



Open Letter

There is an attempt to plunge this country into a racist hysteria, directed against Muslims, of a kind we have not seen for a generation or more.

Recent weeks have seen a series of speeches by leading politicians designed to isolate and demonise British Muslims. These have been reflected in spurious news stories and, still more seriously, violence directed against Muslim people and places of worship.

In particular, we deplore the recent remarks by Jack Straw concerning the veil worn in public by some Muslim women. His intervention undoubtedly created the climate in which the racist attack on a Muslim woman in Liverpool took place. Likewise, the bullying attacks of John Reid have served only to spread fear amongst Muslims.

We further condemn the attempted fire-bombing of a mosque in Windsor the latest in a number of such episodes nationwide, and note the failure of many commentators and politicians to condemn this outrage.

We express our solidarity with all British people of the Muslim faith, and affirm their right to worship and dress as they please and to live their lives in peace and security.

The current wave of Muslim-baiting is rooted above all, in the disastrous 'war on terror', of which this government has been such a prominent supporter. This war has made Britain more vulnerable, not less, to terrorist attack—an uncomfortable fact from which ministers try to distract by attacks on the Muslim community.

If the government is concerned about improving the cohesion of our communities, let it first of all abandon its support for the foreign policy of the US administration, including the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan.

We call on all people of good-will to reject the anti-Muslim hatred being whipped up and to support the values of tolerance now under attack.

PLEASE ADD YOUR NAME TO THIS LETTER