

Pathways into Radicalisation: Why Do People Become Radicals?

00:30	<p>Robert Parsons</p> <p>Okay. If I can just start by introducing myself: I'm Robert Parsons, International Affairs Editor at France 24 [<i>France Vingt-Quatre</i>], France's young TV station which seeks to rival CNN, Peter, and the BBC! And I'll start by introducing my panel now, and then I'll pose a few questions to them, and then I'll throw the floor open to you.</p>
01:02	<p>On my right, Shiraz Maher is a former member of Hizb ut-Tahrir, a radical Islamist organisation campaigning for the creation of a global caliphate or Islamic state. Hizb ut-Tahrir argues that democracy and Islam are incompatible, that the State of Israel should be destroyed, and that Shariah Law should be imposed all over the world by violence, if necessary. It operates in many countries and has a well-established base in the United Kingdom. Shiraz, who was a regional leader of Hizb ut-Tahrir in UK, has frequently written and spoken about the circumstances which led him to becoming a Muslim extremist. He has made frequent appearances as an expert on political Islam for Channel 4, Sky News and the BBC. His book, <i>'The Thinking Man's al-Qaeda: Hizb ut-Tahrir and The Rise of Political Islam'</i>, will be published later this year.</p>
01:55	<p>On my immediate left, Olivier Roy is Research Director at the French National Center for Scientific Research and a lecturer for both the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences and the Paris Institute for Political Studies. He's been a consultant to the French Foreign Ministry since 1983, has served as a consultant to the UN Office for Coordinating Relief in Afghanistan, and as Special OSCE representative to Tajikistan. He's the author of numerous books on Iran, Islam and Asian politics, including <i>'The Failure of Political Islam'</i>, <i>'Globalized Islam: The search for a new ummah'</i>, <i>'Today's Turkey: A European State?'</i> and <i>'The Illusions of September 11'</i>. His most recent book, <i>'Secularism Confronts Islam'</i>, looks at the place of Islam in a secular society and at the diverse experiences of Muslim immigrants in the West.</p>
02:45	<p>On my far right, Peter Bergen is Schwartz Senior Fellow with the New America Foundation in Washington, DC and Adjunct Professor at the School of Advanced International Studies at John Hopkins University, a Research Fellow at New York University's Center on Law & Security, and CNN's terrorism analyst and author of <i>'Holy War, Inc.: Inside The Secret World of bin Laden'</i>—a bestseller that's been translated into 18 languages. In January 2008 Bergen started teaching at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He's travelled repeatedly to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia to report on bin Laden and al-Qaeda. And in 1997, as producer for CNN, Peter conducted bin Laden's first television interview. His most recent book is <i>'The Osama bin Laden I Know: An Oral History of al-Qaeda's Leader'</i>.</p>

03:40	<p>And on my far left, Abdullah Anas is Algerian in origin. He went to Afghanistan way back in 1983 to fight with Mujahedin. He remained there until 1992, when he returned to Algeria. He was a founder of the Office of Services, the forerunner of al-Qaeda, and knew Osama bin Laden well. He married the daughter of Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, leader of the Afghan Arab fighters, and became the closest friend amongst the Arabs to Ahmed Mas'ud, the Mujahedin leader who became head of the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. During the war against the Soviet Union, he also became close to the Emir of the Arab Mujahedin. Today's he's the Council in Exile of the Algerian political party Islamic Salvation Front, and lives in London, having gained political asylum and British citizenship.</p>
04:30	<p>Well, I'd like to start off, if I could, by putting a question to Shiraz Maher and ask him the theme of our debate today: why do people become radicals, and why did he become a member of Hizb ut-Tahrir? What is the attraction of such organisations, Shiraz, to young Muslims, in the UK in particular?</p>
04:49	<p>Shiraz Maher Thank you. I think if you take the overall picture of people we've seen in this country who are today involved in the upper strata of a movement like Hizb ut-Tahrir—those who have been convicted of terrorist offences, those who have <i>engaged</i> in terrorist offences—it's not the typical picture that we all once held of social deprivation, of people who were desperate, of people who didn't have access to opportunity. Overwhelmingly these are people who are educated, who have been afforded all the benefits of living in Western society. They are upwardly mobile and they are affluent.</p>
05:27	<p>So what is it, then, that's taken all of these people, including myself at one point, away from mainstream society and encouraging them to engage with radical Islam? I believe that ultimately underlying all of this is a battle of ideas: an ideology of Islamism which says that Islam and Muslims are fundamentally incompatible with the West and its political culture. And that then seeks to alienate people from the society that exists around them. And ultimately, if you think about it, for them it's one of two things: the closer you move to the West, the further you move away from Islam, in their opinion. The further you move towards Islam, then the more you must detach yourself from the society around you.</p>
06:15	<p>So the common idea sometimes people say is: 'How can you live here in the West, when you hate it and everything it stands for?' But that idea of confrontation, of being agitated by society, actually goes towards reassuring you in yourself mentally and reassuring you in the fact that you feel you're more Islamic now, because you're feeling even more aggrieved with what's happening around you.</p>

