Social Cohesion: New Challenges to the Established Order

Rapporteur's Report

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Canada–UK Colloquium, 15–18 November 2007
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The Canada-UK Colloquia

The Canada-UK Colloquia are annual conferences that aim to increase knowledge and to educate the public about the advantages of a close and dynamic relationship between Canada and the United Kingdom. These conferences take place alternately in each country, bringing together British and Canadian parliamentarians, public officials, academics, representatives from the private sector, graduate students, and others. The organizers focus on issues of immediate concern to both countries. One of the main endeavours is to stimulate and publish research in each subject under discussion. The publications listed at the end of the book demonstrate the wide range of topics covered by recent colloquia.

The colloquia are supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in Canada and by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the United Kingdom. The conferences are organized by the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University on the Canadian side, and by the Canada-UK Colloquia Committee on the British side, from which an executive board, the Council of Management, is elected annually.

The first colloquium, attended by some sixty distinguished participants from both countries, was held at Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park in 1971 to examine the bilateral relationship. This theme figured in the colloquia held at Leeds University in 1979, at Dalhousie University in 1984, and at Queen's University in 1996. A British steering committee, later to become the British Committee, was launched in 1986. The School of Policy Studies assumed

responsibility on the Canadian side in 1996, succeeding the Institute for Research on Public Policy.

At the Denver Summit in June 1997, Prime Ministers Blair and Chrétien issued a joint declaration to mark a program of modernization in the bilateral relationship, which included a role for the Canada-UK Colloquia. The program was reaffirmed during Mr. Chrétien's visit to the United Kingdom in 1998.

Reports on past colloquia may be found at www.Canada-UK.net.

Francis Robinson

Francis Robinson has been Professor of History of South Asia, University of London, since 1990. He was Vice-Principal and Senior Vice-Principal of Royal Holloway College, University of London, from 1997 to 2004. Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge (MA, PhD), he has been a visiting professor of Asian studies at the Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington, and Directeur d'Études Associé at École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris. He has been a Visiting Fellow at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies since 2005. Professor Robinson was President of the Royal Asiatic Society from 1997 to 2000, and from 2003 to 2006. He served for many years as a trustee of the Charles Wallace (Pakistan) Trust, which he also chaired from 2001 to 2006, the Surrey History Trust, and the Ernst Cassel Memorial Trust. He was awarded the Iqbal Centenary Medal (Pakistan) in 1978. His publications include *Separatism Among Indian Muslims*, 1974 (2nd edition 1993); *Atlas of the Islamic World Since 1500*, 1982; *Varieties of South Asia Islam*, 1988; (ed) *Cambridge Encyclopedia of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka*, 1989; (ed) *Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World*, 1996; *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, 2000; *The Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia*, 2001; *Islam, South Asia and the West*, 2007; *The Mughals and the Islamic Dynasties of India, Iran and Central Asia*, 2007. Professor Robinson became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 1997, and in 2006 he was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE).

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Preface

This Rapporteur's Report summarizes the discussions at the recent Canada-United Kingdom Colloquium on "Social Cohesion: New Challenges to the Established Order." The importance and topicality of this subject are underlined by our decision to return to an issue that had been a focal point of the Toronto colloquium in November 2002, when the subject was "Immigration, Multiculturalism and Citizenship."

The picture conveyed at this year's colloquium was that the challenges facing social cohesion are markedly different between our two countries in a number of respects. These differences provided for some lively debate in the light of the many social and political developments of recent times.

If there is a single lesson to be drawn from the challenges of multiculturalism and pluralism to the established order it is that the different communities, and not least the so-called indigenous community, should maintain a continuing dialogue to strive to understand each other's "language" and customs, without endangering a country's sense of national identity. Integration is achieved by talking and continuous contact which leads to knowledge, which in turn leads to understanding and ultimately to acceptance of our neighbours' point of view.

We would like to express our grateful thanks to Professor Robinson for his invaluable services in fulfilling the role of Rapporteur and in producing his succinct and lucid report. In a topic of this range and diversity, Professor Robinson has skilfully distilled the essential elements of our debate. We draw particular attention to his summary of

the conclusions that were reached and the recommendations that were made for concrete action.

We are also extremely grateful to Baroness Deech as Chair for steering the proceedings in her customarily humane way. We were treated this year to a Birmingham Day organized by Birmingham City Council involving community and faith visits that provided a local perspective on the issues relating to social cohesion within Birmingham. We are indebted to Debra Davies, Director of Public Affairs and Communications, and to Dr Mashuq Ally, Head of Equality and Diversity at Birmingham City Council, for organizing these visits which provided much local colour and interest, and to Councillor Alan Rudge, Cabinet Member for Equalities and Human Resources at Birmingham City Council, for hosting and speaking at the civic dinner with great commitment to the subject for which he is responsible.

