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Governing Terror; ‘Top-down’ and ‘Bottom-up’ Approaches to Counter-Terrorism

Introduction

The introduction of community-based approaches to counter-terrorism raises a number of important issues around questions of governance. Traditionally, covert counter-terrorism approaches have consisted of ‘top-down’, state-driven structures of accountability. Covert approaches have not necessarily been subject to significant public scrutiny, even when such approaches have been controversial with there being a fine line toed between legal and illegal activities. Community-based approaches to counter-terrorism will involve community members, non-state actors who themselves will bring a level of public scrutiny to this arena. The involvement of community members in counter-terrorism raises a number of issues around governance in relation to questions of ‘bottom-up’ approaches to counter-terrorism; community cohesion and freedoms associated with liberal democracy; and risk. This chapter focuses on these key issues in order to discuss the implications of community-based approaches for counter-terrorism. This chapter highlights that after 9/11 the ‘War on Terror’ involved a top-down approach to security which was linked to geo-political power plays between nation-states in relation to world order. The ‘War on Terror’ is thus a politicised global strategy, helping to re-configure security issues at the level of the nation-state and the locale, impacting upon Muslim communities in particular. At the same time, after 9/11 ‘bottom-up’ approaches to counter-terrorism were also instigated, which involved engagement and even partnerships between communities and state actors and agencies. Underpinning both ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ approaches are tensions between responses that emphasise

community cohesion, and those that emphasise liberal freedoms associated with liberal democracy. The former can problematise Muslim identities as a whole, whilst the latter do not necessarily view religious, political or other identities as problematic. It is preventing violence that is the focus of policy and practice. This chapter discusses these tensions and their implications for community-based approaches to counter-terrorism. Quotations from community members, police officers and others are also provided in this chapter in order to illustrate more fully some of the points made.

Governance and counter-terrorism

To govern is to influence or determine, whereas governance is the actual act or manner of governing. According to Brennan et al. (2007: 13), 'the world of governing has seen a revolution expressed in a shift from government to governance'. For Brennan et al. (2007), the notion of governance is to be understood as that which includes both government and civil society, with the state and civil society engaging in decision-making and other processes, through the interaction of top-down, state-led, imperatives and bottom-up approaches which include networks, groups, communities and others that are part of what might be deemed civil society. It would appear that the notion of governance is key in exploring and understanding community-based approaches to counter-terrorism.

In relation to counter-terrorism, governance might be viewed as comprising two inter-related, and at times conflicting, dynamics. On the one hand there are 'top-down' global and nation state approaches to counter-terrorism, and on the other hand there are 'bottom-up' approaches that involve state and non-state actors implementing mostly localised approaches. 'Top-down' approaches comprise geo-political power plays between countries which can significantly influence the security policies of nation-states. In relation to Al Qaeda-linked terrorism, responses have been dominated by a 'War on Terror' that was initially instigated by the administration led by former US President Bush. The 'War on Terror' might be viewed from the perspective of global governance as being top-down, comprising dominant political and economic actors and authorities determining the legitimacy of risk in relation

to questions of security, being linked to wider geo-political power plays between nation states in relation to the global world order (Findlay, 2007). The 'War on Terror' might thus be thought of as a politicised global strategy, helping to re-configure security issues at the level of the nation-state and the locale. Through the hegemonic project of globalisation there is a quest for community at a global level, a war on pluralism and the construction of a 'war on terror' which has served to target and alienate those communities viewed as being opposed to western modernisation (Findlay, 2007). 'Top down' governance approaches therefore include international and nation state-led approaches that prioritise the maintenance of a global world order and nation state security over individual and community security concerns.

'Bottom-up' approaches to counter-terrorism are those that stress community involvement, in which partnerships and engagement between communities and state agencies is influenced by the concerns and experiences of those communities. The involvement of communities in relation to countering threats from 'new terrorism' reflects their involvement in tackling other problems such as anti-social behaviour, unemployment and so forth. The governance of 'new terrorism' reflects broader developments in governance, whereby responsibility and accountability for preventing terror crime, as with traditional forms of crime, is increasingly focused towards local levels, whilst still maintaining centralised control in terms of resources and target setting. Also, formal responsibilities for policy implementation and service delivery are progressively being shared across statutory and voluntary agencies and community groups in the form of partnership work. A further aspect to the governance of 'new terrorism' which might be linked to bottom-up approaches is reflectivity. Here, the greater visibility of security intelligence in the public domain has led to an increased awareness, scrutiny and critique by politicians, media commentators, NGOs, communities and the general public.

