

# Gateway to Terror

Anjem Choudary and the  
al-Muhajiroun network



**HOPE not hate**

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## Anjem Choudary and the al-Muhajiroun network

By Nick Lowles and Joe Mulhall

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Joe Mulhall** is currently an AHRC PhD candidate based at Royal Holloway, University of London, researching British fascism, anti-fascism, antisemitism and racism. He is a former campaign organiser at HOPE not hate and the former UK Section Head of the Extremis Project. Contact: [joe@hopenothate.org.uk](mailto:joe@hopenothate.org.uk).

**Nick Lowles** is Chief Executive of HOPE not hate and has led several successful community campaigns against extremism, including that which helped defeat the BNP in Barking & Dagenham. He has written six books on fascism, anti-racism and football hooliganism. In 2012 he co-authored: *The 'Counter-Jihad' movement: the global trend feeding anti-Muslim hatred*. He has also worked for BBC Panorama, World in Action and MacIntyre Undercover. Contact: [nick@hopenothate.org.uk](mailto:nick@hopenothate.org.uk).



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# No place for hate



**C**able Street, Lewisham, Barking and Dagenham; The British anti-fascist movement has a long history of organising to fight hatred and intolerance. Whether it was Oswald Mosley and the British Union of Fascists, John Tyndall and the National Front or Nick Griffin and the British National Party, people have come together, often in the face of danger, to say “They Shall Not Pass”.

Each time a new threat emerged people mobilised to meet it irrespective of the form it took. Whether it was swastika-wearing nazis, the boot boys of the NF or the pseudo-respectable suit clad racists of the BNP, people stood up and fought back. The form and style of delivery was irrelevant, it was the hateful message that mattered.

This is why over the last few years HOPE not hate have broadened its target to include Islamist extremism; a target that some no doubt will question. Chief among its new targets has been Anjem Choudary and al-Muhajiroun, including the various front groups such as Islam4UK and Muslims Against Crusades (MAC). While most agree that Islamist extremism is bad, many might question why it falls into the remit of an anti-fascist organisation.

Firstly, it is important to point out that the actions of this tiny minority of extremists leads to the stigmatisation of the entire Muslim community and the shameful idea of collective responsibility. The primary victim of al-Muhajiroun’s extremism is actually the wider Muslim community.

It is also important to mention that it was the actions of these people that not only led to the formation of the English Defence League (EDL) but have continued to bolster its membership and helped the organisation off of life support numerous times due to either violent or offensive acts.

**“The primary victim of al-Muhajiroun’s extremism is actually the wider Muslim community.”**

The two biggest spikes of support for the EDL occurred when Anjem Choudary’s supporters burnt poppies on Remembrance Day and in the immediate aftermath of the killing of Lee Rigby.

However, more fundamental than its effect on the far right is HOPE not hate’s desire and need to take on and expose the politics of hatred, whoever it happens to be propagating it. While anti-fascists might not always agree on what we stand for, we are uniformly in agreement on what we all stand against; namely racism, sexism, homophobia, antisemitism and bigotry of all forms.

Anjem Choudary, al-Muhajiroun and its successor and affiliated groups have a proven track record of publically expressing all of these prejudices in a way that the BNP or EDL would never dream of doing.

Its members have been known to engage in Holocaust denial and sell copies of the infamous antisemitic forgery the *Protocols*

*of Zion*, as well as Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*. Some of their preachers celebrate 9/11 while others blame it on a Jewish conspiracy.

They describe gay relationships as “perverted acts”, comparable to “rape and murder”, called for homosexuals to be put to death and have produced and disseminated leaflets called “Gay Today, Paedophile Tomorrow?”

In addition, their sexist views call for the subjugation of and discrimination against women. Choudary has called for women to be forced to wear the veil and stated that women who commit adultery should be stoned to death. The Choudary led group Sharia4Pakistan has condemned and attacked the schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai and backed the Taliban’s crusade against female education.

**“No matter under what banner the politics of hatred and intolerance raises its ugly head we must be prepared to greet it with organised and determined opposition. The face of hatred is the face of hatred and the mask it wears is irrelevant.”**

Importantly, they seek to undermine something that HOPE not hate has worked hard to promote, the idea of communities. They try to hammer a wedge between Muslims and the society in which they live by denouncing the idea of multiculturalism and promoting and preaching the dogma of separatism and exclusion. To borrow a phrase from a recent al-Muhajiroun network pamphlet, they force people to choose whether they are “British or Muslim” when the two are by no means mutually exclusive.

Fundamentally, they seek to impose a system that is intolerant of difference, unaccepting of anyone and anything that fails to conform and that is totally opposed to democracy and free will.

All of this is on top of the fact that members of this group, influenced by these hateful ideas, have been involved in the 7/7 bombings and dozens of foiled terrorist plots aimed at killing and maiming innocent people.

That’s why this report is not only necessary but also 100% in keeping with Britain’s long anti-fascist tradition of fighting bigotry and prejudice. This report aims to contribute to that *same* fight.

Anjem Choudary might only have a few hundred supporters but their ability to cause terror and fear on our streets, bring a racist backlash down on mainstream Muslims and – ultimately – to divide communities is huge.

No matter under what banner the politics of hatred and intolerance raises its ugly head we must be prepared to greet it with organised and determined opposition. The face of hatred is the face of hatred and the mask it wears is irrelevant.

# Executive summary

- 1 The al-Muhajiroun network, in its various guises, remains the largest and single most important radical Islamist group in the UK. It continues to attract hundreds of followers around the country.
  - 2 Al-Muhajiroun is a gateway to terror. While there is no evidence to prove that the group's founder, Omar Bakri Mohammad, or its current leader, Anjem Choudary, have directly instigated any terror plots we do believe that they have given people the justification and encouragement to take extreme actions. This report lists 70 people convicted of terrorism, terrorist-related offences in the UK, or died aboard over the last 14 years who have been linked to the group.
  - 3 A much larger figure, numbering several hundred, and who have been linked to al-Muhajiroun, have been convicted of Islamist extremist offences over the same period. In fact, al-Muhajiroun members and supporters make up the overwhelming majority of people convicted of Islamist extremist activities in the UK over the last 15 years.
  - 4 This report charts the history of the group, lists its front organisations and profiles its key leaders. London continues to be its heartland, which is unsurprising given that 78% of known Islamist extremists live in the capital, with Birmingham, Luton, Derby and Leicester its other strongholds.
  - 5 Anjem Choudary's group now leads a network of hardline Islamist organisations across Europe. These include groups in Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Denmark and Italy. It is also closely linked to Islamist extremist groups in Germany, Norway and Finland. Together, they represent the largest extreme Islamist network in Europe and all its sister organisations have been linked to domestic or overseas terrorism.
  - 6 Al-Muhajiroun is also active in the US with its sister organisations the Islamic Thinkers Society (ITS) and Revolution Muslim (RM). Almost a third of people arrested and convicted of Islamist terrorist offences in the US in recent years have been linked to these two groups.
  - 7 Al-Muhajiroun has sent hundreds of British citizens to a succession of battlezones across the globe, from Chechnya to Bosnia, Pakistan to Afghanistan. Since 2008 al-Muhajiroun has encouraged its supporters to go to Somalia and Yemen and many have risen to leading positions in al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.
- This report reveals the extent of those links, connections between the infamous White Widow and Anjem Choudary, and the involvement of one of the group's supporters in the production of the AQ publication *Inspire*. We also identify the masked man narrating the recent al-Shabaab video as Mohamed Hasnath, a 20-year-old from Tower Hamlets, and his links to al-Muhajiroun.
- 8 Over the past 15 months Anjem Choudary has developed close links with the European Ansar al-Islam operation, the al-Qaeda-linked terrorist group in Northern Iraq. The report reveals the names of Ansar al-Islam leaders in Europe and reports from inside private events of the two groups.
  - 9 Norway is emerging as a key recruiting ground for Islamist extremists, with between 40-65 Norwegians having been to Syria. In addition, several Norwegians, or people who have sought asylum in Norway, have been involved with al-Shabaab. They include Mohamed Abdikadir Mohamed, known as Ikrima, who is regarded as one of the most dangerous commanders in the Somali terror group al-Shabaab. Another Norwegian was Hassan Abdi Dhuhulow, a 23-year-old who took part in the Westgate shopping mall attack. This report will reveal that whilst in Kenya, he was in regular telephone contact with Bastian Vasques, the leader of Prophet Ummah, a Norwegian Islamist group with close links with Anjem Choudary.
  - 10 Police and security services now suggest that at least 1,800 Europeans have fought, or are fighting, in Syria. This report estimates that of the 300-350 Britons who have gone to Syria, 50-80 have gone through al-Muhajiroun channels. We name the leading al-Muhajiroun activist in London who is believed to be their key recruiter.
  - 11 We estimate that al-Muhajiroun-connected groups across Europe have sent between 200-300 people to Syria, making it the largest single recruiting network in Europe.
  - 12 There is a clear symbiotic relationship between al-Muhajiroun and the English Defence League. They feed off the other and justify their own existence by the existence of the other. The three biggest spikes in support for the EDL have come after al-Muhajiroun activities. In challenging one it is important to challenge the other and this report concludes with an explanation of the need to mobilise mainstream British society – across all communities – against violent racist and religious extremism.

A man wearing a grey turban and a dark jacket is holding a large, light-colored cardboard sign. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right. The sign is held up with his right hand, which is resting on the top edge. The sign has a white rectangular area in the center with the text "BRITISH SOLDIERS BURN IN HELL!" printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The text is arranged in four lines: "BRITISH", "SOLDIERS", "BURN IN", and "HELL!". The word "HELL!" is underlined with a thick black line. In the background, there are black banners with white Arabic calligraphy, and a wooden pole is visible on the left side.

**BRITISH  
SOLDIERS  
BURN IN  
HELL!**

# A Short History of al-Muhajiroun

*“ Bin Laden is a hero to all Muslims. [...] I want Britain to become an Islamic state. I want to see the flag of Islam raised in 10 Downing Street ”*

**Omar Bakri Mohammed**

**T**he history of al-Muhajiroun and its leaders is deeply entwined with the history of political Islamism in Britain. This is the history of a set of distorted and extremist ideas and the small cabal of devout and dogmatic followers that have dedicated their life to the enactment of them. The result has been bloodshed at home and abroad as well as the unfair and unacceptable stigmatisation of the entire Muslim community; the shameful idea of collective responsibility.

However, while for many it felt as though United Airlines Flight 11 and 175 came out of a clear blue sky on September 11 2001, the reality is that Islamist extremism has been a cloud on the horizon for many decades previous. While only a tiny percentage of Britain's Muslim population, British based extremists have heavily contributed to the international Jihad movement with Scotland Yard estimating that as many as 3,000 Britons may have participated in al-Qaeda training camps and at present there is an unknown number of British extremists fighting with Islamists in Syria.

The bloody effect of this ideological crusade hit the streets of London on 7/7 2005 when the al-Muhajiroun convert Mohammed Siddique Khan murdered 52 people with his three accomplices. To understand how it is that a Leeds born, 30 year old father-of-one, came to blow himself up on a busy tube, one has to go all the way back to January 14, 1986, the day that Omar Bakri Mohammed moved to Britain.

Born in Aleppo, Syria, in 1958, Omar Bakri Mohammed has dedicated most of his life to the propagation of his extreme fundamentalist views. His childhood at an Islamic boarding school shaped his ideas and by the age of 15 he had joined the Muslim Brotherhood. After fleeing from the Syrian security services he moved to Beirut and joined Hizb ut Tahrir (HT).

HT is an international pan-Islamic organisation whose primary aim is to unite all Muslim countries into a single Islamic state, or Caliphate, under strict Islamic Law. The notion of the Caliphate dates back to the seventh century, the last time all Muslim lands were under the governance of a single elected 'caliph'. Originally founded in 1953 in Jerusalem by Taqiuddin an-Nabhani, a Palestinian court clerk, the organisation has since become truly global in its reach.

By the early 80s, following a short spell in Cairo, Omar moved to Mecca and began organising his own HT group. HT was banned in Saudi Arabia, whose ruling Royal family are committed to the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam. Despite concerns voiced by the HT branch in Kuwait and in the face of government

repression and a state ban, Omar managed to mobilise a small but dedicated group of thirty-eight activists by 1983. His decision to continue organising and campaigning in Saudi Arabia even after he had been told to stop by HT leadership led to the suspension of his membership. Thus, Omar launched al-muhajiroun, wilayat al-Jazira al-arabiyya, though he told his small band of followers that the new name was nothing other than an administrative change and that they were still working on behalf of the movement. The group's public activities such as leafleting, brought the attention of the Saudi authorities upon them and several waves of arrests followed. In late 1985 Omar was arrested and deported, after which he moved to London.

Once in London, Omar began organising a UK branch of HT with surprising success. By 1990 his group had grown to 400 members and begun to draw mainstream media attention. The Guardian newspaper stated under the headline, "Radical Time-Bomb Under British Islam", that HT was "challenging the managements of Britain's mosques by making humiliating public criticisms of the local imam's sermons. And Hizb ut-Tahrir has taken over nearly all the Muslim student societies at London University colleges and campuses in other areas where Muslims form a large part of the community."

Bakri and his followers also engaged in high profile public events and demonstrations that, as with Anjem Choudary today, received widespread media coverage. During the Gulf War Bakri famously stated that John Major could be assassinated if he went to Saudi Arabia and later in August 1995, at a rally in Trafalgar Square, called for the Queen to convert to Islam. However, perhaps his most outrageous outburst came during the war in former Yugoslavia when he called on Bosnian Muslims to "eat Serbs" rather than accepting western food aid.

Such events caused public outrage resulting in the Middle Eastern leadership of HT demanding that Omar and his followers lower their profile and be no more than a useful global media hub that solely aided efforts to build towards the primary goal of a caliphate in Muslim countries. Omar refused to rein in his activities and thus quit HT on 15 January 1996 to relaunch his own organisation, al-Muhajiroun, just three days later. It has been said that the creating of al-Muhajiroun "sent shockwaves through the global [Hizb ut-Tahrir] movement" and that many disaffected HT followers contacted Omar Bakri excited by the new found emphasis on public activism. The result was that al-Muhajiroun quickly became the most visible, vocal and infamous Islamist group in Britain with branches in over 30 cities and towns. Alongside the group Omar set up the Al-Khilafa publishing house to produce propaganda.

Al-Muhajiroun spent the rest of the nineties as a vocal but marginalised and largely ignored extremist organisation. However, the groups reaction to the 9/11 terrorist attacks in America rocketed the group to world wide infamy as their celebratory response received international publicity and condemnation. While the overwhelming majority of British Muslims were appalled by the murderous attacks, al-Muhajiroun activists were outspoken in their praise for both Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. In September 2002, exactly a year after the

## A Short History of al-Muhajiroun (continued)

attack the group held a now infamous conference called “the Magnificent 19” which praised the 9/11 terrorists with the poster strap line reading “September the 11th 2001, a Towering Day in World History.”

Support for Bin Laden became common place among the organisation and one follower told Newsnight, in 2004, “When they speak about 11 September, when the two planes magnificently run through those buildings, OK and people turn around and say, ‘hang on a second, that is barbaric. Why did you have to do that?’ You know why? Because of ignorance. ... For us it’s retaliation. Islam is not the starter of wars. If you start the war we won’t turn the other cheek. ... According to you it can’t be right. According to Islam it’s right.”

Outlandish and controversial statements such as these significantly raised the public profile of the group around the world despite the fact that it still amounted to just around 160 “formal members”.

Since its creation, al-Muhajiroun had slowly begun to establish itself beyond British shores with an increasing number of foreign affiliated groups. However, in February 2004, the Pakistan branch ceded from the organisation in order to get more involved with militant activity in Afghanistan. The Pakistani group worked as a conduit to help send radicalised western Muslims to fight in South West Asia.

Not long after the Pakistani group left the network, Omar Bakri took the decision to officially disband al-Muhajiroun, sighting a need for Muslim unity following 9/11 and the resulting American and western reaction. Bakri took the decision apparently believing the group was about to be outlawed. However, from this point on, right up to today, the group continued to exist under an ever-increasing plethora of front groups and linked organisations. Thus, far more important than what was essentially little more than a name change was Omar Bakri’s call for Muslim unity against a “hostile west”. Al-Muhajiroun’s declaration that Islam was under attack by a post 9/11 global coalition of western powers, including Britain, was to have far wider and more important ramifications.

Britain’s Islamists operated under a “Covenant of Security” which was essentially a compromise between the British authorities and extremist Islamists that allowed a level of tolerance in exchange for self-policing. However, in the eyes of Omar Bakri, Britain had broken the covenant and made itself a fair target. Just four months after Bakri’s declaration, Mohammed Siddique Khan, an al-Muhajiroun supporter, and three accomplices murdered 52 people on the streets of London.

In August 2005, not long after the attacks, and following a string of

arrests concerning al-Muhajiroun activists, Omar Bakri fled to Lebanon at which point he was banned from returning by then Home Secretary Charles Clarke who felt Bakri’s presence was “not conducive to the public good.”

Before the bomb attacks, back in October 2004, al-Muhajiroun had reformed under the new name al-Ghurabaa, Arabic for “strangers”. Simultaneously a group called al-Firqat un-Naajiyah, or the Saved Sect, was also launched. Both groups were essentially al-Muhajiroun but under a new name.

Al-Ghurabaa was led by Abu Izzaddeen (formerly Omar Brooks) who was of Jamaican origin but grew up in Hackney. The groups website claimed that terrorism was “part of Islam” and controversially stated that the blame for the 7/7 bombings did not lie with the perpetrators but rather with the British government and the British public.

Meanwhile, the Saved Sect was led by Abu Uzair who had, like Izzaddeen, been involved in al-Muhajiroun. Like Omar Bakri, Uzair famously declared that the “covenant of security” no longer existed and proclaimed that “We don’t live in peace with you any more [...] The banner has been risen for jihad inside the UK, which means it’s allowed for the bombers to attack.”

Both groups came together in February 2006 outside the Danish Embassy to protest against cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed published in Denmark. Al-Ghurabaa called for the protest by posting an article entitled, “Kill those who insult the Prophet Muhammed” on their website which stated, “insulting of the Messenger Muhammad (saw) is something that the Muslims cannot and will not tolerate and the punishment in Islam for the one who does so is death.”

Unsurprisingly, the violent imagery and provocative nature of the protest caused an outcry and led to a string of arrests under the Public Order Act.

Both the Saved Sect and al-Ghurabaa were proscribed in July 2006 under legislation designed to outlaw organisations that support terrorism. However, as they had done before and subsequently since, the group simply relaunched with a new puppet leader and a new name. Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah, meaning “Adherents to the Sunnah and the community”, was one such group, led by Sulayman Keeler (born Simon Keeler). It operated primarily as a closed internet forum for al-Muhajiroun members with log in details being closely protected and only given to activists.

With the absence of Omar, now exiled in Lebanon, Anjem Choudary, leader of the Society of Muslim Lawyers and a long time Omar Bakri disciple, became a prominent member of the organisation. Importantly, members of this organisation took part in the now infamous protest in Luton against homecoming soldiers in 2009, which led to the formation of the United People of Luton group that was the embryo of the English Defence League.

In addition to the Internet based Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah was another street based reconstitution of al-Muhajiroun operating under the name Islam4UK.



Muslims Against Crusades spokesperson Abu Assadullah





Omar Bakri Mohammed and some of his supporters

The leadership of the UK based operation had fallen to the increasingly high profile Anjem Choudary.

Clearly energised and encouraged by the mass public outrage that followed their Luton demonstration, Islam4UK called a protest in early 2010 in Wooten Bassett, the town that had become an unofficial sight of public mourning for returning British military fatalities. The plan of Choudary and his followers to march through the streets holding black coffins was widely condemned by everyone. Islam4UK cancelled the planned march but as with its predecessors, it was quickly proscribed under counter terrorism laws.

As expected the group once again reformed following the proscription of its predecessor, this time under the name of Muslims Against Crusades. While still under the leadership of Anjem Choudary the group's puppet spokesperson was Abu Assadullah.

In vein with its former incarnations this al-Muhajiroun group continued to garner headlines around the world with its outlandish and extremist behavior. The group controversially called for the creation of independent Muslim emirates within the UK cities where Sharia Law could be imposed. The three proposed locations were Bradford and Dewsbury in Yorkshire and Tower Hamlets in East London.

The group's most famous stunt was its poppy burning near the Albert Hall on Remembrance Sunday 2010.

Following a year of headline grabbing stunts and protests MAC were finally banned by Home Secretary Theresa May on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2011, the eve of a planned protest where the poppy burning was to be repeated. Once again the group continued as before with 22 former MAC members being arrested outside the American Embassy in December 2011 for being members of a banned organisation and obstruction and violent disorder. Since then the group has continued its regular demonstrations, conferences and stunts but avoided proscription by not creating an identifiable label for the whole group.

However, a number of small offshoots made up of al-Muhajiroun activists do exist. One such group is The Sharia Project which formed shortly after Ramadan in 2012 in Waltham Forest in North East London. The group, led by al-Muhajiroun and Muslims Against Crusades activist Abu Usamah, engage in vigilante style "muslim patrols" that seek to impose Sharia law on local communities.

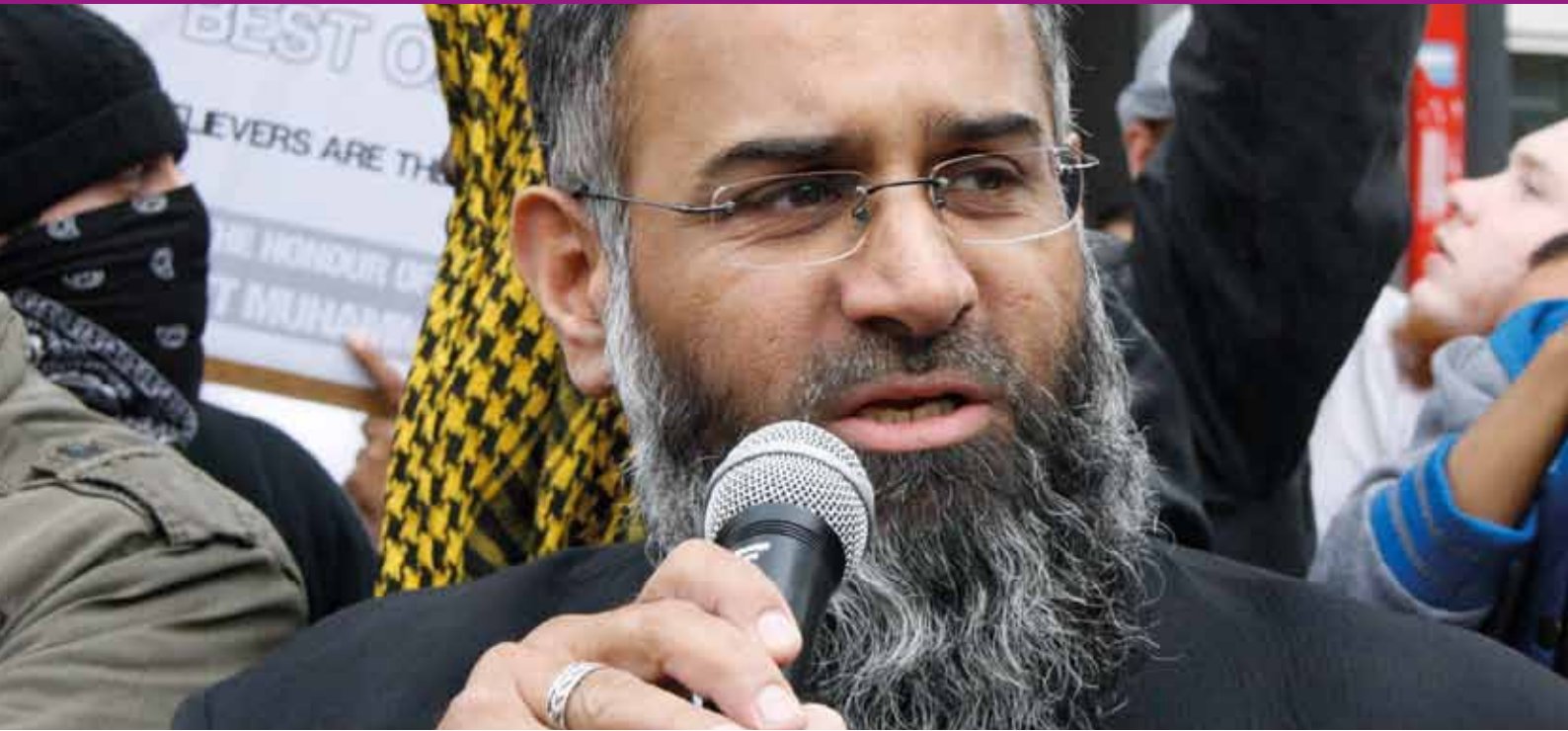
Other leading members of the al-Muhajiroun network, including Abu Izzadeen, current leader of Islamic Revolution, are involved in the group.

