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Community Policing within a Counter-Terrorism Context: Understanding Police and Community Engagement

Introduction

In relation to ordinary, everyday, crime, community policing has raised many questions about whether it is a philosophy, a model of practice, an organisational strategy, a de-centralised approach to problem-solving or a combination of these, there being no clear agreement on its meaning (Chavez, 2012). Community policing in relation to counter-terrorism has also generated substantial research and policy interest, with emotive and politicised reverberations often underpinning the debates. Normative assumptions around how to create a more secure society influence the ways in which community policing, and community-based approaches more generally, have been conceptualised, critiqued and researched in relation to countering terrorism.

In Britain, a pioneer of community policing for counter-terrorism has been Dr Robert Lambert who, after 9/11, created the Muslim Contact Unit (MCU). This is a small counter-terrorism unit with the London Metropolitan Police Service which drew upon community policing principles in its more overt approach to counter-terrorism. Dr Lambert was a former undercover police officer who had directly experienced the damage that infiltration and spying can sometimes do, both on communities and on the police officers who undertake this work. Dr Lambert has therefore been keen to create a new way of dealing with terrorism, one that is more open and accountable to communities. The work of the MCU has been controversial, but not because of the

community policing model at the heart of its approach. Rather, the MCU has been controversial for approaching Salafi and Islamist communities as partners and not suspects even though, within government and some policy circles, these groups are often perceived as potentially dangerous radicals (Lambert, 2011).

Another key figure in this area is Professor Martin Innes, who has been a significant advocate for the role of Neighbourhood Policing (a model of community policing) in relation to counter-terrorism, which underpins the Prevent agenda in Britain. Professor Innes' work has often been sponsored by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), which has been a strong supporter and instigator of the Prevent agenda. Other key authors in this debate include Professor Deborah Ramirez, Wayne Hanniman, Dr Dan Silk, Dr Basia Spalek, Dr Laura Zahra McDonald and Dr Salwa El-Awa. For these individuals, community policing has predominantly been viewed as a way of building bridges between securitised and ostracised Muslim communities and non-Muslim communities in Britain, the US and in Canada, as well as offering the potential to develop new and radical ways of approaching counter-terrorism, an arena that has traditionally been characterised by secrecy and by human rights abuses. Another key author to highlight here is Arun Kundnani who, in 2009, wrote *Spooked, How Not to Prevent Violent Extremism*. This report accused the Prevent agenda in Britain of being a government-legitimated spying on Muslim communities, and of alienating Muslim communities rather than convincing them of the need for their engagement in responding to terrorism.

This chapter explores the work referred to above more closely, in order to highlight some of the key claims made by the authors, and to examine the main points of contestation. It also draws upon empirical data, collected by the author and her team between 2007 and 2012, in relation to Muslim community and police officer experiences of police–community relations. In analyses of policing generally, and in the literature that has focussed on examining police–community relations, the complexity of the dynamics between police and communities is often missing. In the sociological and criminological literature on policing, it is often assumed that there is tension between police and communities, particularly for those communities who have historically had difficult relationships with police. Nonetheless, within

any conflict, important alliances can be built between individuals who may occupy different sides or positions in relation to the ongoing struggle. In the peace-building and conflict-resolution research material, which is based predominantly on post-conflict societies and/or societies in transition, there is little in-depth understanding of police and community relations; policing is examined and attention often tends to be drawn to organisational changes taking place within police services rather than any actual experiences of the interactions between police officers and community members. Trying to understand something as complex, fluid and dynamic as police and community engagement is deeply problematic, for the data that I and my research team have been gathering indicates vastly differing experiences and perceptions of police and community engagement. Trying to link these different narratives together to present a coherent framework of analysis is perhaps impossible. This is an important point, given that due to the politicised arena of counter-terrorism policing, dominant elites often decide on a particular set of policies and practices and then fit research and empirical data around these in order to validate their particular approaches and rationales. The data presented in this chapter has not been tampered with in order to promote a particular philosophy, ideology or political standpoint. The fragments of data presented are real-world, human experiences, and as such are invaluable to our understanding of community policing in relation to counter-terrorism.

Community policing and counter-terrorism: Some key debates

The work of Professor Martin Innes (2006; 2007; 2011) has been especially influential upon policing within a counter-terrorism context. For Innes, counter-terrorism policing is about harnessing the potential of Neighbourhood Police officer teams who have ongoing engagement with local communities, and who respond to the crime-fighting needs of local communities (Innes et al., 2007). Neighbourhood policing is one of the most significant models of policing to be implemented in Britain in recent years. It is about areas having local police teams that can most effectively respond to community needs as a result of their presence and relationships with community members. Innes

(2006) has argued that under the neighbourhood policing model, which contains elements of community-based policing, in responding to individuals' routine security concerns around issues such as anti-social behaviour or crime police officers will be more likely to persuade community members of the benefits of assisting them. Neighbourhood policing has been explicitly linked to counter-terrorism activities in that it is argued that 'neighbourhood policing is a process that can be harnessed to establish the presence of any suspicions about potential terrorist activities' (Innes, 2006: 14). Moreover, it is argued that the indicators for suspecting terror activities may be subtle and not all known to any one person. Therefore, neighbourhood policing should be well placed to handle the diffuse information coming from different individuals, due to the beneficial 'weak community ties' developed between police and community members through such a policing model (Innes, 2006: 14). Localism appears to be a key theme that underpins much of Innes' work in relation to counter-terrorism policing. In line with this, Innes and his research colleagues use a situational model of violent radicalisation. They argue that 'a degree of situational configuration to respond to local circumstances is both necessary and desirable' (Innes et al., 2011: 9) and that, moreover, inhibiting the onset of radicalisation requires targeted local interventions for the factors in radicalisation itself are often local issues (Innes et al., 2011). This localised approach resonates with the review of the Prevent Strategy 2011, in which it is acknowledged that the Government is committed to a fundamental shift of power away from central government to communities, families and individuals, through Big Society. However, Innes' almost exclusive focus upon local dynamics and local grievances may be problematic in that it does not sufficiently take into consideration global factors, and thus represents a de-politicisation of the issues at stake. Local grievances, local factors, may have their roots in international dynamics, in geo-political power plays involving nation-states. Innes' approach potentially places police officers within an overly narrow lens, an overly naive position that can perhaps put police-community relations under greater strain.