It is important to note that community forums can be important mechanisms through which to hold police to account. Forums that involve police and community members engaging with each other can be challenging. For example, a study by Spalek et al. (2009) examining police and community engagement, highlights that the diversity of the Muslim population poses significant challenges for engagement. It may be that some groups place

higher value on organising demonstrations and vociferously expressing their concerns to the police, whereas other groups prefer an approach that involves implicitly expressing their concerns whilst maintaining good relationships with police. These different viewpoints and styles of engagement inevitably lead to tensions between groups and individuals. The Muslim Safety Forum (MSF) is a forum that was set up in 2001 and made up of a wide range of Muslim community organisations, including the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC), the Islamic Forum Europe (IFE) and other organisations. The MSF held regular meetings at Scotland Yard with senior police officers from the Metropolitan Police Service, to discuss community safety, policing and counter-terrorism issues. It is important to stress that community forums can be challenging for their participants because there can be a wide range of views about how to hold police officers to account and how to engage with them. The quotation below from a Muslim police officer illustrates the diverse voices on the MSF and the challenges for their oversight of the police:

... let's say for example you had the X, they had their own remit and good luck to them, they had their own focus you know, and there's a particular way in which they like to do business. Then you have Y which has their own way of doing business, you know their own version of diplomacy and the fact that they would seem to be meeting people like the Prime Minister and their secretary would be seen to be meeting with senior cabinet people etc., etc. It's very unlikely that you're going to get people from X having that kind of a cordial relationship, because they have a different way of working ... So they had different approaches so therefore, when they come into the Muslim Safety Forum, they're sitting round the same table talking, each one brings their own perspective okay. So there was difference of opinion around that table.

In some cases it is difficult for particular communities to be engaged, as the following quotation from an interview with a police officer illustrates:

There are groups that are particularly difficult to engage with, such as youth groups, um, and certainly newly arrived communities. Some communities will have baggage either from, quite rightly, from the police in London or somewhere 20, 25 years ago or ten years ago or five years ago or whatever it is. Others will bring baggage from if they come from outside the UK, sometimes they'll have a cultural issue in dealing with the police that, that is a barrier. Um,

and all you can do is just be around, speak to them, try and bring them along, engage with them, drip by drip by drip. But it's an ongoing process and one of development.

Moreover, it is important for individuals who participate in forums to be doing so on behalf of their communities rather than for their own personal or political interests, as the following quotation from an interview taken with a police officer highlights:

... big challenge is getting a, a really committed community representative and somebody who's not, you know, participating for their own personal or political ends. Erm, and it comes with some sensitivity as well because if you're in any way exposing them to the individual cases they would have to be fully vetted, you know, because there's a degree of information sharing.

According to Spalek, Beleza, Limbada and McDonald (2012), community members who are participating in forums or other mechanisms of engagement with police, often have to grapple with the following concerns:

I want to work in partnership with organisations such as the police, local authority or named person as I want to protect my community ...

I want to have an input at the table as I am a community representative/leader ...

I do not want to accept any Prevent related funding, but I may interact with counter-terrorism officers ...

Do I trust the police and do I have confidence in how they work?

Are the police targeting Muslim communities due to the high number of stop and searches and the high level of terrorist arrests impacting on this group?

How do I ensure the police remain accountable to the community?

Are the police only interested in policing the political and religious thoughts of a particular ethnic/religious group? What about the threat from the far right?

How do I test the notion of partnership working and accountability?

By cooperating with counter-terrorism police, will I be perceived as a "sell out" to my community?

Bottom-up approaches are therefore complex, and providing community oversight of counter-terrorism is, similar to other areas, challenging.