Support for this year's subject was provided by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Home Office, and the Department for Communities and Local Government. We acknowledge with gratitude the generous financial backing provided by Victor Dahdaleh as well as by the FCO.

On the Canadian side the colloquium is possible only because of the financial assistance and encouragement of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. We greatly appreciate the advice this year of Naomi Alboim, Keith Banting, Mel Cappe (chair of our advisory committee), and Hugh Segal. Without the logistical support of Mary Rogers, the Canadian team would not have arrived.

We remain as always grateful to the British High Commission in Ottawa and especially to the Canadian High Commission in London for their continuing support and assistance. It was a great privilege, and indeed an endorsement of the role that the Canada-UK Colloquia seeks to play in bilateral relations, to welcome the Honourable Jason Kenney, Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity, who gave a keynote address at the colloquium dinner and contributed to several of the sessions.

Lastly, thanks are due to those behind the scenes who throughout the planning process have devoted much time and energy to

organizing this year's event. Special mention in this respect is due to George Edmonds-Brown, the Executive Secretary of the Canada-United Kingdom Colloquia, who as ever ensured that his meticulous arrangements for the event went smoothly.

Philip J. Peacock	Robert Wolfe
Chairman	School of Policy Studies
British Committee	Queen's University

Social Cohesion: New Challenges to the Established Order

Francis Robinson

INTRODUCTION

The challenge to social cohesion derived from processes of globalization, along with global warming, is arguably one of the greatest challenges facing humankind today. Globalization means that we live in societies of ever-increasing diversity. The pace of globalization means that this diversity is growing at an ever-increasing speed, a speed that many can barely comprehend. This diversity is experienced almost entirely in urban environments; more and more of us live in pluralistic cities, of which Toronto and London, Vancouver and Birmingham, are classic examples.

Globalization means a weakening of some of the old ties that bound us together. The once powerful idea of citizenship in a nation-state has weakened as individuals work in one state to provide for their families in another; as they take advantage of dual citizenship to live in one state while playing politics in another; and as their social and political imaginations expand, inspired by the simplicity and effectiveness of international systems of communication, to embrace affinities and groupings that reach across nation-state boundaries. Globalization means that in this new world of liberal modernity, in this world of enhanced individualism, we

succeed in living together harmoniously not so much because the state enables or commands it, but because individuals will it.

The growing spread and pace of the processes of globalization, moreover, means that there is a continual gulf, perhaps a growing gulf, between our institutions, the information they command, and the language we use—and the realities of diversity in our communities. So state institutions at the local level are often out of harmony with their own communities. Our discourse, too, is often in danger of meeting neither the current realities of diversity nor the current aspirations of our increasingly diverse populations.

It is a measure of the seriousness of matters of social cohesion that, but five years after the Canada-UK Colloquium had addressed aspects of this issue under the title "Immigration, Multiculturalism and Citizenship," the colloquium should return to this theme.[1] It is pertinent to note that the 2007 colloquium took place in a year in which there had been major security threats from home-grown Muslim populations in the United Kingdom, and some concern about such threats in Canada; it was also a year in which the United Kingdom was engaged in operations in Iraq, and both countries were engaged in operations in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the colloquium took place against the immediate background of febrile debates about immigration and how to maintain an appropriate balance between security and individual freedom. In the United Kingdom, the latter debate has crystallized over the number of days an individual might be detained without charge.

In this context, Canada and the United Kingdom are facing new challenges to their internal social cohesion. In the United Kingdom, these challenges are acute; tensions arise from the alienation of segments of indigenous and immigrant communities, and centre in particular on relationships with Muslim communities in the aftermath of 9/11 and 7/7. Some Muslims argue that the

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[1] Daniel Hiebert, *Immigration, Multiculturalism and Citizenship: Rapporteur's Report.* Canada-UK Colloquium, Toronto, 14–17 November 2002 (Kingston, ON: School of Policy Studies, 2003).

British response has been ineffective, indeed, that it may have actually contributed to their sense of alienation from, and lack of identification with, the national consensus.

In Canada, challenges to internal social cohesion seem less acute, but there are indications that some people do not feel a strong sense of attachment to, or identity with, collective institutions. This disengagement is reflected in particular in the attitudes of young people toward politics and in the declining turnout in Canadian elections. In both countries there are signs of resentment from groups who feel that traditional concepts of established order are not shared by newcomers.

Policy-makers in the United Kingdom and in Canada need to address these challenges to internal social cohesion. So among the questions the colloquium set out to address in full or in part were: What kinds of institutions are needed in a citizen-centred national policy? What kinds of policies are needed in order to encourage national harmony and counter threats to national security? Are there lessons about building a sense of belonging to be learned from developments in Northern Ireland? Are the concepts of multiculturalism, social inclusion, and pluralism sufficient to address current challenges? To what extent has the effectiveness of current institutions and policies been altered by changes in the relations between citizens, between citizens and the state, and between citizens and the world? And to what extent have these relationships been exacerbated by the threat of global terrorism and by persistent socioeconomic and political inequalities at home and abroad?