Another key theme within the work of Innes is that of police officers working with communities to respond not only to their concerns about crime, but also to adopt a 'hearts and minds' approach that attempts to influence people's attitudes and beliefs so that they are less likely to support (tacitly

or explicitly) 'either the means or ends of those groups espousing the use of violence' (Innes et al., 2007:13). This theme draws upon the field of terrorism studies, in that some discussion features here of the role of community in endorsing or supporting terrorism. Crenshaw (1981) has, for example, argued that whilst there may be a lack of popular support at the start of any conflict, terrorists can mobilise widespread support, and public allegiance, during the course of the conflict. For Anderson (2011), it is important to consider violence in relation to how it is committed for or in the name of communities – at local, national and transnational levels – as popular support is necessary for social change. The position taken by the West Midlands Police Authority in relation to Al Qaeda (AQ) linked or influenced terrorism and Muslim communities also reflects this:

Beyond the small core of active or potentially active extremists, and the members of the radical political movements that surround them, there appears to be a much larger group of British Muslims who are morally ambivalent and who are unwilling explicitly to condemn the violent extremists. Polls carried out by a number of respected survey organisations indicate that this figure may be between 10 and 20 per cent of the total Muslim population in Britain. (WMPA, 2008: 9)

Post 9/11, with the counter-terrorism focus being almost exclusively upon AQ-linked or influenced terrorism, the general literature in terrorism studies on passive or active support of communities for terrorism has perhaps too easily been applied almost exclusively to Muslim communities. This has created a situation whereby minority Muslim communities in the West, their identities, allegiances, support for the use of violence and so forth, have been almost exclusively the focus of policy and research interest, above all other communities. This narrow focus, the passive or active support of Muslim communities in relation to terrorism, and moreover, police interest in the 'hearts and minds' of Muslims, is problematic from a number of perspectives. The focus on active or passive support for terrorism amongst Muslims often fails to consider the wider social and political factors that underpin any such support. Schmid (2007) has argued that social factors like poverty or disenfranchisement can play a role in community support for terrorism. A study by Ray et al. (2004), examining the motivations behind offenders of race-hate crimes, found that the economic context was crucial because the offenders

lived in segregated communities in areas of high unemployment. Industries that had previously employed their parents and grandparents had collapsed. This research would suggest that it is important to consider the wider social and economic factors behind violence and terrorism, especially when considering late modernity and the social and economic processes that have led to increasing separation and exclusion, creating a world of uncertainty and risk (Young, 1999). The 'hearts and minds' strategy, as advocated by Innes, therefore potentially focuses attention almost exclusively on support for violence within communities, without taking into consideration broader social and economic factors underpinning that support. At the same time, within the post 9/11 context the focus has been almost exclusively upon Muslim communities, which is problematic for a number of reasons. Much of the Muslim world is governed by non-legitimate elites, as the Arab Spring has clearly illustrated. The role of Western governments in helping to maintain these elites when pursuing their own 'national interests' of course will create grievances within Muslim communities in the West, who seek greater social justice for peoples of the Middle East and Asia. The danger with the exclusive focus on the 'hearts and minds' of Muslim communities is that these communities become pathologised and seen as problematic, without due consideration of wider global politics. As previously argued, a new dichotomy has been created, in which Muslims are subject to categorisation into 'moderates' and 'radicals', with theological and political beliefs or 'values', and their related grievances deemed either legitimate or not (Spalek and McDonald, 2010). Any groups deemed 'radical' are, if not constructed as potential violent actors, categorised as creating an environment in which terrorist activity may be inspired or flourish. Labels such as 'Salafi' and 'Islamist' – applied to a wide range of non-violent Muslim organisations and individuals – have been used to conflate a wide range of theological and political positions not only inaccurately with each other, but with AQ-type philosophy and violence. This has the potential to alienate and disenfranchise large sections of Muslim communities, who will share a sense of exclusion through reductionist interpretations of complex identities and allegiances (Spalek and McDonald, 2010). Interestingly, during the trial of Anders Breivik, responsible for the killing of 77 people on 22 July 2011 in Norway, there was some media discussion about the extent to which Breivik's ideology features in mainstream society – the attacks on

multiculturalism, the fear of difference, racism and so forth (Moore, 2012). It is therefore unsurprising that Muslim communities have felt themselves to be unfairly scrutinised, when extreme views are present within all communities and across all society. Work by Spalek, El-Awa and McDonald (2009) illustrates how local initiatives aimed at countering terrorism can embrace Islamic religious beliefs and practices. Religion can be used directly in terror-prevention strategies to pull those deemed at risk away from vulnerability. At the same time religion can be a motivating factor for communities to partner the state in countering terrorism. Therefore, it is important that Islam itself and Muslim identities and theological positionalities are not problematised.

