salafist fundamentalism. Far from “slandering” Islam, significant chunks of the British elite have shown themselves too ready to appease or play to the Muslim gallery.

Left-wing sycophancy towards radical Islam leads to a tendency to ignore its antisemitism, anti-feminism, homophobia and relentless hatred for the secular West. Common loathing for America and Israel on the British Left apparently outweighs more traditional ideological differences between Islamists and Marxists. Thus a leftist British MP like George Galloway vehemently libels Israel while embracing every Muslim “hero” of recent decades from Saddam Hussein through Yasser Arafat, Osama bin Laden to Hassan Nasrallah; London’s Mayor, Ken Livingstone, fawns over Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradhawi – a homophobic, misogynist, antisemitic bigot – as if he were the last word in Islamic progressivism.

*Londonistan*, in recent years, is a place where radical Muslims have been able to take full advantage of British citizenship and democratic liberties to pursue their barely disguised anti-Western goals. At the same time British multiculturalism by encouraging people of different ethnic backgrounds to nurture imported identities, has reinforced Islamist tendencies to separateness and isolation.

In much of the mainstream British media there is an obvious reluctance to recognize that Islamists want to destroy the West in the name of Allah; that they wish to impose Sharia law or re-establish the medieval Caliphate throughout the world. Instead anger is displaced onto America, Britain, and especially Israel for the “crimes of colonialism,” the war in Iraq and the historic “injustice” in Palestine “explain” the global jihad. The radical Islamist interpretation of theological texts is consistently ignored as a source of terrorism, let alone as a threat to the West. The religious fanaticism which drives the “holy war” is subordinated to geo-political and economic factors even then these are clearly secondary.

British Islamists, while exploiting Western freedoms, make no secret of their hatred for democracy (“a concept the West has conjured to destroy the Islamic state”); or their contempt for secularism, liberalism, socialism, nationalism – indeed for everything that is not Islam. To quote from a pamphlet by Sheikh Omar Bakri: “We are surrounded by a sea of *Kafir* (unbelief): *Kafir* thoughts, practices, and *Kafir* systems of life. Homosexuals, adulterers, fornicators, will be killed, and Jews too.”

In the face of such incitement to murder, the response in Britain has often been to *sanitize* the Islamist agenda. Some have even blamed the so-called “neo-conservative” plot in Washington (a codeword for American-Jewish hawks) who supposedly dragged Britain into the Iraqi war.

Mr. Bush, Mr. Blair and the leaders of Israel are seen as responsible for global terror, especially in British academia and in the media. Similar opinions can also be heard in the British Parliament, on the BBC, in the Tory and Liberal Democrat parties, in the salons of the chattering classes and in the Anglican Church as Margaret Brearley has shown. Multiculturalism has helped to create this perverse situation in

which a radical minority determined to “Islamicise” British society can represent itself as its victim.

In the recent documentary film *Obsession: Radical Islam's War against the West*, a documentary in which I served as historical adviser, there is a chilling scene that exemplifies the problem we are dealing with. It is a video of Mohammed Sidique Khan (who masterminded the 7/7 massacre in London) in an anorak and Arab *keffiyah*, spouting homicidal hatred of the West in a broad Yorkshire accent. Denouncing the atrocities allegedly perpetrated against “our people” (meaning Muslims in general) by the British government in Iraq, he calls for blood vengeance. “We are at war and I am a soldier” was this British-born Anglo-Pakistani suicide bomber’s last message to “you” (meaning Britain) from “my people” – meaning the Muslim *umma*. Recent surveys show that British Muslims are receptive to this kind of “us” and “them” polarization, even if they do not necessarily approve terrorism *per se*.