Those attending the colloquium came from a wide range of organizations and professions including government and non-government agencies, universities, the media, and law. Their views, in consequence, tended to reflect several angles of vision, as well as the different histories of the United Kingdom and Canada. Indeed, such was the diversity of views expressed both within and between the two delegations that distilling common themes from the debate was a challenge. This report follows the sequence of the colloquium, and in several places cites speakers who gave

formal presentations. (The papers, along with a complete list of participants, can be found at http://www.canada-uk.net/2007)

Seven Key Themes Stand Out

The seriousness of the matter. There was no doubting the threat to internal social cohesion, whether it was from evidence of the growing numbers of people taking up dual citizenship, larger remittances from the United Kingdom and Canada to other countries, the urgency surrounding debates over immigration, or the problem of addressing law and customs antithetical to the laws and values of the United Kingdom and Canada. Indeed, terrorist groups present real threats to the security of both countries, including restrictions on the rights of the individual, which some deem necessary to meet these threats.

The problem of language. It was often mentioned that the language in which issues of diversity are discussed is damaging to internal social cohesion, whether it is the rabble-rousing tone of media coverage on immigration; the use by politicians of inflammatory phrases such as "War on Terror" and "Clash of Civilizations," which polarize groups of people; or rhetoric that bundles all Muslims into one pattern of behaviour, despite the vast range of Muslim cultures, the many different ways of being Muslim, and the varied ways of interpreting Islam. In addition to this, the discourse on culture and ethnicity distorts the perception of problems, which might just as well be understood as those of class or deprivation, a process described by Tariq Ramadan as a "religionizing" of social and economic issues.

The danger of parallel systems. Running through much of the discussion was concern about the threats that faith-based schools and systems of law posed to internal social cohesion. It was acknowledged that faith-based schools often attracted students from other religions, for instance, the Muslims who attended Roman Catholic and Church of England schools. But the general opinion was that parallel systems of this kind were, on balance, harmful.

The need to challenge what is not right. There was anxiety that respect for "culture" had led representatives of the state and others to fail to challenge practices that were illegal or unacceptable. Consistency is important, whether it means fair procedures for all, supporting democracy at home and abroad, or supporting equality within the family as well as in the workplace.

The importance of local solutions. Social cohesion begins in local communities. This is where people learn to live, work, and play together. It is here that people learn to talk to each other with respect and build what Sukhvinder Stubbs termed "meaningful habits of solidarity." This emphasis is in harmony with one of the main findings of *Our Shared Future*, the Report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion, commissioned by the UK government.[2]

The role of women. It is almost a mantra of contemporary development literature that women are crucial to success. The colloquium developed a similar position regarding effective integration. Thus, leadership opportunities for women at local and national levels need to be developed and supported, and access to their full panoply of rights as citizens under the law needs to be enabled.

The effectiveness of policies of multiculturalism. Throughout the colloquium there was a process of reflection on the significance and effectiveness of multiculturalism in building internal social cohesion. Here there were some differences between the Canadian and the British positions. For Canadians, multiculturalism was iconic; as the Hon. Jason Kenney, Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity, reminded us, multiculturalism was the basis on which the Canadian national project had been built and

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[2] *Our Shared Future*, Report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (London: HMSO, June 2007), www.integrationandcohesion.org.uk. It was notable that, apart from the message from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, which was incorporated into the colloquium program, this report and its findings were not mentioned once in the proceedings.

was continuing to develop. For the British, the effectiveness of multiculturalism was contested. For some it was a symbol of acceptance, but for others it had become a real barrier to building internal social cohesion.

CHALLENGES TO SOCIAL INCLUSION

The colloquium began with a consideration of the current challenges to social inclusion. From the UK perspective, Sukhvinder Stubbs identified three: the way in which the current discussion about immigration, which tended to overlap with that on terrorism, was damaging efforts to promote internal social cohesion; the importance of recognizing that disadvantage, poverty, and squeezed public services were driving conflict and dissatisfaction among marginalized communities—that it was not possible to talk about social inclusion while ignoring poverty; and the need to foster "meaningful habits of solidarity" between different communities, in effect, to build active ways of working together at the local level.

From the Canadian perspective, Keith Banting identified five flashpoints in social cohesion: Sharia-derived law and the funding of faith-based schools; the issue of reasonable accommodation in Quebec; the impact of the security agenda; concerns about the integration of second-generation immigrants; and the debate over dual citizenship. He reminded the colloquium of Canada's "diverse diversity," with its founding divisions between the British and French, its large number of Aboriginal peoples, and its wide range of immigrant minorities. The 1960s and 1970s had seen a revolutionary change in Canada's diversity model with the end of the old British symbolic order and its replacement with a "Canadianness" that immigrants have been intimately involved in fashioning. In considering whether this new model was working, Banting used recent survey evidence to tell a "cautiously optimistic" story. Yes, Canadians were confronting many of the challenges facing other countries, and in doing so there was much concern over the integration of second-generation immigrants. Encouragingly,

there was little evidence of enduring fault lines between "old" and "new" Canadians. Indeed, the major fault lines seem to be within the ranks of the old established groups, as Quebec Francophone and Aboriginal Canadians remain less integrated into society as a whole.

