

Islamic Human Rights Commission



VOLUME 5 - RAMADAN 1425 / OCTOBER 2004



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In the name of Al-lah,
The-Source-Of-Mercy,
The-Especially-Merciful.

THE AIMS OF THE ISLAMIC HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ARE:

- To champion the rights and duties revealed for human beings.
- To promote a new social and international order, based on truth, justice, righteousness and generosity, rather than selfish interest.
- To demand virtue and oppose wrongdoing in the exercise of power (from whatever base that power derives - e.g. political, judicial, media, economic, military, personal, etc.).
- To gather information about, and to publicise, atrocities, oppression, discrimination, and other abuses of divinely-granted rights.
- To campaign for redress, and to support the victims of such crimes.
- To campaign to bring the perpetrators and their accomplices to justice.
- To cooperate with other groups and individuals where such cooperation is likely to further the achievement

THESE CHILDREN ARE VICTIMS OF TERRORISM. WILL YOU CONDEMN THE TERRORISTS?



Children in Balata refugee camp, Nablus, West Bank being chased by Israeli army, September 2004.

The continuing horror of our world's descent into cruelty and violence was exemplified this year by the targeting of children.

Unsurprisingly the terrifying events in Beslan, Ossetia have dominated headlines world-wide. Indeed so moved was British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, he cancelled the launch of the Foreign Office's Annual Human Rights Report so as to show solidarity with the Russian people and admonish the terrorists.

The condemnation and disgust are universally shared, yet Muslims again are called on by media pundits and politicians to, 'Condemn the terrorists!' - as if we alone have responsibility for voicing this condemnation. It is a sad symptom of the Islamophobia that has engulfed society. Either we all condemn loudly, or it should be taken for granted that we are all appalled. To expect Muslims to shout more or louder suggests that we are not accepted as equal, and that we are considered guilty by religious affiliation.

If condemnation is needed, it needs to be universal, just as the nature of terror is. We have yet to see a flicker of emotion from ministers when for example, Palestinian children are chased down in the streets of the refugee camps they call home by the Israeli military

machine. Or hear the outrage when Roma children are taken away from their families by Eastern European governments, intent on 'civilising' them by destroying their connection to their cultural heritage.

At IHRC over the years we have seen many cases where children have been failed by the British legal and law enforcement system. This year saw a schoolgirl in Luton denied her right to wear jilbab in uniform colours. This is one of the more public humiliations of a child. However others abound. Children who have witnessed the arrests of their fathers in police 'anti-terror' raids have suffered much trauma. IHRC knows of one young girl who is still unable to speak after the trauma of seeing such an arrest take place. In another case a 10 year old had a gun held to his head whilst a police officer shouted at his father that he would blow his son's 'f*****g brains out!' Another woman, whose home was raided by anti-terrorist officers, miscarried her unborn child.

This is terror. And it's getting worse. There is no slaughter here - yet. But remember Bosnia, and how thousands of children were massacred for being nominally Muslim? The United Nations' Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict states that Muslim boys were particularly targeted by the Serbs during the

Srebrenica massacre in which up to 10,000 Muslims were killed.

Bosnian girls were raped in their thousands, some as young as toddlers. There have been many reported cases of babies subjected to this barbarism by Serbian soldiers. UNICEF estimates some 20,000 girls in total were raped.

The war is now over but the trauma of Bosnian children has not abated. They too now see a compliant government harass their parents at the behest of foreign governments, notably the US, on the pretext of anti-terror. In fact in the last year six men were deported to Guantanamo Bay, despite a court ruling, from a Bosnian Serb judge, that there were no grounds for these men to be handed over to the US.

IHRC's research and concerns into the fate of hundreds of Bosnian children are shared by many other organisations now. Many were illegally adopted, some we know into non-Muslim families who have obliterated their religious identity. Thousands of others are still missing along with the 1.2 million trafficked every year to befall an unknown fate. Inevitably in Europe, some if not most of these children of whatever background are taken by paedophile rings.

This is terror on a mass scale. It needs to be condemned, by everyone. It needs to be acted

upon by governments, and we, in our privileged positions need to make sure they act. IHRC is asking everyone this year to take stock of the horror that surrounds us and start thinking and acting according to the dictates of conscience and not the prejudiced and phobic media, governments and institutions that surround us. Many tears have been shed in recent months for the child victims of terrorism. Let us make sure that when we cry we cry for all of them. Let us make sure that when we defend them, we defend them all:

"And what reason have you that you should not fight in the way of Allah and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, (of) those who say: Our Lord! cause us to go forth from this town, whose people are oppressors, and give us from Thee a guardian and give us from Thee a helper."