The Sharia Project has also begun a campaign against alcohol with regular demonstrations in Walthamstow. Abdul Muhid (Alias Abu Muhsina) Muhid, who was jailed for 6 years for soliciting to murder in 2007, is also known to have been on street patrols with The Sharia Project. He also runs the affiliated website called MuslimPrisoners which offers to forward letters to more than 50 extremist Muslim prisoners and displays their replies.

Thus, while no official replacement for Muslims Against Crusades has been launched, the organisation still operates under various front groups and sits at the heart of the Global Sharia Network. As with the previous, now banned, front groups, there are numerous puppet leaders but the power remains in the hands of Anjem Choudary.

The history of al-Muhajiroun is a complex and ever changing one, but one that is intricately linked to the history of Islamism in Britain. This country continues to be the home of an international network of extremists, terrorists and jihadist fighters whose determination to fight for their fundamentalist interpretation of Islam has had a profound effect on our society.

The activities of a small group of dedicated extremists has led to bloodshed on the streets of cities across Europe, supplied fighters to foreign wars in Chechnya, Afghanistan and Syria, acted as a catalyst for the growth of far right groups such as the English Defence League, and led to the unfair victimisation of Britain's wider Muslim communities.



## Profile: Anjem Choudary

ANJEM CHOUDARY is perhaps the best-known Islamist extremist in Britain. His outlandish quotes and controversial demonstrations receive national and often international coverage.

He was born in 1967 in the UK and was raised in a semi-detached house in Welling, Kent. He went to Mulgrave primary school in Woolwich, which ironically is a stone's throw from where Lee Rigby was murdered in May 2013.

Choudary went on to study medicine at the University of Southampton before failing his exams and switching to Law. While at University he went by the anglicized name Andy and is said to have been popular with women, enjoyed a drink and may have even dabbled in recreational drug taking. He went on to complete his law qualifications at a legal firm and later became Chairman of the Society of Muslim Lawyers.

It was in the 1990's that Choudary became radicalized after he "bumped into Sheik Omar Bakri Mohammed" at a mosque in Woolwich, south-east London. They quickly became inseparable and Choudary is said to even have drafted his resignation letter from Hizb ut-Tahrir.

Anjem helped launch al-Muhajiroun with Bakri in the mid-nineties and became the group's deputy-leader. However, since the dissolution of the original al-Muhajiroun (only in name) and the exile of Bakri to Lebanon, Choudary has come to the fore and emerged as the leader of the UK operation. He also claims to have set up the UK's first Sharia Law court of which he is a judge. Also, while numerous front groups such as Al Ghurabaa and Muslims Against Crusades have emerged with different public spokesmen, Choudary has remained the leader behind the scenes.

In addition to his prominent role as leader in the UK, the worldwide hub of the organisation, Anjem has increasingly internationalized his outlook and is now at the centre of his own international network of affiliated and partner organisations. This

network, best described as the Global Sharia Network, operates across the globe and while they respect Omar Bakri and his teachings, they look to Choudary rather than Bakri as their leader.

Often using the name Sharia4 followed by the country, Choudary's network involves groups directly run by him in the UK, such as Sharia4Pakistan and Sharia4Hind, groups set up by him but led by others, such as Sharia4Belgium and Sharia4Holland and copycat groups that form independently but affiliate to the network and see Choudary as their spiritual leader, such as Sharia4Italy and Sharia4Australia. In addition to these groups directly linked to his network are a plethora of international affiliated organisations that he has worked closely with.

It is clear that with Omar Bakri now effectively exiled in Lebanon, Choudary has become an increasingly important figure on the international Islamist scene. As a preacher he has influenced some of the most well known terrorists of the last decade and he has helped to send British and European Muslims to war zones around the world to engage in jihad.

As a result of becoming more internationally known he is increasingly moving in more extreme and dangerous circles with ever more links to major international terrorist groups, such as Ansar al-Islam, the northern Iraq group which is affiliated to al-Qaeda. In October 2013 the Somalia based al-Qaeda affiliate al-Shabaab flagged up Choudary as a key contact in the UK.

While painted by some in the media as a figure of fun, an extremist crackpot whose often-outlandish media stunts are rightly ridiculed, Anjem Choudary has become a serious player on the international Islamist scene. Perhaps it is time to stop laughing at his ridiculous stunts and to start concentrating on his role as a facilitator of terror.

# Key figures

## 1. Abu Izzadeen (born Trevor Brooks)

Considered by many to be Anjem Choudary's deputy, Abu Izzadeen was born in Hackney to Jamaican parents. He converted to Islam at 17 and met Omar Bakri Mohammed and Abu Hamza at Finsbury Park mosque in the 1990s.

he visited training camps in Afghanistan and boasted that he would like to be a suicide bomber.

He was the leader of Al Ghurabaa, one of the front groups that formed after the banning of al-Muhajiroun.

He has been arrested three times for terrorism related offenses and in April 2008 he was convicted for terrorist fund-raising and inciting terrorism overseas and jailed for four and a half years.

## 2. Abu Uzair (born Sajid Sharif)

Born Sajid Sharif in 1968, Abu Uzair is a Pakistani-Briton and a key preacher in the al-Muhajiroun network. He used to preach at Finsbury Park mosque and became leader of the Saviour Sect when al-Muhajiroun was banned.

He continues to preach for Anjem Choudary's London School of Shariah.

He famously declared that the "covenant of security" which stopped Muslim extremists from attacking their host nation no longer existed and proclaimed that "We don't live in peace with you any more [...] The banner has been risen for jihad inside the UK, which means it's allowed for the bombers to attack."

He recently called for David Cameron to be killed.

## 3. Sulayman Keeler (born Simon Keeler)

Converted from Catholicism in the 1990s after spending time in France and meeting people at Langley Green mosque in Crawley. His father left when he was young and he was brought up by his mother and step-father who both worked for the RAF.

He ran the 'Society of Converts to Islam', an al-Muhajiroun front, and when the parent organisation was banned in 2005 he became spokesperson for Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah.

He was imprisoned in 1998 after he assaulted a police officer during a demonstration in London and then arrested again after he assaulted BNP members at a rally. In 2008 he was sentenced to four years imprisonment for terrorist fundraising and inciting people to join the Jihad in Iraq.

## 4. Abu Assadullah / Asad Ullah

A key organiser in the al Muhajiroun network and leader of Muslims Against Crusades until it was banned in 2010.

Attends almost every demonstration the group has organised in recent years, including the anti-Burka ban demo in France. He regularly speaks at these demonstrations.

## 5. Abdul Muhid (Alias Abu Muhsina)

Muhid, 29, was jailed for 6 years for soliciting to murder in 2007 following a demonstration outside the Danish embassy against cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

Muhid runs a Muslim prisoner organization ([www.muslimprisoners.com](http://www.muslimprisoners.com)) which offers to forward letters to more than 135 Muslim prisoners and display their replies.

Engages in Muslim Patrols and is often chief steward on al-Muhajiroun demonstrations in London.

## 6. Abu Usamah

Leader of the Sharia Project and co-ordinator of the street patrols promoting Sharia law in East London and the actions against alcohol in Walthamstow.

A regular speaker at al-Muhajiroun demonstrations.

## 7. Sayful Islam (born Ishtiaq Alamgir)

Leader of the all important Luton branch, Sayful Islam is also a key figure in the national al-Muhajiroun network. The son of a British Rail engineer, Sayful Islam became an Inland Revenue accountant but joined al-Muhajiroun after meeting Omar Bakri and watching TV images of hijacked planes going into the Twin Towers. "I felt elated," he later told reporters.

He organised the protest against the Royal Anglian regiment's homecoming parade and more recently featured in a TV documentary with then-EDL leader Stephen Lennon.

## 8. Abu Waleed

Runs the influential SalafiMediaUK, a platform used by the al-Muhajiroun network to propagate their message at home and abroad.

Has also been a regular speaker at the London School of Shariah.



# Al-Muhajiroun's Ideology

**A**t its core the mission and ideology of al-Muhajiroun and its numerous affiliated groups within the global network, is the creation of world ruled by strict Islamic law, or Sharia, under the leadership of a single religious leader known as a Caliph.

The very formation of al-Muhajiroun was brought about by Omar Bakri Mohammed's ideological diversion away from the leadership of Hizb ut-Tahrir. While still an extreme Islamist organisation HT claims to restricts their desire to create a Caliphate to existing Muslim countries.

In the UK and the West it claims that it is focused solely on "building the case for Political Islam and defending the Ummah and Islam." However, Omar Bakri and now Anjem Choudary call for "direct political struggle" for a caliphate in Britain.

Unlike HT and other extreme Islamic groups Omar Bakri has argued that Western states such as Britain, with their willingness to allow freedom of speech, made them the best, rather than the worst, places to agitate for the creation of the Caliphate.

Understanding the ideology of al-Muhajiroun is integral to understanding the actions of the followers as the doctrines of al-Muhajiroun impact every aspect of activist's lives. This link between ideology and activism makes the often extreme, controversial and hate filled philosophy of the group all the more worrying. This is an organisation of action, making their pronouncements threats not rhetoric.

## Antisemitism

Al-Muhajiroun's doctrines go beyond simply non-engagement with non-Muslims and crosses over to open denunciation and prejudice towards other faiths and communities. While many condemn the Israeli governments actions in Palestine, al-Muhajiroun supporters regularly overstep the line and engage in violent antisemitism.

At an Al-Muhajiroun rally in 1998 Yacub Zaki declared: "Nobody was gassed to death in the concentration camps [...] David Irving has the right idea, destroy the Holocaust myth and you have destroyed Israel."

This visceral anti-Semitism has been promoted through poster and leaflet campaigns calling for a holy war against the Jews. In addition the group's bookstores and street sales have been known to sell copies of the notorious antisemitic forgery *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* and copies of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.

Al-Muhajiroun does not confine their prejudice and hatred to antisemitism. They have also made Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists targets. Anjem Choudary has previously called for the destruction of all non-Muslim religious icons and statues in India and calls for an end to public displays of non-Muslim religions.

## Homophobia

Another integral aspect of their belief system is homophobia. They describe gay relationships as "perverted acts", comparable to "rape and murder", and call for homosexuals to be put to death. The group and its followers regularly and openly preach homophobia.

## Sexism

Anjem Choudary and al-Muhajiroun have consistently spouted anti-women views based that if implemented would subjugate women as second class citizens.

He has previously said: "Every woman, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, would have to wear a traditional burkha and cover everything apart from her face and hands in public." He has also preached that, "In matters to do with the judicial system and the penal code, one male witness is sufficient to counter the testimony of two females. People who commit adultery would be stoned to death."

## Street Patrols

Members of the various linked organisations are encouraged to participate in a rigorous schedule of weekly activities including public outreach programmes (Dawah), protests, and regular lessons and lectures. The activists think it integral to act out their beliefs on a daily basis. One manner in which they have shown their dedication to bringing Sharia to Britain is through controversial vigilante style "muslim patrols" that seek to impose Sharia law on local communities. They aim to stop public alcohol consumption, gambling, and western style dress, often doing so in a confrontational manner. The group, currently called The Sharia Project led by al-Muhajiroun and Muslims Against Crusades activist Abu Usamah but fully backed by Anjem Choudary, also hold regular anti-alcohol demonstrations in Walthamstow, London.

## British or Muslim?

One of the key elements of al-Muhajiroun's ideology is the premise that UK Muslims should abandon any attempt at integration or co-existence but instead follow a path of dislocation. They even go as far as to dissuade followers from associating with non-Muslims altogether. They use de-contextualised parts of the Quran to prove to their followers that complete alienation from their non-Muslim surroundings is necessary and required.

The group's name al-Muhajiroun is Arabic for 'emigrants' and refers to the Prophet's migration to Medina in 622. In the Quran the Prophet's journey from Mecca to Medina is seen as an important point in the life of the early Muslim community and in the modern era the idea has been used by some like al-Muhajiroun, to call for the faithful to remove themselves from the failings of the wider community.

The emphasis on hammering a wedge between Muslims and their host communities has led to a fully blown denunciation of the ideas of secularism, multiculturalism and integration.

They have also been very vocal in attacking more mainstream and moderate British Muslim organisations that seek to build engagement and understanding between different communities and faiths.

In November 2013, Anjem Choudary published the pamphlet



“*British or Muslim?*” on his website which strongly attacks the idea of integration and those moderate Imams who promote it.

The pamphlet describes the police and the army as non-Islamic entities and thus it is “completely prohibited” for Muslims to join. It also attacks the military and says that any Muslim fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan on the side of Britain is engaging in apostasy.

This belief has led al-Muhajiroun converts to leave their jobs. Jahangir Alom, was a Police Community Support Officer but left after he was told that his job was haram (a term meaning sinful) as he was engaged in upholding man made law rather than that made by Allah and laid down in the Quran. He was later jailed for his part in the Royal Wooten Bassett bomb plot.

As the group aim to implement Sharia law in Britain they strictly reject any involvement with the existing democracy and the man made laws that parliament passes. As such Muslim MPs such as Khalid Mahmood and Sayeeda Warsi are attacked as apostates who, “help to rule and judge by other than what Allah (SWT) has revealed.”

This call for Muslims to reject democracy has been a long standing tenant of al-Muhajiroun’s dogma and goes as far as calling for Muslims not to vote in elections because, “How can a Muslim say that there is no legislator except Allah and then vote for someone else to legislate Kuffar law and order?” These views manifest themselves in a constant vocal denunciation of democracy, freedom and tolerance.

Despite being happy to use and in some case abuse the freedom of speech afforded to them in their host countries, they regularly chant “Down down democracy, down down freedom” and “democracy go to hell” at their public demonstrations. Ironically, while they often have banners that read “Democracy=Hypocrisy” they have used their right to freedom of speech to call for the death penalty for those who insult Islam.

Most revealing in Choudary’s *Muslim or British* pamphlet is the section called, “Spying on Muslims or working with ‘Prevent’ will make you a ‘kaafir’.” Prevent is the Governments counter

terrorism strategy. Choudary condemns those Muslims who report on other Muslims to the police and condemns those who do as unbelievers.

The pamphlet closes with a rant about supposed British attacks against Muslims starting with the crusades and finishing with the extradition of Sheikh Abu Qatadah to Jordan and Abu Hamza to America.

The pamphlet is just the latest example of Anjem Choudary’s and al-Muhajiroun’s determination to drive a wedge between British Muslims and the society in which they live. Most worrying of all is the tacit defence of terrorism and the attack on those who seek to stop it.

**In early 2012 three men from Derby linked to al-Muhajiroun were convicted under laws against inciting hatred on the grounds of sexual orientation. The three men, Ihjaz Ali, Kabir Ahmed and Razwan Javed, known associates of Anjem Choudary were handing out a series of leaflets calling for homosexuals to be hung, stoned and even burnt to death. One of the outrageous leaflets stated “Allah permits the destruction” of gay people and that “the only question is how it should be carried out” while another stated, “Gay Today, Paedophile Tomorrow?”**



**Inexcusable and extreme homophobia of this nature is commonplace in al-Muhajiroun circles.**

# The al-Muhajiroun network today

THE AL-MUHAJIROUN network was originally designed so that each country in the network had a national Emir (religious leader), an assistant to the Emir, a national leader and an assistant to the national leader. The Emirs in each country served as the religious leaders while the respective national leaders were supposed to administer the day to day running of the group.

All of these positions sat below the worldwide Emir, which was Omar Bakri Mohammed.

## The Current UK Structure

Omar Bakri was both the worldwide Emir and national emir here in the UK, with Anjem Choudary working as both assistant to the emir as well as the UK leader.

However, since Omar Bakri was exiled to Lebanon the UK operation has been centralised in the hands of Anjem Choudary. He is now considered both the UK emir and the national leader. Abu Izzadeen is the main assistant in the UK but the relationship between him and Choudary blows hot and cold.

There are a number of branches across the country, though probably less than at the peak of the old al-Muhajiroun organisation in the years following 9/11 and those that do exist are not as rigidly controlled as they once were.

Each unit has its own local Emir though in the bigger areas, such as Birmingham and Greater Manchester there might be two or three key leaders. The Emir is responsible for organising the private study circle, which are focused on affirmation of creed and doctrine, and authorising public stalls and activities. They also report directly to Anjem Choudary.

London remains at the heart of the organisation, which is not surprising given that over 75% of Britain's Islamist extremists live in the capital. Their strongholds are in Waltham Forest, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Redbridge and Lewisham. Hackney has emerged as fertile recruiting ground in recent years.

However, due to the intense media attention over their street patrols it is becoming harder to organise over in east London so the organisation is increasingly turning its attention to west London, and Ealing in particular. This has been helped by a number of activists moving across from East London.

A new area of activity over the coming year could well be Harrow, after a leading member of the Grey Set gang converted whilst in prison.

Luton continues to have one of the strongest congregations of supporters, with some estimates suggesting 20-30 active in the area.

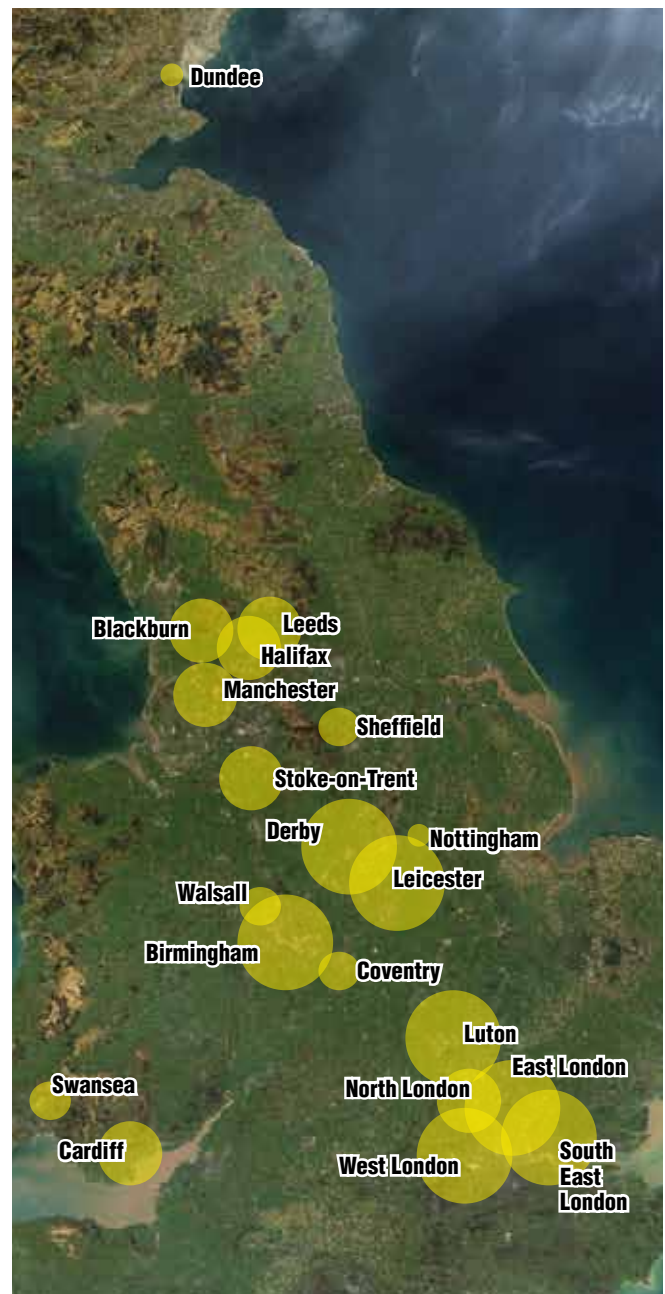
Outside London, Birmingham and the Black Country has the next strongest area of support, followed by Derby and Leicester in the East Midlands.

While there are still branches in Manchester and West Yorkshire, these are smaller than they once were. Other units are in Cardiff, Swansea, Sheffield, Nottingham and Stoke-on-Trent, and the latter also includes supporters in Burton-on-Trent.

There are handfuls of others supporters and individuals dotted around the country.

Social media has both increased Anjem Choudary's reach but also created a layer of supporters who might not actually be in the organisation. Many of their younger supporters are very active on twitter and facebook and can count on far more Islamist friends around the country than members of the organisation.

Membership of Choudary's network is probably between 250-350, though there will be several hundred other people who actively follow the group or get involved intermittently.



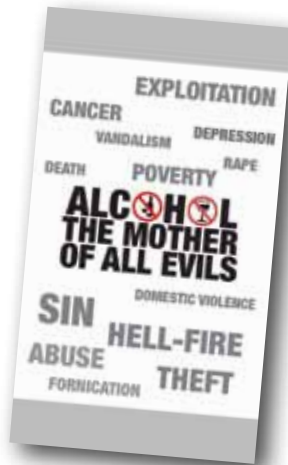
# Front organisations

## The Sharia Project

The Sharia Project was formed shortly after Ramadan in 2012 in Waltham Forest in North East London. The group is led by al-Muhajiroun and Muslims Against Crusades activist Abu Usamah.

They engage in vigilante style "muslim patrols" that seek to impose Sharia law on local communities. Other leading members of the al-Muhajiroun network, including Abu Izzadeen, current leader of Islamic Revolution, are involved in the group. The Sharia Project has also begun a campaign against alcohol with regular "Sharia Roadshows" in London.