Subsequent discussion focused on the importance of keeping public services up-to-date with society's changing diversity; the problem of politicians and the media inflaming issues around immigration and damaging social cohesion; the importance of immigration being seen to be a controlled process, and the value of setting its figures, especially in the United Kingdom, in the context of those for emigration; and the problem of integrating second-generation immigrants and, alongside this, the issue of reverse migration from both Canada and the United Kingdom to countries of origin, a process that could be seen either as a testament to failed integration or to the new attractiveness of the economies of some countries of origin. Further discussion focused on issues of poverty and of dual citizenship. It was noted that the session had illuminated some of the differences as well as some of the similarities between the United Kingdom and Canada concerning the challenges to social inclusion.

The Challenge of Security

While the presentations of the security experts set out the differences between British and Canadian experiences, what was striking was the similarity in their concerns and approaches. Let us turn, first, to the differences. Robert Whalley emphasized that the international terrorist threat to Britain was associated not just with al-Qaida but with over forty other terrorist organizations. Recently, the scale of the threat had risen to the point that the Director-General of the Security Service, Jonathan Evans, speaking on 5 November 2007, referred to at least 2,000 individuals who "pose a direct threat to national security and public safety, because of their support for terrorism." It was, moreover, a threat very different from that of the past three decades regarding Ireland, where

politics had been as significant as violence. This threat involved "no warnings, no intermediaries, no calibration of the violence to the intended effects, no negotiable agenda, no limit on casualties, and no hesitation to use unconventional weapons." Furthermore, it was being carried forward by groups with a substantial grasp of modern means of communication. Among the methods being used to address the challenge were engagement with local communities and the widest possible collaboration with security agencies, both domestically and around the world.

The situation in Canada, according to Jim Judd, was somewhat different. Canada ranked second among OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries in terms of the number of foreign-born residents and citizens. But it was also one of the most secure countries in the world. Some security threats had emerged, but nothing on the scale experienced by Britain. Canada's approach to the threats had been to make sure that its security personnel reflected the diversity of the country and to increase its efforts to engage with local communities.

In addition to engaging with local communities, Canadian and British security experts shared other approaches. Both emphasized the importance of sensitive, even fastidious, use of language; terror was the work of small groups of people, and it was crucial in responding to the threat not to stigmatize communities. Both emphasized, too, the importance of not permitting threats to security to destroy what society wished to preserve. We noted the title of the recent Canadian national security strategy, "Securing an Open Society," and Robert Whalley's heartfelt maxim, "security is no more than the physical manifestation of the society we want to be."

Discussion revolved around the reasons for radicalization and, in particular, the role of religion as a motivating force. It was noted that a recent survey of 150 madrasa students undertaking jihadi activities in Pakistan had produced the following reasons in order of priority: a sense of injustice, group dynamics, jihadi preaching, unemployment, and a sense of adventure/nothing much else to

do.[3] There was some debate over the role of religion as a motivating force. Both security experts declared that there was nothing in Islam which justified terrorism. Others, perhaps with greater expertise in Islamic matters, were more cautious. Islam, like any great religious tradition, offers a "repertoire of possibilities," among which there might be interpretations, however deplored by the majority of Muslims, that justified terrorist action.

The Challenge of Engaging with Muslim Communities

The colloquium then turned to the experiences of Canada and the United Kingdom in engaging with their Muslim communities. Denise Helly set out Canada's systems for enabling social inclusion and social cohesion: its policy of multiculturalism adopted in 1979 with the aim both of eradicating ideas of white, European superiority and of enabling the integration of immigrants into Canadian society on the basis of absolute equality; the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which reinforced this policy by prohibiting discrimination, including religious discrimination; the 1985 Supreme Court judgment, which initiated the concept of "discrimination through prejudicial effect," bolstering the struggle against religious discrimination by creating the obligation of accommodation to counter this effect; the 1986 and 1991 Employment Equity Programs; and the 1988 Act for the Preservation and Enhancement of Multiculturalism, which went beyond issues of respect for human rights, requiring the active promotion of an open and pluralistic society.