The Holy Qur'an 4:75

This year's newsletter again looks at some of the ways IHRC has tried to think and act across shared agendas for justice and progress - it covers some of the more public aspects of our work, both in the UK and abroad. At IHRC we try to implement the command of Allah swt to uplift society for the benefit of everyone. If you too share some of our thoughts, we urge you to help us in the struggle for justice. Please join and support IHRC.

Exposing the Islamophobes Again

Winners of the Islamophobia awards were announced after audiences were comically entertained at the second annual awards ceremony which was held this June 26th. More candidates were nominated and voted for the most Islamophobic personalities of the year. The candidates were nominated by the Public and selected by a panel of judges. Amongst those candidates were Nick Griffin for the 'Most Islamophobic British Politician of the year' and unsurprisingly George W. Bush for the 'Islamophobe of the year'!



Khaleel Muhammad captivating the audience

The 'Islamophobia Awards' is IHRC's annual comedy event aimed at highlighting prevailing prejudices and subverting them using humour. The evening consists of satire, musical entertainment, a fundraising auction, a sumptuous meal and of course the spoof awards themselves. This year the audience was musically entertained by Khaleel Muhammad, Mecca2Medina and Nurul Mustafa. These well established acts were accompanied by musical comedy newcomers 'Shock & Awe' - two Elvis impersonators who looked a little more than familiar (see page 9 for a photo clue) - who had the audience howling with their 'interesting' musical review of the year past. The entire event was hosted by IHRC's Nazim Ali and Romana Majid.

Although this evening was an evening that was highly entertaining, we must not forget why this event was held. The chairman of IHRC, Massoud Shadjareh said that, "it is with great sadness that we reveal this year's winners. Sadly the competition was extremely tough and we see no signs of this abating in the year to come."

Islamophobia is like a deadly disease which has spread not just throughout the UK, but through-

out the entire world.

The Islamophobia Awards are not only an easy way for us to digest the horrific events that occur to the Muslims around the world, but also to highlight the injustice happening to the Muslim Ummah.

Islamophobia has influenced the way Muslims and non-Muslims think and behave towards one another. This is why it is so important for IHRC and other organizations to highlight this problematic disease and establish peace and understanding throughout the globe.

The organisers of this event were pleased with the smoothly run evening and hope to raise even more awareness of global Islamophobic attitudes which have become part of a growing culture which seems to be affecting the hearts and minds of many Muslims and non-Muslims.

This event was only a tiny glimpse of what IHRC actually do and are about. Gratifying the audience at this event was not only what IHRC wanted to achieve. This evening was a highlight for the events that have taken place in the last year and what has and still needs to be done to tackle the disease of Islamophobia.

It is everyone's duty to not only



Rewarding outstanding achievement

tackle this problem, but to ensure that people are aware of these issues so that we can help as many as we can who are suffering the consequences of this disease.

The top awards were given to:

- **Most Islamophobic British Politician: Nick Griffin**
- **Most Islamophobic Media Personality: Polly Toynbee**
- **Most Islamophobic International Politician: Jacques Chirac and Ariel Sharon (joint winners)**
- **Most Islamophobic Media: The Daily Telegraph**
- **Islamophobe of the year: George W. Bush**

An outstanding achievement in promoting Islamophobia award was given this year to the Metropolitan Police Service (see page 5 for details of IHRC's work in tackling this issue).

On a more positive note, IHRC

once again presented an award to someone who has excelled in combating Islamophobia. This year's recipient was human rights lawyer Mudassar Arani (pictured above).

Videos and DVDs of this event are planned. Please watch out for details on our website along with on-line footage and audio clips. Please visit: www.ihrc.org.uk