This discussion illustrates the complex terrain for counter-terrorism policing when pursuing a 'hearts and minds' approach and raises the question whether counter-terrorism policing should take this approach, since there is the danger that it targets ideology rather than violence. Another danger with the almost exclusive focus on Muslim communities is that political positions on Palestine, Afghanistan and so forth, and theological positions in relation to issues such as Sharia, can be the target of policing, in addition to the policing of violence. This raises the question of whether this should be the role of policing, especially when considering the roots of community policing under Robert Peel, who argued that the public are the police and the police are the public. Within the Prevent Review strategy 2011 there is an increased focus on extremism rather than violent extremism, and so there are real dangers involved here for the police in terms of the potential to go beyond the remit of policing into the more ill-defined and diffuse realms of 'extremism'. If thinking about the role of policing as one of persuasion in relation to ideology, is this not the traditional focus of the secret services rather than police agencies? Could this potentially damage police and community relations, particularly amongst those communities most targeted by 'hearts and minds' strategies?

There is also significant attention in the work of Innes to the issue of police-community engagement in relation to counter-terrorism. For Innes (2006), strategic engagement is about soft power, about police officers using engagement strategically for two key purposes: to counter rumours within communities, and also as an intelligence feed for the police. The theme of countering rumours has emerged from the data that my research team and I have collected, with police officers talking about the importance of being

aware of any misinformation that may be circulating within communities and being able to robustly challenge this:

There's a bit of urban myth around it as well, you know, some people get stopped and, you know, word will get round the community that, you know, their copy of the Koran was manhandled and a dog trampled all over their suitcase and, you know, none of which is necessarily true, but it's ... it shows the potential for those incidents to get ... to cause a lot of grievances and misreporting and misinformation within the communities.

Innes et al. (2007: 13) refer to an 'eyes and ears' strategy which is intended to persuade citizens to act as intelligence assets for the authorities. Interestingly, Innes does not raise the issue of the historical tensions between police and minority communities, treating citizens as though they are divorced from their individual and group identities in relation to 'race'/ethnicity, gender, faith, sexual orientation and so forth.

The representation of minority groups within the police service has been a serious issue, with the under-representation of minority ethnic and Muslim communities within the police in particular raising concerns (Rowe, 2004); yet for Innes et al. (2007) all citizens appear the same. Some of the police officers that we interviewed have indicated the real value of having Muslim or minority ethnic police officers involved in counter-terrorism work. For example, the following quotation from a counter-terrorism officer emphasises the importance of police services employing Muslims and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) officers more generally, especially in a context where trust placed in the police by minority ethnic communities may be low:

it's about cultural understanding and it's also about recognising where the police service is in relation to the minority communities ... if you can look at every major poll the number, the level of trust and confidence within the BME communities is lower than the trust and confidence in the white community. So it's about actually having Muslim officers who understand the community, the community are going to trust and have confidence in.

The same police officer also observes that Muslim and BME officers can effectively build relationships with those communities:

The officers have a role in improving relationships with the community ... and it's just simple things, you know. If you end up with a, having a Muslim

officer, a BME officer who can stand up after a police operation to explain what's happened and it will send out a very, very positive message to the community. Whereas at the moment invariably you have er, with the lack of Muslims within counter terrorism command, very low, very low numbers, 1 or 2%, if you have a an operation then you will have no Muslims virtually within the operation and if you do they have a very, very peripheral role, and then in addition to that you then have the whole of the operation, the media, the follow up, the community reassurance, being done by white officers who ...

The following quotation is from a counter-terrorism police officer who worked within the MCU, who argues that, as the remit of the police unit was to approach Muslim communities, it was important for the unit to employ Muslim police officers:

... part of developing the Muslim Contact Unit approach, we are approaching Muslim communities, we were quite clearly, you know, we weren't approaching other communities and Muslim police officers that had great integrity in local communities were obviously a great asset.

When Innes writes about strategic engagement between police officers and community members, an issue that he leaves out is that of the difference between superficial and real engagement. From the interviews that we conducted, it seems that what community members value is 'real engagement', and they are much less enthusiastic about superficial engagement. The following is a quotation from a Muslim man who explains that there are good and bad examples of police and community engagement:

Muslim relations with the police are very much in many cases, depending on which area, they vary from good, very good to bad, to extremely bad ... and it depends on the level of expertise. So for instance with the Met and the MCU X has developed a really good example of how things can work. With Y it's an example of how things can not work where you superficially engage, below the surface nobody trusts anybody, and below the surface nobody is willing to cooperate, and below the surface the problems are getting worse and worse ... it's just a rubber stamp for the police in many areas. So there's no hope left. And eventually these young youth get so disaffected they just go off onto themselves, and then we hear about extremist actions being taken and we say why, you know?

The following is a quotation from a Muslim woman speaking about communities looking for answers from the police but often not getting, in her opinion, satisfactory responses:

After 7/7 for example is, you know, you would have community meetings, you'd have men and women come, they can ask questions to the Imam or even police representatives were there, so they can kind of ask the questions freely and I think often, from what I recall, some of the questions that were asked to the police were not answered, they did not receive satisfactory answers back from the police, because it felt like okay, we're asking you a question but you're not actually listening to what the real question is. You know, they regurgitate a certain answer that has been written up by lawyers and things like that.

This same Muslim woman speaks about communities seeking sincerity from the police:

Whereas what the community is looking for is sincere empathy maybe for the situation that the Muslim community is in and proof, some sort of proof to show that you are not, not ... if one feels like as if, or a lot of Muslims I think, feel like as if there's an attitude of stigmatising the Muslims and, you know, as a whole community and persecuted because, you know, obviously the increase in certain stop and search has increased, the amount of violence against Muslim women with their scarves, and their scarves have been pulled off and things like that, obviously increased so there was not enough done at police level and at the level of the authorities who had responsibility to make sure there was no backlash and things against the Muslims. There wasn't enough of that done to reassure, support and reassure the community that there was that support from the police.