Unfortunately, in the case of Muslims, these policies have not been as successful as might be hoped. A strong negative stereotype of Muslims, which goes back to the 1990s, persists among at

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[3] Some of these madrasa students included those involved in the Lal Masjid episode in Islamabad in the summer of 2007. (Masooda Bano, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, personal communication).

least one-third of Canadians. Among the factors impeding Muslim inclusion in Canadian society are the following: powerful lobbies opposed to a public role for religion; beliefs that religious faith represents a rejection of progress and modernity; the lack of knowledge of Islam in universities and government agencies; the indifference of Jewish organizations, on account of the Palestine issue, to Muslim rights in spite of their notable tradition in Canada of defending minority rights; the mediocre coverage of Islam and Middle Eastern topics by much of the media; the inability of Canada's Muslim elites to organize a powerful lobby and present an intelligible description of Islam; and the failure of Muslim NGOs to stand up for Muslim rights and to participate more in social and cultural life.[4]

Surveying the current state of engagement with Muslim communities in the United Kingdom, Tariq Ramadan made three initial points: that he did not find comparisons of national models very helpful because the real action was at the local level where communities learned to work together and to trust each other; that it was crucial not to "religionize" non-religious matters—that is, the differences between socioeconomic and religious problems must be respected; and that a paradigm shift was needed so that we no longer talk in terms of Muslim communities as if they were separate from the rest of society, but instead of our society and our common challenges. Then, turning to address some specific issues, he argued that the seeds of radicalization lay not in poverty or in foreign policy but in religious discourse, in particular ways of reading and interpreting texts, which needed to be challenged from within Muslim communities. He stressed the importance of listening to what people were actually saying, and that failure to do so was likely to breed extremism; however, when Muslims stepped outside the law, by advocating violence for instance, they must be challenged. Furthermore, he maintained that a

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[4] Denise Helly, "Are Muslims Discriminated Against in Canada since September 2001?" *Journal of Canadian Ethnic Studies* 36, no. 1 (2004): 24-47.

cohesive future for UK society does not lie down the road of faith-based schools, and so it is crucial that the state has strong policies in favour of mixed schooling. The Muslim presence should be institutionalized by, for instance, training imams in UK universities and colleges and granting them official diplomas. Finally, he emphasized the importance of supporting women who were emerging as leaders at the local level, a further area in need of institutionalization.

Discussion revealed some skepticism as to whether the Muslim presence in Canadian media was as weak as had been suggested. Questions were also raised as to whether Muslim advocacy of violence should be seen as a political rather than a religious matter. There was strong support for Tariq Ramadan's opposition to faith schools, and considerable interest on both the British and the Canadian sides in institutionalizing the training of imams. In cases where there appeared to be tension between religious values and modern values, participants preferred resolution in favour of the latter. The line taken was that fundamental human rights must come before culture; communities should not seek the benefits of democracy and equality outside the home and ignore these benefits within the home.

The Challenge of Multiple Identities:
From Multiculturalism to Pluralism

Consideration was then given to the significance of globalization for policies of multiculturalism, in particular the challenge of multiple identities. Robert Wolfe reminded the colloquium that a plural society like Canada could not create a shared identity based on language, ethnicity, or culture; the national project had to be defined by policy, by what Canadians agreed to do together. The first national policy of 1879 aimed to create a country that extended across the continent. The second national policy emerged in the 1930s as governments created a welfare state. Over the past twenty-five years national policies have operated within conditions that are fundamentally changing under pressures of globalization: the Canadian economy has become increasingly international with

interprovincial exports falling to 20 percent and foreign exports rising to 40 percent of gross domestic product; electronic innovation has reduced the role of newspaper and national media in social communication and increased that of the individual through the growth of many-to-many communication networks, thus flattening old hierarchies; the composition of Canada's immigrants has changed as 80 percent of recent arrivals are neither English nor French; and 80 percent of Canadians now live in cities—most new immigrants in just three of them. In this overwhelmingly urban Canada, economic links between Canadian cities are no longer more important than links with cities around the world. Social ties among Canadians are weakening. In this context, a third national policy is emerging that reflects these new conditions. Its principles are to facilitate the agency of the individual citizen; to enable citizens to have real choice in expressing their multiple identities, as opposed to having one identity imposed upon them; and to disaggregate government programs so that they became less producer-focused and more citizen-centred. In this scenario Canada has remained multicultural because that is what it is. But in terms of considering it as a society, it is better thought of as pluralist. Multiculturalism evokes only one of the dimensions of identity, robbing individuals of the right to choose.[5]

Trevor Phillips, in considering the challenges of multiple identities for the United Kingdom, not only reinforced Robert Wolfe's analysis of the impact of globalization but emphasized the growing speed and intensity of change: people were coming to work in the United Kingdom in growing numbers; remittances sent back home were increasing at a similar pace; and government was having problems keeping up with the growing diversity of towns and cities. In short, the problem of how we live together has become a leading question of the age. Phillips went on to consider the effectiveness of British policies of multiculturalism in addressing

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[5] This presentation was based on Roderick A. Macdonald and Robert Wolfe, "Beyond Multiculturalism: National Policies and the Challenge of Multiple Identities" (unpublished paper).

this growing diversity. While these policies were introduced out of a desire to recognize diversity, they were implemented in ways that tended to trap people in their ethnicities. Such an outcome, Phillips suggested, was not appropriate for a democracy in which people should be free to fashion their own lives and identities regardless of who they might be through accident of birth. Moving beyond multiculturalism, he declared, meant reaching a place where three things were at work: (a) a sense of procedural fairness and social justice—the British had problems with immigration not because they disliked foreigners, and not because they feared the numbers involved, but because they felt people were cheating; (b) the recognition that we have a common identity that binds us, over and above our differences—that is, Britishness is a way of doing things, among which the instinct to form a queue might be regarded as typical; and (c) a way of talking to each other that gives each of us dignity and respect.