06:36	To give a sort of very quick example of this, on 30 June last year a Jeep packed full of explosives crashed into Glasgow Airport. Two men emerged: one on fire, the other one not. One died: the driver, Kafeel Ahmed; and the other, Bilal Abdullah, is currently awaiting trial and is being held at Belmarsh. Both of these men were known to me and were very good friends of mine when I was in Hizb ut-Tahrir, when we all lived in Cambridge. I lost contact with him in 2005, and two years later they went on to commit this atrocity.
07:13	The trajectory of Kafeel is incredibly interesting. I've been working now for some time to retrace his steps and to follow his own path. When he moved from India, he first went to Belfast, where he did a master's, and there all his friends describe him as being incredibly well integrated. They describe him as working on interfaith forums, as opposing the Palestinian Intifada—he couldn't see the logic of it.
07:40	When he moved to Cambridge, it was through his direct contact with Hizb ut-Tahrir, myself and other members who lived in the city at the time, that he was radicalised, that he was detached from society. He gave up his non-Muslim friends, as we had done ourselves. He began only to mix in circles of extremists and radicals—not even mixing with other Muslims, who he felt didn't live up to the standards that he was now trying to emulate.
08:05	Once we left, he met Bilal Abdullah, who was also there, but Bilal remained. And the two of them continued down a path of extremism—having never joined Hizb ut-Tahrir, I should stress that. But the point is this is something which is ideas-driven and ideas-led, and that then spills over into all kinds of things.
08:28	Robert Parsons Just to follow on that, Shiraz, what in your view should the State be doing to prevent the sort of radicalisation that led you to join Hizb ut-Tahrir?
08:37	Shiraz Maher I think the State faces a real difficulty in engaging with the ideas aspect, on one hand, because ultimately to theological debate that needs to be carried by Muslims. And Muslims need to organise themselves to fight back against that. But very quickly, what the State can do is for a long time now they've given the ear of Government, funding and backing to Islamist organisations which have ultimately worked to undermine the West in one way or another.
09:07	So the Government needs to be at the forefront of disenfranchising a lot of those movements: in no longer funding them, in no longer giving them airtime, credibility and credence. And that's something which, encouragingly, <i>has</i> changed, to a large part. If you look at the people the Government spoke to after the Glasgow attacks, compared to 7/7, then you see a massive shift in who they're talking to and who they're listening to.

09:30	Also, in recent months many of you will have heard about the book <i>'The Islamist'</i> , written by Ed Hussain, who is involved with Hizb ut-Tahrir. And some of you will have also heard of Maajid Nawaz, who was imprisoned in Egypt, in the same prison as Said Qutb, who was also a senior-ranking member of Hizb ut-Tahrir—this is Maajid Nawaz, not Said Qutb. And Maajid has also left the organisation.
09:54	There are lots of others, as well, who have done the same. And we are in the early stages now of launching a new think-tank called the Quilliam Foundation [all one word: quilliamfoundation.org], which is headed and led by former Islamists and will engage in that theological debate here in Britain at a grass-roots level to explain our experiences to other young Muslims, to prevent them getting involved in the first place. And ultimately we will also be engaging in the ideological, theoretical Islamic debate that needs to happen. And for the first time, I think, it's very encouraging now that we've seen the formal unification of a body that's going to take that message back to the community.
10:34	Ultimately, the message of radical Islam in this country spread off the backs of young Muslims like ourselves. And if we're not the ones now to lead the fight-back against that, then it's never going to happen.
10:48	Robert Parsons Thanks, Shiraz. Olivier, if I could turn to you. There's similar problems in France with radicalised Muslim youth, but a different approach from the State about how to deal with it. There's been a lot of criticism about the multicultural approach that we've seen in Britain and other countries. In France there's a different, more assimilationist approach. Is it any better, do you think, any more effective than what we're seeing in Britain?
11:10	Olivier Roy I think that both models—the multiculturalist model and the assimilationist model—are in crisis. And they are in crisis, in fact, for the same reason: because both models presuppose that there is a link between religion and culture. So in the French system, when you become French you are no more a Muslim. And there is a problem with the visibility of Islam—and of any religion, by the way—in the public sphere.
11:38	While, in the multiculturalist model, once you are a Muslim you retain a foreign culture. You still are a Pakistani, a South Asian, an Arab and what you want. But the problem now is the disconnect between cultural identities and religious choices. And it goes in two contrary directions. One is some sort of integration: you can be a citizen and a Muslim; you can belong to a nation state and to a faith community. This is integration, for me.
12:10	But the second model is, if you belong to a faith community, then you stop to recognise to accept yourself as a citizen of any nation and you join the vehicle Ummah, you know, which is popularised by the Hizb ut-Tahrir, the Caliphate or by al-Qaeda and things like that. So we have radicalisation.

12:29	And so we should now think about the lessons of the failure of the two models, and looking for a new model which could cope with both: full citizenship, real citizenship, you know, and the recognition of religious communities, not cultural and ethnic minorities.
12:49	<p>Robert Parsons</p> <p>Okay, thank you. Peter, if I could turn to you. You've written a lot about Osama bin Laden, followed his career very closely. Would either killing or capturing Osama bin Laden, in your view, change anything at all?</p>
13:07	<p>Peter Bergen</p> <p>Yes, it would. I mean, I believe, perhaps in an old-fashioned view of history that certain people make a difference, and it's very hard to conceive of al-Qaeda without Osama bin Laden and Ayman Al Zawahiri. It's also very hard to conceive of 9/11 without them, since essentially it was their idea.</p>
13:20	If Hitler had been killed by von Stauffenberg in 1944, World War II would have finished rather earlier. Now, I'm not making any sort of—Hitler and bin Laden are very different people. But if you take out certain individuals, it does change history. It wouldn't end the jihadist movement, of course, but it would be a huge psychological victory for us and it would be a huge non-psychological victory for them.
13:41	<p>Robert Parsons</p> <p>What about the, at least, perceived lack of operational control that Osama bin Laden has now? Many people would say that wherever he is it's well nigh impossible for him to achieve any sort of operational control over al-Qaeda because of the difficulty of operating in circumstances in which he's being followed all over the world.</p>
14:02	<p>Peter Bergen</p> <p>That's to ignore the global communications revolution. Every time bin Laden releases an audiotape or videotape, these are the most widely distributed political statements in history. And they usually have several messages: 'Kill Westerners, Jews, crusaders', etc. They also have specific messages. For instance, bin Laden offered a truce to European countries willing to pull out of the coalition in Iraq. That truce expired in July 2004 and is directly relevant to the fact that there was a bomb attack by an al-Qaeda-directed cell in this city a year later.</p>
14:31	Similarly, he's called for attacks on Saudi infrastructure. We've seen attacks by al-Qaeda in Saudi Arabia. Very recently, both Ayman Al Zawahiri and bin Laden have called for attacks in Pakistan, which is one of the reasons that we're seeing an absolute rash of suicide attacks in Pakistan.