The group hit the headlines when they posted a video on YouTube of a patrol in East London stopping and threatening people late at night. Their current patrols are more nuanced, as they target drinkers and prostitutes in Walthamstow.



## Islamic Emergency Defence

Islamic Emergency Defence (IED) is essentially designed to be a private police force for Muslims, but of course, in true al-Muhajiroun tradition, IED is also a play on the deadly Improvised Explosive Device.



IED was set up in the immediate aftermath of the murder of Lee Rigby and the subsequent anti-Muslim backlash.

The group supposedly offers advice on how to prevent getting in trouble as well as an emergency hotline you can call if in danger. The website also explains why Islam allows the use of force in self-defence.

## Islamic Revolution

This group is a relatively new organisation under the leadership of the former leader of the now banned front group al-Ghurabaa, Abu Izzaddeen.

The group is largely inactive though it did hold a large conference in 2013 that saw Izzaddeen joined by other speakers including Anjem Choudary and Awat Karkuky who is linked to Ansar al-Islam, the Kurdish-based affiliate of the al-Qaeda terror network, set up by Mullah Krekar.



## MuslimPrisoners.com

An online project was set up by Abdul Muhid (Alias Abu Muhsina), who himself had been jailed for 6 years for soliciting to murder in 2007 following a demonstration outside the Danish embassy against cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad organized by al-Ghurabaa.

His website offers to forward letters to 135 Muslim prisoners currently in British prisons.

## The London School of Shariah

Anjem Choudary claims to be principal lecturer at this Shariah school. Of course, this is not a proper school but merely a front for Choudary and others to preach their extremism.

They have previously run free Ramadan lectures which cover issues such as "Fiqh of marriage", "free mixing", and "clothing" at which "strict segregation" is enforced.

Other lecturers have included Ustadh Abu Luqmaan and former leader of the *Saved Sect* Abu Uzair.

## Women4Shariah

Women4Shariah has been described as an "international movement with a strong UK base" but there is no evidence that it operates in other countries.

W4S contingents are regularly seen on Anjem Choudary's demonstrations, including one outside the Sri Lankan embassy in London where it has been claimed they were waving al-Qaeda flags.

A Women4Shariah Facebook page carried taunts about the slaying of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich. Less than 24 hours after his murder, a statement on the page read: "Muslims should not play the victim and be cornered by the media or feel obliged to condemn or distance themselves from something they not responsible for."

Despite its name, social media analysis by Geoff Short has shown that 45% of the group's members online are men while only 29% could be confirmed as women.

# The Muslim prisoners

ONE OF THE MOST important fronts run by the al-Muhajiroun network is Muslim Prisoners, run through a website that seeks to correspond with Muslim prisoners in jail. However, in doing this it plays a far more significant role in keeping in contact with convicted terrorists and bring others into the al-Muhajiroun network.

Muslim Prisoners is run by Abdul Muhid, who sometimes operates under the alias Abu Muhsina.

Muhid is a key member of the al-Muhajiroun network and regularly acts as chief steward on their demonstrations in London. In 2007 he was jailed for 6 years for soliciting to murder in 2007 following a demonstration outside the Danish embassy against cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

The Muslim Prisoner website currently lists 135 Muslim prisoners who they are in contact with, including most of the Islamists who have been convicted of terrorism in the UK and abroad.

More worryingly, the list includes some prisoners, including converts, who were convicted for far more mundane criminal activities.

The website also carries stories about mistreatment of Muslim prisoners in British prison and makes comparisons with their fate with gross abuses in US-controlled prisons in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay.

There is even a monthly competition, where the winners can win £10 of “yummy sweets”, no doubt from the Yummy sweet shops run by Anjem Choudary’s brother and which employs several key al-Muhajiroun activists.

Much has been made of conversion in British prisoners and some of the stories have been hyped. The truth is that many of those converting in British prisons have no links to radical groups and are doing so for far more basic reasons such as belonging to a gang and better prison conditions.



Abdul Muhid

However, al-Muhajiroun does seek to recruit Muslim and non-Muslim prisoners to their cause. One such case is Mikaeel Ibraheem, a Hackney gangster who was convicted of attempting to murder a police officer during a fight in a club in Leeds. He admits to being converted and recruited to the al-Muhajiroun network by Dhiren Barot, the ringleader of the 2004 Financial Centre plot, whilst in Franklin prison.



Mikaeel Ibraheem

Ibraheem remains a key activist in the network and is one of Choudary’s bodyguards.

**The Muslim Prisoner website posts replies of numerous prisoners, including many who were not known to have been connected to the al-Muhajiroun network prior to their arrest.**

“If the mushriks [non-believers] can leave their families and sacrifice their lives and limbs to occupy, enslave and oppress the ummah [Muslim nation] then we too can sacrifice 100 times that to defend it.”

**1. Ahmed Ali**, the leader of a suicide plot to blow up trans-Atlantic passenger jets, writing in support of the Taliban.



1

**2. Rajib Karim**, one of those jailed for conspiring to smuggle a bomb onto a trans-Atlantic aircraft, says he looks forward to meeting those who convicted him in “the court of Allah on the day of judgment when ultimate justice will be served.”



2

**3. Hussain Osman**, one of the 21/7 bombers, writes that he had been placed in segregation for four weeks because “the governor is accusing me of ‘putting pressure on the Muslims to follow their extreme way of life’.”



3

**4. Roshonara Choudhry**, jailed for the attempted murder of the MP Stephen Timms after stabbing him at a constituency surgery, wrote of her “euphoria” when associates of former al-Muhajiroun leader Anjem Choudhry shouted their support from the public gallery at the Old Bailey as she was sentenced.



4

**5. Bilal Zaheer Ahmad**, 24, jailed for 12 years last summer after calling on Muslims to murder MPs who voted for the Iraq war, calls Britain “a nation of binge-drinking bastards, whores and homosexuals with STDs”.



5





(left) Dr Fikri speaking alongside Anjem Choudary outside the Egyptian embassy in July 2013  
(below left) Abu Uzair and (right) Usman Ali

# The hate preachers

ASIDE FROM Omar Bakri Mohammed, Anjem Choudary and Abu Izzadeen, there are a number of other key preachers who have influenced the al-Muhajiroun network.

They preach directly to AM supporters through mosques, study groups and on demonstrations but increasingly they spread their messages via the plethora of Jihadist internet sites, YouTube channels and forums.

They include:

## Dr. Khalid Fikri

Dr. Khalid Fikri is high profile preacher and the Secretary-General of the Committee Defending the Prophet's Honor in Britain. He delivers Friday prayers at four London Mosques.

Fikri graduated from the University of Cairo's Faculty of Medicine in 1980 serving as the Faculty of Medicine Student President from 1977 to 1978. In 1981 he was arrested in Egypt as part of the security crackdown on religious extremists ordered by President Anwar Sadat, although he was later acquitted by court in 1984. Between 1983 and 1984 he studied in the Institute of Islamic Studies and Research in Egypt. He then travelled to Kuwait where he worked as a private physician from 1985 to 1997. Finally, Dr. Fikri was granted political asylum in Britain in 2005.

He is both deeply sectarian against Shia Muslims and is openly antisemitic. He has previously called Jews "cruel, ungrateful, back-stabbing people" and claimed that Jews were behind 9/11.

He has also shown support to numerous convicted terrorist and extremist preachers.

Since being based in Britain he has become closely linked to al-Muhajiroun and is viewed as a respected preacher by AM activists. He has been seen at AM demonstrations with Anjem Choudary and his often radical sermons appear regularly on the Salafi Media You Tube page.

## Abu Uzair

Born Sajid Sharif, 45-year-old Abu Uzair has long been a key preacher in the al-Muhajiroun network. After al-Muhajiroun was



disbanded in 2004 he became leader of its successor group, The Saved Sect and a leading member of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah.

He has praised the 9/11 attacks in the US as "magnificent" and said that if he knew about plans to carry out a suicide attack he would not alert the police.

In an interview with BBC Newsnight he declared that the Covenant of Security, which forbids British Muslims from attacking Britain, no longer existed. He added: "We don't live in peace with you anymore. The banner has been risen for jihad inside the UK, which means it's allowed for the bombers to attack."

He appears to have fallen out with Choudary in late 2010. What began as a personal dispute widened over their differences over the covenant. Sharing a platform with Choudary at the Islamic Awakening conference, in December 2010, Abu Uzair, speaking under the name Abu Mounisa tells the audience that the only way to get Islam is to attack the system, including attacking Prime Minister David Cameron.

## Usman Ali

Usman Ali is a former al-Muhajiroun member who broke with the organisation in 2003. He once boasted of sending British volunteers to fight for the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Despite leaving al-Muhajiroun, Usman Ali remains an influential preacher. For many years he preached at Greenwich mosque until he was thrown out for his extremist views. The local council stepped in to help and provided him space at the Glyndon Community Centre.

He is involved in the Woolwich Dawah Forum and remains an influential figure on many local al-Muhajiroun supporters.

He holds prayers and meetings at gyms and community centres throughout East London and organises the annual "Belmarsh Iftar", in support of those being held in the maximum security prison.

# Dawah: Spreading the word

CENTRAL TO THE WORK of al-Muhajiroun and the many linked organisations in the Global Sharia Movement is the act of dawah.

Dawah literally translates as “to invite” or “to summon” and in practice it is the same as missionary work only dawah is specifically the act of proselytizing about Islam.

In the case of al-Muhajiroun it is about the recruitment of new activists and the spreading of their extreme and fundamentalist interpretation of the religion, all with a view to creating a worldwide caliphate.

The act of dawah is an integral part of any AM members life and deemed central to securing their place in the “here after”. They spread their propaganda both offline and online through numerous methods and mediums.

## Offline

High profile public demonstrations are the most obvious of AM activities. These often-controversial events regularly gain mass media attention, which provide the group with a reach and influence far in excess of what a faction of this size would otherwise expect.

The demonstrations are almost always called to raise awareness about Muslims suffering around the world with a view to garnering support from the wider Muslim community. They also always call for the adoption of Sharia law in the effected country to end the oppression.

As well as large demos, the group also engages in regular street stalls. They are held outside local tube stops, public buildings and near weekend markets.

Activists are also expected to recruit through existing networks such as friends and family and also have to host public study circles at local mosques.

## Online

While the high profile stunts and provocative demonstrations unquestionably bring a wider awareness to the existence of the group, especially through reporting in the media, it is on the internet where AM can reach a far larger audience with their propaganda.

In addition to the basic use of social media and online forums to advertise public demonstrations and meetings, the Internet provides the perfect medium for the dissemination of their ideology through video and audio lectures, online publications, specific forums and dedicated websites.

The government have recognised the importance of online activity for recruitment and radicalisation by criminalising the “glorification of terror” in 2006 with specific mention of online extremist publications. However, some have argued that British-based Islamists’ online activity has regularly breached this Act without repercussions.

Many AM-linked preachers have their own websites where they upload content including videos and articles. Two of the most active are Anjem Choudary’s personal site and Dr Khaled Fikry’s.



However, it is on YouTube that one can find most al-Muhajiroun and Global Sharia Network propaganda. The Sharia4 franchise has dozens of affiliated YouTube sites, many with cross-posted videos. While they are presented as independent set ups, linked by ideology only, all but a few copycat channels are likely part of a centrally directed network.

Existing social network analysis confirms that al-Muhajiroun is the single organising network behind much of this online proselytising.

As well as sermons by preachers, these YouTube sites often post “revert” videos, another popular recruitment tool used by AM. The videos tell the story of how non-Muslims converted to the Islamic faith.

These videos are clearly designed to prey on vulnerable individuals experiencing tough times and looking for answers and have proved very popular with some videos having nearly 20,000 hits.

Another popular AM linked propaganda outlet is UK based Salafi Media. It is one of the best-produced and regularly updated propaganda outlets for al-Muhajiroun linked preachers and supporters which has both a website and a YouTube channel.

The organisation, run by long-time AM affiliate Abu Waleed, has filmed and posted many videos of prominent AM members and affiliated individuals including a series of videos with AM activist Anthony Small and many lectures by the radical preacher Khaled Fikry.

Salafi Media have also hosted videos by and in support of al-Qaeda linked Mohamed Mahmoud, also known as Abu Usama al-Gharib, the leader of *Millat Ibrahim*, a banned German Islamist group.

Salafi Media seem to aim much of their content at younger audiences with modern graphics and styling and have several videos where young teenagers are in the videos as both participants and audiences. The videos usually aim to show how young vulnerable kids can avoid the troubles of gang life and poverty by become fundamentalist Muslims.

Thus, despite its relatively small size AM propaganda manages to reach a far larger audience via both its media grabbing demonstrations and its extensive production of videos and articles to watch and download.



## The terror connection

**A**l-Muhajiroun is a gateway to terror. The majority of Islamist terror plots in the UK have involved, directly or indirectly, people who have been active in al-Muhajiroun or one of its successor organisations.

While there is no evidence to prove that the group's founder, Omar Bakri Mohammad, or its current leader, Anjem Choudary, have directly instigated any terror plots we do believe that they have given people the justification and encouragement to take extreme actions. Some have organised terror plots whilst still active in the al-Muhajiroun while for others it has been a conveyor belt to terrorist groups.

We do believe, however, that there are active recruiters for overseas terrorist groups operating in and around al-Muhajiroun and this cannot have gone unnoticed by Bakri or Choudary. Indeed, we understand that there have been, or continue to be

today, key people within the organisation who actively encourage people to join jihadist groups abroad.

Over the next ten pages we highlight some of the worst terror plots and list 70 people convicted of terrorism, terrorist-related offences in the UK, or died aboard over the last 14 years who have been linked to the group. The true figure is unquestionably higher.

A much larger figure, numbering several hundred, and who have been linked to al-Muhajiroun, have been convicted of Islamist extremist offences over the same period. In fact, al-Muhajiroun members and supporters make up the overwhelming majority of people convicted of Islamist extremist activities in the UK over the last 15 years.

Al-Muhajiroun has quite simply been the single biggest gateway to terrorism in recent British history.

A gateway to terrorism: Case Study #1

# 7/7 London Bombings

IN THE MORNING of 7 July 2005 four suicide bombers struck central London killing 52 people and injuring 770 more. It was the worst terrorist atrocity in British history and it rocked the nation.

Three of the bombers detonated their bombs on the London underground system at Edgware Road, Russell Square and Aldgate stations and one bombed a London bus at Tavistock Square.

Three of the bombers were British nationals of Pakistani descent and came from West Yorkshire and one was a Jamaican convert from Buckinghamshire.

It is said that the bombs were constructed using readily available materials that were not particularly difficult to fashion into an explosive. The bombs, once made were packed into rucksacks worn by the bombers.

The four men were captured on CCTV arriving at Kings Cross station on a Thameslink train from Luton at 8:30 am. They then

split up with three detonating their bombs simultaneously at 8:50 am and then the final bomb was detonated 57 minutes later near Tavistock Square.

A month after the July bombings Omar Bakri Mohammed left the UK after stories emerged that the government was planning to investigate radical Muslim preachers under treason laws following the attacks. The Home Office then banned him from returning as his presence was, “not conducive to the public good”.

From start to finish, this was an al-Muhajiroun operation. The four bombers all had links to the group; the three Yorkshire-based bombers met the fourth through the group; the safe houses two of the bombers stayed in while in Lahore was owned by an al-Muhajiroun member and the training camp where they learnt to build bombs was established by the group.

The ringleader, Mohammad Sidique Khan, was closely linked to another al-Muhajiroun activist, Omar Kyyam, who was the ringleader of the Fertiliser bomb plot.





## The Bombers

### Mohammad Sidique Khan

Mohammad Sidique Khan was the ringleader of the plot and bombed the Edgware Road station killing himself and five others.



Khan, born in Leeds in 1974, was the son of Pakistani immigrants who had taken British citizenship. He grew up in Beeston in Yorkshire and after leaving school worked in low-level government clerical jobs before returning to education to do a Business Studies degree at Leeds Metropolitan University.

Khan and his accomplices had been in contact with Omar Bakri's al-Muhajiroun followers during which time he became an al-Muhajiroun convert. He also visited the Finsbury Park Mosque to hear the radical cleric Abu Hamza speak.

In 2001, he travelled to a camp in Kashmir run by the militant group, Harakat ul-Mujahidin. Two years later in 2003, he spent time in Pakistan with the American al-Muhajiroun member Junaid Babar whose Lahore flat operated as a conduit for getting people to the Malakand training camp hidden in Pakistan's North West Frontier.

He attended the training camp with eight other British extremists including Omar Khyam, the al-Muhajiroun member arrested as the ringleader of the failed Fertilizer Bomb Plot, and Zeeshan Siddique, another al-Muhajiroun member.

It is also reported that Khan was associated with the al-Muhajiroun linked Asif Hanif who was one of two Muslims involved in suicide bomb attacks in Tel Aviv.



### Shehzad Tanweer

Shehzad exploded the bomb near Aldgate station killing himself and seven others.

He was born in Bradford but lived most of his life in Beeston in Leeds and later studied sports science at the city's Metropolitan University.

He was first arrested in 2004 for disorderly conduct and then later that year travelled to Karachi with Khan. The official report

into the bombings mentioned rumours that he may have also been to Afghanistan for "violent jihad".

He has been described as a "member" of al-Muhajiroun in the UK and was also one of the "Mullah Boys" from Beeston who accompanied Khan on his trips to Finsbury Park Mosque where he came into contact with Omar Bakri's followers.

### Germaine Maurice Lindsay

He detonated his bomb near Russell Square tube station killing himself and 26 other people.

Originally from Jamaica he moved to the UK at the age of one and grew up in the Yorkshire town of Huddersfield. Both him and his mother were converts to Islam and Germaine quickly became more radical and was caught handing out pro-al-Qaeda leaflets while still at school.

Shortly before the attack he moved to Aylsebury to be closer to his wife's family. He was married to and had a child with Samantha Lewthwaite who is now better known as the 'White Widow' and is considered a key operative for the Somali-based al-Shabaab terrorist group.

While in the area he became closely associated with extremists in Luton. Though he did not officially join al-Muhajiroun he was well known in its circles and is known to have handed out leaflets and attempted to recruit for the group in Luton.



### Hasib Hussain

He was the youngest of the attackers; aged just 18 when he detonated a bomb on a London bus killing 13 people.

While always a Muslim it is believed that he became more radical following a trip to

Mecca to do the Hajj pilgrimage followed by a period with family in Pakistan.

He became involved with Khan and his network of extremists in Beeston and is known to have attended the same gym as two of the fellow bombers.

A gateway to terrorism: Case Study #2

# Fertiliser bomb plot

IN APRIL 2007 five men were convicted at the Old Bailey in London for arguably the biggest UK-based terror plot to date. The ringleaders were all active in al-Muhajiroun but the bombing campaign was international in nature and instigated by al-Qaeda. Over 1300 pounds of ammonium nitrate fertilizer was seized in raids carried out in March 2004.

The targets were said to be Bluewater shopping centre in Kent, the Ministry of Sound nightclub in London and the domestic gas network. Five men were jailed for life in the UK and others around the world have also faced charges.

The plot definitively proved the importance of al-Muhajiroun to British terrorism. *The Observer* newspaper showed “how al-Muhajiroun became the incubator of a global terror network that played a decisive role in radicalising the five ‘fertiliser bomb’ plotters [...]. The fertiliser bomb plotters were typical of those al-Muhajiroun found and indoctrinated.”

## The Supergrass Mohammed Babar

Barbar was an American al-Muhajiroun activist whose Lahore safe house was integral to al-Muhajiroun’s foreign operations as it acted as a stop on the road to training camps such as the Malakand camp hidden in Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province.

The evidence of Mohammed Babar was at the heart of the case against the defendants and was integral to understanding the truly global nature of the plot.



## The Plotters



### Omar Khyam

He was the leader of the plot and was jailed for life in April 2007.

He was radicalised by Omar Bakri, after becoming involved with al-Muhajiroun while studying for his A-levels in his home town of Crawley. He was a regular at the meetings where he was shown videos of events in Chechnya that glorified the Muslim dead.

He was reportedly sent by the group to fight in Kashmir in 2000 and then in 2001 he travelled to Afghanistan to meet the Taliban. In 2002 he met Mohammed Babar and became a co-organiser of a training camp trip in 2003 that involved many of the plotters and Sidique Khan who later led the 7/7 London bomb attacks.



### Waheed Mahmood [Abdul Waheed]

Waheed was central to the plot and was sentenced to life for his involvement. He was found at the trial to have been suggesting possible targets such as Bluewater Shopping Centre and football fans. Many of the plotters spent time at his house in Gujar Khan in Pakistan.

He met Omar Khyam in the late 1990s at meetings organized by al-Muhajiroun at a mosque in Crawley.



### Jawad Akbar

Born in Pakistan Jawad moved to Crawley when still young. He began attending al-Muhajiroun meetings while studying at Brunel University and attended a terrorist training camp in Malakand in the remote North West of Pakistan in 2003 with Omar Khyam.



### Anthony Garcia

Born Rahman Benouis in Algeria, he moved to East London as a child and went to school in Ilford.

He became involved with al-Muhajiroun’s East London contingent and met Khyam at an Islamic fair and later travelled to Pakistan and attended the same training camp together.

It was Garcia who bought the fertiliser for the plot.



### Salahuddin Amin

He was also sentenced to life in prison for his part in the planned attack. He was born in London but moved to Pakistan at a young age before returning to Luton in 1991. While he was in Luton he began attending extremist political meetings away from Luton’s main mosque. The prosecution described him as a facilitator between the plotters and mujahideen groups. He gave himself up to Pakistani authorities in 2004 and was reportedly tortured.



### Mohammad Momin Khawaja

He is a Canadian national who was sentenced to ten and a half years for his part in the plot. He was active in al-Muhajiroun and he was charged with helping to develop bomb detonators, possession of explosives, helping to finance terrorist activity, receiving terrorist training and facilitating terrorism. He met Khyam’s flat mate at a house in December 2002.

He later visited Khyam in the UK to discuss detonators but British intelligence had bugged the car in which the conversation took place.

## A gateway to terrorism: Case Study #3

# The Christmas Bomb Plot

AFTER A LULL of a few years, the arrest of twelve men in December 2010 marked a resurgence of al-Muhajiroun links to terrorism in the UK.

In a police operation codenamed 'Guava', anti-terrorist police arrested men in London, Cardiff, Stoke-on-Trent and Birmingham. It was the culmination of a long-term surveillance operation by MI5, that had seen the men scope possible targets in London, travelled to Pakistan to attempt to make contact with al-Qaeda, downloaded bomb making equipment and built and detonated viable devices.

Eventually nine of the twelve were charged and later convicted of plotting a Christmas bombing campaign which included targets such as Big Ben, the London Stock Exchange, Westminster Abbey, the London Eye, Boris Johnson's Mayoral Office, the US Embassy and the Church of Scientology. The addresses of Boris Johnson, the dean of St Paul's Cathedral and two rabbis were also found.

They hoped to send five mail bombs to targets over Christmas 2010 and then launch an even bigger campaign over the following Easter.