In this climate of appeasement, even a moderate critique of Islam becomes an offence against peace, reconciliation, dialogue or the virtues of cultural diversity. Freedom of speech turns into a one-way street. Muslim leaders openly preach contempt for Western democracy, secularism, Jews, gays, feminists and other “Kaffirs” but Islam is off limits. Euphemism and evasion take over as soon as it comes to documenting any Muslim involvement in terrorism, violent crimes, “honor” killings, rapes, or incitement against the “infidel” West. Mainstream journalists, seem terrified that they will be accused of “Islamophobia” or racism. Silence is considered more prudent. The task of commenting on Muslim crimes is left to the tabloids, the British National Party or other far-right groups.

Such suicidal cowardice, passivity and self-deception may have serious consequences for British Jews.

The report of the U.K. All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism, published in September 2006 (to which I presented evidence) did a very good job on most issues but it was evasive about antisemitism among Muslims. It was seen as an offshoot of propaganda by a tiny minority of extremists. The report evoked the *Hizb ut-Tabrir*, *Al-Muhajiroun*, and the case of Sheikh Abdullah el-Faisal (sentenced to nine years in prison in February 2003 for inciting racial hatred); it mentioned Abu Hamza and Omar Bakri, but it did not investigate the growing resonance of antisemitic views among British Muslims. The facts reveal, however, that the majority of Muslims in the U.K. are by no means the moderates they are so often made out to be. Nearly 40% believe that the Jewish community is a legitimate target “as part of the ongoing struggle for justice in the Middle East”; no less than 46% think that there is a Judeo-masonic conspiracy to control the British media and politics; and more than half of British Muslims agree that Jews had “too much influence over the direction of U.K. foreign policy.” These are appalling figures.

There may be a multitude of different reasons for such antisemitism. There is the high-profile of the Arab-Israel conflict. Some Asian Muslims in Britain (80% in fact

originate from the Indian subcontinent) even try to be more “Palestinian” than the Palestinians. There is also a fundamentalist component, influenced by Islamist ideologies whose seedbed is Pakistan but which are spread in Britain by Saudi-financed preachers in the mosques. Some of the hatred is linked to anti-Americanism as well as contempt for Britain. There is loathing for the “Crusader” West as the “protector” of Zionism. Some, Muslim antisemitism may also express latent envy and resentment towards the Anglo-Jewish community, seen as too rich, integrated and supportive of Israel. These antisemitic attitudes, are reinforced by the unrelenting hostility in parts of the British media towards Israel.

The “quality” British media often present terrorist violence by Muslims against Israel as legitimate “resistance” driven by the highest and most altruistic aims. The BBC, has never once referred to the suicide bombings of Israeli civilians by Fatah, Hamas or Islamic Jihad as anything other than the action of Palestinian “militants.” It is as if these brutal murderers are the equivalent of trade unionists calling for higher wages in a British industrial dispute.

In such a media context, British Muslims can only feel reinforced by the “victim culture” of contemporary Britain. The dominant liberal-leftist culture encourages the excessive inflation of terms like “Islamophobia” while it often questions the seriousness of antisemitism in Britain elsewhere. But figures compiled by the British police in recent months indicate that Jews are four times more likely to be attacked because of their religion than Muslims.

Some of these assaults are carried out by white racists and bigots on the margins of British society. But they and the British National Party are far outside the media consensus – universally condemned as fascists, neo-Nazis or racists. Left-wing or Muslim antisemitism is another matter. When linked to the Palestinian cause, hostility to Israel, Zionism and Jewry enjoys considerable sympathy in British society.

Islamist Judeophobia in Britain cannot be reduced to the question of Iraq or Palestine. It has adopted many of the themes of the Jewish world conspiracy, especially Jewish control of the media, and political domination of the United States. In Britain, the obsession with the “injustice” allegedly done to the Palestinians, has allowed antisemitic fantasies to acquire some credibility not only among marginalized Muslims but also in mainstream elite opinion and among the “chattering classes”. This is a dangerous symptom of the broader malaise which currently affects British society as a whole.