It is important to stress that top down and bottom up approaches to counter-terrorism involve both state and non-state actors, in that both state and non-state actors can be part of global, national, top-down approaches as well as being part of bottom-up and reflective governance approaches. Indeed,

the idea that communities can defeat terrorism features in both top-down and bottom-up approaches, with the notion of 'community' predominantly viewed through the lens of 'problem' within top-down approaches whilst in bottom-up approaches community is viewed largely as 'solution'. There may also be significant tensions between top-down and bottom-up approaches. For example, bottom-up approaches may involve partnership work between state agencies and those communities deemed 'suspect' by global and nation state top-down approaches. Therefore, state actors involved in engaging and developing long-term partnerships with members of 'suspect' communities are likely to attract criticism, not only from top-down perspectives but also from the wider public domain where dominant discourses like the 'War on Terror' have gained hegemony. Lowndes and Thorp (2010: 123–4) stress that 'tensions between a locally driven, community-focussed approach and a nationally led, security-oriented agenda have been ongoing'. It is important to elaborate further on what some of these tensions are, between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches to the governance of counter-terrorism. The research that I and my team have been involved in suggests that, in particular, there are tensions between approaches that emphasise community cohesion, and those that emphasise liberal freedoms associated with liberal democracy. The former can problematise Muslim identities as a whole, for Islamic ideology here is portrayed as dangerous and in conflict with 'western values' (Jackson, 2005) and so Muslims are viewed as not integrating with wider British society. The latter do not view religious, political or other identities as problematic, only largely preventing violence is viewed as the focus of policy and practice. There also can be tensions over risk: who identifies risk, how this is managed and ultimately who decides whether a set of vulnerabilities constitutes risk of violent extremism.

Security as community cohesion and/or as liberal freedom?

Community cohesion in relation to terrorism has featured significantly in public policy debates. According to the Cattle Report on community cohesion (2001), ignorance about each others' communities can easily grow

into fear, especially where this is exploited by extremist groups determined to undermine community harmony and foster divisions. The report's authors further observed that although the physical segregation of housing estates and inner cities came as no surprise, they had been repeatedly struck by the degree to which the existence of 'separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, means that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives'. For authors of the Cantle report, there needs to be a greater collective and individual effort for all sections of the community to improve their knowledge and understanding of each other, also for the largely non-white community to develop a greater acceptance of, and engagement with, the principal national institutions.

Interestingly, research suggests that higher levels of community cohesion might be linked to lower crime rates. According to Wedlock (2006), cohesive communities have the following characteristics: a sense of community, similar life opportunities, a respect for diversity, political trust and a sense of belonging. According to Wedlock (2006), local areas with a high sense of community, political trust and sense of belonging show significantly lower levels of 'all' reported crime. Sampson and Groves (1989) found that community cohesion was directly linked to a reduction in mugging, street crime and stranger violence. More recently, Sampson and Raudenbush (1999) have found that social control takes the form of people in cohesive neighbourhoods being prepared to pull together and intervene in deviant or criminal activities for the public good. They defined this type of collective efficacy as 'cohesion amongst residents combined with shared expectations for the social control of public space'. They found that collective efficacy is associated with lower rates of crime and social disorder even after controlling for structural characteristics of the neighbourhood. Wedlock (2006) points to other research that suggests that the links between cohesive communities and reduced crime are not only a British and American phenomenon. Lee (2000) used data from 15 countries in the 1992 wave of the International Victimisation Survey in order to provide an international comparison of the role that community cohesion plays in reducing the risk of individual violent victimisation. He found that the higher levels of social control or guardianship apparent in a cohesive community reduce the likelihood of becoming a victim of violent crime such as robbery

and assault, regardless of socioeconomic status, lifestyle and neighbourhood characteristics.