Discussion revealed concerns that in a globalizing world the positive role the state might play in supporting internal social cohesion was being overlooked. The state was needed to ameliorate the ways in which individual autonomy and social integration work against each other. The state was needed to help ensure equity, social inclusion, and social interaction. It was not clear that individual autonomy and mutual obligation would be sufficient to produce a satisfactory outcome. Moreover, Phillips's critique of multiculturalism was not permitted to pass without comment. We were reminded that the concept was essential to Canada; it had been part of the country's DNA since 1759. There was also the feeling, in part echoing Phillips's view, that the problem of multiculturalism in the United Kingdom was not the policy per se but the way in which it had been implemented.

COMPETING SOURCES OF AUTHORITY IN
A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY

The colloquium moved on to consider how pluralistic democracies might address the claims of competing sources of authority. Mota Singh noted that in recent years the sovereignty of the British

Parliament had been constrained by international obligations consequent upon the British accession to the Treaty of Rome. He wondered if there might be further threats to parliamentary sovereignty from the claims of ethnic minorities. As far as Sharia-derived law was concerned, he did not think there was a problem; it was not an issue that currently divided people, and it could only be implemented in a Muslim state. One point of particular importance was his reference to India—arguably the world's most complex society, embracing a great variety of races, tribes, castes, communities, religions, languages, customs, and lifestyles—where since 1947 political pluralism has been a most effective way of accommodating diversity. It was thought that there might be value in looking at India's strategies and, in particular, the work of its National Commission for Minorities established in 1992.

Marion Boyd explored the central tension in multiculturalism of how to balance the rights of minority groups with the rights of individuals within those groups. She noted that in Canada the majority of citizens and immigrants identified closely with the values of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the rule of law as determined by a democratically elected government. A minority, on the other hand, seemed to be wedded to religious and cultural traditions of authority that bore little resemblance to these values in either theory or practice. She considered the problems that arose when some Muslims in Ontario set out to use the arbitration provisions of the Canadian Charter to make Sharia-derived law available to members of their community. Her recommendation to the Ontario government had been a form of "transformational accommodation"; that is, Muslims could if they wished have recourse to Sharia-derived law, but if they did not wish to accept the outcome they could go to the state courts, whose decisions would be dominant. It was an approach that enabled the inclusion of a minority community while ensuring that the rights and choices of individual members of that community were respected. In any event, the path of "transformational accommodation" was rejected by the provincial government, which ruled that religious courts did not have jurisdiction in Ontario. This ruling left an

unsatisfactory situation in which religious courts continue to operate unofficially and without the oversight of law.

Discussion revealed strong support for the Canadian Charter, although it was recognized that it could be used in different ways. Participants also expressed a distaste for parallel systems and a preference for the law of the land to have the upper hand over the claims of religious law.

APPROACHES TO THE FUTURE

Approaches to the future were then discussed, which inevitably meant considering the future of policies of multiculturalism. Mona Siddiqui reflected on how the July 2005 bombing in London had called into question the success of Britain's policies of multiculturalism. The fact that Muslims raised in the United Kingdom had attacked fellow citizens suggested a failure of integration. By the same token, it raised the question of whether Muslims had different values from those of British society. Were they able to accept a civil and diverse society? Indeed, a German political leader had told her recently that the clash between "German" values and "Muslim" values was the most severe challenge German society had confronted since the Berlin Wall had come down. In addressing the failed integration of Muslims, Mona Siddiqui indicated that, on the one hand, there were aspects of the position of Muslims that needed to be better understood; for instance, that modernity had come to them through European imperialism and was tainted by that experience; and that members of Muslim communities, like many religious and ethnic communities, did not see themselves as part of the debate—they were just trying to get on with their lives. On the other hand, the state must act with courage in dealing with Muslim minorities; it must be willing to challenge practices and positions that need to be challenged. In the same way, Muslim communities must realize that they are accountable for their actions. They have come to the United Kingdom to live not as members of the majority ruling group, but as minorities. Members of these communities must ask themselves: What

vision do I have for my life here? How can I work together with my fellow citizens to build the society in which we live?