This woman clearly stresses the violence that has been committed against Muslim women and her opinion that there has not been enough done to provide Muslims with the reassurance they need to be able to feel safe from hate crime.

The following quotation is from an interview with a male Muslim community member, who suggests that 'easy engagement', whereby community members agree with police approaches and do not really question these, is what police often look for:

The police actually didn't also want to really have difficult times in these meetings. They actually wanted to have people that they might you know

shout and scream but at the end of the day would go along with them because they sort of, you know, they ... it's, it's what they want is not to represent the community and challenge the police, what they want is to be represented across the community. And that was very clear and the police knew that. Very well. And I don't think it's just with the Muslim community. I've seen it being played out in the black community and so forth. Police have always chosen that avenue rather than facing real challenges.

At a workshop that I organised in Washington DC in June 2011, involving Muslim community members, police officers and researchers, a key theme that emerged from discussions around police and community engagement was that often there has been no engagement, where engagement is viewed as being about the overcoming of differences. At the same time, individuals spoke about how many Muslims have been treated as though they owe something to their host country, when many are second or third or later generation American. It was also stressed that whilst young Muslims may feel that they are being asked for their opinions, their ideas are being dismissed. Again, this highlights the importance of differentiating between real and superficial engagement.

In a later report, Innes et al. (2011) are concerned that whilst some mosques have been dealing with extremism, they have been doing so largely on their own, without involving the police. Moreover, in these cases the police are often not made aware of community interventions through the community contacts that they have. However, as highlighted in the previous chapter, it may be the case that for community members to act credibly with their key audiences it is essential for them to act independently, and this may mean independence from the police. This of course is a controversial point, but it does raise the question of what this means at a grassroots level in the co-production of security? Does this mean that at times it will be essential for community members to act without the knowledge of the police? For Innes et al. (2011: 42–3), the co-production of security is 'when local groups utilise public security resources to achieve an impact on a problem that neither could produce by their own means alone'. As demonstrated in chapter two, co-production can actually mean community members delivering projects that police would like to deliver but are unable to due to their lack of credibility with communities. Therefore, co-production can mean community

members taking the lead in programme implementation and delivery. It can also involve community members seeking unofficial, informal, advice from the police, as the following quotation from a police officer demonstrates:

I went down to speak to the chairman of the mosque. I sat with him for an hour and a half. He knew who I was and why I was there and I could have been there a lot longer, to be honest, if I didn't have another meeting ... he phoned me up saying, 'We've got some issues. Could you possibly not officially deal with them but could you just give us some advice and come in and sort this out for us?' And that just took one meeting. I've only met him once.

Co-production can also involve partnership, an issue that Innes tends to overlook. Partnership in counter-terrorism has been promoted by Dr Robert Lambert, an ex counter-terrorism police officer who has written extensively about partnership approaches between police and communities and who set up the MCU.

Lambert (2008; 2010; 2011) has provided an 'insider account' of the work he engaged in with the MCU, reflecting on his practice-based experience. Lambert (2011) conceptualises the MCU as adopting a partnership approach, a partnership between a counter-terrorism policing unit and members of Muslim communities in London. The importance of understanding the local context to violent radicalisation is a theme that underpins the work of Lambert (2010) and indeed that of Baker (2010), both of whom write about the significance of locales for identifying specific vulnerabilities. Lambert (2010) focuses on examining two main case studies of partnership between police and communities at two mosques in London which experienced AQ-linked extremism during the 1990s – Brixton and Finsbury Park mosques. Lambert is keen to distinguish the partnership approach of the MCU from the informant-based culture traditionally operating in policing. Indeed, the following is a quotation from a Muslim community member who we interviewed, speaking about the distress created by the utilisation of an informant-based approach by police:

IV:...one of our members was actually approached by MI6 and asked to co-operate as an informer and that was our very own committee members, so if they are approaching our bodies, you know ... it means that we may well be a suspect, because they have chosen us to try and recruit us. But we as a whole don't want to be considered as spies for the authorities, we want to retain an

independence from authority and show respect to them and we hope that we receive respect back.

Partnership is perhaps aptly conceptualised as ‘equality, transparency and legitimate cooperation between partners, which may involve participants with different interests forming a partnership to carry out work that they collectively decide to do’ (Spalek et al., 2009: 33). Partnership is challenging for police services, for police can have a tendency to control and manage partnerships. Moreover, in any partnership approach, it is likely that different partners will have different priorities and how these divergent sets of experiences and needs come together is a fascinating topic in itself. As a former practitioner, for Lambert (2011) it is important to develop an effective counter-terrorism policy, which means a policy that does not alienate the communities from which terrorists seek support and recruits. This is also stressed in academic literature (Schmid, 2004). For Lambert (2011), partnership offers such an approach:

... although informants were an important source of terrorist intelligence – just as they were for criminal intelligence – our experience suggested that community leaders and representatives were more likely to cooperate with police if they were treated as partners and not as informants. To be an informant, in our experience, was to risk losing credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness in the communities to which they belonged. In contrast, in our experience, that credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness could be safeguarded if community leaders or representatives engaged with police in a wholly transparent manner. (Lambert, 2011: 60)