In debates about the risks for terrorism that a lack of community cohesion and integration can pose it is Muslim communities that have featured predominantly in relation to counter-terrorism policy. Some have suggested that Islam as a religion is in a state of flux, with political and ideological conflict taking place similar to the struggles in Christianity during the Reformation (Modood, 2007). According to Modood (2007: 23), 'the upheavals and wars that characterise the Reformation are present in the Muslim world today but non-Muslim powers, especially the US, are major players'. Post 7/7, minorities are expected to conform to and assimilate the dominant norms of British society, culturally and religiously. It has therefore become commonplace to construct certain Muslim practices and beliefs not only as markers of difference, but as barriers to 'positive community relations', as illustrated by Jack Straw's comments¹ – as a public servant – on women's face coverings as a 'visible statement of separation and of difference'. 'Muslim difference' has been viewed as dangerous, and a dichotomy now exists between 'moderate' and 'radical' Muslims. Narratives found previously in American neo-conservative commentaries, such as the RAND Corporation's testimony 'Moderate and Radical Islam' (Rabasa, 2005) have become mainstreamed into British government counter-terrorism strategy (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. Therefore, Muslim who appear to value the Ummah over feelings of Britishness, or to isolate themselves from wider society, are negatively judged and seen as a threat to social cohesion. Within government rhetoric, those Muslims and community organisations that are viewed as being 'moderate' are seen to be allies in the prevention of terrorism (Spalek and Imtoul, 2007). It seems that all kinds of value judgements have been placed onto Muslim communities, distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate Muslim identities. Legitimate Muslims are perceived to be those who engage with governments on the terms set by those governments. Those Muslims who refuse such an engagement (irrespective of their motivations or reasons)

¹ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2006/oct/06/politics.uk> (accessed 30 January 2012)

are likely to be perceived as 'radical' and hence a potential terrorist threat. This creates an untenable situation for many Muslims (Spalek and Imtoul, 2007). Spalek and Lambert (2008) have argued that wider questions about community and social cohesion should not define the terms of engagement with Muslim communities for the purposes of counter-terrorism. Rather, a rational assessment should be made, according to which groups can best help combat extremism, and questions of cohesion and national identity should be left to other fields of policy-making. Although research has highlighted that engaging marginal and marginalised Muslim groups such as 'Salafis' and 'Islamists' is a logical continuum of the post 7/7 drive to support community-led, faith-based approaches to youth work, education and de-radicalisation central to the Prevent agenda (Lambert, 2008; Spalek et al., 2009; Baker, 2011), this is problematic in terms of government policy, as government policy focuses on the notion of 'shared values' within CONTEST 2, the British government's main counter-terrorism strategy. According to CONTEST 2 (Home Office, 2009: 13):

we will take action against those who defend terrorism and violent extremism. We will also continue to challenge views which fall short of supporting violence and are within the law, but which reject and undermine our shared values and jeopardise community cohesion. Some of these views can create a climate in which people may be drawn into violent activity ...

Problematically, the above paragraph – reflected in later sections in the document (ibid, 87) – lacks crucial precision: terms such as terrorism, extremism, shared values and community cohesion are diffuse and contested notions, open to a high degree of interpretation. This is perhaps unsurprising: as argued elsewhere, engagement work for the purposes of counter-terrorism is a highly politicised arena in which debates around broader, normative issues in relation to citizenship, multiculturalism and values continue to take place, profoundly influencing engagement work (Spalek and Lambert, 2008). The focus on 'shared values' is problematic because local problems of socio-economic marginalisation and exclusion, and related inter- and intra-community tensions within ethnically and religiously diverse British cities are conflated with the globally constructed social problem of 'new terrorism'.

There can therefore be significant tensions between approaches to counter-terrorism that emphasise community cohesion, and those that emphasise liberal freedoms associated with liberal democracy. As discussed above, the former can problematise Muslim identities as a whole, for Islamic ideology here is portrayed as dangerous and in conflict with 'western values' (Jackson, 2005), so Muslims are viewed as not integrating with wider British society. At the same time, particular political, religious and ethnic identities, associated with being a Muslim and with a perceived increased risk of committing acts of violence, are securitised. Approaches that emphasise liberal freedoms seek not to problematise or securitise particular identities, but rather to enable individuals to draw upon the liberal freedoms associated with liberal democracy. Thus a wider range of actions are considered legitimate, so that individuals do not see violence as a means to pursue their aims. This work includes a wide range of activities such as encouraging political participation from within Muslim communities, enhancing education about Islam among Muslims themselves, and supporting social and political activism. This work also seeks to draw upon individuals formerly and/or currently practising 'securitised identities' as mentors in order to attempt to rehabilitate those deemed at risk of committing acts of violence, so that they are no longer at risk from pursuing violent action.