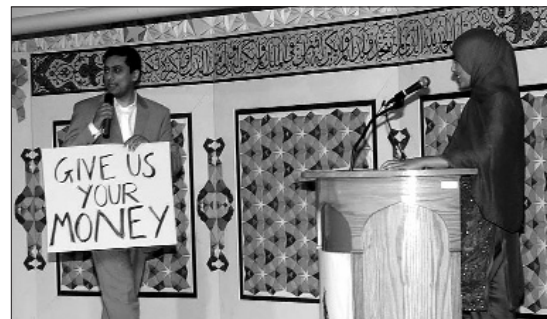
Saleha Tasneem

IHRC Advisors

- Professor Hamid Algar, Berkley, USA
- Imam Mohammed Al-Asi, Washington, USA
- Dr. Muhammad Al-Massari, Jazeerat-ul-Arab
- Sheikh Ibraheem Al-Zakzaky, Kaduna, Nigeria
- Faiq Anwari, London, UK
- Mudassar Arani, London, UK
- Dr. Mohammed Saeed Bahmanpour, Cambridge, UK
- Haidar Bagir, Indiana, USA
- Faisal Bodi, Doha, Qatar
- Shaikh Achmad Cassiem, Cape Town, South Africa
- Bilal Cleland, Melbourne, Australia
- Merve Safa Kavakci, Dallas, USA
- Shaikh Abdul Mabud, Cambridge, UK.
- Fuad Nahdi, London, UK
- Riaz Ramzan, London, UK
- Jalaluddin Rekhmat, Jakarta, Indonesia
- Ustadz Fadzlullah Shuib, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Maulana Faiz Siddiqi, London, UK.
- IHRC Chair, Massoud Shadjareh, London, UK



Recognising abominable practice



Nazim Ali and Roaman Majid compering

Promoting Islamic Human Rights

IHRC organised vigils, protests and seminars across the year and participated in many others. On the controversial issue of the hijab ban, IHRC sent various speakers to events across the UK and held

a vigil outside the French embassy in London (see page 7).

Our work against the war in Iraq and the subsequent occupation continued with support for protests across the year. IHRC speakers also attended events



Raising awareness about anti-terror laws in Gloucester

across the UK including Luton and Gloucester, addressing not only the war but current issues e.g. the impact of anti-terrorism laws (see pages 6 and 8).

In January IHRC held another of its seminars looking at current theoretical issues pertaining to Islam and human rights. Professor Scott Lucas of the University of Birmingham and Dr. Saied Reza Ameli of the University of Tehran discussed, 'Negative Globalization, Human Rights and New Perceptions of the American in the World'. Massoud Shadjareh also addressed the issue of Islam and Human Rights in Cambridge.

Further events, including a substantial seminar on the issue of hijab and democracy, as well as a conference on Palestine are planned for 2005. We will also be launching the British Muslims' Expectations series of reports at the end of 2004. IHRC speakers will also be at various events around the UK - please check the events' section of our website www.ihrc.org.uk. IHRC also provides training workshops on a variety of issues. Please see pages 9 and 10 for more details of this and ways to get involved.

Amirah Ali

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BRITISH MUSLIMS' EXPECTATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT: WHAT DO MUSLIMS WANT?

This summer IHRC began one of its biggest research projects to date. The British Muslims' Expectations of the Government project will be producing eight titles in the next eighteen months reflecting the results of quantitative and qualitative surveys from around the UK on a variety of issues relating to Muslims in UK and their ideas of citizenship.

IHRC has embarked on this project in order to raise the level of debate that currently surrounds Muslims in the UK. Rarely a day goes by when Muslims are not mentioned in the media or by politicians. The current debate is characterised by demonisation and vilification of Muslims, and takes place across a political and social space from which Muslims are increasingly marginalised. This has led to a questioning of British Muslim identity and allegiance to the country; as well as

explicit expectations of 'immigrant' communities to fully embrace British culture and language. Therefore the current debate as propagated by the government and mass media is focused almost entirely on the expectations that the society and state has of British Muslims.

This research aims to voice the concerns of Muslims from the ground, rather than responding to government and other agendas or imposing our own ideas and thoughts. Well over a thousand respondents took part in the quantitative survey over the summer, and various qualitative surveys are on-going or complete depending on the subject matter. Forthcoming reports will explore the issues of dual identity, hijab, Muslim schools, law, social discrimination, media, further education and British Muslim contribution to British society. Currently we are completing work on the first publication entitled

'Dual Citizenship: British, Islamic or Both - Obligation, Recognition, Respect and Belonging'.

The research insh'Allah will highlight not only the issue of marginalisation as perceived by the Muslim community to the policy makers. Thus the project will create information and dialogue which could potentially inform successful policies to promote greater integration and social harmony; which is much needed to build the bridge of trust and respect between the Muslim community and the government.

If you are interested in participating in this project, please contact info@ihrc.org or write to us, BMEG project, IHRC, PO Box 598, Wembley, HA9 7XH. The first reports will be launched in November 2004, so watch out for details of the launch event on our website www.ihrc.org.uk

Fehim Khan



Solidarity with Palestine: The last twelve months

Campaigning for Palestine is not easy. Indeed many aspects of this crisis leave us feeling helpless. The country's government appears powerless, its people seem far away and out of reach. And as a nation endures its fifty-seventh year in exile, we ask: how could a UK-based organisation possibly make a difference? A look at IHRC's support work over the past twelve months offers several suggestions...

