



International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence

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News: UK Shadow Minister calls for ban on Hizb ut Tahrir

Speaking at an ICSR event on 25 March, Crispin Blunt MP, Conservative Shadow Minister for Counterterrorism, announced that his party would ban the UK branch of the international Islamist organisation Hizb ut Tahrir, whose goal is the establishment of an Islamic state.

“It is simply not acceptable for the British version of Hizb ut Tahrir to stay just one side of the law whilst their international partners openly promote violence”, he said.

Blunt also called for clarity on the “rules of democratic engagement” and stated that “too often public money has been channelled to organisations which... by promoting separatism through multiculturalism end up exacerbating tensions between minorities and the state.”

He called on the Muslim Council of Britain to disavow Dawud Abdullah, the organisation’s deputy general secretary, who signed the Istanbul Declaration – which raised the prospect of attacks on the Royal Navy were they to take part in a blockade to keep arms out of Gaza – or, preferably, for Mr Abdullah to disavow the Declaration.

Blunt was speaking on a panel at a conference on Political Islam and Public Policy, hosted by ICSR at King’s College London, along with the Institute of Public Policy Research, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and the German Embassy.

The event is likely to have been the most important discussion of these issues in the run-up to the UK general election on 6 May. Other speakers included HE Georg Boomgaarden (German Ambassador), Prof Herta Däubler-Gmelin (former Secretary of Justice, Germany), Baroness Kishwer Falkner (Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for foreign and home affairs), Maajid Nawaz (Director, Quilliam Foundation), Ruprecht Polenz (Christian Democrat MP, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, German Bundestag), Anas Altikriti (CEO of the Cordoba Foundation) and Martin Bright (political editor of the Jewish Chronicle).

Analysis: Real IRA bombing offers ideological challenge to Sinn Fein

By Dr John Bew

The Real IRA bomb which exploded near MI5 headquarters on the outskirts of Holywood, County Down on 12 April, was designed to coincide with the moment policing and justice powers were devolved to Northern Ireland’s local power-sharing government. It is likely to raise questions about long-term effects of the devolution of policing and justice powers and the capacity of the Police Service of

Northern Ireland to handle what seems to be a growing threat.

The timing of this latest act confirms that the dissident republicans retain an acute sense of political timing. There has been a steady continuation of attempted bombings and shootings for a number of months in Northern Ireland, but this is arguably the most headline-grabbing act by the Real IRA since the murder of two British soldiers in Northern Ireland in March 2009. There are fears that the frequency and scale of attacks is likely to increase further in the run-up to the UK general election on 6 May.

For dissident republicans, the opening of a new MI5 base in County Down in 2007 is evidence that the British state is actually strengthening its position in Northern Ireland with a long-term intention to maintain a presence on Irish shores. This is a direct challenge to the Sinn Fein narrative, which holds that the peace process is a building block in the slow march to a united Ireland.

The Real IRA are speaking directly to an Irish republican audience, saying that they are the only organisation really still committed to forcing the British out of Ireland and that Sinn Fein's transitional approach to a united Ireland has failed, twelve years on from the Good Friday Agreement.

It would be extremely difficult for the Real IRA or other dissident groups to bring Northern Ireland back to the cycle of sectarian violence which characterised the conflict in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. But it is clear that they do retain a capacity for a spectacular and deadly attack.

An extended version of this assessment – along with other analysis and commentary – can be found on ICSR's blog Free Radicals: www.icsr.info/blog.

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[Forthcoming event: The Moscow bombings – causes and consequences](#)

Terrorism returned to Moscow on 19 March, with suicide bombings that killed 40 people. What's the story behind the attacks, and how are recent events connected with the ongoing insurgency in the Caucasus? Dr Cerwyn Moore of the University of Birmingham will be ICSR's next guest speaker, addressing "The Return of Suicide Attacks to Russia: Understanding the Insurgency in the North Caucasus." The seminar will take place at King's College London on 28 April, 4.30pm.

[Forthcoming publications: Islam4UK – the group behind the ban](#)

In January, the UK Home Secretary banned the Islamist group Islam4UK. But who are Islam4UK? What do they want, and how will the ban impact its activities? As part of the ICSR paper series, Catherine Zara Raymond examines Islam4UK and its membership and discusses the government's attitude towards the organisation. The report is based on new interviews with leading figures in the group, including its leader Anjem Choudary.

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