As highlighted in chapter two, embedding Muslim youth who are at risk of becoming violently extremist within those communities that are likely to carry greatest legitimacy with them might prevent their drift towards violence as a means of action. This work, however, is under constant threat of being criticised by a fear-fuelled media and political frenzy, which views the empowerment of communities or groups that are seen as 'fundamentalist' or 'separatist' as serving to feed Islamic extremism. A more rational viewpoint might be that working in partnership with minority Muslim groups may constitute part of a broader, multicultural dynamic. For, in the process of engagement work, both state institutions and Muslim communities are involved in mutual interaction and dialogue, within which there are of course points of contestation. Ongoing engagement work might be seen as constituting part of a pluralistic process whereby community groups can help to shape government policies and the practices of state agencies, as well as being themselves shaped by these (see Modood, 2007). Ongoing engagement work might be viewed as influencing

the very cultures of those groups involved in partnership. Therefore, an aspect of partnership work may be that those groups involved in engagement are reciprocally influencing each other's cultures, where cultures are seen as constructed by 'crossover, by hybridization and by innovation' (Young, 1999: 89). Drawing upon the work of Castells, it may be that 'bottom-up' approaches to counter-terrorism involve a process through which identities can be shaped. Individuals holding resistance identities, which are those generated by individuals who occupy devalued or stigmatised positions within society, who may build resistance due to feeling different from, or being opposed to, principles permeating the institutions of society (Castells, 2004), can, through effective counter-terrorism practice, be inspired to become project identities. Project identities seek to transform society through political and social action. Project identities can even eventually become dominant in the institutions of society, thus becoming legitimising identities. Counter-terrorism practices can thus shape resistance identities and empower them to become project and even legitimising identities through a focus on political and social agency which excludes violence. This approach is vastly different from an approach in which particular identities are problematised. In relation to AQ-linked terrorism, Islamist and Salafi communities have in particular been problematised by counter-terrorism policies because Islamism and Salafism have been viewed as posing a subversive threat to Europe (Spalek and Lambert, 2008). Lambert (2008) has argued that a broad alliance of powerful and influential politicians and commentators are adamant that the AQ terrorist threat is just the tip of an Islamist-Salafi iceberg. As such police should be encouraged to target and monitor Islamists and Salafis as subversive groups or organisations rather than seek to serve them as minority communities. Therefore, it follows that to empower Islamists and Salafis is to legitimise and appease subversives and extremists. However, the research by Lambert (2008), Spalek et al. (2009), Baker (2012) and others challenges this viewpoint through stressing that engagement and partnerships with Islamist and Salafi groups is not only desirable but essential to reducing AQ-linked terrorism in Europe, the US and other areas. Here, religion, politics, Muslim identities and practices are embraced rather than viewed as dangerous or antithetical to social cohesion. Community members are encouraged to co-operate with the police on what is viewed as a common aim, the protection of society at

large from crime committed in the name of Islam (Spalek et al. 2009). What is apparent, therefore, is that law enforcement agencies are operating within a conflicting counter-terrorism environment. On the one hand, where social and community cohesion is stressed then 'hard' policing tactics are encouraged in order to flush out potential 'subversives'. On the other hand, where liberal freedoms within democracies are emphasised then 'softer' counter-terrorism tactics involving engagement and partnerships are pursued. Future research could therefore examine the tensions and overlaps between these different styles of law-enforcement approaches as part of a wider exploration of the complex refashioning of identity and affiliation within the 'new age of terror' in relation to sovereignty, 'extreme' identities, counter-subversion and counter-terrorism (Spalek and McDonald, 2011). Importantly, the tensions between 'hard' and 'soft' policing approaches can also be played out by those police officers working in counter-terrorism themselves. The quotation below comes from an interview with a Muslim police officer who was being asked to work for an overt counter-terrorism policing unit:

So there is that uncertainty, then there is uncertainty in the counter-terrorist remit, what's that involve? If it means that you are going to be picking up a phone or something and listening to a conversation, of course, we don't do that, that's something else, but if it meant that you have to do that, what would I do under those circumstances, would I turn around and tell them I'm Muslim, sorry, I'm not doing that? Would I face discipline, would I not face discipline, they're all unanswered questions and uncertainty as to what that work involved, okay.