## ANTISEMITISM AND THE RESPONSE OF ANGLO-JEWISH LEADERSHIP

*Isi Leibler*

I feel privileged to share this platform with Melanie Phillips and Professor Robert Wistrich. Melanie Phillips has emerged as a lone courageous voice warning that continued appeasement of Islamic Fundamentalism in the UK would culminate in a national disaster. Her brilliant book *Londonistan* is one of the most important political exposés of our time, documenting how the craven appeasement of Islamic extremists by all sections of British society led to London becoming the central hub of Islamic terror in Europe.

Professor Wistrich is the foremost global expert on antisemitism. At a time when most analysts were understating its importance, he was one of the first to sound the tocsins regarding the dangers of Islamic antisemitism.

My contribution to this Symposium will primarily concentrate on antisemitism and the role of Anglo-Jewry.

### INTRODUCTION

First, a few introductory remarks about the dramatic resurgence of antisemitism over the past decade.

In the 1980s - despite the UN resolution bracketing Zionism and racism which was regarded as an aberration - most analysts were describing antisemiticites as an extinct species.

Yet today the world's oldest hatred has not only emerged as the greatest international political growth industry – as Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks described it 'an antisemitic tsunami' – but has actually succeeded in once again transforming British Jews into pariahs.

It is as though the mystique of Israel – "the people that dwelleth alone" – and antisemitism, had simply been in a state of remission since the Holocaust.

Malignant Islamic Arab antisemitism has been at the forefront of promoting the new brew of the world's oldest disease. It defines Jews as descendants of apes and pigs, provides new versions of blood libels and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, and of course generates blind hatred of any manifestation of Jewish sovereignty – not to mention ascribing the responsibility of Jews for all the disasters facing mankind, including 9/11. But we should be under no illusions. In Western countries, it was the indigenous people, the educated classes who were responsible for generating the hatred throughout the media and in cultural and social circles.

Today, most of the world is once again accusing Jews of poisoning the wells. The Jewish state is regarded as a collective manifestation of evil incarnate. Left and Right, Christian and Muslim, Sunni and Shiite and even a number of self hating Jews, have all united, to demonize Israel. Even human rights bodies have been hijacked by our enemies.

George Orwell would have been stunned to observe that to most nations of the world Israel is regarded as a far greater threat to world peace than rogue states like Iran and North Korea. And the sad reality is that even if Jihadist terrorist outrages rebound against Muslims, it would in all probability not detract in any manner from antisemitism.

#### UNITED KINGDOM

It is of course somewhat obscene that beyond the Arab world, the principal centers of antisemitism are now once again to be found in Europe whose soil only 60 years ago was drenched with Jewish blood.

But it is even more paradoxical that the UK, the cradle of Western democracy, tolerance and enlightenment, has now assumed the role of the European centre for Islamic Fundamentalism.

At all levels Israel and the Jews are under siege. But the brunt of the attack emanates not from Muslims, but from indigenous Britons. They are the principal demonizers of Israel in the media and in cultural and social circles. They are the ones who have made antisemitic discourse respectable.

They shamelessly create Nazi-style caricatures as exemplified by the *Independent* cartoon depicting Sharon as an ogre devouring Palestinian children, which was awarded first prize as the best political cartoon of the year in England. That cartoon could also have been a prizewinner at the recent Iranian Holocaust cartoon competition.

It is indigenous British academics - not Muslim immigrants, who are the driving force for anti Israel boycotts and divestment campaigns at the universities.

Nor is the BBC, the primary global vehicle demonizing Israel, operated by Muslims.

Ken Livingstone, the Mayor of London, a reconstructed version of a contemporary Mosley – but infinitely more popular - is no Muslim. And the talkbacks he receives on Israel and Anglo-Jewry testify to the popularity of anti Jewish hostility.

Whilst the assault on Jews in the UK is principally concentrated on demonizing Israel, the frenzied hatred being generated at all levels against the state of the Jews, obviously also impacts on Anglo-Jews.