14:47	Similarly, one of the reasons, in my view, that a US diplomat was killed in Sudan just recently was because al-Qaeda, and bin Laden and Ayman Al Zawahiri, has specifically called for attacks in Sudan. They see the potential of humanitarian mission there by the West in very much the same frame that they saw Somalia: not as a humanitarian mission but as an attempt to take over another Muslim country.
15:10	And so I would anticipate, as a result of bin Laden's calls for action in that area, more attacks on Westerners in any kind of relief effort in Darfur.
15:18	Robert Parsons But is there any doubt, Peter, that if Osama bin Laden were to be killed or captured, that someone would immediately take his place?
15:26	Peter Bergen No one with his stature. I mean, his sons—he's got eleven sons: some of them have already chosen to go into Dad's line of work. But I think that, you know, Ayman Al Zawahiri—if you captured or killed Ayman Al Zawahiri, this would actually not be particularly helpful. Because Ayman Al Zawahiri's leadership of even the Egyptian jihadist groups is contested internally. Taking out bin Laden would create a huge succession crisis within al-Qaeda, because no one can really fill his role.
15:46	Robert Parsons Thanks very much. Abdullah Anas, if I could turn to you now. You went further still than Shiraz—you actually took up weapons to fight in the early 1980's, when you went to Afghanistan. Could I ask you what is it that persuades a young man to travel almost halfway round the world from Algiers to Afghanistan, to take up weapons for a cause like that? What is it that motivates you?
16:21	Abdullah Anas If you want the answer as one sentence, just to go to paradise! <i>[laughter]</i> Nothing else. To be <i>shahid</i> , martyred, and then to go to paradise. But I don't know what I'm going to say. You know, I did not plan it—I did not plan the last thirty years for what I'm now. It was planned, or it's my fate, by Allah [<i>`panotala`?</i>].
16:58	The last three decades, from '84 till '92, my experience was something completely different from my engagement between '93 and after, for the other ten years. And we have another experience now for the third decade, from 2001 up to now. So to be honest, there is no time to explain all these steps, all these stations in ten or fifteen minutes.
17:37	For example, when I decided in '84 to go to Afghanistan, in my mind, in my knowledge in that time, in my experience, probably the crisis of the universe, the crisis of the world was between two blocs: Muslim and non-Muslim, and that's it. And you are going to Afghanistan to defend Islam. If you gain the victory, so good; if not, you have nothing to lose—you are going to paradise. So.

18:05	But this changed after eight years beside the great man, Ahmed Shah Massud, in 1992 to enter to Kabul to gain the victory, to destroy the communist government, to see no Russian in Afghanistan.
18:28	And then another era, another experience, another question, another challenge opens in my life, because what we were thinking the day we entered into Kabul, 'Everything will turn to heaven!' But that was completely opposite! <i>[laughter]</i> We started fighting against each other. So Najibullah was in the United Nations house. There is none Najiibullah's army, so the fighting gets internal fighting.
19:14	I remember when I entered his office, the Presidency office. I found his passport! I went to the Intercontinental five-star hotel and I asked the manager of the hotel how the hotel is. Something shocked me: after two months I came back to that hotel—the situation of the hotel completely changed. It was very clean, very organised! After that you cannot imagine how it's been.
19:57	So that opened another challenge in my face: the problem, the crisis, the challenge is not just two blocs, Muslim and non-Muslim—if you gain the victory against non-Muslim, so that's it. No, it's another challenge, another problem, which is: now it's not from outside; now it's from your <i>inside</i> . And it's not something to be dealt with just in one day or one month; it will bring you and through you in the heart of the history. You have a political problem you have not solved from fourteen.
20:33	Robert Parsons So, Abdullah, what do you do now, more than twenty years after you first went to Afghanistan? Afghanistan's future is again in question!
20:40	Abdullah Anas Just I'm trying to put this small—if I compare myself to the people who have big, big experience, I have very small experience. I would like to put what I have, my experience, the challenges, to pass it to the new generations. Challenges not just black and white. Don't judge things black and white.
21:18	Now, when I went in 1984, I was thinking there were two challenges, black and white. Now I am facing—at least in my side; I don't know for somebody from Britain or from whatever; just from my point of view: the challenge now, I have to prepare myself to deal with four challenges instead of, in '84, just one: foreigners and their campaign, and that's it. No, now I'm facing another problem called dictatorship, which is I couldn't understand that it could be very, very dangerous file. Because in Algeria now we are talking about 200,000 lives we lost in Algeria. And in Algeria there is no Shi'i and Sunni. In Algeria there is no occupation. There is no Americans there. There is no one in there.