The same officer speaks about needing reassurances from his police seniors, as he did not want to be involved in any covert policing activities that might compromise his relationship with his community:

And so I wanted some reassurances on wanting to know more about that role and everything because I couldn't, I wouldn't do it, you know, it's for me as a Muslim to go around doing it and to be seen to be spying ... it immediately sets off a whole part of your community against you, that trust that you build up over the years as a police officer, who everybody knows is a police officer and to build up that trust and that relationship and, you know, getting them to work, even the kind of people that never ever dreamed about working with the police service; getting them to work with you and subtly, they see you as somebody who's ... spying on people or gathering intelligence. It immediately puts you in a

very different light in the eyes of the Muslim community particularly you know. Remember it's difficult for people to talk to the police anyway to report a crime, to be a victim and then to go to the police is very difficult for people, especially in the Asian Community, the immigrant community, the Muslim community, other communities, it's very difficult. Even more difficult for them to come and talk to somebody that they think is an intelligence officer.

Community members can also experience the tensions between being viewed as covert intelligence sources and community partners:

There is always that thought because 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 MCB, Muslim Parliament, Welfare House, wherever, you know it means that we may well be a suspect, because they have chosen us to try and recruit us.

In the above quotation, the person highlights how members of Muslim communities have been approached by the security services and have been asked to act as informants. This same community member goes on to explain that community members want to remain independent, and do not want to be seen as spies for the authorities:

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. The relationships just now are fairly well, but they are extremely difficult at the time of the East End attack on those two brothers that I mentioned to you.

It is also worth drawing attention to the mention that the community member makes regarding hate crimes committed against two Muslims, which placed strain onto relationships between Muslims in the East End of London and the authorities.

Risk

When exploring community-based approaches to counter-terrorism, risk is a key issue. Indeed, most of the chapters in this book include some discussion of risk. In relation to the governance of counter-terrorism, 'bottom-up' community-based approaches raise a number of issues of risk.

The involvement of community members in counter-terrorism initiatives can mean that community members play a crucial role in helping to assess risk. For initiatives that do not problematise 'extreme' identities but rather which work with individuals in order to encourage wide-ranging non-violent political and social actions it can be problematic to judge the extent to which individuals risk committing violence. Such initiatives are often led by community members rather than state actors and so it is community members that can play a significant role in assessing risk of violent extremism, especially as there may be aspects to individuals' lives that only community members can witness and understand. The following quotation is from a community member involved in community-based counter-terrorism initiatives, talking about risk assessment:

it's a judgement call that you've got to make in terms of what you know of this individual and other factors, in assessing what you believe to be the risk in terms of the behaviour, the activity, or the comments that you hear or see, or that are reported to you. So it was really very much a case of, you know, trying to work out whether is this just a, you know, an individual who is boasting, bragging, seen a programme on TV etc? Or is it actually somebody who is genuinely being groomed, influenced, you know, and that's something that you have to really make that judgement call.

This is why strong partnerships between community members involved in community-based initiatives and police officers are essential, for police officers must be able to trust any risk assessments made by community members. Governance in relation to community-based approaches to counter-terrorism therefore raises the question of who it is that identifies risk; ultimately who decides whether a set of vulnerabilities constitutes risk of violent extremism? There may be a danger of tending to over-assess vulnerability and for too many cases to be brought to the attention of neighbourhood police officers, who then have to decide whether a particular case is so insubstantial that it does not require the attention of counter-terrorism units nor of intervention providers in relation to preventing violent extremism. At the same time, it may be that all cases deemed 'borderline' are passed on to counter-terrorism units or to intervention providers and so there is a potential here for net-widening, for bringing in greater numbers of individuals for intervention. A study by Spalek and McDonald (2011) found that some police officers are