Mobina Jaffer referred to the success of Canada's policies of multiculturalism. Indeed, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms had enabled Canadians to develop a new identity. In considering new approaches, she emphasized the importance of using inclusive language; for example, *assimilation* was not inclusive, while *integration* was. And there were problems of communication: too often community members talked only among themselves. It was important for the media, in particular television, to operate in ways and in languages that were relevant to local communities, that included them and enabled them to belong. Future action required real integration in matters of health care, education, and employment. Gender was also a major issue. It was not good enough to back away from criticizing harmful practices, such as genital mutilation, because they were regarded as part of "culture." Indeed, it was most important to act so as to include women in future integrative programs, because that was the best way to get things done.

Several themes emerged in the subsequent debate. There was further emphasis on working at the local level, on building human understanding through personal contact. Reference was made to the good work being done at this level by the police in both Britain and Canada. A heartening sign in Britain was the emergence of a young Muslim leadership ready to engage in civil society issues. On the other hand, the prominence of alcohol in British social life and its conspicuous consumption in urban environments was a barrier to social cohesion. A particular problem of the multiculturalism debate in the Canadian context, at least in Quebec, was that it had come to be dominated by Muslim issues when issues of deprivation and marginalization were just as relevant, if not more so, to blacks, poor whites, and Aboriginals.

There were two reflections on the tendency of cultures, broadly understood, to ossify once moved from their homelands to the Western environment. The first involved the dutiful maintenance of ethnic and religious customs in the West that had long since

been abandoned in the lands of origin. The second concerned a tendency to produce deeply conservative interpretations of the Sharia in Western environments, rather than interpretations that responded positively to the challenges of the West.[6] In response to these reflections, Mona Siddiqui made it clear that she would resist any attempt by the UK government to codify the Sharia; it would be bad for Muslims. Mobina Jaffer emphasized the importance of a continuing dialogue with society in the context of which outmoded practices could be challenged.

Some consideration was given to the role of the arts in building social cohesion. It was noted that minority communities in both Canada and the United Kingdom had made important contributions in music and literature.

Finally, participants considered two major issues of approach and process. The first, which was emphasized several times, was the importance of learning from each other, of engaging in interaction and being changed in the process. This was encapsulated in the useful analogy of a chemical reaction in which the constituent chemicals were changed forever by their interaction with each other, producing a completely new compound. The second was the argument put forward by some that multiculturalism in Canada should be placed in the broader context of pluralism. Because globalization encouraged a never-ending process of fragmentation of cultures, of communities and so on, there would always be a pressing duty to accommodate and to adapt.

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[6] It should be noted that there are major scholars promoting progressive interpretations of Islamic law in the West. Prominent among them is Khaled Abou el Fadl, who was born in Kuwait and educated at Egypt's al-Azhar, as well as at Yale and Princeton, and is now the Omar and Azmeralda Alfi Professor of Law at the University of California, Los Angeles. Among works demonstrating his progressive approach to interpretation are *Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority and Women* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2001); *The Place of Toleration in Islam* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002); and *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

CONCLUSION

History plays an important role in the fate of multiculturalism as a policy in Canada and the United Kingdom. In Canada, multiculturalism since 1759 has been the rock on which the Canadian national project has been built. From the beginning it was the basis on which the British, French, and Aboriginals came to live together in the new state. Since the second half of the twentieth century, as people have been migrating to Canada from all over the world, it has been the emblem of Canadianness—the assurance, supported by an impressive raft of legislation, of the right of all to be included.

For Britain, multiculturalism has at least some roots in the imperial past. That past was supported by an Orientalist scholarship that tended to essentialize religion, race, and identity, producing forms of knowledge that influenced both imperial policy and the shape of the nations that emerged at Independence, most notably in the division of British India into the states of India and Pakistan in 1947. There is a sense that, despite good intentions, the implementation of multicultural policies may not have entirely escaped the influence of these old imperial understandings. In consequence, British multiculturalism has tended to trap people in their ethnicities.

In recent years, both Canada and the United Kingdom under growing pressures of globalization have seen the beginnings of a reassessment of their multicultural policies. In Canada, the restriction of religious courts in Ontario and concerns that multiculturalism tends to prioritize one aspect of identity are arguably straws in the wind. This said, because multiculturalism is so central to Canadian identity, the reassessment has been in the direction—emphasized by several (though not all) speakers at the colloquium—of reframing multiculturalism within a discourse of pluralism. In the United Kingdom the reassessment has gone further. Some voices at the colloquium were raised in favour of multiculturalism, but the weight of opinion, whether measured by opposition to the policy in general or by attitudes to issues such as faith schools in particular, was opposed. Multiculturalism was

seen as a barrier to, rather than an enabler of, integration. It is significant that the report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion mentions multiculturalism just once, and as something of the past.[7] Looking to the future, both the report and contributors to the colloquium emphasized the importance of addressing cohesion at the local level through a "whole community approach."[8]

As policies of multiculturalism are refashioned according to the distinctive requirements of Canada and the United Kingdom, it is hoped that the major issues regarding social cohesion, which were substantially endorsed by the colloquium, will be noted:

- the importance of working at the local level
- the importance of seeing the task as one for the whole community
- the divisive nature of the wrong kinds of language and the different meanings of vocabulary
- the divisive nature of parallel systems
- the positive role women can play
- the need to challenge practices that deny basic human rights

In addition, two concrete recommendations were made:

1. Institutionalize religious leadership among Muslims in the West by training imams in our universities and colleges.

2. Encourage immigrants to learn the national languages of their new homes (i.e., English, and English/French).

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[7] *Our Shared Future*, para. 4.3, p. 46.
[8] *Our Shared Future*, p. 8; para. 4.11, p. 48.