1. Much of IHRC's campaigning has focussed on raising public awareness of Palestinian suffering. It has achieved this in several ways:

IHRC has supported large-scale public demonstrations such as the 'Freedom for Palestine' march, the annual Al-Quds Day rally and IHRC has also promoted public seminars with politicians and reputable academics. On a more particular scale, it recently helped the British women arrested by Israeli Security Services, return to the UK with all charges against them dropped.

Such events require liaising with Muslim and non-Muslim groups alike, such as Neturei Karta and the Palestinian Return Centre (PRC). They are proof that concerted effort and popular participation work. And they have a common goal: to ensure that even though Palestinian suffering may often be out of sight, it is never out of mind.

2. IHRC's strategy also addresses the media:

One technique is media monitoring. For example, IHRC complained about the one-sided Channel 4 documentary, 'Witness: Inside the Mind of a Suicide Bomber'. Also significant was IHRC's protest against the BBC Middle East watchdog, apparently appointed to 'neutralise' pro-Palestinian sympathy in news reporting.

Another method involves ensuring a counter-media. Recently IHRC Chairman Massoud Shadjareh participated in BBC Radio 4's 'The moral maze', a debate about the assassination of Sheikh Yassin. Also noteworthy is IHRC's latest report (available online), 'Bringing Israel to Account: The Role of International Law' by Uzma Karim.

Where mainstream reporting shows bias IHRC endeavours to re-inject some objectivity and balance. The public ought to have access to an alternative source of information. For its part IHRC ensures that the Muslim perspective is always given and that the oppressed are not depicted as oppressors. A notable example is the on-going campaign with Innovative Minds

regarding the CBBC Newsround website's depiction of the conflict.

3. Economic boycott is another useful tool:

Last October Innovative Minds and IHRC launched the 'Ramadan Boycott For Justice'. A blacklist of companies which support Israel was distributed on flyers and pocket-sized cards (still available from IHRC). This was a simple but effective technique which found success in its 'ripple effect'. Minor changes in shopping habits were adopted across communities to send out an amplified message. They say money talks.

4. Also important is political boycott:

If consumer power was about strength in numbers, then we must not forget the might of individual sacrifice. A recent IHRC campaign supported the Iranian world judo champion who refused to fight his Israeli opponent in Athens. It is the story of an Olympian who selflessly renounced a lifetime's ambition for the sake of his brothers and sisters in Palestine. Could there be a more moving and yet more influential show of solidarity?

So IHRC clearly uses a variety of methods. But do they share a common denominator? What is their ultimate goal?

IHRC's campaigns focus on the heart of the Palestinian problem: Zionism. Our aim is to condemn it publicly as racism pure and simple. To expose modern-day Israel as a pariah state and to denounce those who so proudly support it.



Faith a target of Israeli forces

Palestine is no quick-fix scenario: we cannot expect instant results. But slow progress is progress nonetheless. Much can be achieved through changing world opinion: one need only look at the downfall of apartheid in South Africa. It is an example that continues to inspire hope for the future.

But returning to the present, sadly there is no end in sight for the plight of the Palestinian people. And so, for another year at least, IHRC's work continues. Our only hope is that one day soon the world will wake up and realise. InshAllah.

Changez A. Khan



Prisoners of faith

IHRC campaigning for prisoners of faith since 1997

Let's be clear on one point from the outset. A prisoner of faith is somebody who is detained – often indefinitely and in appalling conditions – not for the threat they pose to society. Rather it is their expression of an intimate, personal belief which is criminalised. 'Thinking aloud outlawed' if you like.

Campaigning for prisoners of faith has always formed a core part of IHRC's work. The reason why is simple. Islam places great value upon the rights of the individual: their freedom of conscience; their

cence. Meanwhile Al-Zakzaky's wife and young children were harassed and arrested by police.

As is equally common with prisoner of faith cases, IHRC's response was uncompromising. Vigils were held outside the Nigerian High Commission in London. An intensive letter writing campaign also targeted the Nigerian government and the Commonwealth. The results? Al-Zakzaky's family were released after six weeks, the Zaria four after two years. The Free Al-Zakzaky! campaign had been a success.

2. Next, we see that IHRC's methods are varied and effective.

Campaigning techniques commonly include holding vigils and letter writing (Al-Zakzaky's case). Sometimes IHRC sends out a legal team to investigate. An example was the case of Cehl Fakeemceah, a Mauritian political leader who had been imprisoned for three years and subject to twenty-four hour lock-ups. IHRC observers also visit prisoners on fact-finding trips. This was done with Gul Aslan, a young Turkish mother who had been detained – and tortured – for three years without charge.