adopting a minimalist approach, preferring other agencies and professionals to assess and deal with any dangers posed by individuals displaying inappropriate behaviours, and for police to be brought in when the behaviours and the risks are deemed severe. There is of course another inherent issue here: in encouraging agencies and staff across a wide range of sectors to look for signs of vulnerability in the first place, society is encouraged to look for risks in relation to violent extremism. With the focus of the Prevent strategy having been on Muslim communities there is the inherent danger that Islamic beliefs and practices are stigmatised (Spalek and McDonald, 2010). Our research also raises some deeper questions – in a situation where risk is being assessed by different agencies, whose voice carries most weight? Is there a potential for the voice of the communities to be marginalised? Is there not a very fine line in risk-assessing cases of individuals who might be dealt with constructively under preventative work but who might also be dealt with through an investigative approach? Who ultimately decides whether an individual has passed from being at risk of committing acts of violence to being about to commit them? Moreover, in relation to the notion of partnership, is there equality, transparency and legitimate cooperation between partners when cases that fall between Prevent and Pursue are apparent? At the same time, our interviews suggest that partnerships that are created can sometimes exclude community members from key decisions that are made, with community members having to ‘chase up’ statutory agencies. When linking this to the notion of risk, the question is raised whether community members can at times be excluded even within engagement that is based on a model of partnership.

‘Bottom-up’, community-based approaches to counter-terrorism also raise questions over risk in relation to information-sharing protocols. There may be a danger that statutory agencies enter into relationships and agreements with community members that may prioritise the risk and other needs of those agencies rather than the risks and the needs of community members themselves. Community members who work with the police and other agencies as part of multi-agency forums assessing risk may be placing themselves at high risk of reprisals from members of their own communities or any networks to which they belong. Therefore, agreements that fully represent the requirements and operating parameters of both the communities and of the police and other statutory agencies are crucial. It is

important to take into consideration, and to acknowledge, that within multi-agency approaches to assessing and working with risks of violent extremism, community members may face risks that statutory agencies do not face, and vice versa, hence the need for clear discussion about how any protocols of engagement can capture the needs of both communities and statutory agencies (see also Baker, 2011).

Community-based approaches can involve overt counter-terrorism police officers working in partnership and engaging with communities. A study by Spalek and McDonald (2011) highlights that sometimes overt counter-terrorism police officers working with communities on the ground may not be given all the information on a particular case from covert policing units, yet may be asked by these units to check out a piece of information with, say, a community member. This requires further exploration: the overt counter-terrorism police officer could be placing themselves at an unknown level of risk, and may not be quite sure why they are being asked to speak with particular community members. It may therefore be that there needs to be further discussion and analysis of the linkages between overt and covert approaches, and the information that is shared between them. Overt counter-terrorism police officers can play an important role in highlighting to covert counter-terrorism units the actual or potential impact of covert or any other policing operations upon communities. Future research needs to explore the extent of any influence that overt approaches are having on covert approaches, to explore the dialogue and interaction between the two in more detail. Thus, in 'bottom-up' community-based approaches to counter-terrorism, professionals and not only community members can also face certain risks themselves. Professionals may engage in actions that they argue helps prevent violent extremism but that the agencies that they work for will perhaps discourage them from undertaking. This may be partly because the organisational cultures of the agencies themselves are more risk averse than are the individuals working for them. One example that might illustrate the point is that of a youth worker who took young, marginalised, disenfranchised Muslims to a Stop the War march because he thought that this was a positive way for the young people to display their anger at foreign policy. This was also seen as an opportunity for building community cohesion in that the young people noted how many of those on the march were neither Muslim

nor from minority ethnic backgrounds but from white communities (Spalek and McDonald, 2011).