22:05	So another big problem I have to face: I have to learn, I have to teach, which is another challenge—forget about it. Now, another problem, which has just begun for me after 9/11, which is what we are seeing now in Iraq. Another file, very dangerous, very dirty file. Now it's rising, which is sectarian file. People who have been killed in Iraq. But with Shi'i and Sunni it's not comparable between people who killed between the Americans and Sunni and the others. So it's a big file.
22:47	So that's why I don't like to explain it in detail, but it's for my experience, small experience. And I'm going to do it, <i>insha'Allah</i> . It's in no way to give up; it's a matter from [humanity]. You are serving not your nation, Muslim nation; you are serving the humanity. I remember our judgments for the other nations were very, very superficial.
23:15	I remember when I met in 1983 in a caravan going to Mazari Sharif—I feel sorry for that! I came across with a Frenchman, who was in—I don't know for what purpose; he was a doctor or something like that. The first question I asked him: 'Why are you not Muslim?' And he was surprised! <i>[laughter]</i> And, <i>insha'Allah</i> , Islam will take France! I'm still wishing that! <i>[laughter]</i> I wish that everybody will be Muslim, from you!
23:55	But the way to deal with it through the Qur'an is completely. Now, because the matter is not just to read Qur'an; the matter is to understand what Qur'an is saying! Now, I found this is not a plan of Allah for all humanity to be Muslims. <i>[speaks Arabic sentence]</i> Allah did not want to make <i>all</i> humanity, six billion in the world, must be Muslims! No, that is not the question. Six billion, you are part, one of them—some of them have eyes like that, some of them, from America, from here, Africa, have lips like that. You have some green eyes, some big eyes, Arabs or whatever. So you are not alone in the universe!
24:44	So this is mentioned in the Qur'an, but it was not clear for me in 1984! <i>[laughter]</i> So I think we need... After that it changed when I went to Panjshir: my mind began to be broadminded. I came across with some friends—who are still good friends. Among them were Mr Sandy Gaul. Now I'm living here in Britain. Every time I get bored, I call him: 'I'm coming to you!' in fun, saying, 'Look, my son, come, Abdullah!' So he's still Christian, he's still British. I am still Muslim, I'm still Algerian, but there is nothing problem with it, there is nothing wrong! So, I don't like to waste your time! <i>[laughter, applause]</i> I'm trying just to do something for Afghanistan now.
25:42	Robert Parsons Abdullah, Olivier would like to put a question to you, I think.
25:47	Olivier Roy Yeah. I was in the Panjshir Valley at the same time as Abdullah, but we didn't meet, because [some of us?] would say, 'Okay, we have some Arabs here. They are nice guys, but they're a bit tough. So we have two guesthouses: one for the Westerners, one for the Arab volunteers, and we never mix at the table.' Now we mix! <i>[laughter]</i>

26:18	<p>Abdullah Anas</p> <p>So I think the result of this journey, this trip, this experience, I don't like to be mean, to deprive the next generations; to deal with it, to shorten the way of the conflict. During 2006/7 I had two visits to Afghanistan. That doesn't mean... You know, there is a slogan these days called [<i>almora jihad?</i>]. <i>Almora jihad</i>—I don't know what you say. <i>Almora jihad</i> of something else. [<i>from audience: 'Religion'</i>] Religion. <i>Almora jihad</i>.</p>
26:56	<p>I mean, <i>Alhamdulillah</i>, thank God, and that is not because I am clever. Allah, God guided me to be companion to personalities, with two personalities, protected me from the terrorism. <i>Alhamdulillah</i>, thank God, I don't have anything in my list I bothered any civilian—that all because of Abdullah Azzam and Ahmed Shah Massud.</p>
27:22	<p>Robert Parsons</p> <p>Abdullah, I'd like to ask you one more question before I throw the debate open to the floor. You returned in 1992 to Algeria, the year that the FIS was on the brink of winning an electoral victory, which was snatched from it by the government at the time. How important a role did that annulment of the election play in the radicalisation of Algerian youth?</p>
27:43	<p>Abdullah Anas</p> <p>You know, as you say now, I'm talking where 200,000 people's lives were lost in Algeria. I can't summarise history of fourteen years in two or three minutes. It's still complicated. 200,000 people died in Algeria, not just by the government or the secret services. The Taqfir also is in there. Taqfir, it's in there. I am in the death list twice—not for nothing, just because of your opinions. It's a big challenge. Sectarian war is a challenge. Occupations, occupiers from outside is a challenge, in my way. Dictatorship is a challenge. Taqfir is a challenge. Never undermine [underestimate] the Taqfir. You can imagine a fighter mujahid like Ahmed Shah Massud fighting.</p>
28:47	<p>The most stronger mujahid in the history. And now, after 25 years defending his <i>din</i>, defending his land, defending his [<i>arcada?</i>], his country—at the end he died because [<i>his cover?</i>]. The big challenge: if Ahmed Shah Massud with his credibility does not deserve to stay alive. So let alone [?] Western or somebody secularist or [<i>Shi'i?</i>] or...</p>
29:21	<p>So this Taqfir is another challenge! Another challenge. So, because the files are very complicated, I'm very happy to see these nice faces gathering and trying to knock these doors from this side. It's not simple. And it's wrong to try to simplify the conflict. It's very complicated. But it's achievable. We do it, <i>insha'Allah</i>. <i>Insha'Allah</i>.</p>
29:48	<p>Robert Parsons</p> <p>Okay. So I'd like to throw the debate open to the floor now. Please keep your questions as short as possible, and no statements, please!</p>
29:49	<p>Peter Bergen</p> <p>Good luck! [<i>laughter</i>]</p>