The prosecuting QC accepted that the group had not actually planned to kill anyone but rather "their intentions was to cause terror and economic harm and disruption". However, he added, "their chosen method meant there was a risk people would be maimed or killed."

Between them they were sentenced to a total of 94 years and eight months.

All of the nine men had confirmed links with al-Muhajiroun and its successor organisations.

The three men from Cardiff – Gurukanth Desai, Omar Sharif Latif and Abdul Miah – had all attended local al-Muhajiroun meetings, included one addressed by Abu Izzadeen. At least two, Desair and Miah, had also attended Muslim Against Crusades demonstrations.

All three appeared to have been recruited while in prison for drugs and other petty offences.

The four men from Stoke-on-Trent – Nazam Hussain, Abdul Mohammed Shahjahan, Usman Khan and Mohibur Rahman – were all active in their al-Muhajiroun branch.

Nazam Hussain raised money to set up a terror training camp on land owned by Khan's family in Kashmir. He admitted attending operational meetings, fundraising for terrorist training and preparing to travel abroad with intent to commit acts of terrorism. Abdul Mohammed Shahjahan had the phone number of Anjem Choudary in his phone when arrested.

The alleged ringleader was Mohammed Chowdhury, one of the two Londoners convicted. Based in East London, he had formal links with al-Muhajiroun and is known to have attended Islam4UK and Muslims Against Crusades demonstrations. He was arrested in December 2010 and pleaded guilty in January 2011.

The court heard how these separate Islamist groups, based around their local al-Muhajiroun groups, came into contact with each other at national demonstrations and meetings.

When arrested he was found to have the phone numbers of prominent al-Muhajiroun members in his phone including Anjem Choudary and Abu Izzadeen. He made two phone calls to Izzadeen, leader of al-Ghurabaa, an al-Muhajiroun front, upon his release from prison in October 2010.

While there is no evidence to suggest that Anjem Choudary knew about this plot the closeness between him and the plotters, especially Mohammed Chowdhury, does suggest that his teachings and the organisation's network was key to bringing the plotters together.

Only a few weeks before Mohammed Chowdhury was arrested, he was filmed by Norway's TV2 helping Anjem Choudary set up a Skype call with Omar Bakri Mohammed.



Mohammed Chowdhury helping Anjem Choudary set up a Skype call to Omar Bakri just a few weeks before he was arrested.

# The Manchester cell

In December 2008 two British citizens were convicted of being members of al-Qaeda. The Crown Prosecution Service described Rangzieb Ahmed as being “an important member of al-Qaeda and in a position to direct some of its activities.”

Habib Ahmed was charged with “attending a terrorist training camp in Pakistan” and of collecting “information, namely electronic records relating to potential terrorist targets and other information of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism.”

The two men were also linked to al-Muhajiroun, with Habib Ahmed being its Manchester organiser at the time of his arrest. His wife, Mehreen, another al-Muhajiroun member, was also initially arrested for funding terrorism but she was found not guilty at the subsequent trial.

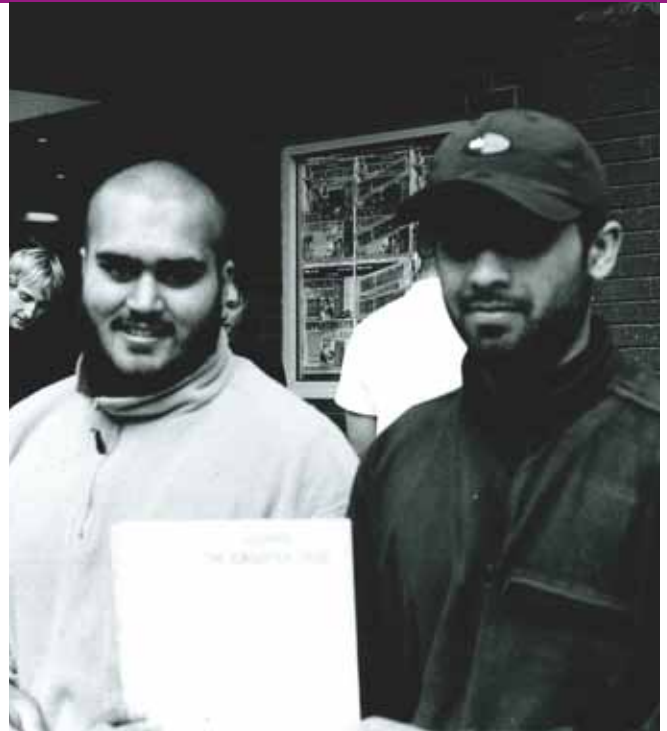
Rangzieb Ahmed was one of the highest ranking Britons within the al-Qaeda operation, to some, he was the highest. He was a key link between British extremists and al-Qaeda leaders and it was his link to Abu Hamza Rabia, al-Qaeda’s third in command, which brought him the attention of the British authorities.

Rangzieb Ahmed was en-route on a mission to South Africa with two others when Rabia was killed in a US drone strike in November 2005. The mission was halted and Hibab Ahmed was summoned to Dubai to collect his notebooks.

These notebooks were later seized by the arresting officers and found to contain invisible ink which, when revealed, contained a contact list of leading al-Qaeda figures. In addition to Rabia, the notebook had contact details of Khalid Habib, al-Qaeda’s chief of operations for south-east Afghanistan; Mamoun Darkanzanli (a.k.a. Ilyas), said to be one of the financiers of the Madrid bombings and Abdul Rashid Ghazi, a radical Pakistani cleric who was killed in the siege of Lal Masjid (the Red Mosque) in July 2007.

The prosecution were never certain what the two men were planning to attack. On Habib Ahmed’s computer they found searches for the addresses of Government ministers, locations of British army bases and a document listing the political aides and supporters of the then Prime Minister Tony Blair.

The trial revealed the extent of the men’s connections. Bury-born Habib Ahmed met Hassan Butt, who was later to become an al-Muhajiroun spokesman in Pakistan, while at



Habib Ahmed (in cap), distributing al-Muhajiroun literature in Manchester.

sixth-form, and the two, together with Butt’s brother, all went to college in Wolverhampton. It was here they switched their allegiances from Hizb ut-Tahrir to al-Muhajiroun.

The court was shown photographs of AM leader Omar Bakri presiding over Habib’s wedding to Mehreen and it heard how he had been convicted of putting up AM posters.

Rochdale-born Rangzieb Ahmed was first arrested by the Indian Army in Kashmir when he was just 16-years-old for illegally crossing the border. He was imprisoned for seven years. Whilst in prison he received money from another British-born al-Qaeda terrorist, Omar Saaed Sheikh, who is currently in prison for killing American journalist Daniel Pearl.

The court also heard how a phone registered to Rangzieb Ahmed was rung in March 2005 by Yassin Omar, one of the 21/7 London bombers.

Both men were found guilty and sentenced to ten years imprisonment. In passing sentence, the Judge, Justice Saunders, said that Rangzieb specifically should “remain in prison until the authorities believe you no longer hold your distorted views about Islam.”

This case received far less media coverage than many others involving al-Muhajiroun supporters and yet it was one of the most illuminating. “The trial was significant as a milestone case with two individuals being convicted of being members of al-Qaeda (a first in the UK), but also in that it further showed the depths of interconnectedness between British extremist networks and al-Qaeda’s core in Pakistan,” wrote terrorism expert Raffaello Pantucci, in the immediate aftermath of the trial.





# The Luton connection

THE BEDFORDSHIRE town of Luton has unfortunately become synonymous with al-Muhajiroun and it is easy to understand why. Twenty-five people, with connections to the town, have been convicted of terrorism, terror-related offences, died fighting overseas and other significant al-Muhajiroun actions.

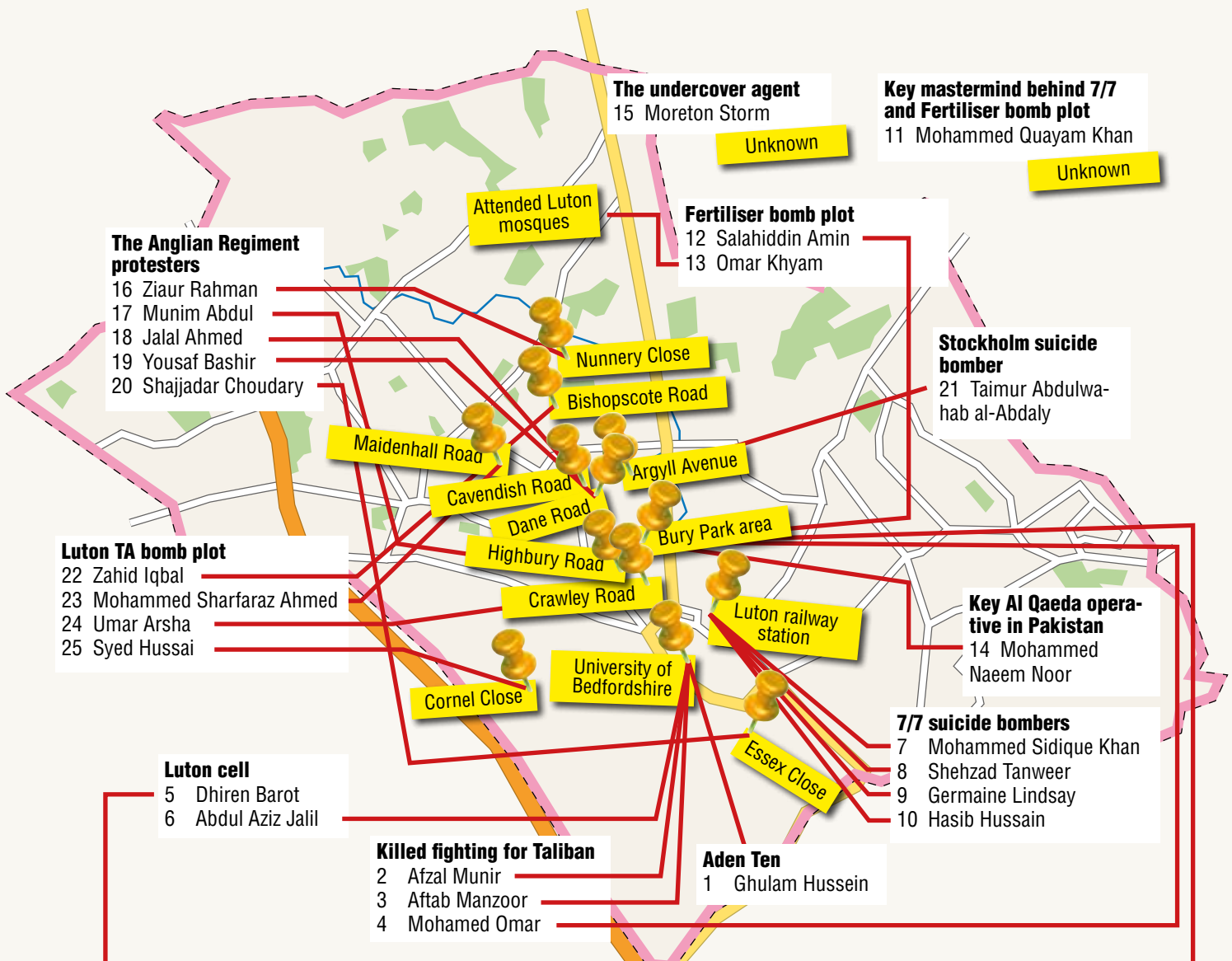
They include the 7/7 bombers, the worst terrorist atrocities in British history, and people convicted for opposing the homecoming parade of the Royal Anglian Regiment, which sparked the emergence of the English Defence League.

In addition, Luton possess al-Muhajiroun's largest single branch, a considerable number of whom are currently in Syria fighting for Jihadist organisations.

The Luton branch is led by Sayful Islam.



Shahzad Tanweer, Germaine Lindsay and Mohammed Sidique Khan enter Luton Train Station at 8.10am on June 28. Photograph: Metropolitan police



# The terror connection

## 1998 Aden Ten



7 years

**Malik Nasser  
Fadl Harhara**



5 years

**Samad Ahmed**



5 years

**Shahid Butta**



7 years

**Ghulam Hussein**



7 years

**Mohsin Ghalain**

All were convicted of planning to form an armed gang and bomb a number of locations in Yemen. Omar Bakri boasted of links

## 1999



6 months

**Amer Mirza**  
Threw petrol bomb at a British TA base in West London.

## 2001 Taleban fighters



2 years w/o trial

**Ruhul Ahmed**



2 years w/o trial

**Shafiq Rasul**



2 years w/o trial

**Asif Iqbal**

Ruhul Ahmed, Shafiq Rasul, Asif Iqbal: Part of the so-called Tipton Taliban. Arrested in Afghanistan and sent to Guantanamo Bay. AM boasted of a connection

## 2003 Ricin plot



Life

**Kamel Bourgass**  
Convicted of murdering a policeman. Linked to Manchester AM

## 2003 Mike's Place bomb



Died in attack

**Asif Muhammad Hanif**  
His bomb killed three people. Was an AM activist



Died in attack

**Omar Khan Sharif**  
Second bomber whose vest failed to detonate. Was an AM activist

## 2005



Unknown

**Zeeshan Siddiqui**  
Arrested in Pakistan on suspicion of being associated with terrorism. AM member in UK

## 2005



9 years

**Kazi Rahman**  
Attempted to buy machine guns and grenades from undercover MI5 agent. Active in AM

## 2006 Danish cartoon protests



6 years

**Mizanur Rahman**  
Active member of AM, jailed for soliciting murder



6 years

**Umran Javed**  
Active member of AM, jailed for soliciting murder.



6 years

**Abdul Muhid**  
Active member of AM, jailed for soliciting murder



4 years

**Abdul Rahman Saleem**  
Convicted of inciting race hate.

Over the last 15 years hundreds of people connected to al-Muhajiroun network have been convicted in British courts. There are also several people linked to the group who are currently awaiting trial and so cannot be named for legal reasons.

Here is a list of 68 people linked to the al-Muhajiroun network who have been convicted of terrorism or terror-related offences or been killed abroad.

**2000 Suicide bomber**



**Died in attack**

**Mohammed Bilal**

Believed to be Britain's first suicide bomber. Killed nine in suicide car bomb attack on an Indian barracks in Kashmir on Christmas Day 2000.

**2001 Shoe bomber**



**Life**

**Richard Reid**

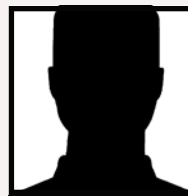
Attempted to blow up a flight from Paris to Miami with explosives packed into his shoe.

**2001 Taleban fighters**



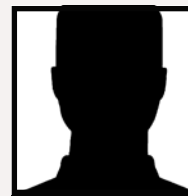
**Killed in action**

**Aftab Manzoor**



**Killed in action**

**Afzal Munir**



**Killed in action**

**Mohamed Omar**

Aftab Manzoor, Afzal Munir and Mohamed Omar: Died fighting on behalf of the Taliban and the Pakistani terrorist group Harkat-ul-Mujahideen.

**2004 Financial Centre plot**



**Life**

**Dhiren Barot**

A key figure in the Al Qaeda network. Active in HT



**26 years**

**Abdul Aziz Jalil**

AM activist from Luton

**2005 7/7 suicide bombers**



**Died in attack**

**Mohammed Sidique Khan**

Attended AM training camps in Pakistan



**Died in attack**

**Shehzad Tanweer**

Member of AM and part of the Mullah Boys



**Died in attack**

**Germaine Lindsay**

Linked with Khan in Bradford. Became active with AM in Luton



**Died in attack**

**Hasib Hussain**

Active in Yorkshire branch of AM

**2006 Cheetham Hill gang**



**10 years**

**Habib Ahmed**

AM Manchester organiser. Convicted for being a member of al-Qaeda



**10 years**

**Rangzieb Ahmed**

Key Al Qaeda operative and plot planner. Connected to AM while in Indian prison

**2007 Fertiliser bomb plot**



**Life**

**Omar Khyam**

Leader of plot. Radicalised by Omar Bakri. Attended AM training camp in Pakistan



**Life**

**Waheed Mahood**

Met Omar Khyam at AM meetings in Crawley



**17.5 years**

**Jawad Akbar**

Attended AM meetings. Attended AM training camp in Pakistan



**20 years**

**Anthony Garcia**

Involved in AM in East London. Attended AM training camp in Pakistan



**17.5 years**

**Salahuddin Amin**

Active in AM in Luton

The terror connection (continued)

2007 Transatlantic liquid bomb



Life

**Abdullah Ahmed Ali**

Ringleader of plot. Joined AM whilst at City University



Life

**Waheed Zaman**

President of student Islamic Society at University. Had AM material



Presumed dead

**Rashid Rauf**

Key AQ operative. Link between plotters and al-Qaeda. Had links to AM in UK

2008 Inciting terrorism abroad



6 years

**Abu Izzadeen**

A leading figure in AM, found guilty of inciting others to join in the jihad in Iraq



6 years

**Sulayman Keeler**

A leading figure in AM, found guilty of inciting others to join in the jihad in Iraq



4 years

**Abdul Saleem**

Guilty of inciting others to join in the jihad in Iraq. Active in AM

2010 Taleban fighters



Killed in action

**Ibrahim Adam**

Brother of Anthony Garcia, he had been active in AM. Killed in a drone strike



Killed in action

**Mohammed Azmir Khan**

had been active in AM. Killed in a drone strike



Killed in action

**Mohammed Jabar Ahmed**

Killed in drone strike. Active in AM

2010 Christmas bomb plot



13 years

**Mohammed Chowdhury**

Active in AM, Islam4UK and MAC



12 years

**Shah Rahman**

Attended Islam4UK and MAC demonstrations in London



12 years

**Gurukanth Desai**

Attended Islam4UK and MAC demonstrations

2011 Soliciting murder



12 years

**Bilal Zaheer Ahmad**

Soliciting the murder of MPs who had voted in favour of Iraq War



Awaiting trial

**B2**

Vietnamese-born British citizen charged for five terrorist offences

2012



4 years

**Mohammed Benares**

Downloading bomb making guides likely to be useful for terrorists

2013 Territorial Army plot abroad



16 years

**Zahid Iqbal**

Ringleader and AM activist. Facilitator for people who wanted to travel for "extremist purposes"



16 years

**Mohammed Sharfaraz Ahmed**

AM activist. Attended training camp in Pakistan



5 years

**Syed Farhan Hussain**

AM activist

**2009 Bomb**



**2 years**

**Ibrahim Hassan**

Guilty of inciting others to join in the jihad in Iraq



**10 years**

**Andrew Ibrahim**

Arrested in Pakistan was convicted for making a bomb. Studied AM on internet

**2009 Firebomb**



**4.5 years**

**Ali Beheshti**

Involved in an arson attack on the home of the publisher of a novel about the child bride of the prophet Muhammad

**2009 Terrorist**



**2 years**

**Houria Chahed Chentouf**

Pleaded guilty to two offences of possessing documents likely to be useful for a terrorist

**2010 Stockholm**



**Died in attack**

**Taimour Abdulwahab al-Abdaly**

Set off two bombs in central Stockholm killing himself and injuring two others



**16 years**

**Abdul Miah**

Active in AM, Islam4UK and MAC. Attended AM meetings in Cardiff



**10 years**

**Omar Sharif Latif**

Active in AM circles in Cardiff



**8 years**

**Nazam Hussain**

Active in AM circles in Stoke-on-Trent



**8 years**

**Abdul Mohammed Shahjahan**

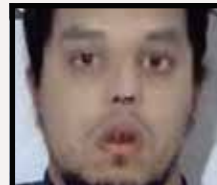
Had phone number of Anjem Choudary in phone when arrested



**8 years**

**Usman Khan**

Active in AM circles in Stoke-on-Trent



**5 years**

**Mohibur Rahman**

Active in AM circles in Stoke-on-Trent

**2013 Royal Wooten Bassett plot**



**6 years**

**Umar Arshad**

AM activist



**6 years**

**Richard Dart**

Converted to Islam by Anjem Choudary and was active in Al-Muhajiroun



**9 years**

**Imran Mahmood**

Arrested while returning from a terrorist training camp in Pakistan. Active in AM



**4.5 years**

**Jahangir Alom**

Active in AM

**2013 Terrorist**



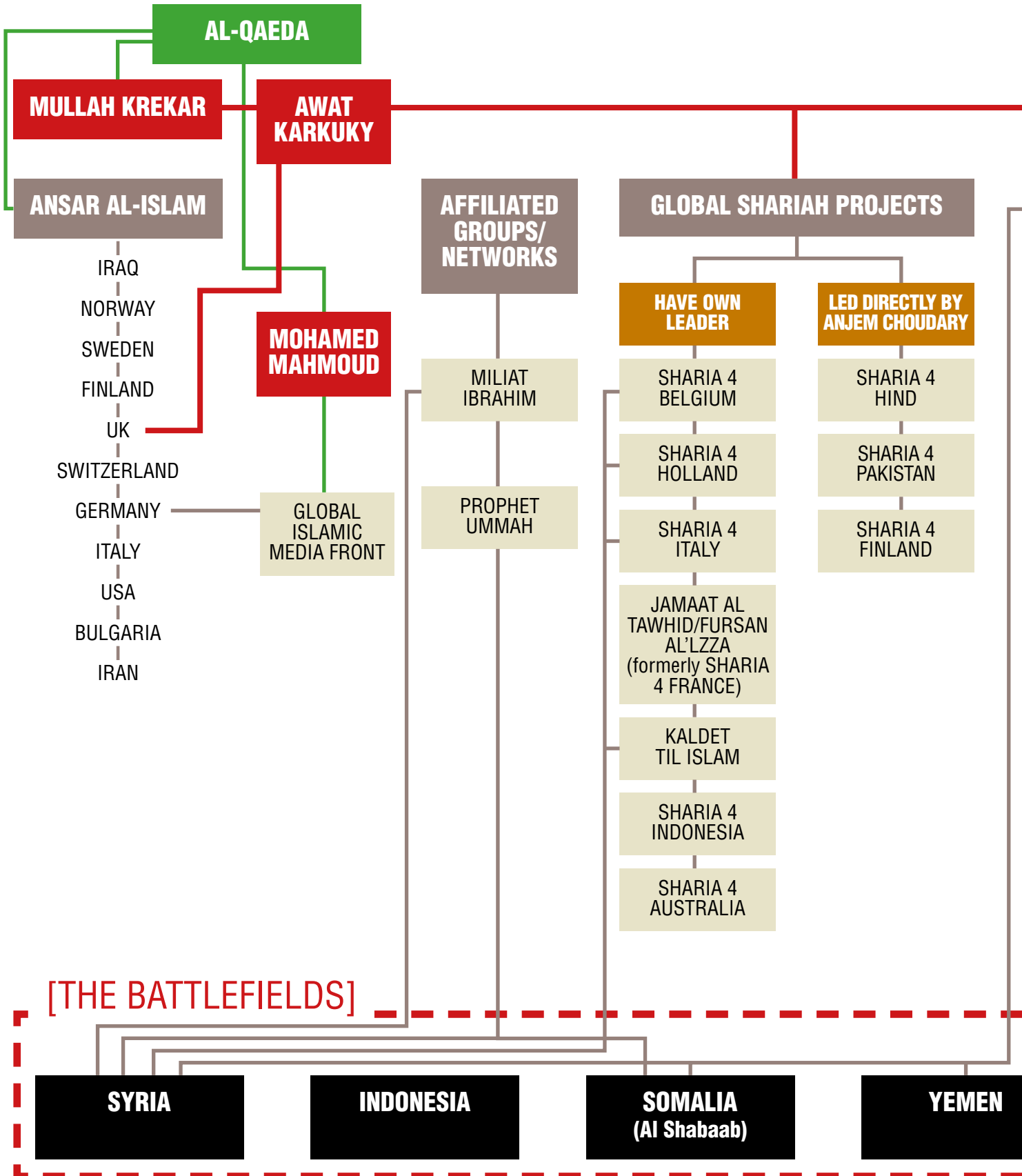
**Active**

**Y1**

Afghan-born AM activist, currently in Kenya. Lost his British citizenship due to terrorist links

There are several more al-Muhajiroun activists currently awaiting trial

# Organisational map





# Foreign al-Muhajiroun Groups

**A**l-Muhajiroun has claimed that they had branches in 21 countries around the world. One can find examples of members and affiliated activists in countries such as Algeria, Australia, Britain, Belgium, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, Ireland, Jamaica, Lebanon, Netherlands, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syria, Uganda, United States of America to mention just a few.