It is important to highlight that within community-based approaches to counter-terrorism involving community members and police, both are taking risks. It may be that community members view the police as a 'last resort' in preventing violence, preferring first to challenge appropriately and prevent violence themselves before seeking help from the police. As highlighted in chapter two, community members cannot be seen to be overtly and repeatedly seeking help from the police as this can undermine their credibility with community members who may be suspicious of police. The following quotation from a Muslim community member serves to illustrate this point:

it's high risk, that is very, very high risk. There's been incidents where you know if it doesn't go the right way someone's getting killed. There's people armed in front of you. But if you don't deal with it in that way, these individuals, you'll lose their trust, their confidence, and they will go to extremists. (Muslim Community Member [5] 2008) (from Spalek, 2010: 804)

Community-based approaches to counter-terrorism may involve community members also sorting out everyday crime and other related issues themselves, and only seeking direct police action as a last resort. This raises the question of who ultimately has responsibility for policing ? Community members and/or police officers ? Where community members are involved in policing then how is accountability maintained ? The following is a quotation from a Muslim community member who has been involved in policing issues from within his own community:

An individual turns up in a big mackintosh because he had a dispute with another Muslim and the size of the weapon he had down the back of his coat and what did we do? Did we panic and run and call the police? We took him round the corner, my colleagues, spoke with him, really calmly.

What are you doing? You're coming to a religious place, this is the house of God, it's a mosque. And you're coming to kill a Muslim? Do you know that killing a Muslim means that you go to the hellfire straight away? Eyes wide. Really? So if I killed this individual I will be punished? Yes you will. And even if he was wrong and he do this you'll still do this because you are not an authority to take anybody's life. What did he do? Jumped in the car, went home, put his

weapon away, came back, made up with the individual. (Muslim Community Member [5] 2008) (in Spalek, 2010: 804)

Community-based approaches to counter-terrorism are likely to be particularly problematic within areas that are experiencing political transitions, where there may be a 'divided sovereignty'. Findlay (2007) argues that para-politics operate beyond the reach of conventional state authority and highlights that these dynamics add further complexity to law-and-order strategies designed to maintain social order. Within areas marked by conflict and transitions, there may be no common acceptance of appropriate law-and-order responses, and so who is responsible for maintaining law and order and how it is governed are key questions. According to Knox (2001), writing in the context of Northern Ireland, punishment beatings and shootings are ways in which paramilitaries have 'policed' their areas. Paramilitaries in Northern Ireland have claimed that they take action against joyriders, burglars, paedophiles, car thieves and other types of criminals. Historically, communities have been discouraged from going to the police. Knox's (2006) study illustrates that within a zone of conflict, alternative mechanisms for dealing with law and order exist because state-based organisations may be distrusted. They may be viewed as being owned by 'the other side' or simply be considered to be ineffective. But the 'street level' maintenance of order in these contexts is not to be mistaken for the kind of social control that naturally occurs in cohesive communities discussed earlier. In this context, order is enforced through paramilitary groups and militias whose loyalty is to their own groupings rather than to the community as a whole.

Conclusion

This chapter explores some issues around questions of governance and community-based approaches to counter-terrorism. The chapter highlights that there can be tensions between approaches to counter-terrorism that stress community cohesion and those approaches that stress liberal freedoms associated with democracy. It points to an unresolved question for many counter-terrorism practitioners, for policy makers, for researchers and for community members: within a society, where should the balance

lie between the embracing of ethical freedoms in relation to 'extreme' identities, and the governance of identity? Extreme or radical identifications are not necessarily problematic but violent actions associated with them are. Therefore, can there be alternative forms of agency that allow for the expression of radical or extreme identities that are democratic and do not involve violence? This chapter has shown that the 'War on Terror' associated with AQ-linked 'new terrorism' comprises a set of rationalities and technologies which are top-down, international and national state policies instigated and influenced by elite political, social, media and other groupings. Nonetheless, 'bottom-up' approaches that are community-based can challenge 'top-down' approaches. 'Bottom-up' approaches that stress liberal freedoms can involve working with individuals and groups deemed 'dangerous' by 'top-down' approaches. 'Bottom-up' approaches involve community members and potentially bring greater public scrutiny of counter-terrorism. However, as this chapter also demonstrates, the involvement of community members in engagement and oversight of counter-terrorism can be challenging.

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