Today in Britain there is open chatter that the creation of Israel was a mistake and there are even increasing calls for an end to the Jewish "apartheid" state.

Not only have Jews reverted to their pre World War II role of being pariahs in their own country. In many respects, today the situation is even worse. In the 1930s, at least liberal or left wing groups defended the Jews against Nazi propaganda. In these days Liberals, Progressives, Arabs, Human Rights activists, the ultra Right, and others – are all willing to indulge in the anti Zionist frenzy and march under the banner of "we are all Hizbollahh".

Reinforced by the renewed influence of replacement theology and having succumbed to the prevailing climate of post modernism which fails to distinguish

between good and evil, the Church of England has displayed crude and shameless bias and employed double standards against Israel.

One would have expected the devastating impact of home bred Islamic terrorism to have created some countervailing reactions. But alas, the main response has been that the UK had become a target for terror because British foreign policy had been too pro Israeli. There are now increasing calls on the government to be more critical of Israel in order to avoid future terrorist attacks.

#### MULTICULTURALISM

In this environment, Anglo-Jewry, like Jewish communities in other democracies, are now obliged to review the concept of multiculturalism. They should also think twice about their inclination to mindlessly repeat the ritual condemnations against what is described as "Islamophobia" - despite the behavior of the radical leadership of the Muslim community and their failure to condemn terrorism and extremism in their own ranks.

In Australia, multiculturalism was the framework of the Jewish community's integration into Australian society. I clearly recall how John Howard, now Prime Minister and recognized as one of Israel's greatest friends, once predicted to me that multiculturalism would disintegrate once groups seeking to undermine the open society, began to exploit it. Little did we dream that two decades later multiculturalism would be serving as a Trojan horse for Jihadists to establish themselves in Western countries and that we would have enclaves of Muslims incubating indigenous home grown terrorists. Multi-culturalism becomes a prescription for disaster if, instead of accommodating a diversity of peaceful religious and cultural groups, it provides a platform for a minority like the Muslims, to anchor themselves in a society, with the objective of asserting their separatism rather than contributing to the welfare of society, and having the ultimate sectarian objective not only of maintaining their separation, but of seeking to control the state and impose their way of life on society.

In *Londonistan* Melanie Phillips elaborates on this, describing how the benign tolerance of British intelligence and the police combined with liberal immigration laws, enabled some of the most radical agents of international terrorist groups to find safe havens, create retreats, and achieve respectability within British society.

She also depicts the lack of moral fiber of the governing classes, bureaucracy, and Church of England who prostrated themselves at the feet of Islamic extremists, not to mention British politicians even becoming cheerleaders for suicide bombers in order to attract votes from their Muslim constituents.

#### THE ROLE OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

I have worked with Anglo-Jewish leaders over many years. By and large they are dedicated well intentioned Jews genuinely striving to serve their community. But the problem in England is that *shtadlanut*, the belief that reliance on discreet appeals to

those in authority rather than public protest is the effective manner of pursuing Jewish objectives, appears to have become accepted dogma within the Jewish establishment.

Many Anglo-Jewish leaders also tend to bury their heads in the sand, denying the extent of the antisemitism encompassing them. One Jewish journalist, questioning all the fuss about antisemitism, actually wrote "there are no pogroms in the high street, no concentration camps in the parks, and no crematoria in these shores".

There is to my mind considerable merit in the depiction of Anglo-Jewish leaders as trembling Israelites, grateful for the protection accorded them and desperate not to rock the boat. This outlook is epitomized by Henry Grunwald, the current President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, a decent traditional Jew but a firm worshipper of *shtadlanut*, who even formally articulates the need to direct Jewish affairs on the basis of "softly softly" which he adamantly insists will achieve the best results. He summed up his approach by stating "why must one shout when a whisper can be heard?".

In recent years, these negative trends have been accentuated by increasingly shrill condemnations of Israel by people proclaiming their Jewish origin. They are hailed in the general media as courageous battlers against Zionist colonialism.