The groups most active foreign branches were in the United States, France, Lebanon and Pakistan. However, many of the groups discussed in this section have petered out with time, though not all. Many of the foreign al-Muhajiroun groups, primarily linked to Omar Bakri, have disintegrated, often due to arrests and imprisonments, and the Global Sharia Movement, more closely managed by Anjem Choudary, has seceded it as the primary international network. That said, many of the activists and affiliates are still associated often under different group names in the new network.

## Profile of Selected Foreign al-Muhajiroun Groups

### Ireland

Closer to home is the Irish branch of the organisation led by Khalid Kelly (pictured), born Terence Edward Kelly (also known as Abu Osama and Taliban Terry). Kelly was converted by Omar Bakri and went on to form and lead a small Irish wing of the organisation.



Following a spate of al-Muhajiroun arrests it is reported that Kelly went on the run, travelling the Muslim world looking for somewhere to live. He was reportedly living in the Swat Valley and declared that he was aiming to go and fight in Afghanistan.

However, he returned to Dublin in 2010 and was later arrested for stating that he wanted Obama to be assassinated while on an Irish visit.

### Denmark

Even after the group had been banned in the UK, the Omar Bakri Mohammed run part of the al-Muhajiroun network occasionally sprang back into life. In late 2007 an al-Muhajiroun office was reportedly opened in Copenhagen, Denmark.

At the time Omar Bakri said, "We have already been in Denmark for long, but in the coming three weeks we'll make that official." As with all groups in the network the stated aim was the introduction of Sharia in Denmark. Omar stated, "Hizb ut-Tahrir doesn't think like us on a revolution of society and on a political struggle against the Danish government. While they are more

moderate, we are more orthodox," He went on to claim that the group had around 50 active members.

Despite the public declarations it seems that little came of Omar Bakri's planned Danish group. However, in 2012 the Danish based group 'Kaldet til Islam' (The Call to Islam) became followers of Omar Bakri and members of Anjem Choudary's Global Sharia Movement.

## America: The Islamic Thinkers Society

The Islamic Thinkers Society (ITS) is an al-Muhajiroun affiliated foreign group based mainly in and around New York City that was active primarily in the mid-2000s. The group is known to have flown the al-Muhajiroun flag at demonstrations and distributed its literature.

The link was confirmed by the Anti-Defamation League that called the ITS "a pseudonym or an offshoot of the British-based" group.

The group used to hold regular controversial public demonstrations, often of an extremely antisemitic nature such as in May 2005 when they held a demo outside the Israeli embassy. They have also held demonstrations to mark the death of the founder of Hamas and one where they desecrated and then ripped up the American flag.

Things escalated in 2006 when they called for a nuclear attack against Israel. Demonstrators shouted, "The mushroom cloud is on its way! The real Holocaust is on its way!" and "Israel won't last long. Indeed, Allah will repeat the Holocaust right on the soil of Israel!"

While the group have always declared that their struggle is intellectual and political and in no way violent, this has not always held true. The group has had links with Somalia and had members arrested attempting to become foreign fighters in Africa. Mahmood Alessa and Carlos Eduardo Almonte were arrested at J F K Airport allegedly on their way to fight with al-Qaeda militants in Somali. The two men are known to have attended numerous ITS events. In June 2010 Carlos Eduardo Almonte was seen at a demonstration holding a sign that read, "Exterminate the Zionist Roaches."

One of the prominent members of the ITS was Yousef al Khattab who went on to form a group called *Revolution Muslim*. As with ITS, the group has courted controversy for its outlandish and provocative behavior. Their website was shut down in 2010 after it posted the addresses of some British MPs. The had begun group split up by 2010 with internal disagreements and no longer operates.

## The USA/Pakistan Connection

The groups in this network, especially the American and Pakistani groups, were integral to al-Muhajiroun's foreign operations such as aiding foreign soldiers and providing training for western Islamists.

Al-Muhajiroun established its first office in the USA in 1999.





(above) Free Syed Fahad Hashmi demonstration  
(below) Carlos Eduardo Almonte of the Islamic Thinkers Society



It was run by a Lebanese university student called Zakaria Mustapha Soubra. He had spent time in London and Manchester for up to two years until 2000 and was converted to radical fundamentalism at East London Mosque in 1998 and was a close associate of Omar Bakri.

Soubra was named in an FBI memo that raised concerns about extremists receiving flying lessons before the September 11 attacks and he has been linked to hijacker Hani Hanjour.

Key American members included Mohammed Babar who was recruited to al-Muhajiroun shortly after 9/11 and went on to be a crucial cog in their Pakistan operation. His Lahore flat was a conveyor belt for many radicalised British Muslims, with many ending up at the Malakand training camp hidden in Pakistan's North West frontier province. Among those people travelling through were the 7/7 London bombers and the Fertiliser bomb plotters.

US documents reveal that Babar was recruited to Al-Muhajiroun by Syed Mehmood Ahmed Hashmi. Hashmi was a Pakistani American attending high school in the Long Island City area in the late nineties. Hashmi became involved in al-Muhajiroun in 2001 while a student at Brooklyn University and set up a branch of the group in Queens NY.

Hashmi was later sentenced to 15 years imprisonment in 2010 in New York for providing material support to Al Qaeda.

The Pakistani branch of the operation was run by Sajeel Shahid, sometimes called the Lahore Amir. However, in March 2004 the Pakistani branch ceded from the organisation in order to participate more actively in the militant Islamist activity in Afghanistan. The group, says Kylie Baxter, in the book *British Muslims and the call to global jihad*, then evolved into one of the "many support networks connecting Western Muslim youths, mostly from Europe, to the Jihadist theatre in South West Asia. Bakri blessed the decision; clearly he wanted to maintain plausible deniability for the group as a whole."

## Conclusion

Al-Muhajiroun's numerous foreign branches have been extensively involved in planning and facilitating terrorism around the world. It has also been integral in helping the organisations aim of supporting foreign fighters in war zones such as Chechnya, Afghanistan and now Syria. However, the use of the name al-Muhajiroun has declined in usage both in the UK and around the world and with Anjem Choudary taking a far more prominent role and though many of the people remain the same, has resulted in the creation of a new network with a new name.

# The Global Sharia Movement

From around 2010 onwards, following the launch of Islam4UK by Anjem Choudary in Britain, a new global network has been developed and fostered by Anjem Choudary. He is the international spokesman for the network and sits at the core of a group of semi-autonomous organisations that are collectively known as the *Global Sharia Movement* or the *Sharia4TheWorldCampaign*.

Choudary has significant influence over most of the groups that are usually named Sharia4 followed by the country. His involvement varies from directly founding them through to inspiration and guidance.

The level of the activity from the member groups of the Global Sharia movement varies considerably from a single blog or website through to a fully functioning organisation that engages in terrorist activity and facilitate the transportation of Jihad fighters to Syria.

A report by the *Middle East Media Research Institute* identified global ties between the groups such as the use of similar logos, such as the map of a country or famous national monument with a black Islamist flag superimposed on it as well as the use of online and social media to communicate and the use of highly provocative and aggressive slogans to garner media attention. The groups often cross post videos from affiliated groups on youtube and facebook offering each other support and encouragement.

Over a 3 month period in 2011 researchers Jytte Klausen, Eliane Tschaen Barbieri, Aaron Reichlin-Melnick, and Aaron Y. Zelin identified 41 YouTube channels, that posted extremist and jihadist content that were linked to al-Muhajiroun. Twenty-one used some version of the *Shariah4* label similar to Islam4UK.

As with many controversial sites they were based in America, despite their primarily European authorship, to take advantage of the First Amendment. Much of the content on these Jihad sites would be illegal in parts of Europe.

The authors stress the importance of online Jihadist material. "The new internet-based technologies lower the bar for participation in the global jihadist movement. On the web, one can proselytize for the jihad all day and night with friends from around the world by posting and cross-posting content on social networking platforms linked to a website with a domain name that allows the projection of an online brand.

"The successes of the popular uprising of the Arab Spring have been credited, at least in part, to social networking media, and in particular to *Facebook*, *YouTube*, and *Twitter*. Relatively unnoticed, certainly uncelebrated, is the fact that closer to home the same mainstream social networking media platforms have been exploited by radical Islamists. They feature again and again in a series of recent terrorism indictments involving jihadists.

Previous research has identified al-Muhajiroun as "a single production entity behind most of the propaganda." The YouTube channels propagate the ideas of Al-Muhajiroun, Anjem Choudary and Omar Bakri.



Omar Bakri  
Mohammed  
[Lebanon]

[For more information on the online al-Muhajiroun networks, see <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/klausen-et-al-youtube-jihadists/html>]



Anjem Choudary [London]

# Groups within the Global Sharia Project

## Kaldet til Islam (Denmark)

Kaldet til Islam is the oldest group in the network outside the UK. Its origins go back to at least 2004, when 12 activists from Denmark attended an al-Muhajiroun rally in London.

Abu Asadullah, the group's spokesman and Abu Musa (aka Shiraz Tariq), the chairman, are said to regularly watch and listen to Bakris preaching over the internet.

The group has modeled itself after the Choudary run Islam4UK and mimicked the UK based groups tactic of provocative public demonstrations. Kaldet til Islam hit the headlines in Denmark in September 2012 when in a copy of the similar Islam4UK demonstrations, they held a demo on National Flag Day; a day similar to Remembrance Sunday in the UK.

The group has been linked to several terrorist incidents, including a 2005 suicide bomb plot in Bosnia, and the convictions of Abdoulghani Takhi and Hammad Hurshid for making explosives for a terrorist attack.

The group has more recently been linked to Danish rebel fighters in Syria.

## Sharia4Belgium

Anjem helped launch Sharia4Belgium in January 2010 as a branch of his UK based group.

The group's main spokesperson is Fouad Belkacem (alias Abu Imran). In April 2013 he was arrested for terrorism related offenses including sending jihad fighter to Syria (see Syria – the new front, page 48). He has previously been sentenced to two years in prison in February 2012 for incitement to hatred and violence towards non-Muslims, he was released from prison in February 2013.

It was one of the most active group in the network after the UK based group moving beyond purely an online presence and engaging in street based activity such as "Street *da'wa*" (public proselytizing) and demonstrations. In September 2011 they set up Belgium's first Sharia Law Court in Antwerp.

In 2010 authorities arrested 11 people in connection with a terror plot in Belgium. Those arrested were believed to be linked to Sharia4Belgium. They also investigated the groups funding of a Chechen terror organisation.

Belgian prosecutors have told a news conference that "the investigation shows that Sharia4Belgium is part of a broad international jihadist movement" which is accused of providing ideological and martial arts training, organizing violent activities in Belgium and recruiting Islamist fighters for conflicts abroad.

The group was formerly disbanded in October 2012 but the network continues to exist underground.



## Sharia4Holland

Sharia4Holland is an offshoot of Sharia4Belgium and its spokesperson is Abu Qasim. In December 2011, the Dutch Intelligence Service AIVD said it was concerned about the rapid radicalization of Sharia4Holland.

In May 2012 Police in Amsterdam arrested the group's leader on charges of making death threats against the Dutch Freedom Party leader, Geert Wilders.

The group's link to the UK and Anjem Choudary are very strong and on May 25, 2012, Sharia4Holland held a press conference with Choudary, called the *Global Shariah Conference*.

In line with the provocative behaviour of their parent organisation, the group has engaged in numerous public stunts. On 7 December 2011, at a debate in a theater in Amsterdam with Tofik Dibi, 20 supporters shouted, threw eggs and ordered the execution of Canadian writer Irshad Manji. In May 2012, on the anniversary of the Dutch liberation from Nazi Germany, about 20 members of the group and its twin Sharia4Belgium gathered in front of the maximum security prison in the southern Dutch municipality of Vught to demand the "liberation" of Mohammed Bouyeri, the Muslim who murdered Theo van Gogh.

## Sharia4Finland

Like other groups that are directly run by Choudary from London, Sharia4Finland is very inactive. The only major event under this heading took place on March 28<sup>th</sup> 2013 when Choudary organised a conference in Helsinki, Finland called *Free All Muslim Hostages*, held in honour of Mullah Krekar, the imprisoned radical cleric based in Norway.

While Sharia4Finland was probably set up just for this meeting the event further established Choudary's links with the Islamist Kurdish community.



## Sharia4Italy

Sharia4Italy was founded by Anas El Abboubi, a Moroccan-born blogger who lives with his family near Brescia since 1999.

In June 2013 he was arrested for terrorism offensive in June 2013 and accused of training with terrorist purposes, incitement to discrimination and violence for racial, ethnic and religious reasons and he faces

charges of recruitment aimed at international terrorism. He was said to be interested in sending jihad fighters to Syria.

He had managed to build a small group of activists around him by the time of his arrest. In the past he has celebrated the actions of Mohamed Jarmoune (also a Moroccan living in Brescia), arrested in March 2012 and sentenced to five years and four months in jail on terrorism charges.



Anjem Choudary  
with Sharia4Holland's  
Abu Qasim

## Shariah4Hind

Sharia4Hind was set up and run from the UK by Anjem Choudary. The venture had a hard time getting off the ground with both its attempted demonstration and website being banned.

The group issued a fatwa against Indian political leaders and the Indian Constitution and controversially stated that their first targets would be the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The website was later banned in India.

Since the government crackdown the group seems inactive.

## Shariah4Pakistan

Another Sharia group run out of London, it issued a fatwa by Omar Bakri against Pakistani Election Candidates at a special conference titled 'What is the Meaning of Pakistan' in April 2013.

They also issued a fatwa against Malala Yousafzai, the 15-year-old girl shot by the Pakistan Taliban, for her role in standing up to extremists in November 2012.

An attempted conference to launch the group in Islamabad on 30 November 2012, at which Choudary and Bakri were to speak, was cancelled after key speakers were denied visas.

The group claims a leading activist as Dr Tariq Ali Author, a London-based Surgeon and a former Pakistan Army officer.

## Sharia4Indonesia

Sharia4Indonesia is one of the more active groups in the network and holds well attended public demonstrations. In October 2013 there was a Sharia4TheWorldCampaign held in South Tangerang, Indonesia. The main speaker was Anjem Choudary and he was joined by Abu Izzadeen. The speaker from Sharia4Indonesia was Ustadz Abu Sholeh.

In 2012 the group held a 100-strong demonstration to celebrate the 9/11 attacks. Entitled, 'You Lost the War', the event was held in collaboration with Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid, an off-shoot of Jemaah Islamiyah, which is best known for being behind the 2002 Bali bombing which killed 202 people.

Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid has itself been designated a terrorist group by the United States.

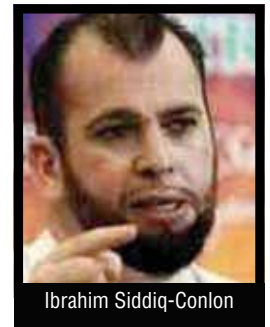
## Sharia4Australia

The group, which is possibly just a one man band, is led by a Muslim convert called Ibrahim Siddiq-Conlon from Adelaide. He is a Masters graduate in architecture from the University of Technology Sydney and converted to Islam while travelling in Indonesia.

He formed the group in 2010 in the South West of Australia and has described Choudary as a key spiritual mentor.

He claims not to condone the murder of innocent people yet he has talked of his admiration for Indonesian militant leader Abu Bakar Bashir, founder of the militant group Jemaah Islamiyah, which carried out the 2002 Bali bombings and a series of subsequent attacks including the 2004 bombing of the Australian embassy in Jakarta. He said, "I'm very proud of his work. To me he's not a terrorist, he's a freedom fighter."

In 2012 Siddiq was tried and convicted for threatening a terrorist attack on Sydney's Mardi Gras and for possession of child pornography.



Ibrahim Siddiq-Conlon

## Shariah4USA/Sharia4America

As with some of the other groups in the network the American branch of Sharia4 may be little more than a website. Shariah 4 America's motto is "Communism is dead. Capitalism is dying. Islam is the Solution."

The group's webmaster is a 24 year old prison convert called Devin Zentmyer, who also goes by his Islamic name Abu Amatullah and is based outside Chicago. Included in his small network of friends on his YouTube channel was Abu Khalid Abdul-Latif, who was arrested in June along with another associate for plotting a suicide terror attack on a Seattle area military facility.

In March 2011 Anjem Choudary announced a demonstration in front of the White House to mark the anniversary of the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924. The demonstration was called under the banner *Shariah4America*. However, despite being cancelled Choudary was invited onto both CNN and Fox News as a result of his American campaign.

# Millat Ibrahim

(left) Mohamed Mahmoud  
(below) German salafists attack police



MILLAT IBRAHIM is a German ultra-conservative salafist organisation. The group had received some media attention due to a campaign where they would hand out free Qurans. However, they came to wider attention in May 2012 after public street battles occurred between Islamist activists and members of the far right pro-NRW party in Bonn and Solingen, in western Germany. The far right party had started an islamophobic campaign where they would display offensive anti-Muslim cartoons in the North Rhine-Westphalia province in the run up to elections in the state.

Counter demonstrations involving *Millat Ibrahim* turned violent with 29 police officers being injured by a barrage of rocks and sticks. Two officers were taken to hospital with stab wounds. Not long after the disturbances premises related to the group were raided by police as part of a major crack down against Islamic extremism. The authorities also targeted *Die wahre Religion* and *DawaFFM*.

Not long after in June 2012 the German Interior Minister Hans-Peter Friedrich banned Millat Ibrahim saying, "The organization acts in opposition to the idea of constitutional order and multicultural understanding".

The group is known to have been involved in sending Islamists to fight abroad and in November 2012 the group reported that two of its members died in a car accident in a jihad front.

The group is led by Mohamed Mahmoud, an Austrian Islamist who, back in 2002 when just 17-years-old, left home for Iraq where he joined an Ansar al-Islam training back. Over the years he has developed links with several leading Al Qaeda operatives, including Atiyah Abd al-Rahman, who briefly become the organisation's second-ranking official after Osama bin Laden's death.

Mahmoud moved to Germany in 2011 after serving four years for creating and promoting a terrorist organization and set up Millat Ibrahim. He is an important figure on the international Islamist scene after being one of the leaders of the *Global Islamic Media Front* which translated al-Qaeda texts into German. A profile of Mahmoud in the *New York Times* concluded: "Mr. Mahmoud combines a gift for inspiring followers, a knack for tapping into the power of the Internet and a virtual Rolodex of Qaeda leadership connections, many made in prison or in training camps."

He left Germany in 2012, first heading to Egypt and then onto Turkey, where he was arrested trying to enter Syria.

## UK Links

The links between Millat Ibrahim in Germany and the al-Muhajiroun network in the UK are very strong. Anjem Choudary is quoted in the German media as having visited Germany and having met with representatives from Millat Ibrahim. He also offered his support over the social network site Twitter after the group was targeted by German authorities.

Other links can be found via Salafi Media UK, a UK based group run by Abu Waleed, a key part of the British al-Muhajiroun network.

Millat Ibrahim use the "Salafi Media" registration for their own website and the UK website has hosted videos by the German leader Mohamed Mahmoud, also known as Abu Usama al-Gharib. Furthermore, Abu Waleed, who founded Salafi Media in late 2009, posted a video of support for Millat Ibrahim in May 2012. Also in the video was Abu Muwahhid who has recently been arrested for terrorist related offenses in the UK.

# The US plotters

ACCORDING TO THE CNN journalist Paul Cruickshank “homegrown terrorism is on the rise in the United States”. In the 15 months to June 2010 he noted 23 cases of Americans and permanent US residents implicated in terrorist plots inspired by al-Qaeda or its affiliates. These involved 56 people.

Seven of these plots, so almost a third, involved supporters of the Islamic Thinkers Society (ITS) and Revolution Muslim (RM), two groups affiliated to the al-Muhajiroun network. These groups, Cruickshank concluded, “are increasingly appearing in counterterrorism investigations.”

In addition to Omar Bakri and Anjem Choudary, the followers of RM were also heavily influenced by the Abdullah al-Faisal, the radical Jamaican preacher who was deported from the UK days after 7/7, and Anwar al-Awlaki, the US-born editor of the al-Qaeda magazine *Inspire*.

They included:

Bryant Neal Vinas, a Hispanic Catholic convert to Islam from Long Island who was convicted of participating in and supporting al-Qaeda plots in Afghanistan and the U.S., moved in Islamic Thinkers Society circles in New York before he left the US. He made the connections to al-Qaeda in Pakistan through the ITS and at least two of the New York ITS branch had knowledge of his plans.

In 2007 Daniel Maldonado became the first US citizen to be convicted of training with al-Shabaab. He had travelled to Somalia, via Egypt, with Omar Shafik Hammami, who was better known by the pseudonym Abu Mansoor Al-Amriki. Al-Amriki rose through the ranks of al-Shabaab and in 2012 was placed on the FBI’s Most Wanted Terrorist list. He was killed in an internal al-Shabaab power struggle in September 2013.

Mohamed Mahmood Alessa and Carlos “Omar” Eduardo Almonte were arrested in June 2010 at New York’s JFK airport as they were about to board separate flights to Egypt from where they planned to travel to Somalia to join al-Shabaab.

Tarek Mehanna, 29, was found guilty in December 2011 of conspiring to help al Qaeda, conspiring to commit murder in a foreign country and making false statements.

Colleen Renee LaRose, also known as JihadJane and Fatima LaRose, pleaded guilty in February 2011 to charges in terrorism-related crimes, including conspiracy to commit murder and providing material support to terrorists after she threatened to kill Swedish cartoonist Lars Vilks, who had drawn an image of the prophet Muhammad with the body of a dog.

Zachary Chesser, a well-known RM blogger, was arrested in June 2010 as he boarded a flight to Uganda with the intention of going to fight for al-Shabaab in Somalia. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Only 21-years-old at the time, it appears he converted to Islam after meeting a Muslim woman and self-radicalised over the internet.