APPENDIX

PROGRAM

THE 2007 CANADA-UK COLLOQUIUM

Social Cohesion: New Challenges to the Established Order

Chair: **The Baroness Deech, DBE, Hon LLD**
Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

FRIDAY 16TH NOVEMBER

9:15 a.m.   **Session 1: Social Inclusion: Current Challenges**

UK: Ms Sukhvinder Stubbs, Chief Executive of the
Barrow Cadbury Trust

Canada: Professor Keith Banting, CM, School of Policy
Studies, Queen's University

11:00 a.m. **Session 2: The Security Challenge**

UK: Mr Robert Whalley, CB, Consultant Senior Fellow,
International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)

Canada: Mr Jim Judd, Director, Canadian Security and
Intelligence Service

2:00 p.m.   **Session 3: Engaging with Muslim Communities**

UK: Professor Tariq Ramadan, Oxford University

Canada: Professeure Denise Helly, Institut national de
recherche scientifique, Montréal

3:45 p.m. Session 4: Beyond Multiculturalism: The Challenges of Multiple Identities

UK: Mr Trevor Phillips, OBE, Chair, Equality and Human Rights Commission

Canada: Professor Robert Wolfe, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University
(Professor Wolfe's paper was written in collaboration with Professor Roderick Macdonald of McGill University)

7:30 p.m. The Colloquium Dinner

Speaker: Hon. Jason Kenney, PC, MP (Calgary South), Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity

SATURDAY 17TH NOVEMBER

9:00 a.m. Session 5: Competing Sources of Authority in a Pluralist Society

UK: His Honour Judge Mota Singh, QC (Retd.)

Canada: Hon. Marion Boyd, former Attorney-General of Ontario, Bencher of the Law Society of Upper Canada

10:45 a.m. Session 6: New Approaches

UK: Professor Mona Siddiqui, FRSE, FRSA, Glasgow University

Canada: Hon. Senator Mobina Jaffer, Senate of Canada (Representing the Province of British Columbia)

2:00 p.m. Rapporteur's Report

Professor Francis Robertson CBE, Royal Holloway, University of London

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

CHAIR

The Baroness Deech, DBE, Hon LLD
Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

RAPPORTEUR

Professor Francis Robinson, CBE
Royal Holloway, University of London

CANADIAN ADVISOR TO THE 2007 COLLOQUIUM

Professor Robert Wolfe
School of Policy Studies, Queen's University

SPEAKER: CIVIC DINNER 15 NOVEMBER

Councillor Alan Rudge
Cabinet Member, Equalities and Human Resources, Birmingham City Council

SPEAKER: COLLOQUIUM DINNER 16 NOVEMBER

Hon. Jason Kenney, PC, MP
MP (Calgary South), Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity

BRITISH SPEAKERS (in order of presentation)

Ms Sukhvinder Stubbs
Chief Executive of the Barrow Cadbury Trust

Mr Robert Whalley, CB
Consultant Senior Fellow, International Institute for Strategic Studies

Professor Tariq Ramadan
Oxford University

Mr Trevor Phillips, OBE
Chair, Equality and Human Rights Commission

His Honour Judge Mota Singh, QC (Retd.)

Professor Mona Siddiqui, FRSE, FRSA
Glasgow University

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Professor Keith Banting, CM
School of Policy Studies, Queen's University

Mr Jim Judd
Director, Canadian Security and Intelligence Service

Professor Denise Helly
Institut national de recherche scientifique, Montréal

Professor Robert Wolfe
Queen's University

Hon. Marion Boyd
Former Attorney-General of Ontario, Bencher of the Law Society of
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Hon. Senator Mobina Jaffer
Senate of Canada (Representing the Province of British Columbia)

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Mr Anthony Cary, CMG
British High Commissioner to Canada

Mr Peter J Chenery
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University of Bristol

Mr Carl Morris
Cardiff University

The Baroness Neuberger, DBE
Life peer (Liberal Democrat), Prime Minister's Champion on Volunteering, Chair of the Independent Commission on the Future of Volunteering

Mr Philip Peacock
Chairman, Canada-UK Colloquia

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Ms Rosanna Scotti
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Mr Jim Wright
High Commissioner for Canada, London