For Lambert (2011), the notion of partnership is best understood according to three stages: approach, engagement and consolidation. Approach is the term used to cover initial meetings between MCU officers and community representatives at which the prospect of partnership was discussed. Lambert (2011) makes a clear distinction between the use of this term in relation to MCU, and the use of the term ‘approach’ more generally in policing. This is because ‘approach’ is often used in policing as the term to describe the procedures surrounding a first approach between an officer and a potential informant. For Lambert (2011), engagement is the period that follows an approach when the police and community partners engage together in a joint project. This is also about having productive dialogue without necessarily having

productive partnership. Consolidation describes the period when police and community partners reflect on the work they have done together and look towards learning lessons from each other (Lambert, 2011). This approach has been coined 'Lambertism' within policy circles and has been both supported and criticised. Criticism comes from the fact that the MCU partnered with Salafi and Islamist community members in London, which have often been viewed as potential dangerous 'radicals' within security and other circles. For Lambert (2011), it is the very fact that these people have strong and consistent standpoints on theological and political issues that provides them with the necessary credibility, legitimacy and skills to influence individuals at risk of AQ propaganda towards non-violence. Thus:

Of course, I do not seek to argue that many of the Muslim Londoners I worked with to counter al-Qaeda influence are not fierce opponents of Israel's policy towards Palestine. On the contrary it is part of my case that their credible opposition to Israel's Palestinian policy at times played a key role in countering al-Qaeda influence in local communities in Britain. (Lambert, 2011: 33)

For Lambert (2011), effective counter-terrorism policing must involve building trust and partnerships with key community members – connectors as identified in research by Spalek and McDonald (2011) – because AQ propagandists and recruiters are also in the business of building trust and nurturing networks within the same communities. Thus, 'the MCU identified sections of Muslim youth in London who were the targets for AQ propagandists and embarked on trust-building with Muslim community partners who, as outreach workers, were able to access Muslim youth and work with them' (Lambert, 2011: 60). Being able to access young people is an issue that resonates deeply with the research that I and my team have conducted and with the empirical data that we have collected. There seems to be a real mistrust amongst young people towards police officers and so it is crucial for police to work with people from within communities – outreach workers as identified by Lambert (2011) – who can reach out to young people. The following is a quotation from a young Muslim woman interviewed by my team who spoke about young people's relationships with the police:

when it comes to the, okay the Muslim and the youth, I'd say, they have no respect for the police whatsoever. I notice that the people who are going in

partnership with the police are the elderly people and it's not filtering down to the younger people because they don't know what to do. You know, they kind of say, you must, I don't know, 50,000 was, there was a seminar for anti you know, anti violence, anti terrorism, we'll get someone to talk, they'll get an old sheikh who'll just rattle on a few, for the last few, ideas from the Koran, about peace. And you're going to get how many youths? You know, because they're not interested, it's the wrong approach. I think definitely groups like ours, the younger people, need to be involved and really need to work directly with the police ... actually getting down to the young people who are on the road. You know, young people who have just reverted and who are angry.

This woman stresses how young people do not have any respect for the police, are often not involved in partnerships with the police, and that young people do not necessary listen to their elders. The work by McDonald (2012) further highlights the importance of being able to access and to work with young people, for whom counter-terrorism policy has been felt most acutely. McDonald (2012) has argued that grassroots initiatives are succeeding in engaging young Muslims in order to empower and support them.

The issue of trust is a complex one and will be tackled in chapter four. What is so remarkable is that within a post 9/11 context of distrust and fear between police and Muslim communities, the MCU was able to build relationships with members of Muslim communities (Spalek, 2010). Other key researchers within the counter-terrorism policing arena include Spalek, El-Awa and McDonald (2009), Ramirez (2008), Silk (2009) and Hanniman (2008). In the US, Ramirez (2008) has been at the forefront of research, policy and practice in relation to building bridges between Arab Muslim communities and the police within a counter-terrorism context. Ramirez (2008) has argued that whereas counter-terrorism has traditionally relied on the analysis of domestic and friendly foreign government intelligence rather than the engagement of communities and the development of partnerships between communities and local law enforcement agencies, more recently, there has been a movement towards the utilisation of community policing within a counter-terrorism context, with partnerships being developed between police and Muslim, Arab, Sikh and South Asian American communities (Ramirez, 2008). Nonetheless, significant obstacles to community policing in relation to counter-terrorism in the US remain. For a number of years now, police departments in the

US have been accused of infiltrating mosques and of approaching Arab Muslim citizens as informants rather than as partners (see Chapter 4 for more details). Similarly, in Canada, there has been a movement towards the adoption of community policing within the remit of national security policing. Hanniman (2008), a police officer himself, argues that since 9/11 Canada's Muslim population has experienced increased scrutiny of their communities, alongside rising Islamophobia. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) put together a National Security Community Outreach Program (NSCOP) to establish positive relations with all Canadian communities, including Muslim Canadians, to increase understanding and trust between the public and police organisations and to ensure that all Canadians are treated equally and effectively protected. A number of community outreach initiatives have been undertaken by the RCMP in order to increase public understanding of the RCMP's role in national security and to create greater openness and transparency in the RCMP's work and procedures (Hanniman, 2008). Hanniman (2008) argues that adopting a community policing approach to national security can be problematic since community policing programmes can be used to exploit relationships in order to penetrate communities for the purposes of gathering criminal intelligence. Hanniman (2008) therefore stresses that gaining criminal intelligence through the RCMP's outreach programme was not the intent. Rather, the RCMP's community interactions were to identify problems, to find solutions and to provide communities with reassurance – intelligence was seen as a secondary issue.