Shaker Masri, a friend of Zachary Chesser, was sentenced to ten years in prison after pleading guilty to plotting to attend a Somali training camp with dreams of becoming a suicide



Younus Abdullah Muhammad



Zachary Chesser

bomber for al-Qaida and another terrorist group, al-Shabab.

Samir ibn Zafar Khan was the Pakistani-American editor of the al-Qaeda magazine *Inspire*. He had links to both RM and ITS. He was killed in a drone strike in Yemen while in the company of Anwar al-Awlaki in July 2011.

In 2012 Younus Abdullah Muhammad (real name Jesse Curtis Morton), co-founder of Revolution Muslim, pleaded guilty for his role in threatening the creators of the cartoon “South Park.” His arrest came not too long after he participated in online conference with Abdullah al-Faisal, Omar Bakri Mohammed and Anjem Choudary. Entitled “Take Over Washington”, Bakri Mohammed urged listeners to resist the “Crusaders” led by the United States “verbally, financially or physically if you can.”

Emerson Winfield Begolly, 24, of New Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, was sentenced in July 2013 in Pittsburgh to 102 months in prison for soliciting others to engage in acts of terrorism within the United States. He was also a follower of RM.

The convictions of Chesseer and Younes Abdullah Muhammad brought an end to organised RM activities but there is still a network of supporters with links to al-Muhajiroun still active across the United States. Some of these people remain in direct contact with Anjem Choudary’s supporters in the UK. In late 2010 the US authorities shut down the RM website after it listed the home addresses of British MPs.

# Branching out into Kurdish Iraq

Over the last eighteen months Anjem Choudary has sought to develop links with the European end of Ansar al-Islam, a primarily Kurdish group that originates in Northern Iraq which has been closely linked to al-Qaeda.

Formed in September 2001, Ansar al-Islam (Partisans of Islam) came about through a merger between Jund al-Islam (Soldiers of Islam) and a splinter group from the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan, led by Mullah Krekar. After the American invasion of Iraq, justified partly by the false claim that Ansar al-Islam had links to al-Qaeda, the group was behind a series of terrorist attacks, including a suicide attack on an Eid celebration that 109 people and wounded over 200 others.

The organisation was crushed in a US military operation in 2003, leaving many militants dead and the uncovering of chemical weapons, the only such find in Iraq. Those who survived fled to neighbouring Iran.

The group was superseded by Ansar al-Sunnah (AS), though in 2007 this new group acknowledged that it had derived from Ansar al-Islam and reverted to their original name. AS formed a partnership with al-Qaeda (AQ), but this has been severely strained in more recent years over disagreements over AQ's deliberate targeting of civilians in suicide attacks.

## Trial

The links first developed in the summer of 2012 when Choudary travelled to Oslo to show his support for Mullah Krekar, the founder of Ansar al-Islam, who was on trial for threatening the life of a Norwegian politician.

Choudary spoke in support of Krekar on the steps of the court, in a meeting with Krekar followers and Prophet Ummah (see page 40) at a meeting in Oslo, and through a protest in London.

In May 2012 Choudary shared a press conference with Awat Kurkuki, who was described as a student of Mullah Krekar, where he told journalists: "We stand together to effect his release. We stand together to raise his plight. And we will stand together in any action we take to put pressure on the Norwegian regime and we will raise his situation within the Muslim community."

A couple of months later, standing outside Parliament, Choudary went even further in an interview with Norwegian TV. "Mullah Krekar is a phenomenal figure. He is one of the few pure voices of Islam in Europe and he stands very firm on the fact with Muslim lands need to be liberated and the Sharia needs to be implemented."

"But," he added, so as to protect himself and the man he defended, "he is also very clear that Muslims have a Covenant of Security that they are not allowed to target, for example, the Norwegian people."

Pressed about comments on his website where he appeared to call for Norwegians to be held hostage until Krekar was freed, Choudary responded: "In Islam, our options that Muslims have is to ransom someone or to break him free from prison, or indeed, exchange him for other hostages. Now, we live here under a



Anjem Choudary with (front right) Awat Karkuky

Covenant of Security so it is not allowed for me to do that but Muslims, in Muslim countries, they know that this is the Islamic ruling so you see many hostages already taken in Iraq, Afghanistan and other places to exchange for others held in the West."

And, in what many viewed as a warning, he added: "If you continue to take people hostage in the West, this is the kind of repercussion that could occur."

Awat Karkuky is in fact 31-year-old Awat Wahab Hamasalih, born in the Kurdish region of Iraq but now living in Birmingham. He is a rising star in the European Ansar al-Islam movement and now a member of its ruling council.

He is currently under investigation by German police for his role in financing the organisation, which in turn, they believe, goes to help fund terrorism in Iraq.

The German investigation began after a number of Kurdish nationals were arrested in Germany and Switzerland accused of fundraising for Ansar al-Islam. It soon became wider as the authorities networks in Norway, Sweden and the UK.

Swedish court documents, which themselves had been based on the German investigation, claims that an Ansar al-Islam network was resurrected in Europe in 2008 and shortly after held a General Conference on the internet forum Paltalk in which 40-50 people participated.

A new Islamic Online University was set up to support this new network.

German police believe that the aim was to transform this online network into a physical reality. "The goal of the network was to gather 100 people," reported Swedish anti-extremist organisation EXPO, "divided into four wings and travel back to





Mullah Krekar  
Photo:  
Frida Tørring

Iraq.” After first liberating Iraq, they would then continue onto other countries.

Choudary and Hamasalih were key speakers at a conference in Helsinki, in March 2013. Entitled: Free All Muslim Hostages, Choudary spoke on behalf of Sharia4Finland, a group he had undoubtedly set up for the occasion, while Hamasalih, using the name Karkuky, represented the Didinwe Organisation, which is linked to the Kurdish Islamist website Durbeen.org. Other speakers included Irfan Muhammad Kawa Ali.

Only the month before, on Saturday 23 February, Choudary and 20-25 of his supporters joined about 100 Kurds linked to Hamasalih at an indoor rally in Birmingham. There, Hamasalih, speaking through an interpreter, thanked Choudary for his support, claiming that he was the only Muslim leader who had spoken out in defence of Mullah Krekar.

Choudary’s speech was fairly tame, claiming that the media were wrong to portray them as haters and terrorists. That moderate approach was undone by the next speaker, Abu Izzadeen, aka Trevor Brooks, who, amidst chants of ‘Allah Akbar’ said that anyone who was not part of jihad was “nothing”.

Hamasalih is now a regular on Choudary’s demonstrations in London and in recent months has attended their protests outside the Egyptian embassy, against the overthrow of President Morsi, and outside the Iranian embassy, in protest of the execution of 21 Islamists.

How long this relationship will last is uncertain, especially when Mullah Krekar is released from prison, but what is clear is that through his support for Krekar at the time of his trial Choudary developed a new front in his international network and one with direct links into the heart of the al-Qaeda’s Iraqi insurgency.

## Profile: Mullah Krekar

Mullah Krekar, born Najm Faraj Ahmad, is a Norway based enigmatic character that is the founder of the Kurdish terrorist organisation Ansar al-Islam (Helpers of Islam). The group has been blamed for attacks on coalition forces in Iraq and is regarded as a terrorist organisation by both the Americans and the UN.

He moved to Norway as a refugee in 1991 and took up residence in a suburb of Oslo. However, in 2003 an expulsion order was signed on the basis that he was a threat to national security. However, due to the precarious security situation in Iraq he has not been sent back for fear that he may be killed.

Krekar claims to have stepped down from Ansar al-Islam in 2002 but in 2006 the UN added him to the list of people believed to be linked to al-Qaeda.

The UN claimed that while in Europe, Krekar was responsible for funneling money through Bulgaria and Iraq to Ansar al-Islam’s successor organization, Ansar al-Sunnah (AS). “As of spring 2005, a non-governmental organization founded by Krekar sent money to terrorist organisations, spread extremist Islamic ideology, and actively recruited European citizens into terrorist organisations,” a submission to the UN.

“More recently,” the document continued, “Krekar has been accused of having motivated AS members and encouraged terrorist activities in Iraq while in exile.” It claimed that during one of his trips to northern Iraq, “Krekar allegedly recruited and trained combatants.”

Not content with getting Krekar listed as a terrorist, it has been claimed that on two separate occasions the US authorities have hatched plans to grab the Iraqi in Oslo and spirit him out of the country.

In 2012 he was sentenced to five year in prison for making death threats against officials and others, including Erna Solberg, the minister who signed the expulsion order.

## French connection

JAMA'AT AL-TAWHID and Fursan Al-'Izza (The Knights of Pride) are the French groups linked to the Global Sharia project. While they appear to be two separate organisations, their membership is interchangeable.



Toulouse killer  
Muhammad Merah

Jama'at Al-Tawhid has managed limited activity with its biggest event being a protest against the banning of the veil in France in April 2011. The group invited Anjem Choudary and Abu Izzadeen from the UK and Abu Imran (Fouad Belkacem), the leader of *Shariah4Belgium*.

However, Belkacem was arrested by the French police on a warrant from the Moroccan authorities and returned to Belgium. Choudary was also turned away and permanently banned from French territory.

The demonstration went ahead and 61 people were arrested, including 19 women wearing veils and one illegal immigrant who was found in possession of an offensive weapon. Several members of the UK group did attend the protest including Abdul Muhid, who runs the British based website muslimprisoners.com, and the English Muslim convert Jamaal Uddin.

Following the relative failure of this public outing the group's website fell inactive in April 2011 and little has been heard of the group since.

Fursan Al-'Izza (The Knights of Pride) also has links to Anjem Choudary and the UK network. The group announced that it would join Choudary and Jamaat Tawheed at the Paris veil demonstration.

Fursan Al-'Izza also operates under the name Sharia4France.

The group, formed in Nantes in 2010, is led by Mohamed Achamlane and is believed to have only 30-100 members, though the ICSR point out that the group can count on nearly 2000 Facebook followers.

As with al-Muhajiroun in the UK, Fursan Al-'Izza have received widespread media coverage in France for their often controversial and provocative demonstrations and public pronouncements including the invasion of a McDonalds restaurant where they proceeded to shout antisemitic slogans. French Interior Minister Claude Gueant banned the group in January 2012 for encouraging French citizens to travel to Afghanistan to fight jihad.

It has been reported that Muhammad Merah, the man who killed seven people in Toulouse and Montauban in March 2012, was a member of the group. Merah, who killed French soldiers and Jewish civilians, was then shot dead after a 30 hour siege.

Following the shootings Achamlane was one of 19 Fursan Al-'Izza militants arrested in raids for inciting violence and terrorism and a string of deportations followed. Kalashnikov rifles, tear gas canisters and about eight handguns were found.

## Prophet Ummah

FORMED IN 2011, Prophet Ummah is the main Islamist organisation in Norway. Similar in many ways to al-Muhajiroun, the group has been ridiculed by much of the Norwegian media for its silly stunts and pathetically small demonstrations. However, like their British counterparts, this should not disguise the influence they have on more impressionable followers who seem only too willing to put into practice what PU teach.

The group came to national prominence in January 2012 when a film was launched on the Internet with the message that several named members of the government deserved to burn in Hell, all illustrated with pictures from the funeral of fallen Norwegian soldiers in Afghanistan.

The film, promoting a demonstration against Norway's participation in the war in Afghanistan, was made by Bastian Vasquez, a Norwegian-Chilean convert to Islam.

In the event, only 46 people attended the demonstration and they were far outnumbered by protestors, who turned their back on the Islamists, and even journalists.

Later in the year, 100 followers of the group demonstrated outside the US embassy to protest against the 'Innocence of Muslims' film.

The spokesperson for the group was Ubaydullah Hussain, though he was subsequently arrested for making threats against two journalists and members of the local Jewish community.



Anjem Choudary with  
Islamists from Norway,  
Denmark and Sweden

Other prominent members have included Arfan Bhatti, a former gang member who has eight convictions including stabbing and shooting. He is also believed to be involved in Ansar al-Islam.

Bhatti is currently in prison in Pakistan after being sentenced to six years imprisonment for contacts with the Taliban.

Another key member is Omar Cheblal, an Algerian, who was once convicted in Morocco for smuggling guns to the GIA terrorist group in Algeria. It appears that he is also wanted in Algeria for the same offence but Norway refuse to deport him because of the use of torture by Algerian security forces.

Another key person in Prophet Ummah is Wahhab Butt. Like so many others, Butt also has a history of criminality. In 2007 Butt was convicted for five years after being caught, along with his father, in possession of 85 kilos of hashish.

In 2012 Anjem Choudary developed links with the group and met them on at least two occasions in Oslo. After a video was posted up on YouTube by a leading PU activist, Choudary boasted to the media that he encouraged them to post the film and he also acted as a mentor to the group.

Prophet Ummah has retreated into the shadows after Bhatti's imprisonment. However, a younger generation who have been influenced by them appear to be emerging, many of whom have travelled to Syria to fight.



## The Kenyan attack

In October 2013 a number of al-Shabaab supporters went on a shooting rampage in the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya. At least 67 people were killed by four Islamist gunmen who targeted Westerners and non-Muslims.

After the siege ended, it emerged that one of the gunmen was Hassan Abdi Dhuhulow, a 23-year-old Norwegian of Somalian origin.

Dhuhulow was born in Somalia, but he and his family moved to Norway as refugees in 1999. He grew up in the town of Larvik, but appears to have left for Somalia in 2009.

According to Norway's TV2, Dhuhulow was in regular telephone contact up until the Westgate massacre, with Mohyeldeen Mohammad, the current leader of Prophet Ummah.

Dhuhulow appears to be just one of dozens of Scandinavians who have returned to fight for al-Shabaab.

Probably the most high profile has been Abdukadir Mohamed Abdukadir, alias Ikrima. He is thought to be a Kenyan citizen of Somali origin, one of many Kenyan Somalis and other foreign fighters who have joined the group.

Norway's TV2 reported earlier this week that Ikrima had travelled to Norway and applied for asylum in 2004 but left before there was a decision on his application. He spent time in London and Birmingham before heading back to East Africa.

On 5 October, ten days after the Nairobi siege ended, US special forces attempted to snatch Ikrima from his base in Somalia but were unsuccessful due to fierce resistance.

He has been named by Kenyan intelligence as the alleged leader of three terrorist plots, including one involving Samantha Lewthwaite, the British widow of 7 July suicide bomber Germaine Lindsey.



# Recruiting for jihad

Osama Bakri was a latecomer in arranging for his supporters to go abroad to engage in training and fighting. For much of his time in HT and then with the newly formed al-Muhajiroun, Bakri was considered a joke by the real mujahideen, both in Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia. Both had their own well-established networks amongst émigré communities in the UK and Bakri's clownish behaviour coupled with the unwelcome media attention he brought on their operations meant he was kept at arm's length for much of the 1990s.

Bakri played second fiddle to Abu Hamza, who was considered a serious player and ally by the international Islamist movement.

Things began to change with Chechnya, where Bakri's newly formed al-Muhajiroun sent some recruits to fight, though their bark was probably louder than their bite. While the numbers sent abroad were small, Bakri made up for it by loud and visible demonstrations and pronouncements about his support for the Chechnyan cause.

It was easy to understand why to the outside world Bakri was a more important figure than he actually was. The Russian authorities certainly appeared to believe this and in 1999 they formally complained to the British authorities about al-Muhajiroun's activities in Chechnya.

As with Choudary today, Bakri saw training for Jihad as an obligation for every Muslim and as a result he and his supporters would hold regular training camps in Scotland, Wales and in Crawley, Sussex.

In the hilarious 'Tottenham Ayatollah' documentary, after which Bakri was badly ridiculed within Jihadist circles, he is filmed training 30 supporters at a camp in Sussex.

A leading al-Muhajiroun supporter, Muhammad Jameel, was also instrumental in establishing Sakina Security Services, which among other things advertised the 'Ultimate Jihad Challenge', a two-week course in the United States which included weapons training.

Sakina Security Services and is shrouded in mystery. According to several media reports is named as its founder. Other reports name Zainulabidin, and indeed, in an interview with *The Hindu*, in June 2000, the name Suleiman Bilal crops up.

Suleiman Bilal appears to be the first two names of Zainulabidin and the same Hindu article claims Suleiman Bilal was in fact Muhammad Jameel. The article goes on to quote Bilal as admitting to training the young Muslims who were arrested in Yemen in 1998.

Bakri was quite open about Sakina Security Services, telling one newspaper "I know brother Jameel very well. He is extremely trustworthy and honest. As head of al-Muhajiroun, I have overall responsibility for a number of organisations fighting for the Islamic cause. Sakina is one of them."

In October 2001, just three weeks after the 9/11 attacks, 43-year-old Sulayman Zain-ul-abidin was arrested and charged for running a training course to recruit Islamist terrorists. He was eventually found not guilty after the court heard that only one

person had actually been through his training course.

"My client was only prosecuted because he was a Muslim and for no other reason," his solicitor told a press conference afterwards. "It was not my client that was being tried, it was ISLAM that was being tried."

A few months later Zain-ul-abidin was taken into hospital for an operation on his knee. Three days later he began feeling drowsy and then slipped into a coma. His drug records went missing and no-one appeared to know what medication he had been given. He died soon after.

His lawyer claimed that he was about to disclose "vital information" about the anti-terror squad and this led some of his supporters to believe he was assassinated by a CIA hit squad. His wife requested, for religious reasons, that a post-mortem not be carried out so the real cause of death was never known.

Many questions over Sakina Security Services remain. Why was the prosecution case against Zain-ul-abidin so bad? Was it any more than a coincidence that the land on which Zain-ul-abidin was supposed to train his recruits was originally purchased off a US intelligence expert and former Army officer? Why did Bakri make such bold assertions about Sakina if it did not in fact exist as he suggested? Why, most fundamentally did Zain-ul-abidin, a kitchen assistant from Greenwich, decide to set up a training camp in the US in the first place?

Adding fuel to the murky fire, US author and former US government prosecutor and former Army intelligence officer, John Loftus, has even claimed that Bakri (and Abu Hamza) was working for British Intelligence in order to influence Islamist extremists in the Balkans.

While there have long been rumours about Bakri's links to the intelligence services Loftus' claims are a stretch. Al-Muhajiroun was not really involved in the Balkans and a connection between the so-called covenant of security, whereby Bakri, and later Choudary were left alone by the British authorities in return for not targeting Britain, is quite different from working directly for them.

## Credibility

Al-Muhajiroun's recruitment for jihadist missions abroad really took off after 9/11 when hundreds of young men, mainly of Pakistani and Kashmiri ancestry, travelled to Pakistan to join up with the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Bakri's own ideology was becoming more extreme and in tune with al-Qaeda's own brand of Qutbism and the volume of recruits, and their willingness to fight, gave him new credibility in the wider Islamist world.

The old traditional mujahideen and Saudi networks continued to operate independently in the UK, and they remained suspicious of Bakri and his followers, but close ties between leading al-Qaeda operatives and al-Muhajiroun recruits were being formed in the mountains of Pakistan.

Several al-Muhajiroun activists emerged as key figures in the

wider al-Qaeda operation, among them Sajeel Shahid and Rashid Rauf.

Anjem Choudary continues to argue that it is the duty of all Muslims to train for Jihad and dozens of his supporters have travelled abroad in recent years. While a few still go to Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen and now Syria are the favoured destinations. There, they tap into more militant networks, train and experience battle and then, if they remain alive, return home fuelled by even more extreme thoughts.

Most of the terrorist plots linked to al-Muhajiroun supporters have been hatched abroad or at least by people who have been abroad.

“People get radicalised by Choudary and Bakri and then go abroad,” says one former follower of the two men. “By going abroad they go off the grid.

“Of course that provides Choudary with the excuse that he has lost contact with these people and so he can’t be blamed for what they get up to. But of course, he encouraged them to go abroad, he told them it was their duty. His lieutenants facilitated it and it was often into their networks abroad where they ended up.”

## Key British operatives in Pakistan

**Sajeel Shahid:** Also known as Abu Ibrahim, Sajeel Shahid a computer scientist with a degree from Manchester University, was the head of Al-Muhajiroun in Pakistan.

He set up the safe house in Lahore that was regularly used by AM activists passing through the city and helped establish the training camp in Pakistan that was used by Mohammed Quayyam Khan, Omar Khyam and Mohammed Siddique Khan.

In December 2001 he boasted to the *Manchester Evening News* that he was helping fellow young Muslims from the Manchester area travel to Pakistan to fight with the Taliban.

The Pakistani government abducted Shahid in 2005 and held him for three months before expelling him.

**Rashid Rauf:** Born in Birmingham to Pakistani parents, Rashid Rauf rose to become a major figure in the network in Pakistan. He is believed to have been one of the ringleaders of the 2006 transatlantic aircraft plot, however a trial in Rawalpindi found no evidence that he had been involved in terrorist activities, and his charges were downgraded to possession of explosives.

In December 2007 he mysteriously escaped from prison and the following year it was rumoured that he had been killed in a US drone strike. This proved false and by 2009 British intelligence was suggesting that he was plotting another terrorist strike on the UK.

In 2012 he was killed in a US drone strike.



The battlezones

# Battlefield: Somalia

It is estimated that as many as 200 Britons have gone to fight for the Jihadists in Somalia, the vast majority for al-Shabaab, an al-Qaeda linked terrorist group that was formed in 2007.

Some have gone through their own Somalian and Kenyan community networks, but most appear to have been recruited and channelled through extreme Islamist networks, such as al-Mujahiroun.

In the recent al-Shabaab propaganda video, released in October 2013, it lists eleven Britons who have been killed fighting for the group.

In contrast to al-Qaeda in the Pakistan/Afghanistan region, al-Shabaab appears eager to use foreign fighters more publicly, both leading operations within East Africa but also for propaganda value.

The most high profile of the British recruits is undoubtedly Samantha Lewthwaite, dubbed by the media as the 'white widow' and now described as the most wanted female terrorist in the world.

Yorkshire-born Lewthwaite was married to 7/7 bomber Germaine Lindsay and now is believed to play a key logistical role within the al-Shabaab network. She is wanted by Kenyan authorities for a bomb plot in Mombasa and is believed to have been involved in organising the Nairobi mall massacre.