29:34	Robert Parsons Okay. Gentleman in the front here. And could you specify, perhaps, who the question is for, as well?
30:11	Mohammed Ali Yes, I am Mohammed—Mohammed Ali from Iraq. I am a Shi'a scholar. Well, I think this panel is very important, especially with the audience from academia, media, politicians and policymakers. I think you should expand it more, because this is the most important session in this programme. So I have two questions, but I should begin with some comments to Abdullah and Shiraz! <i>[laughter]</i>
30:44	Robert Parsons Please keep them short, because we really are running out of time.
30:48	Mohammed Ali Yes, I know that. Well, I understand from the <i>[Adab?]</i> ayaat—that means the books and the ideology of Hizb ut-Tahrir—the most [important] thing is <i>[daulitil?]</i> <i>khilafat</i> —that means the state of <i>khilafat</i> , the four successors after the Prophet Mohammed, peace upon him.
31:16	Well, and I understand as well that Hizb ut-Tahrir now is very powerful in Britain and also in Jordan; maybe in other countries. Shiraz should say about it. And, well, Hizb ut-Tahrir is approaching the youth mostly. And Hizb ut-Tahrir means—you know, when you ask the question to Shirez, 'Well, why would you be in that party?' he mentioned that he was in Cambridge etc etc, but he didn't mention anything about the ideology which attracted him. He should talk more about it.
32:04	And when you asked Mr Abdullah Anas about why he went to join the mujahidin in Afghanistan, he said, 'Well, my job is to go to paradise. So I joined them to go to paradise.' And also this is simplifying the issue. We should go deep into many... Although later on he started to mention some other things which are very important, and especially the Taqfir as a word and as an objective.
32:48	Robert Parsons Could I ask you to get to the questions quickly, please? Because otherwise people are not going to have time.
32:52	Mohammed Ali Yes, my question to him: was the exact and real attraction to go to Afghanistan, rather than just to go to paradise? Well, paradise and <i>shahid</i> , martyr, is a big issue in the Qur'an and the text. Well, I can speak here for hours about <i>shahid</i> , martyrdom and how much text in the Qur'an and the text of the Prophet about it.

33:21	<p>And the other thing about jihad and jihadi—two different issues: jihad, the greatest jihad is against the sins and the evils inside your soul. And the smallest jihad is a defensive jihad, not to start a war. This is the jihad in the text. So all these issues should be well addressed and understood by all the audience. And also the panels should concentrate on the jihadi and the taqfiri issues, so that we can understand what is going on in Afghanistan, what is going on by those terrorist cults—not Islamic or Islamist cults. So these are my comments and questions to Abdullah and Shiraz. Thank you.</p>
34:15	<p>Robert Parsons Shiraz, do you want to go first? What was it about the ideology, I think it was, yeah?</p>
34:19	<p>Shiraz Maher Yeah. I think the reality of any British mosque... I mean, I signed up to Hizb ut-Tahrir within a month of 9/11. And it seems quite counterintuitive to people; that you'd assume that's when people are going to run away from groups like this. But the reality is, particularly within Britain—and, you know, this is the only real place I can comment on—the deadening conservatism of our mosques, or the mosques which just want to bury their heads in the sand and aren't prepared, aren't able to and aren't willing to, engage with people. When you juxtapose that against the message of a movement like Hizb ut-Tahrir—and it's not just confined to them—which is bold, which is confident, which is world-changing—it's very seductive.</p>
35:12	<p>And underlying all of this is this notion of righting wrongs, of reacting against injustice. And I think, to sort of broaden out briefly, this is where the Government has failed as well in stressing the idea of common values. We can all share common values, but that says nothing about fostering a collective sense of self or a collective sense of national identity. And there's been a massive, massive failure and stagnation in thinking, in that sense. Because many of the Islamists, when you speak to them, they'll speak in the same terms of reacting against injustice, of reacting against dictatorships, and so on. And it's not quite as simple as that, but in their <i>minds</i> that's certainly what they think that they're doing.</p>
36:01	<p>Just very quickly, you mentioned the global strength of Hizb ut-Tahrir. Hizb ut-Tahrir is very good at projecting a sense of power, projecting a sense of itself, which is much larger than it actually is. For example, they hosted a massive conference in Indonesia which attracted 100,000 people. Which, you know, frightens a lot of uninformed commentators: because it's pretty impressive to mobilise that number of people.</p>

36:31	But in the reality of what they were doing, there are much bigger organisations within Indonesia, like the [Nata de la Mer, Mohammedia?] and so on, and they invited speakers from those organisations to this conference, who basically packed it out with their own foot-soldiers. And so, although it was under the banner of Hizb ut-Tahrir, most of the followers there were there for the other speakers. And I know, because I went to the conference myself and spoke to a lot of the people there.
36:51	I couldn't comment on the strength in Jordan, but in Egypt it's very small. I've spoken extensively with Maajid Nawaz about his experiences there. The problem is these movements, as we've seen, don't need mass membership; they just need to effect change. It only took four people to bomb the underground on 7 July. And in that sense Hizb ut-Tahrir is shrewd about what it's doing: it's targeting militaries for military revolutions and coups in the Muslim world, and it isn't focused on being a mass revolutionary movement which relies on a popular base.
37:38	Robert Parsons Abdullah Anas, would you like to respond briefly to the question?
37:43	Abdullah Anas I think it's - I don't have any, because I did give a comment...
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Pathways into Radicalisation: Why Do People Become Radicals? Q&A

00:30 **James Kidner**

I'm James Kidner from the Coexist Foundation. And it builds on the previous question and I suppose is directed mostly at Shiraz but also at others on the panel. Shiraz, you've articulated very clearly the steps, the slide, into extremism of young British Muslims. And I congratulate you on your initiative to set up the Quilliam Foundation, which seems to answer Sir Richard Dearlove's request yesterday for more theologians. But I want to just tease out this issue of whether it is in fact theology at all, because there are huge parallels here between what I would call 'secularist' terrorism—the Red Army faction, the Bader Meinhof groups—and also, to reduce it to absurdity, the sort of US high school shootings. Can you tease out, can others help tease out, the distinction here between people who are just driven to make a name for themselves and people who have actually a genuine theological underpinning for what they're trying to do?