There is an almost standard list of Anglo-Jewish anti-Israeli Jewish activists, including academics, writers, actors, musicians and others including even a number of progressive Rabbis whose signatures regularly appear in petitions and advertisements hostile to Israel.

This trend is exemplified by Anthony Lerman, Executive Director of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research, a body funded by Jewish philanthropists and purporting to be the premier "think tank" of Anglo-Jewry.

Lerman publicly stated in his address to the "Jewish Forum for Justice and Human Rights" on 21 March 2005 that in view of the fact that the State of Israel and Zionism have been "failures" and that Israel "perpetrates human rights abuses", the Jewish state should be transformed into a bi-national state which would "repeal Israel's law of return" and enable "the right of return of Arab refugees". Such views are increasingly being expressed by left wing Jewish fringe groups who ally themselves with Arabs and those seeking to dismantle the Jewish state. But to have such views expressed by the head of the leading Anglo-Jewish think tank, funded and patronized by Jewish establishment personalities is scandalous. It is symptomatic of the impotence of a communal leadership when they lack the backbone to act against a chief executive officer of a publicly funded Jewish think tank who endorses the destruction of Israel. The negative impact of this anti-Israeli hostility from fringe Jews is vastly underestimated.

It should be noted that the obsession of Anglo-Jewry to rely exclusively on silent diplomacy is not shared by many rank and file Jews. For example, at the outset of the Intifada, the Anglo-Jewish leadership refused to accede to calls to hold public protest meetings, insisting it would be counterproductive because few Jews would

participate. It was pressure from the Jewish street which forced them to change their approach. The subsequent level of participation demonstrated that the mass of British Jews were frequently willing to be more upfront than their leaders.

The flow of supportive letters I receive from English Jews whenever I write on this theme, also confirms that many of them, especially the younger generation, are keen to adopt more assertive public postures.

The serious negative repercussions when those demonizing Israel and attacking Jews are not confronted are two-fold. Clearly the case for Israel is lost by default in the absence of vigorous repudiation of those demonizing Israel. But it has even worse repercussions on the Jewish community itself. In a climate which is saturated with anti-Israeli venom, the absence of debate accelerates the marginalization of Jews from their roots. The cowardly behavior of parents in the presence of their children invariably undermines the self confidence of the younger generation who become less inclined to take up the cudgels on behalf of Israel after observing their parents running for cover. It will doubtlessly encourage many of them to opt out entirely. If antisemitic and anti-Israeli libels remain unanswered, we will simply lose the younger generation by default!

My experience as a leader of the Australian Jewish community has convinced me that a twin track approach of tough lobbying by a courageous community combined with parallel silent diplomacy can transform the role of a Jewish community from one of inferiority and subservience to one of pride and dignity. This should especially be so in a nation which prides itself on freedom of expression and the right to public protest.

One final observation which applies to antisemitism generally. There is a close relationship between the level of antisemitism and a strong and weak Israel. During the Six Day War public support for Israel, then the darling of the Western world reached its zenith. In contrast since the Oslo Accords when Israel began making territorial concessions without reciprocity culminating with the unilateral Gaza withdrawal, the climate of hostility became harsher and harsher. In fact, whenever Israel was perceived as becoming weaker, especially during the recent war against Hizbollah, the anti-Israeli forces became more and strident.

Today the principal disaster in England, as in many other countries, is that with Jews having failed to convey the Jewish narrative of the Arab-Israeli conflict to the public and frequently their own children, there is an almost universal acceptance of the distorted versions disseminated by the Arabs and their allies. They have succeeded in positioning Israel as a rogue state, born in sin, illegally occupying Arab territory and denying the Palestinians their basic human rights.

It is still not too late for us to galvanize ourselves in the war of ideas. But we must do so with no less determination than the countermeasures we adopt against terrorism.