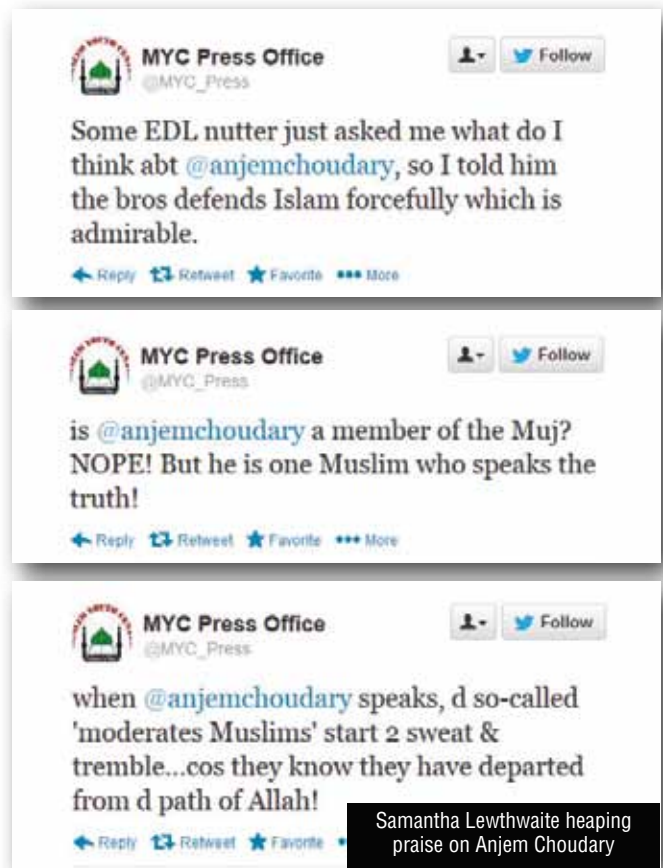
She is believed to run the al-Shabaab twitter feed, which has regularly praised Anjem Choudary.

Another key British al-Shabaab operative was Bilal Berjawi, from West London, who first went to Somalia in 2006 and rose to become the right-hand man to the head of al-Qaeda's East Africa operations, Fazul Abdullah Mohammad. After Fazul's death through a US drone strike it has even been reported that Berjawi took over al-Qaeda operations, though as Raffaello Pantucci, a Senior Research Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute notes, having been injured in another US attack, "it is not clear how much he would have been able to achieve in this role."

Berjawi, like his neighbour Mohammed Sakr, who also went to fight in East Africa, were part of a West London network of extremists. "These individuals were part of the radical scene in London that were drawn by messages advanced by radical preachers who circled around the "Londonistan" community," says Pantucci. "Al-Berjawi was further connected, at least peripherally, to a group linked to the network that attempted to carry out a terrorist attack on London's transportation system on July 21, 2005."

The Ugandan authorities link Berjawi, Sakr and a third Briton to a double suicide bombing of two bars in Kampala, Uganda, during the 2010 World Cup which killed 74 people. A month after Berjawi's death, Mohamed Sakr was killed in another US drone strike.

Anjem Choudary is first known to have encouraged his supporters to go and fight in East Africa in early 2007. Writing on the Followers of Ahlun Sunnah Wal Jama'ah Muntada website forum under the pseudonym Abou Luqman, Choudary declared: "The Ethiopians, with . . . support (from the Christian crusader regimes) and backed by illegitimate Israel (Zionists), have violated the blood of Muslims in Somalia. By committing such an



act of terrorism the Muslims in Somalia and nearby lands have responded to the divine call of jihad."

He then urged his followers to go and fight. "The obligation of supporting jihad all over the world is fard ayn (an individual obligation) . . . This honourable act must be carried out according to your own capabilities because our beloved prophet Muhammad said strike the mushrik (infidels) with your wealth, hands and tongue."

The website was devised by al-Muhajiroun activist Mizanur Rahman.

It is clear that some in his network took up the fight, but nowhere near as many as the hundreds who went to Pakistan. A group of young men from Tower Hamlets were certainly in close contact with AM activists, as did some from Greenwich.

The death of Berjawi by US air strike and the ensuing power-struggle within al-Shabaab, led several hundred foreign fighters to leave the region. Some returned home while others went to Yemen and it was there, in December 2010, that an al-Mujahiroun supporter of Vietnamese heritage ended up.

He had got involved in the AM network whilst at college in Greenwich. Close to Richard Dart, a fellow convert who was the subject of the 'My Brother the Islamist' documentary, this man, known in court as B2, travelled to Yemen where he stayed for seven months and, it is alleged, worked on al-Qaeda's *Inspire* magazine, though he denies this.

He was arrested on his arrival back into the UK and is currently fighting extradition to the US. He was one of a number of Britons who the Home Secretary attempted to deprive of British citizenship, thus allowing them to be killed abroad in US airstrikes or rendered.

Berjawi and Sakr were also stripped of their citizenship only months before their assassinations.

# The al-Shabaab-Choudary connection

IN OCTOBER 2013 the Somalian terrorist group, al-Shabaab, produced a 58-minute video aimed at the British public, and in particular British Muslims. Called 'Woolwich Attack: It's an Eye for an Eye', the English-language production urges Muslims in Britain to go to Somalia to fight jihad or carry out terror attacks in the UK if they are unable to travel.

The film glorifies the murder of Lee Rigby, who was hacked to death on the streets of London in May 2013, and placed it in the context of the on-going war between Islam and the Kafir (non-believers).

But the film also promoted the voice and ideas of Anjem Choudary, whom it described as a "Caller to Islam". Clips of an interview Choudary gave in the wake of the Woolwich murder took up over two-minutes of the film and footage from his demonstrations were also used.

Some commentators have noted that this was the first time Choudary has been specifically referenced in an al-Qaeda-supporting video.

One newspaper even claimed that "he [Choudary] and a militant colleague based in North-West London are the main points of contact for Muslims eager to wage jihad in Somalia or Britain."

The film claims that eleven Britons have died fighting for al-Shabaab and ends with a chilling call to arms. Using Woolwich and attacks in other countries, such as the Boston bombing and the Toulouse killings, as examples, the film stresses that attacking their opponents in their own countries is often more important and effective than joining the war abroad.

The narrator of the film, wearing a black mask and holding an automatic weapon, tells viewers "Do not waste your time trying to re-invent the wheel.

"If you can't afford to get hold of [a gun] then certainly a simple knife from your local B&Q will do the job.'



Ricardo McFarlane

Jordan Horner



He told followers to "cut the necks of the disbelievers."

The narrator of the film is believed to be 21-year-old Mohammed Abul Hasnath, from Tower Hamlets, a man well-known to the authorities.

In October 2011 Hasnath was arrested and later convicted of possessing several copies of al-Qaeda's Inspire magazine and sentenced to 14-months imprisonment.

Only a few months earlier, Hasanth was fined £100 for putting up 'Gay Free Zone' stickers in Tower Hamlets. He was already on bail for defacing a women's fashion advertising board along with Jordan Hordan and Ricardo McFarlane, two well-known Anjem Choudary supporters.

Hordan and McFarlane have since been convicted of assaulting and abusing late night drinkers during their Muslim patrols in Tower Hamlets and Walthamstow.

Mohammed Abul Hasnath, the narrator of the al-Shabaab video, was active in the British al-Muhajiroun network.



(right) Mohammed Abul Hasnath. Photo: National News



# The networker: Morten Storm

A bike gang leader turned Islamist, Moreton Storm became a key intelligence asset at the heart of al-Muhajiroun and the al-Qaeda network



Celebrate 7/7 but uneasy about killing 'unarmed civilians'.

21-year-old bike gang leader from Denmark. Converts to Islam whilst in prison

Angered by Chechnyan war, he attends Salafist conference in Birmingham in 2000. The talk was of Jihad. He begins touring UK mosques spreading extremist word

Moves back to UK in autumn 2002. Gets job in Hemel Hempstead and becomes involved with al Muhajiroun [AM] in Luton

Meets Afghan veterans whilst in Yemen, among them close confidant of Al Qaeda's Somali leader, Abu Taha al-Sudani

9/11 attack. Storm elated. Calls son Osama.

Organises military training for AM in Barton Hills, just outside Luton

(right) Al-Shabab Parade in Mogadishu

Taimour Abdulwahab



Regents' Park mosque



(above) Zocarias Moussaoui  
(right) Richard Reid



USS Cole after the suicide attack



Active in 'Operation Disrespect', which saw AM disrupt George Galloway's 2005 election campaign

Wants action. Heads back to Yemen in early 2006 and befriends Anwar al-Awlaki

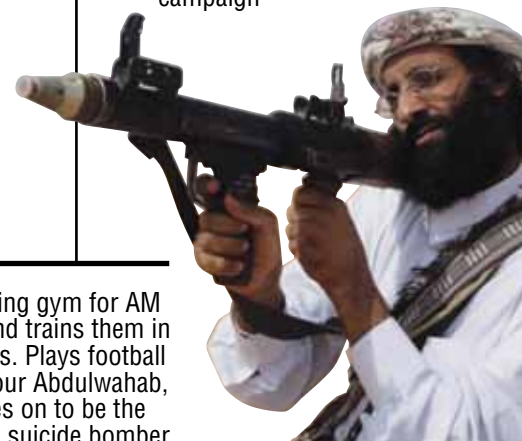
Returns to UK in 1998, attends fundamentalist Salafist mosques in West London. In Brixton, he links up with 9/11 wannabe bomber Zocarias Moussaoui and soon-to-be shoe bomber Richard Reid

Returns to Denmark. Some of his Yemeni friends involved in attack on USS Cole

Moves to Milton Keynes. Invited to Yemen after spending time at Regents' Park mosque

Heads back to Yemem. Invited to join fight in Afghanistan in early 2001 but declines due to imminent birth of child

Runs boxing gym for AM activists and trains them in martial arts. Plays football with Taimour Abdulwahab, who goes on to be the Stockholm suicide bomber





On return to Denmark, Storm approached by Danish intelligence [PET] but declines, saying he wants to fight in Somalia

Back in the UK, Storm sets up training camp in Yorkshire and trains extremists from Birmingham

Sets up pro-Awlaki facebook page and invites supporters to get in touch. No one does except Aminah, a woman in Croatia. Storms arranges for this woman to marry Awlaki

Three weeks later, on 30 September 2011, Awlaki is killed in a US drone strike. Storms thinks he is entitled to the huge reward but handlers say information was from a parallel operation. Furious, Storm breaks cover and tells all

Is sent to Lebanon to see AM leader, Omar Bakri Mohammed, and then Fatah al-Islam leaders Saddam el-Hajdib and brother Khalid

His information also leads to arrests of two Danish extremists who were planning bombing campaign

Claims to have provided equipment to Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan, one of those behind attacks on US embassies in East Africa. Soon after Nabhan is killed in US strike.

CIA pay Storm \$250,000 for arranging Aminah's marriage to Awlaki but plans to track him by planting tracer in her suitcase fails as his aids discard her luggage



Morten Storm

Aminah

Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan



(left) Omar Bakri Mohammed  
(above) Ahmed Abdulkadir Warsome

Fall of Mogadishu ends his hopes of reaching Somalia. Pause gives Storm time to reflect on Islam. Contacts PET and offers to work for them

Anwar al-Awlaki

In 2007 he heads back to Yemen. Again befriends Awlaki, who he puts in touch with Ahmed Abdulkadir Warsome, a Somali asyllum seekers who he met in Birmingham and who now acts as go-between for al Shabaab and AQ in Arab Penninsular

Storms moves back to London with request from Awlaki to raise funds. He reports to handlers plans by Awlaki to attack western shopping centres with ricin

Storm returns to Yemen and passes Awlaki's courier several items, including a USB stick which contains a CIA tracer

Umar Farouq Abdulmutallab

Storm moves to Birmingham. Begins spying on Somali extremists in Small Heath. Befriends Hassan Tabbakh, who is learning to make bombs. Tabbakh subsequently arrested

Travels to Kenya with intention of going to Somalia. Links up with associate of Ahmed Abdulkadir Warsome and soon after 18 are arrested with guns

Umar Farouq Abdulmutallab fails to detonate bomb hidden in underpants on plane in December 2009 but plot confirms Storm's concerns about Awlaki



The battlezones

# Syria: the new battlefield



Over the last 30 months Syria has emerged as al-Qaeda's latest battleground as the civil war between President Assad's regime and up to 1,000 rebel units rage.

It is a war that has involved as many as 50,000 people fighting for Jihadists groups, of which at least 1,700 have come from Europe.

In early November, MI5 chief Andrew Parker told Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee (ISC) "Syria has become a very attractive place for people to go for that reason – those who support or sympathise with the al-Qaeda ideological message.

"We've seen low hundreds of people from this country go to Syria for periods and come back – some large numbers are still there – and get involved in fighting."

What he failed to disclose was that several dozen of this number had been recruited by, or facilitated with the support of Anjem Choudary's network.

\* \* \*

When the civil war first broke out, in March 2011, it manifested itself in demonstrations and protests against the government. It appeared to be the latest instalment of the Arab Spring, which has swept dictatorships aside in several North Africa countries.

A month after the uprising began, the Syrian Army were dispatched to the hotbeds of the rebellion, principally in the southern city of Daraa and the central city of Homs, and before long armed opposition emerged.

In July, 2011, a group of Army defectors announced the formation of the Free Syria Army as an umbrella to represent the opposition. It seemed, at least at the time, as though the opposition to President Assad's rule was firmly embedded with a desire for greater freedom and democracy.

Gradually, things began to change.

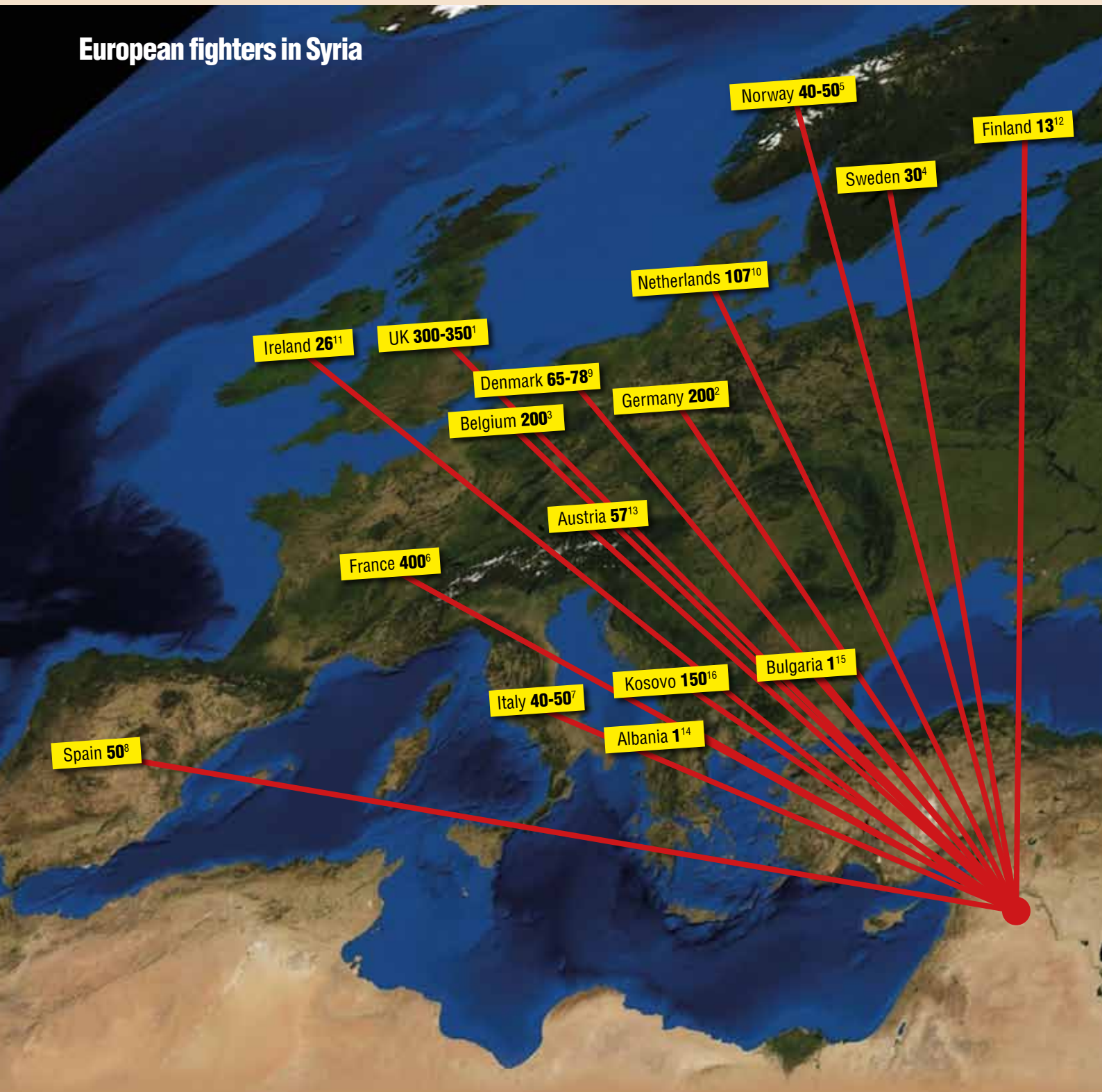
On 23 January, 2012, the Al Nusra Front was created. It was an al-Qaeda supporting group and was made up of Syrian veterans from Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's Islamist army fighting US troops in Iraq, and was the culmination of several meetings held in Homs in late 2011 which included the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant.

The group quickly emerged as one of the most effective units on the battlefield, helped in no small part by their experienced fighters and battle-tested training regime. They currently make up 15-20% of the opposition forces in Syria, though their influence is greater.

In total, it is believed that 59% of opposition fighters have stated that Sharia law should be the sole source of legislation in a new Syria.

Many European fighters in Syria have become involved with Jaish al-Muhajireen wal-Ansar, previously known as the Muhajireen Brigade. Led by Abu Omar al-Chechen, a veteran of the Chechnyan conflict, Jaish al-Muhajireen wal-Ansar, which literally means Army of Emigrants and Helpers, is composed almost entirely of foreign fighters.

## European fighters in Syria



**NOTES**

- 1 (The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation [ICSR], Oct '13)
- 2 (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV) report, quoted in SPIEGEL, Oct '13)
- 3 (Foreign Strategic Intelligence and Security Center, July '13)
- 4 (Swedish Security Service April '13)
- 5 (Police Security Agency, quoted by TV2, Nov '13)
- 6 (The General Directorate for External Security, quoted in Le Monde, Oct '13)
- 7 (Security Intelligence Department)
- 8 (Spanish police, quoted in Spanish press, Sept '13)

- 9 (Domestic Intelligence Agency PET and ICSR, April '13)
- 10 (ICSR, April '13)
- 11 (ICSR, April '13)
- 12 (ICSR, April '13)
- 13 (Austrian intelligence agency, quoted in Der Spiegel, Oct '13)
- 14 (ICSR, April '13)
- 15 (ICSR, April '13)
- 16 (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV) report, quoted in SPIEGEL, Oct '13)

## The battlezones

### Syria: the new battlefield (continued)

A review of open source material, quoting information from police or intelligence services, suggests that a minimum of about 1,700 Europeans have gone to fight in Syria, with an upsurge in people going in 2013.

This is probably a conservative figure. These are people known to the police having gone, and so does not account for those who the authorities do not know about, but also some of the data from certain countries is already more than six months old.

The true figure is undoubtedly higher.

The French Intelligence services now believe that 400 French citizens have been to Syria, with about half there at the moment. Next is Britain, with between 300-350 and then Germany.

Germany has seen a big increase in people going during 2013 and with news that German Islamists have set up a media bureau on the Syrian/Turkish border with the purpose of encouraging others to make the trip, this figure is likely to grow substantially.

While countries like Britain and France have a long history of its citizens linked with overseas terror groups, for others it is a relatively new experience. In particular, the numbers going from Scandinavian countries have shocked their respective authorities.

Anjem Choudary's network, the Sharia4 groups and its sister organisations, have been busily recruiting supporters to go and fight in Syria. It is estimated that these groups have facilitated or encouraged 250-300 people to go, making it the biggest single recruiting network in Europe.

Possibly the most active group has been Sharia4Belgium, led by Fouad Belkacem. The Belgian authorities estimate that this group has been responsible for 33 people to travel to Syria, though more recent reports quote police sources as saying that the true figure could be as much as 70.

Much of the recruiting has been done in the Flemish cities of Antwerp and Vilvoorde. Belgian newspapers reported in June that seven of the nine Belgian nationals who already came back from Syria and been detained, had confessed that Fouad Belkacem has been implicated in their recruitment.

The Danish group, Kadlet til Islam has also been sending

supporters to Syria and several have used social media to report on their activities and to encourage others to make the trip. Six Danes are known to have been killed in Syria, including Kadlet Til Islam leader Shiraz Tariq (aka Abu Khattab).

Tariq was killed at the beginning of October 2013, after having spent almost eleven months there fighting for Jaish al-Muhajireen wal-Ansar. His death was announced through a martyrdom video.

In August, he had made another video urging his fellow Danish Muslims to come and him in building a new Syria.

Kadlet til Islam greeted his death by launching a letter-writing campaign to Muslim prisoners in Danish jails, a tactic that is regularly used by Anjem Choudary's front group, Muslim Prisoners.

Norwegian security services estimate that between 40 and 50 Norwegians have travelled to Syria, many having previously been involved directly or more loosely in the Prophet Ummah (PU) network. Among them is the current PU leader, Mohyeldeen Mohammad.

While most of the Norwegians have gone for a short period of time, a few have stayed for many months. Among them is Bastian Vasquez, of Chilean birth, and a key PU member.

Mohamed Mahmoud, the Austrian-born leader of the German Salafist group, Millat Ibrahim, was arrested on the Turkish/Syrian border in March 2013, presumably on his way to fight in Syria. The German authorities are fighting for his extradition for allegedly calling for terrorist attacks in Western Europe.

Sharia4Holland and Sharia4Italy have also been involved in sending supporters to Syria. Choudary is now talking excitedly of his growing network in Spain, some of whom have also gone to Syria.

In May 2012 Choudary travelled to Oslo with two of his followers to show their support for Ansar al-Islam founder Mullah Krekar, who was facing trial. He used the trip to meet up with activists from Prophet Ummah and the Danish group, Kadlet til Islam. Also there was a Swedish man of Lebanese origin who goes by the name of Abu Dujanah Al Lubnani. He even took time to pose with the British al-Muhajiroun leader.



Brothers at war. (left to right) Abu Maaz, Abu Osman and Abu Dujanah Al Lubnani. Abu with Anjem Choudary

Abu Dujanah Al Lubnani comes from a family of Islamist fighters. Three of his close relatives have already been killed in action. Abu Maaz and Abu Osman were both killed in an attack on an army checkpoint in Abu Zeid, close to the Crusader castle of Krac des Chevaliers. Abu Maaz died in a suicide car bomb, while Abu Osman was shot dead in the ensuing battle. The third brother, Rabih, was killed in sectarian conflict in Tripoli, Lebanon, in 2012.

Their uncle, Youssef el-Hajj Dib, is currently in prison in Germany serving a life sentence for attempting to blow up a commuter train. According to Per Gudmundson, who has written extensively on Sweden's Islamist extremists, another uncle was considered the fourth highest ranking leader in Lebanese Fatah al-Islam when he was killed in 2007.

Abu Dujanah Al Lubnani now appears to be in Syria and posted photos of himself in army fatigues carrying a Kalashnikov rifle.

Anjem Choudary's UK network is much less boastful of their activities in Syria. Choudary refuses to get drawn into numbers of supporters in Syria and there have been no videos or interviews with returning jihadists.

But they certainly are there in numbers, with rumour that between 50-80 have gone from the UK through networks associated with Choudary.

Al-Muhajiroun supporters from London, Birmingham, Luton and Stoke-on-Trent have all definitely gone. The group from Luton, numbering in double figures, appear to have gone together.