01:34 **Shiraz Maher**

I think you're right. I mean, in this sense, the sort of notion of violent struggle isn't limited to Islamist movements. You know, we see it all over the world, and even suicide bombings are not the exclusive domain of Muslims or of Islamists. But I think in each of those scenarios and circumstances there are still a body of ideas that underwrites that. And as Abdullah mentioned, you know, for him it was the notion of paradise, which says: 'Go and do this.' Ultimately, for all of us who were either involved or who are still involved, in many cases, in these movements, it's that still overriding notion that 'What I'm doing is right. What I'm doing is the will of God. And therefore it's right.'

02:14 What's very interesting is when you join Hizb ut-Tahrir—I'm not sure about some of the other movements—you go through a process called the *halaka*. And it's a once-a-week, two-hour study of books which the party has written and its understanding of Islam. Now, what's very interesting is when you start, you start off by saying, 'Well, why do we believe in God? You know, *why should we?*' And you come to this understanding of, 'Okay, we must believe in God.' You say, 'Okay, well then, what do we do now?' And then you come to a sense then of, 'Okay, now we believe in Islam for these reasons.' So all of that's kind of rationalised through a dialectic process.

02:54 Once that happens, and you say, 'Okay, we've now established all these things kind of logically and we say that the Qur'an is the word of God. After that, now we're not going to challenge anything that's within it. Because this is the word of God. It's not open for debate, interpretation, discussion at all.' And so at that mind, they ask you to turn *off* your mind. And you take whatever's there in the literal, in the black and white, and you do.

03:19	<p>So in that sense there is a vast infrastructure, theological infrastructure, surrounding all of this. And it's actually been a criticism of many of the groups and movements that have emerged to counter radicalism is that they <i>haven't</i> gone back to the Qur'an; they've argued with them on political, normative facts. But someone <i>has</i> to do that. You know, I'm <i>not</i> the one who's going to do that. I'm not scholarly trained. The Quilliam Foundation—of which I'm really just an associate; and Maajid Nawaz and Ed Husain are very much at the forefront, spearheading this—are bringing together scholarship, bringing together people from around the world. And what's so forward-thinking about this foundation is even its body of advisors isn't exclusively Muslim. At the moment I know they are in the process of approaching rabbis and priests and various people to bring all of them on board. So why <i>should</i> this just be an exclusive Muslim...?</p>
04:16	<p>We have to start by addressing those ideas, because it's those ideas that says to Kafeel Ahmed—who I would never have imagined in a million years would go on to do what he did—that said to him: 'Bombing Glasgow is a good thing. Bombing Glasgow will please God.' And unless you change <i>that</i> aspect of it, the sort of counter-terrorism end and the hard policing end and intelligence end is immaterial. We can't catch everyone. We have to stop them at the early stage.</p>
04:45	<p>Robert Parsons Peter, would you like to -</p>
04:46	<p>Peter Bergen Yeah, I've been picking up on that. The 9/11 hijackers saw what they were doing as an act of worship; you have to understand that. And if bin Laden was here and you asked him what's this about, he would say it's about the defence of Islam and 'I'm part of a small vanguard who is basically preventing true Islam from disappearing from the planet.' And so to ignore these facts is simply, I think, to ignore the central motivator.</p>
05:07	<p>The largest suicide campaign in history is going on right now in Iraq. And it's being conducted by non-Iraqis! You know, there is overwhelming evidence to show that the people who are conducting these suicide operations are Saudis, Moroccans; people from Europe, indeed. What are they motivated by? They are motivated by the idea that Islam is under attack and this is the only way they can defend it. And so to ignore these facts, I think, is to misunderstand the whole problem.</p>
05:33	<p>Robert Parsons Olivier, do you want to...?</p>

05:34	<p>Olivier Roy Yeah, just... We tend to over-ideologise the so-called `Islamic radicalisation'. We tend to see it in a vertical way. What is beyond the radicalisation? Islamic ideology, [Side Cordeba?], Zawahiri or what is in the Qur'an, and so on. But we must look a bit more, I would say, on the horizontal way. Islamic radicalisation amongst the youth as a youth movement, as an expression of radicalisation of the youth. And this explains, as I said, the number of the converts in al-Qaeda.</p>
06:10	<p>Robert Parsons The gentleman at the back.</p>
06:17	<p>Unidentified I have two quick questions to Sheikh Abdullah. The first one is: would you agree with Peter Bergen's suggestion that the removal of bin Laden would really end or at least greatly influence al-Qaeda? And the second question is: how did the companionship of Sheikh Abdullah and Sheikh Ahmed Shah Massud prevent you from stepping into violent terrorism? I would like to hear your say on this, please.</p>
06:54	<p>Abdullah Anas Certainly. Let me start from the second question. Well, I don't know. So far, when I remember that, I just said it was just a gift from Allah to me, because I did not plan it to be part. Because easily I could be on the other side in Afghanistan: because you're in Peshawar—you know, we were many groups in there, especially when we formed Services Bureau in 1984, Osama bin Laden was part of us. And when I talk about al-Qaeda and extremism, I completely make separation, big gap, between Osama and Ayman al-Zawahiri. Osama is a victim of the ideas of Ayman al-Zawahiri.</p>
07:43	<p>Even though now when I judge, I judge al-Qaeda. My knowledge of Osama doesn't mean that he's free from the crimes happening today. He's part of that. But, because I know him deeply, there's a very big difference between him and Ayman al-Zawahiri in terms of his manners or his upbringing. So when we formed the Services Bureau in '84, Sheikh Abdullah put a strategy for the Services Bureau. The strategy was to cause the Ummah, the Muslims, all over the world to come to see, participate in, Afghanistan. And Afghanistan, it's a duty for every Muslim to come to Afghanistan to liberate Afghanistan from the communism. And that fatwa was signed by a group of scholars through the Islamic world.</p>
08:50	<p>So this was one duty for Services Bureau. Second duty was to understand what is happening inside Afghanistan, to educate them, to open hospitals—many, many things, not just to come to fight. Many, many programmes. And myself, I was the emir in the North of Afghanistan, in the [France of Amajama Ote?]. My duty was not only to participate in the campaigns on the barracks or the headquarters of the Soviets; also besides that, I had two or three hospitals in the North. I had two or three institutes. But the deviation happened when the Egyptian jihadi came to Peshawar. When they came to Peshawar, they had nothing to do with the Afghanistan conflict, with their own agenda.</p>