The importance of a focus on relationship-building rather than on obtaining community intelligence is stressed in the work of Silk (2009), Spalek et al. (2009), Spalek, (2010) and Spalek and McDonald (2011). Relationship-building has to be undertaken within a very challenging context in which individuals are being stopped and searched and questioned, particularly at airports. State counter-terrorism approaches continue to rely heavily on the use of profiling and surveillance systems, so where police officers are beginning to build relationships with communities in local contexts their relationships are likely to be influenced by the policies and practices of the broader counter-terrorism arena. The following is a quotation from a young male Muslim who we interviewed in relation to his being stopped and questioned at an airport:

Obviously the anti terrorism legislation at the moment is of key importance ... about three or four months ago I came back to an airport, City Airport, and you know there was the anti-terror kind of police there and me and a friend of mine as soon as we kind of came through this 'can we see your passports', and they said 'can you wait over there, keep your luggage?' And then they said to me 'can you come into this room?'

The young man speaks about how he was questioned, during this stop at the airport, on matters that are political:

And then the first question that the guy asked me is 'what are your views on Hamas?' you know, me, I work in this kind of political things and that, so I thought you know, okay, I said 'well actually that's quite a political question that you just asked me. I've just got off a plane. And the first thing you're asking me is that, can I have some solicitors with me?' He said to me 'you're not entitled to a solicitor.'... his words were 'you have no rights, we have all the rights. You're not entitled to a solicitor, if you refuse to cooperate and answer our questions we can prosecute you because we're detaining you under ...' I think it was schedule 11 or something of the Terrorism Act.

He describes this approach as being 'heavy', especially as he had just got off from a flight from Prague:

And I thought, do you know what I mean, it's a bit heavy and a bit much when, you know, you've just got off a plane, you know, coming back from Prague and that's what I'm having to go through. And then it was two hours of interrogation of all kinds of questions, you know, what are my views on Al Qaeda? What do I think of suicide bombing? What do I think of British soldiers getting killed in, you know, Afghanistan and Iraq? ... I can imagine for lots of people that must be quite a terrifying experience. Do you know what I mean, you come off the plane and the next thing, and you know it's happened to lots of people that I know. It's not just a random list, it's lots of people.

Being stopped at the airport and being questioned in this way has obviously had a deep impact on this young man. Any community police officers wishing to build a relationship with him would need to understand his particular set of grievances.

The following is a quotation from a young Muslim woman talking about the strained relationship between herself and police:

the relationship from, in, in my, the way I see it is, is a relationship of hatred.

There's no respect and I must admit even me personally, I'd walk past and see a policeman, two plonkers, you know, because it's just the way, it's just the way you see things on a daily basis.

It appears that her relationship with the police is strained because she sees police officers harassing people and also because she herself has been followed by the police:

You see them harassing people. They've harassed me, you know, I've driven through Dulwich in a nice car, I had a cap on, it was early in the morning, was driving through, and they started following me, I think they thought I was a boy. Erm, because all they saw was a cap and they, and I was driving a BMW, going through. They followed me all the way to Brixton from Dulwich. So I stopped the car, they didn't put their lights or anything, they just followed me. I stopped the car, one of them came round, Miss X? I said yes. Oh, okay, we were just checking. I said checking what? Er, we were just ... we don't mean to stop you, our lights shouldn't have been on, the lights weren't even on, so he's just started stuttering, going on, he didn't have anything to say, they just didn't have anything to do, the car wasn't stolen, they could have checked to see if it was insured by just calling in the licence plate which they did because they called me by my name.

Interestingly, at a workshop that I ran involving police and communities in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in April 2011, police officers were talking about how policing is a very reactive job – responding to intelligence – and so within this context it is difficult to engage and to build relationships with communities. The Connect Project was highlighted as a good example of police officers and communities coming together outside of a crisis event in an environment of learning. Under the Connect Project police officers and community members were asked to talk about their experiences with each other, both good and bad. This was seen as a useful undertaking, serving to humanise police and community relations. At the same time, police officers expressed the real need for a covert style of policing, and that communities cannot expect 'hard' policing tactics to be removed for the sake of relationship-building. It was stressed here that what is key is accountability and oversight of any tactics and procedures that are applied. It was also highlighted that single interactions between police and community members often define how the police are perceived, and that every interaction leaves a trace; it requires fourteen good

incidents to counteract one negative one. At this workshop it was also stressed by police officers that they can be nervous about walking in certain areas of Belfast due to concerns for their own safety, and the question was raised of what communities are doing about this. It was stressed by police that it is important for the community to understand police perspectives.

The critical importance of relationship building for community policing in relation to counter-terrorism cannot be stressed enough. The following is a quotation taken from an interview with a counter-terrorism police officer, who speaks about the importance of taking the time to build a relationship with communities, especially in the highly sensitised area of counter-terrorism:

It literally is stopping people turning from those thoughts they have into a deliberate act that's going to harm themselves, others, you know, it's really practical stuff. You know, stop them converting themselves into a terrorist. Or influencing others to do that. And then all the other work around that, the project work, building up good relations with the community, is contributing to that. Because it's recognised, and we recognised it quite early on that we just can't turn up at a Community Centre, a community, a Mosque, and go 'we're here from the Preventing Violent Extremism wing of the Counter Terrorism Unit, you know, let's be friends and let's stop it happening'. First of all there has to be a relationship. And I think we've probably learnt that a little bit quicker than the people who are deciding on policy and what's right.