Supporters have gone from the group's heartland in East London, but also increasingly from West London and the Lewisham area.

One of those who has been actively encouraging people to go to Syria is former boxing champion Anthony Small (aka Abdul Huq), from Lewisham.

In an interview with Norway's TV2, Bakri boasted of sending people to Syria via Istanbul. He even claims that he often gives references to "brothers" when they arrive in the region, "especially if I personally know the brothers who are behind these brothers."

One possible network for the British jihadists is via Abu Basir al-Tartusi, a Syrian-born cleric who has been described as one of the "primary Salafi opinion-makers guiding the jihadi movement."

Abu Basir is well known to both Bakri and Choudary and both men revere him. For many years Abu Basir lived in London, after emigrating from Syria in the 1980s, and also believed in the Covenant of Security, so much so that he criticised the 7/7 bombers for targeting civilians.

He returned to Syria in 2012 and is believed to have 2-3,000 supporters there. In October 2012 he appeared in a YouTube video alongside scores of armed rebels from the Ansar al-Sham paramilitary group.

Syria appears to have given Choudary's network a new boost. The suffering of the Syrian people has galvanised Muslim communities across the country and Choudary is keen to exploit this. They have had several demonstrations in London, some led by banners in support of the 'Soldiers of the Levant'.

But it is in local communities – in mosques and through street stalls – that their work is really going on.

Even Choudary's 16-year-old daughter, Hadiyah Mehraj, has taken up the cause. Tweeting under the pseudonym Heidyag Bint Anjem, she wrote: 'The ultimate way to help Syria is not Muslim aid or temporary convoys, rather it is to take authority via Jihad and implement Allah's law.'

\* \* \*

The fear for the authorities is that these people will return from Syria to carry out attacks in the UK. Intelligence chiefs cite the experience of Afghanistan, where it was through contacts made in foreign battlefields that most of the worst terror plots against the UK were hatched.

Similarly, there is also growing concern that the civil war that's raging in Syria between Sunni and Shia communities will be brought back to the UK. Over the past six months there have been a number of small incidents between Sunni and Shia communities in London, one of which led to ten of Choudary's followers being arrested after attacking a Shia on Edgware Road, London.



Former boxing champion Anthony Small



An al-Muhajiroun demonstration in London, May 2013

# The Insider's View

HOPE not hate spoke to one follower of Anjem Choudary for his views on life on the inside, leaving and reflections on the dangers they represent.

## 1 Why are people drawn to groups like al-Muhajiroun?

I think much of it is the need for identity, belonging and sense of loyalty and duty. I was a young Muslim who felt disconnected with the world around me. I felt racism and discrimination around me and I was unhappy and uncertain about my future. Choudary and his group made me feel wanted, they made me feel important. There was a strength in numbers which made me feel more confident and less isolated.

I didn't have much knowledge about Islam and what they offered appeared the real deal. They were able to actualise what can often feel like 'cultural faith' into an actionable version of faith.

## 2 How did you feel when you were in the group?

I felt like I was superman and that non-Muslims were insects. I felt I was superior to other Muslims, like I was the only one who could be righteous. I was untouchable. It was like God had authorised me to behave this way.

All my previous worries, nervousness and inhibitions had gone. I knew who I was and my life had a sense of purpose.

## 3 What did you feel at the time you were prepared to do?

I felt I could do anything. I was hyped up and I kept telling yourself 'you will do anything'. I started dreaming of battlefields and being the saviour of Islam.

There were two types of people in the group. There were the ones who would love being at the front, the speakers and the organisers. But they were basically the talkers. Then there were the people who would sit quietly at the back of the room, listen and take it all in. These are the ones you really have to worry about. They are sitting there thinking, absorbing the information and dreaming of martyrdom. I was one of these people.

## 4 Was it a tightly organised group or did people drift in and out?

Generally it's a very tightly run ship. There might be some drift at a low foot soldier level but they try to involve you as much as

possible. The local leader – or Emir – meets and looks after all local supporters. When you show an interest in their ideas at a meeting or engage in conversation at one of their street stalls then you will get invited to a private meeting to hear more radical talks, probably at the house of another member.

They seek to look after you but really they are trying to forge a united and collective group mentality. By singing from the same hymn sheet you will end up towing the line and get more involved.

## 5 How successful have the Government bans been?

Overall they are ineffective in the long term. It might have some short term effect in forcing them underground but they just pop up again using a different name. They are now prepared for a ban and have had at least 5 name changes already since 1996.

The other problem is that the bans indirectly give them further credibility in the eyes of some. To their members it makes them more committed as they feel vindicated by the act of the kuffar authorities.

## 6 The group claims to operate under a covenant of security. Did members adhere to this and if so, what was the reaction following terrorist attacks/plots in the UK?

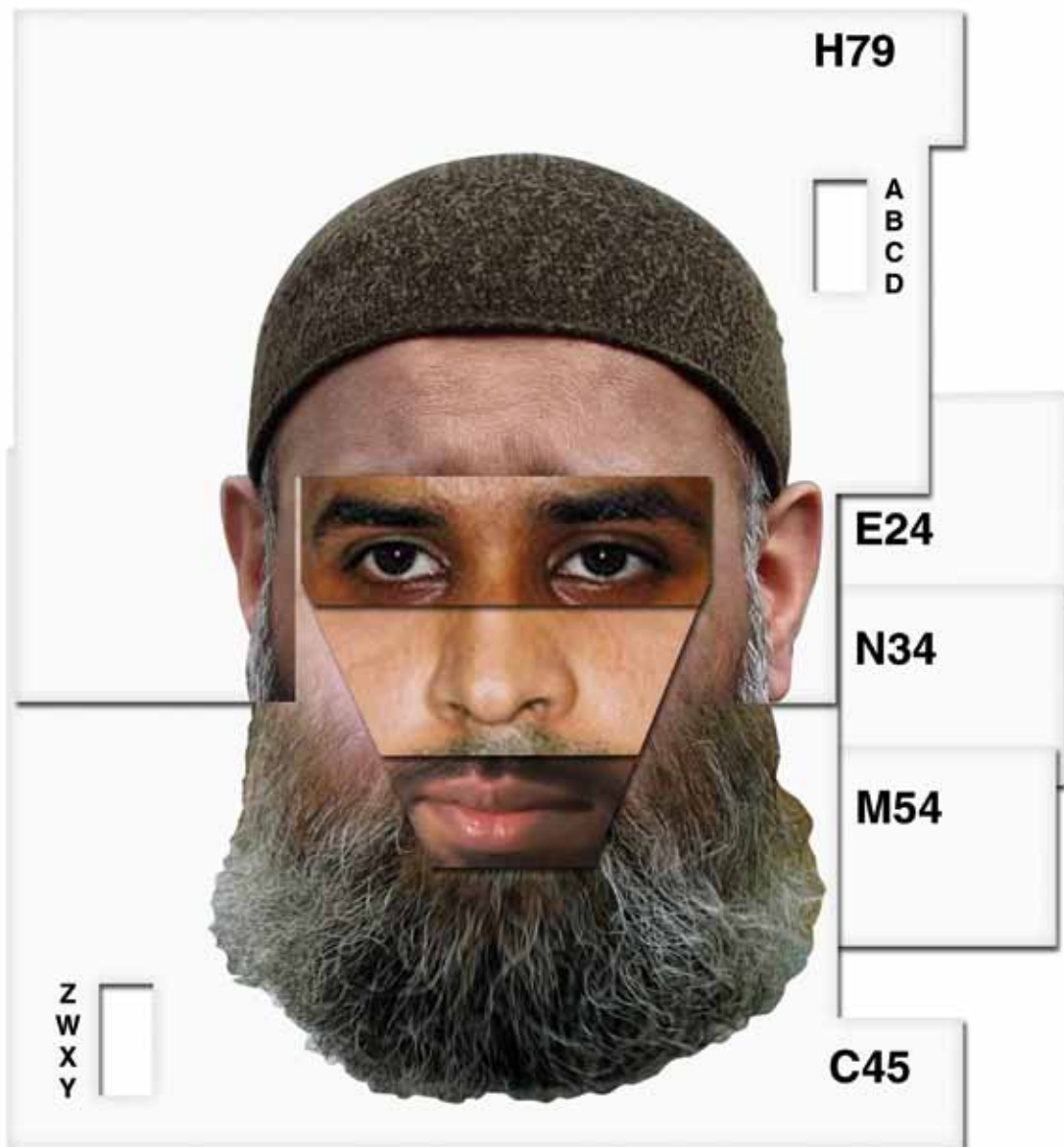
The covenant of security is just a front that is used to give them a lower public profile when they need it. Deep down the group believes the UK is dar-al harb therefore there is no covenant in war. The rules of war apply then.

They repeatedly talk about the covenant of security to evade too much attention but it's a ploy.

## 7 Why did you leave the group?

Gradually I began questioning myself and their vision of the world. I couldn't answer key questions like where will Islamic State emerge? When will it happen and who will be the leader?

From starting out questioning the future and what it would look like, I began questioning everything about the group. I began to



resent the leadership and thought that they were talkers and not doers and that they were exploiting weak-minded people.

My questions and my anger grew rapidly. Why did the leaders encourage us to go to Jihad but they would never do it themselves.

I began reading more about Islam and realised that the vision given by Choudary and Bakri was distorted and warped.

I guess I was growing up and so was growing out of the group and what it stood for.

#### **8 What do you think when you look back on your time in the group?**

A feel a little ashamed that I was taken in by all this for so many years. I'm angry at myself for not learning more about Islam and getting wrapped up in these foolish ideas. And I'm angry at them for the way they manipulated me and others.

I feel I wasted many years of my life which I can't get back.

Looking back I realise that getting involved in the group was really just masking my inner vulnerabilities. It was making up for

my own lack of self-esteem. The group was a replacement for family but it was also an adventure. I guess I put it down simply to a phase.

And I'm also just lucky, and relieved, that I didn't do anything really stupid – to myself or others.

#### **9 How do we defeat groups like al-Muhajiroun?**

It is all too easy to dismiss them as a joke but that would be wrong. We need to take them and their ideas on at every level.

We need to counter their narrative at grassroots and community level and we also need to challenge them in public. We need to refute their doctrine in public debates and on TV and we need to counter the narrative online.

We need to crowd them out, show that they and their views are a minority.

More fundamentally, we need to attack the credentials of the leader. We need to undermine the likes of Choudary and Bakri in the eyes of their followers. We need to break the spell they have over people and show them up for what they really are.

# A plague on both your houses





In May 2013 six men were sentenced to more than 100 years in prison for planning to attack an English Defence League demonstration in Dewsbury last year with a homemade bomb, guns and knives.

The court heard how the men, all from Birmingham, only abandoned their plan after they arrived in Dewsbury two hours after the demonstration had finished. They were caught by chance after one of the two cars they were travelling in was stopped and impounded after being found to have no insurance.

Amongst their possessions were copies of a letter they had written to the Queen and David Cameron explaining their actions. It stated: “We love death more than you love life ... What we did today was a direct retaliation of your insulting of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) & also in retaliation of your crusade against Islam/Muslims on a global scale. It is of the greatest honour for us to do what we did.”

HOPE not hate wrote a blog condemning their actions and unequivocally called them terrorists. We also feared they would have unleashed violent retribution on the British Muslim community if they had been successful.

The blog was instantly attacked by some on the political left.

Sita Balani wrote an online article entitled: “Beyond ‘A Plague on both their houses’: The Bradford 12 and the liberal anti-fascism of HOPE not hate” in which compared the six Dewsbury plotters with the 12 men in Bradford who, in 1981, were arrested after being caught preparing petrol bombs ahead of a National Front march through their neighbourhood.”

## ‘Cry of rage’

The other attack came from the editor of *Socialist Worker*, Judith Orr, the organ of the Socialist Workers’ Party. She dismissed the blog as “despicable” and criticised us for demonising the six men as terrorists.

The headline of Orr’s article gave a clear indication of the approach she was taking: “We need more than brave individuals to beat the Nazis”.

“The men who went to Dewsbury with homemade bombs were a reaction to bigotry, not its cause,” she wrote. “The violence of an oppressor cannot be equated with the actions of those suffering oppression who lash out to fight back.”

To Orr, as the headline suggested, these men were simply wrong in their actions. “In reality individual acts of terror may represent a cry of rage but they do not take the struggle forward.

“They can actually damage the chances of building the sort of struggles needed to win, sapping confidence of ordinary people and allowing the state to increase repression.

“If you assassinate a Tory, blow up a banker or shoot a fascist it can cause a temporary crisis.

“But each will be replaced and the system remains intact.”

Sadly, many on the Left ignore extremism and hatred when it is not perpetrated by white racists. This at best undermines the moral case against right-wing extremism and at worst leaves a vacuum for racists and Islamophobes to exploit by presenting themselves as the defenders of minority rights.

Why is there no condemnation when a Muslim cleric calls for gay people to be killed or espouses holocaust denial? How can we sit by in silence when a death sentence is put on a person who decides that he or she no longer wants to be a Muslim?

Earlier this year the communications watchdog, Ofcom, made a series of rulings against Islamic channels which had allowed “inflammatory” material to be broadcast in breach of rules which forbid extreme opinions gaining a platform on British television.

Among the examples found was an Islamic scholar who told viewers: “It is your duty ... to kill those who insult Prophet Mohammed.” Then there was a preacher banned from coming to Britain who used the channel – which he co-owns – to say anyone who left Islam should be put to death and a phone-in presenter who advocated “eliminating” anyone who disrespected Mohammed.

In December 2012, a Leeds radio station was fined £4,000 for breaching broadcasting rules in programmes involving a presenter called “Sister Ruby Ramadan”. She told listeners that homosexuals should be beaten and tortured.

There was hardly a murmur from institutions that claim to campaign against racism.

## Opressor v Oppressed

There are three common arguments used to explain a failure to criticise non-white extremists. The first is the need to understand the racial power politics of British society and capitalism and the right of the oppressed to fight back against the oppressor.

In a follow-up article, published after the six men were convicted, *Socialist Worker* wrote: “Some have said that the actions of the Dewsbury men are equivalent to the violence of the fascists.

“This argument says that there are extremists on both sides and that socialists should oppose both equally.

“But this ignores racism and oppression.

“The plan to attack the EDL was a reaction to discrimination. It is not equal to the violence of the state, or of racists or fascists who attack people because of their race or religion. It was an act of despair against racist thugs.”

While of course it is important to recognise the racism minority communities have suffered in the UK this should not give them a free pass to hate others.

Another argument used is that by criticising non-white extremists, particularly Islamist extremists, we are playing into the hands of Islamophobes.

### A plague on both your houses (continued)

While of course one has to be careful not to give ammunition to those who stoke up anti-Muslim hatred for religious or racial reasons, this should not be an excuse to ignore some forms of hatred. In fact, it is our failure to speak out and condemn which leaves the vacuum for the white racists to exploit.

Finally, there is also the argument that these extreme Islamist groups are small and not representative of the wider Muslim communities and so it is inappropriate to give them too much attention.

This might be a legitimate argument if it were not that some of the groups who argue this then protest and oppose even smaller and more irrelevant groups on the far right.

The size of the group should also not be the determining factor. The National Front number less than 100 activists but that does not stop the UAF calling protests every time they do something publicly.

Anjem Choudary's group might only number a few hundred strong but garners much media attention and there have been dozens people, convicted of terrorism, who have been linked to him.

Indeed, it has been the actions of his group that gave rise to the EDL in the first place, and they benefited hugely from the burning of poppies by Muslim Against Crusades in 2010 and the murder of Lee Rigby.

### Foreign policy

The failure of some of the left to criticise the Dewsbury bombers is just the latest example of an inability to criticise Islamist extremists. Lindsey German, from the Stop the War Coalition, claimed that Mohamed Merah, an Islamist gunman who killed seven people in Toulouse in March 2012, was "the terrible and disastrous outcome of the West's war policies and anti-Muslim racism."

Not a word about the extreme Islamist ideology which turned resentment into murderous action. Not a word about how his visits to Al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan might have influenced his mindset. More importantly, German offered no explanation of why, if Mohamed Merah was fuelled by the West's oppression in Iraq and Afghanistan, he decided to shoot Jewish schoolchildren.

Trying to determine who is the oppressor and who is the oppressed is not as clear cut as some would believe. If a Muslim is driven to acts of violence because of oppression and racism then what of the oppression of those he or she targets?

What about the rights of women, gay people, Jews and even those who have turned away from Islam? Surely, just because someone is a victim of racism and oppression they do not have the right to oppress, target and potentially kill others.

And who decides who is the oppressed and the oppressor?

Likewise, with Woolwich, some groups on the left paid pitiful lip

service to the dead soldier but nowhere did they investigate or condemn the ideology which appears to have driven the act.

Contrast that with David Copeland, the London nail-bomber, who killed three people and injured 200 others in 1999. The people who now ignore the political ideology of the Dewsbury Six, the Toulouse killer or the Woolwich murderers were quick to label Copeland as simply a 'fascist'. No need to explain or understand his actions. The same with Anders Breivik.

Sita Balani compares the Dewsbury Six to the Bradford 12. Judith Orr calls them "brave" but misguided.

Both are totally and completely wrong. The Bradford 12 were young secular Asians defending their own community against a provocative fascist march. It was a defensive action designed to stop a fascist incursion. The Dewsbury Six was about people driven by an extremist Islamist ideology who were prepared to go and kill for their extremist beliefs.

Three of the six had read the terrorist online magazine *Inspire*, which is connected to Anwar al-Awlaki, the former spiritual leader of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, who was killed in his Yemeni hideout by a US drone strike on 30 September, 2011.

One of them, Jewel Uddin, had a recording of a lecture on his mobile phone, in which the speaker said that it was right to wage war against the unbeliever. He had collected components for a pipe bomb after reading instructions in *Inspire*.

At the home of another, police found 859 examples of extremist literature, including some urging people to fight abroad.

A third had already served a prison sentence after being convicted of possession of terrorist material from the internet. A fourth is the brother of Ishaq Hussain, who was sentenced to 40 months imprisonment in April for his part in a bomb plot that police considered to be more deadly than 7/7.

These are not brave men driven to violence by racism. These are extremists who sought to carry out terrorism for an ideology that all progressive people should oppose.

Hate is hate, pure and simple. Whether it is the BNP blaming all immigrants for the ills of society or a Muslim cleric calling homosexuality a crime punishable by death, hate is wrong and it should be opposed.

How can we say we defend women's rights when we ignore those who want to subjugate women? How can we say we defend gay rights when we fail to speak out against those who call for gays to be killed? How can we say we believe in freedom when we deliberately ignore those who call for people who have renounced their religion to be hunted down and killed?

Turning a blind eye to some forms of hatred or excusing it because it does not fit our world view is deplorable. Worse still, by remaining silent we are letting down the victims of this hatred.

We should be bold enough to say to the extreme Islamists and the racists: 'A plague on both your houses'.

# The Covenant of Security

The extent and extremist nature of the al-Muhajiroun network has understandably led many to ask how and why Britain has become the base for an international Islamists organisation. One answer is that Islamic extremists have operated in Britain under a “covenant of security”. British security officials allowed Islamists to freely preach homophobia, antisemitism and subversion abroad as long as they refrained from terrorism in Britain. In the words of Omar Bakri:

“When a Muslim enters a non-Muslim country with a covenant of security, he/she has agreed not to violate the sanctity of the other party (i.e. the government or ruler), and that they will not violate yours. The government however represents all of the other people and so the covenant is applicable to all the people, and so you cannot kill or steal from anybody in that country, while you are under covenant.”

Sayful Islam, leader of al-Muhajiroun in Luton, also explained the covenant by saying

“it is against Islam for me to engage personally in acts of terrorism in the UK because I live here. According to Islam, I have a covenant of security with the UK, as long as they allow us Muslims to live here in peace. [...] If we want to engage in terrorism, we would have to leave the country. It is against Islam to do otherwise.”

However, the covenant has not been by any means one-sided. It is widely accepted that the British intelligence agencies were happy to allow a degree of freedom and tolerance in exchange for domestic abstention by the terrorists. It is known that radical preachers such as Abu Hamza were in close and regular contact with the security services and there have been many allegations about Omar Bakri’s own contacts with the authorities.

The result of such a tactic was that London became a hotbed of extremism and an international centre for terrorist activity. Judge Garzon in Spain has claimed that every major al-Qaeda attack, including 9/11, could in some way be traced back to Britain. It is thus understandable that Britain’s policy baffled and infuriated foreign governments and security services.

Chief among the angered foreign authorities were the French. They were outraged by the freedom being shown to a group of extremists based in London who were militants of the Algerian Groupe Islamique Arme (GIA). Finsbury Park Mosque was their home and the location from which they published their newsletter *al-Ansar*, which was edited at different times by Abu Hamza and Abu Qatada. The French authorities felt it should be shut down but the British continually refused to do so.

It would later come to light that Rachid Ramda, an Algerian who had moved to the UK in 1992, assembled and funded a group of GIA activists, including Khaled Kelkal, who later carried out the 1995 Métro and RER bombings in Paris that killed eight and injured hundreds. In 1994 French detectives had discovered the telephone and fax numbers of London addresses of suspected terrorists, including Ramda’s, and

passed them on to the British security services. Following the bomb attacks in France their authorities were outraged at Britain’s lack of action and claimed that had MI5 acted on the information the bombings could have been averted.

Despite the attack British authorities still refused to move and it would take over a decade before Ramda was extradited back to France where he was later sentenced to 10 years in prison.



Anjem Choudary claims to have an agreement with the British authorities

Britain’s covenant of security led to the French security services hatching alternative plans. In the run up to the 1998 Football World Cup in France, the French authorities had serious concerns about possible terrorist attacks designed to disrupt the games. Angered by the inaction of Special Branch and MI5 in the UK, there was serious talk of taking matters into their own hands. One plot that has previously come to light was a plan to kidnap Abu Hamza as he left his house in West London. He would be nabbed on the street, forced into the back of a van and then driven to Dover and snuck onto a French ferry. It is also known that a team of assassins from Draco, a DGSE unit was considering taking out senior terrorists.

However, one plot hatched by French intelligence that has, until now, not previously come to light, was the idea of assassinating Abu Hamza in London. The plan was to impersonate the British nazi group Combat 18 and then allow them to take the blame. In the immediate aftermath of the London nailbombings, the French considered sending death threats in the style of C18 and then killing him with the same type of weaponry that the group was thought to possess. However, as with the kidnap plan, the assassination attempt was aborted and it is unclear how advanced the planning of either idea progressed.

The covenant no doubt helped foster terrorism abroad and once Omar Bakri declared it at an end in late 2004, the 7/7 bombings followed swiftly. How alive the covenant is in Britain today remains unclear with Anjem Choudary and Abu Izzadeen still referencing it as a defense when charged with fostering terrorism in the UK. However, given the number of UK terror plots linked to al-Muhajiroun, this is probably just their leaders attempting to distancing themselves from any political or legal fallout from these plots.

Whatever the truth, the legacy of the covenant can still be felt today, and it is in the fertile environment of a tolerant Britain that Omar Bakri and Anjem Choudary have grown their international network.



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