09:45	They had a big struggle with the School of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, because, you know, it's a big conflict between Jamaat jihad and [? Muslimin?], in terms of how to deal with the regime: do you accept democracy or not is a big debate inside on that. So he brought with him that unclear file into Pakistan, into Afghanistan, which was a red line. When we formed Services Office, it was a red line for us for Sheikh Abdullah, for Osama bin Laden. `We are here not to create problems for Afghans, not to bring Salafism to the Afghans, not to bring what is happening in the Muslim Brotherhood, Jamaat jihad, Tahrir, blah-blah-blah. The Afghans already are seven parties. The Afghans are already many ethnics, and they are fighting against each other. So don't put oil on the fire, or what you call it!'
10:47	So it was clearly a red line: `We are, even you see, servants, Services Bureau.' We named ourselves al Haddam. `We are serving the Afghans to liberate their land.' They are free to do what they want. They will open dialogue with the Russians, with the United Nations—they are free. We are then nothing to do.
11:11	And this is the deviation which happened in Iraq. I had many interviews. I tried to send the masses to resistance of Iraq. One big division that happened in Iraq, that the brothers who came from outside to fight in Iraq—because I don't like to blame anybody. If you talk about the foreigners in Afghanistan, let us open the file of <i>all</i> of the foreigners! So -
11:38	Robert Parsons Abdullah, what about the second question, which was the question: would the removal of bin Laden—that's one of the points that Peter had made—have done anything to undermine al-Qaeda?
11:46	Abdullah Anas But I think, for my opinion, from the beginning—because you know the file, the struggle for me did not start through the headlines in the satellites. The file for me starts in '84. So I know what is behind the lines, everything. For me, for some reason or for some politics, for some strategies, for some agendas, people highlighted al-Qaeda more than the others. If we compare al-Qaeda to Taliban inside Afghanistan, al-Qaeda was the guest of Taliban. But no one knows Taliban in the world. When Taliban collapsed, automatically al-Qaeda collapsed. So I don't like to deal with al-Qaeda as a file among the very hot files in the Arab world. If we go to [Lubnan?] there is no al-Qaeda. Struggle of Palestine; nothing to do with al-Qaeda. Struggle in Egypt and Algeria; nothing to do with al-Qaeda. For me, al-Qaeda is a headline for the media.
12:57	Robert Parsons The second question that you were asked was to respond to Peter's point that the elimination of bin Laden would seriously undermine al-Qaeda. Is that something you agree with?
13:07	Abdullah Anas Yes. Say it again, please?

13:10	<p>Robert Parsons Would the elimination of Osama bin Laden finish off al-Qaeda? <i>[Woman in audience: `Kill it! You can say it!...]</i> Would it kill it?</p>
13:24	<p>Abdullah Anas Oh, I don't know. God knows!</p>
12:27	<p>Robert Parsons <i>[laughs]</i> Okay! There was a question from somebody in the middle here.</p>
13:34	<p>Eric Albert Eric Albert from La Croix, a French newspaper. Two questions: one for Peter Bergen and one for Shiraz Maher. It seems that there is not so many homegrown terror cells within the US. Why is that—is it just we don't know about it, or is it something specific to the US? Same thing, while I can, opposite question to Shiraz Maher: at least in Europe, but especially in Britain, there has been quite a lot of homegrown cells. Is there a specificity of British Muslim here?</p>
14:09	<p>Peter Bergen I think the short answer about American Muslims is they're better educated than most Americans, they have higher incomes, they don't live in ghettos. They bought into the American Dream. I grew up in Britain—I'm unaware of a British Dream. I don't think there's an EU Dream or a French Dream or a Spanish Dream or any of these Dreams! And it's really that simple: the American Dream doesn't work all the time, but it's worked very well for American Muslims.</p>
14:33	<p>Shiraz Maher I'd agree in part, actually! <i>[laughter]</i> On the grounds that, you know, a lot of the people here who have been—and, pretty much in Britain, <i>everyone</i> who's been—arrested or picked up in the major plots have been British-born and raised here, with a few exceptions. And overwhelmingly they are upwardly mobile, educated, affluent—with the one exception that they do tend to live in ghettos; but even that's not really always the case.</p>
14:59	<p>I think the problem here is that there's just the quagmire and the decline of Britain's understanding of itself and the British identity in the last twenty, thirty years in this adoption of multiculturalism, which has created a climate of moral, cultural relativism that says anything goes is a big, big problem. Because what you've had is at the heart of it and at the centre of it Britain's sense of itself and its understanding has evaporated, while minority communities grow ever surer of themselves and don't have anything to orbit around. And Islamists love that.</p>