However, it is important to highlight that relationship-building in a counter-terrorism context presents particular challenges, and therefore requires added sensitivity. In Britain, within the context of neighbourhood policing, police officers have dual responsibility for responding to ordinary crimes and also for policing violent extremism. There is a danger of community policing being co-opted into intelligence-led, covert, policing under the auspices of the neighbourhood policing model. Thus, there is a danger that neighbourhood policing is used as a means of developing trust between community members and police officers and this trust then being exploited as part of wider intelligence-gathering mechanisms, rather than being nurtured and built on to enable long-term partnerships to develop between police and community members. The incursion in the everyday activities of neighbourhood police officers of the prevention of violent extremism contains the risk that trust between communities and police will be eroded. This is because

counter-terrorism is an arena traditionally dominated by covert rather than overt policing models, and so communities may be sceptical of any interest shown in them by neighbourhood police officers in relation to issues of violent extremism. At the workshop in Belfast mentioned above, community members spoke about how they did not want counter-terrorism to dominate the community safety agenda, and did not want a counter-insurgency agenda to pollute all the good work being done. It was also highlighted that communities have to be responsible for speaking out against violence against police officers. It was pointed out that whereas people are saying publically that covert policing is a problem, privately they are saying that it is overt counter-terrorism policing that is problematic. It seems that communities themselves are unclear about what they want from policing, and so naturally police do not know how communities want them to respond.

A study by Spalek and McDonald (2011) exploring police and community engagement within a counter-terrorism context highlights how the police officers who were interviewed said they spent a considerable amount of time trying to convince community members that they are not interested in spying on people and are not part of any surveillance mechanisms, but are trying to clarify where the boundaries should be placed in terms of what information should come to the attention of the police. Due to the sensitivities involved in overt counter-terrorism policing models, it is therefore important for police officers to be reflexive practitioners, and to show sensitivity and delicacy in the approaches they make to community members. It is the lack of delicacy and the focus on obtaining intelligence that has been criticised by Kundnani (2009), in an influential report called *Spooked! How Not To Prevent Violent Extremism*. This report was based on an exploration of the Prevent strategy in Britain. The study on which the report was based involved a total of 32 interviews with Prevent programme workers and managers in local authorities, with voluntary sector workers engaged in Prevent work, and with community workers familiar with local Prevent work. The evidence that emerged was controversial and gained much publicity. Kundnani's (2009) report contained some key criticisms of Prevent. Kundnani (2009) argued that a significant part of Prevent involved embedding counter-terrorism police officers in the delivery of local services with the apparent purpose of gathering intelligence, as well as managing perceptions and grievances. Furthermore, voluntary

sector and local authority workers are increasingly suspicious of the expectations placed on them to provide information to the police. Prevent has been targeted at Muslims, and there is a perceived atmosphere that to make any radical criticisms of government is to risk losing funding, which undermines channels for effective and open discussions with young people who may be influenced by ideologies that legitimate illegitimate political violence (Kundnani, 2009). For Kundnani (2009), the Prevent agenda is the depoliticisation of Muslim communities. Moreover, for Kundnani (2009: 6), 'Prevent decision-making lacks transparency and accountability. Decisions are taken behind closed doors rather than in consultation with the voluntary and community sector'. Below is a quotation from a young male Muslim that my team and I interviewed in relation to the Prevent agenda. Echoing some of the criticisms presented by Kundnani (2009), he talks about the pressures being placed on certain individuals in Muslim communities to embrace Prevent:

Absolutely. If you apply pressure which there's a lot of pressure on the Muslim community, but I wouldn't say the pressure is on all of the Muslim community, because that would be disingenuous, because pressure isn't on all of the Muslim community. It's on certain elements within a local community. So the gatekeepers are under pressure to join the programme and to work toward the objectives of the programme. Because most of the community doesn't matter. You only need the key people in the community and key leader networks or KLMS or whatever they're called, you only need those and they will then relay that message to the relevant sectors of that local community.

He continues by arguing that the state has co-opted those individuals within Muslim communities through whom the Prevent agenda and counter-terrorism policy can be implemented:

When it comes to the state responding to ... security or threats to its national security, it only applies pressure on those that it needs to apply pressure on. And they're then co-opted and they then forward on the relevant messages or the relevant narrative to those members of the community that aren't necessarily involved. So pressure is applied indirectly through the Muslim community onto the Muslim community.

He then speaks about the importance of gatekeepers within the Muslim community, and how government policy can be forced onto a community through the gatekeepers:

Or through the gatekeepers of the Muslim community through to the lower level of the community ... So what we need to do is we need to understand the relationship between the gatekeepers and everybody else within the community, and how these two communicate and respond ... Nobody gets to ... briefings, the gatekeeper gets briefings and the briefings are handed out. So if we understood how that pressure from the state was being channelled to the local community via the gatekeepers, it would allow us to understand how the policy is being spread onto the local level. Also it's very important to research who these so called gatekeepers are. Who made them gatekeepers? Why are they considered to be gatekeepers? Why are they so influential? I think it's very important to understand this.

The above quotation is interesting, given that in the previous chapter I have argued that for those individuals engaged in counter-terrorism as conflict transformation credibility is key. Credibility is about challenging state-led agendas where these are perceived to be unjust. Therefore, a key question for future research is what are the ways in which members of communities may be co-opted into state-driven security agendas, and in what ways might some individuals challenge such agendas.