15:40	The other problem here is that there is a South Asian community, which is pretty much <i>the</i> Muslim community in Britain—50% of British Muslims come from Pakistan alone. And then, if you take in India, Bangladesh into that, the number grows to almost two-thirds. The problem with that is that many of these guys (a) have a very poor understanding of Islam, don't read or speak Arabic and can't access any of the classical scholarship of Islam to understand it.
16:13	And so when we have what we had in the late Eighties and early Nineties—charismatic people coming from the Middle East who can quote a bit of Arabic— immediately they have a mandate. And, you know, in that I'd class Omar Bakri Mohammed, Abu Hamzar, Abu Qatada and so on. And that's been a big problem, because actually you don't find in the composition of these groups Arabs. You know, look at 7/7; look at Operation Crevice—by and large, it has been South Asians. And it's not to say there haven't been Arabs involved; there have been. But I think that that's also a part of it.
16:54	Robert Parsons Okay, we're running very short of time. We've got about five minutes left, which leaves us time for about three questions at the very most.
17:00	Eric Herren Eric Herren from ICT Israel, to Shiraz and to Abdullah, two short questions. One, what is the role of exactly those charismatic ideological leaders like Abu Qatada, Abu Hamzar, Qaradawi: how much they influence? And they're working in the West, by the way. And the second one is: we spoke apparently about factionalism. And I think Abdullah also showed how much factionalism is inside this camp. How we can distinguish and work on those which can be moderate and leave the radical camp, in order to advance the [deregularisation?].
17:37	Robert Parsons Shiraz, do you want to go first?
17:38	Shiraz Maher I think historically the influence of these guys has been massive. They certainly set up the infrastructure where nothing existed previously. What's interesting is now, of course, none of these guys are out and about any more. And Omar Bakri's back in Lebanon; the others are in jail. What we've seen happen is a shift in the demographic leadership of these movements. Now those same young South Asians that they were once preaching to have adopted the mantle, as it were, and have very much come to the fore. And the leadership of groups like Muhajirun, Hizb ut-Tahrir and stuff, is now led by South Asians.
18:17	Part of that, you can see the repercussions in the Indian subcontinent, where we are actively exporting extremism and, in many cases, terrorism back to that part of the world. And really it doesn't need us to be chipping in.

18:34	The other thing is now, I'd say that the need for those characters is irrelevant. We have the infrastructure, and already the cauldron of hatred is well established. But also, of course, the internet is now providing a massive forum. So they don't have to physically be here any more to be radicalising people and to be charging them up.
18:54	Robert Parsons Abdullah, do you want to add to that?
18:56	Abdullah Anas In the question was mentioned three or four names, among them Sheikh Qaradawi. Just I would like to advise you to separate Sheikh Qaradawi from these names and to be more familiar with knowledge of Sheikh Qaradawi. So Sheikh Qaradawi does not come in that list. That's one. Second thing, I don't know what's the answer or what is the message behind we try to modernise people. The answer is different between this agenda to this agenda! For example, sometimes when somebody defends his land, he's a terrorist in some explanations. So he's still moderate, but he's defending his land. So the answer of this question has many...!
19:58	What can I say for Iraq, for example, for Iraqis seeing one day a president, very far, thousands of miles far, sending a message: 'I'm sending, threatening the president of that country to leave within 84 hours to leave the power, otherwise I'm coming to destroy you.' This is something very new in the history! 'I'm coming to you'—and this is the other president of another country, let alone what was Saddam. Saddam is dictator, blah-blah-blah; he's something to deal with in another subject. And after that, 'I'm sending an American to rule you!' Who is that? Is he Shi'ite? No. He is Sunni? No. He's Kurd? No! [laughter] His name is Bremer. [laughter, applause] Well, come on!
20:55	So what can I do? What can I do? Imagine Hitler indicating or mentioning somebody to come to Britain in '41 and ruling British people. People will be clapping to him? So I think we need... Once again, this is another challenge: we need to make the files, separate them, to talk in them. And what we are trying to do now is not something to be done in one week or one year or five years, but thanks for the callers, thanks for the Centre, and I hope it will be a good beginning, <i>insha'Allah</i> .
21:34	Robert Parsons We've time for just one more question, I'm afraid. Over here.
21:07	Bill Deredy [?] Yeah, I'm Bill Deredy. When Pekka-Eric Auvinen shot and killed seven of his classmates and his headmistress in Finland last November, he said in his YouTube video, 'I am prepared to die for what I believe in.' That is almost word for word what Mohammed Sadiq Khan said in his so-called 'martyrdom' video after 7 July 2005. Pekka-Eric Auvinen wore a t-shirt with the slogan, <i>Humanity Is Overrated</i> , which is from the American medical soap opera <i>House</i> , a quote from <i>House</i> , which you can still buy on the internet today: <i>Humanity Is Overrated</i> .

22:16	My point and question to Peter is: don't you think that your idea that killing Osama bin Laden is going to put the death-knell into all of this a bit simplistic and a bit based on a selective reading of Osama bin Laden? Bin Laden talks about how the US exploits and oppresses women—which is a bit rich from someone wanting a twelfth-century caliphate! He also talks about how the US has polluting industries and refuses to sign up to Kyoto. In other words, bin Laden is entirely parasitic upon our concerns about ourselves. He represents a mood or a metaphor for people who reject the West and modernity. How do you kill a mood or a metaphor?
22:59	Peter Bergen Look, I'm not making a very naïve argument that killing bin Laden would end this problem; I'm just simply saying that it might be helpful! <i>[laughter, applause]</i>
23:11	Robert Parsons Okay. And that, I'm afraid, is all we have time for in this session. We're already running over by ten minutes. Lunch. We're back here at two o'clock for the next session, which is Engaging with Radicals: Do Negotiations Work? <i>[applause]</i>
End of Pathways into Radicalisation: Why Do People Become Radicals?	