The above paragraphs have summarised some of the key arguments and positions articulated by some of the leading and high-profile voices regarding community policing and counter-terrorism post 9/11. With the exception perhaps of Kundnani (2009), all of these authors are generally supportive of a more overt approach in counter-terrorism and adopting a localised approach that includes community policing. A key distinction between the work of Innes and that of Lambert, Spalek, Ramirez, Hanniman and Silk is perhaps the emphasis placed upon community intelligence as opposed to relationship building and providing community reassurance. Underpinning Innes' (2006) approach is this notion of 'soft power', whereby strategic engagement is for police to be able to challenge rumours that circulate within communities, and also for engagement to act as an intelligence feed for police. This focus on police and community engagement for intelligence purposes could be accused of exploiting relationships and networks for intelligence gathering purposes. In a counter-terrorism context where criminality and the nature of intelligence is much more diffuse and ill-defined than for ordinary crime, this can be deeply problematic. This emphasis on intelligence is very concerning, given the apparent level of mistrust and the lack of confidence regarding counter-terrorism policing within

Muslim communities (Spalek, 2010). The work by Lambert, Spalek, Ramirez, Hanniman and Silk stresses 'soft engagement', and the use of 'soft' policing skills in relation to dialogue, relationship-building, trust-building, but also highlights that intelligence should not be the key, or even a focus, for community policing. Rather, police and community engagement should be about providing communities with reassurance, particularly as Muslim communities have been experiencing substantial and heightened Islamophobia since 9/11 (Lambert and Githens-Mazer, 2010). The work of Lambert, Spalek, Ramirez, Hanniman and Silk has included highlighting a skill-set for police that includes cultural and emotional intelligence, human connection, being able to elicit trust, and so forth. However, this body of work has largely been ignored by policy makers and key decision-makers within policing, and any contribution that Lambert has made has been largely overlooked as a result of the engagement of the MCU with 'radicals'.

There is of course an argument that community policing skills and strategies should not be employed within counter-terrorism, for this is too much of a blurring between police services and the security services (Thiel, 2009). The security services also use 'soft tactics' in relation to relationship-building, trust-building, cultural and emotional intelligence and even disruption tactics like knocking on someone's door to show that they are under state scrutiny. Should skills and experiences developed within a covert security context be transferred to a policing context? The following is a quotation taken from an interview that we conducted with a police officer that serves to illustrate a focus on 'disruption' tactics by counter-terrorism police officers:

So that balance, so actually we've got intelligence to say that they could be about to do something, when do we jump? So it's a disruption. We might not get a conviction, but we've potentially stopped an atrocity ... And it's sometimes a very subjective decision where you have very little intelligence around it and you're balancing, well, if something goes boom and we knew ... so do I stop the chance of something going boom, but we've then disrupted and not convicted a network. So those type of things go on. It is complex and sometimes perhaps those people, their behaviour may be suspicious but there's nothing illegal that they're doing.

In many ways, 'softer' skills that feature in more covert, security-led approaches have already been applied within overt counter-terrorism policing contexts.

Could this decrease the legitimacy of the police, particularly when this is often based on accountability and the rule of law being seen to be upheld and equal for all citizens (Huq, Tyler and Schulhofer, 2011)? Or, on the contrary, by increasing the scope of 'soft' security-related skills within community policing approaches to counter-terrorism, might a better balance be attained between overt and covert approaches? Work traditionally carried out by the security services might be transferred to more overt policing approaches which may play an important role in deterring terrorism. This raises the question of what members of the public generally, and of Muslim and other securitised communities more specifically, might perceive the legitimacy of such policing tactics to be. Where there is little perceived legitimacy for such tactics it may be that their adoption will add to, rather than reduce, conflict between police and communities. This is an ongoing and real issue for counter-terrorism and counter-terrorism policing, one that is insufficiently researched and understood.

Conclusion

This chapter has focussed upon some of the key debates and research in relation to counter-terrorism policing, specifically post 9/11. Whilst there has been a substantial interest in active or passive support for terrorism amongst communities, the almost exclusive focus upon Muslim communities contributes to their stigmatisation and securitisation. At the same time, the focus on active or passive support for terrorism amongst Muslims often fails to consider the social and political factors that underpin any such support, factors such as poverty or disenfranchisement. Localism appears to be a common theme in the literature, particularly in the work by Professor Innes and his colleagues. However, this focus on local dynamics and local grievances may be problematic in that it does not take wider factors sufficiently into consideration, and thus represents a de-politicisation of the issues at stake. Local grievances, local factors, may have their roots in international dynamics, in geo-political power plays involving nation-states. Innes' approach potentially places police officers within an overly-narrow lens, an overly naive position that can perhaps put police community relations under

greater strain. This chapter also highlights the importance of police and communities engaging with each other than during a crisis event, as this can serve to humanise police and community relations. It is important, though to highlight that there can be major differences in perceptions between police officers and communities. Thus, police officers may express the need for a covert style of counter-terrorism policing, and feel communities cannot expect 'hard' policing tactics to be removed for the sake of relationship-building, even though communities argue that they dislike the use of tactics like surveillance, stop-and-search and informant-based approaches. It is also important to consider police officers' perceptions that they feel unsafe walking in certain neighbourhoods or areas and so what responsibility do community members have here in ensuring the safety of officers? Another question raised in this chapter concerns the ways in which members of communities might be co-opted into state-driven security agendas, and the ways in which some individuals might challenge such agendas? Furthermore, could the application of 'softer' skills that feature in more covert, security-service led approaches within overt counter-terrorism policing contexts decrease the legitimacy of the police, particularly when legitimacy towards policing is often based on accountability and the rule of law being seen to be upheld and equal for all citizens? Or by increasing the scope of 'soft' security-related skills within community policing approaches to counter-terrorism might a better balance between overt and covert approaches be achieved? What might the perceived legitimacy of such policing tactics be among members of the public generally, and among members of Muslim and other securitised communities specifically? The next chapter considers citizenship, the acceptance of responsibility and trust in relation to counter-terrorism as conflict transformation. The chapter considers how states can encourage and actively persuade citizens to work within state-driven counter-terrorism agendas in a context of differentiated citizenship where there may be competing loyalties associated with experiences of belonging at a global, as well as national and local level.

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