But not only are IHRC's methods innovative... crucially, they work. When deciding to release Al-Zakzaky's family, the bail judge referred to the flood of let-

ters already been mentioned. Others include: Sheikh Ali Benhadj and Dr Abbassi Madani, leaders of Algeria's Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). Also notable are the cases of the 'Malatya 75': most had faced the death penalty charge of trying to change the Turkish constitution... by protesting the hijab ban. While their cases continue, IHRC has helped in having the original charges reduced.



5. If we are to take one final lesson from prisoner of faith campaigns, it must be that well-intentioned efforts never go to waste. Three alternatives present themselves:

Either IHRC obtains the release of the prisoner: a resounding victory for individual right over political might. Or the public campaign exposes and embarrasses an unjust government: the international community can then apply pressure.



Or – the third alternative – IHRC campaigners can if nothing else be content that they have done their utmost to discharge what are Islamic duties. Namely, to ensure that injustice does not go unchallenged. And to let their brothers and sisters in captivity know that, where countless others have forgotten or given up on them, they at least have not. For them we will continue to bear witness.

For information on previous and ongoing campaigns please visit our website at www.ihrc.org.uk.

Changez Ali Khan



Thousands of detainees have been released as a result of IHRC campaigns. Some of those include: Mu'allim Ibraheem Al-Zakzaky, Mallam Turi, Zeenah Ibrahim, Nigeria; Sheikh Al-Jamri, Bahrain; Huda Kaya, Gul Aslan, Bekir Yildiz, Recep Tayyep Erdogan, Nurilhak Saatcioglu, Nurcihan Saatcioglu, Turkey; Sheikh Ahmed Yassine, Abdul Aziz Rantissi, Rabbi Biton, Sheikh Abdulkareem Obeid, Mustafa Dirani from Israeli Detention; Mohammed Mahdi Akef, Egypt; Dr. Muhammad Osman Elamin, Sudan; Cehl Meeah, Mauritius; Abbasi Madani and Ali Behadj, Algeria.

right to differ; the sanctity of their person. Upholding these rights means challenging their violations.

This year has seen many releases of prisoners that IHRC has campaigned for on a long term basis: Cehl Meeah in Mauritius, Sheikh Abdulkareem Obeid and Mustafa Dirani released from detention by the Israeli Defense Forces, Anwar Ibrahim in Malaysia and many, many others. Sadly some remain, like Nureddin Sirin - or have been rearrested, like Intisaar Saatcioglu, both in Turkey.



So how does IHRC support prisoners of faith? Are its methods successful? One of our earliest campaigns is illustrative:

In 1996 Mu'allim Ibrahim Al-Zakzaky, leader of the Muslim Brothers in Nigeria, was arrested with three others by the junta. He had done little more than publicly state that there is no sovereignty except through God.

As is common with prisoners of faith, all notions of due process were readily discarded. Known as the 'Zaria four', the men were detained for almost one year before being charged; their trial was repeatedly adjourned; and a chief government witness even testified in favour of their inno-



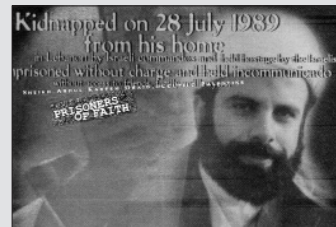
From this case five important lessons may be learned about IHRC's approach to prisoners of faith:

1. First, we note how the prisoners IHRC adopts are vulnerable and up against it: against an unfair legal system; against a biased government; against cultural prejudice.



In Al-Zakzaky's case, protest by Nigerian Muslims had been suppressed. His followers were persecuted, shot at and even killed during peaceful rallies. Had an overseas body like IHRC not intervened, one wonders whether his case would ever have come to light.

And so emerges a key starting point for all campaigns: rather than flee the battlefield overawed by the odds, IHRC stays to fight against them.



ters received internationally in their support. Meanwhile Fakeemceah's legal team had the trumped up murder charges against him dropped. As for Gul Aslan, the case against her was thrown out by the courts who found that it had no legal basis.

3. The Free Al-Zakzaky! campaign also shows that it takes sustained effort to overcome political inertia. Unsurprisingly, it is hard work to persuade a proud nation state to backtrack and publicly admit that it was wrong.



It took more than two years and a change of government in Nigeria before Al-Zakzaky was freed. Other cases have taken longer. Sheikh Abdul Kareem Obaid and Mustafa Dirani were kidnapped and held hostage by Israeli commandos. It was fifteen and ten years respectively before their release this year (2004). Worse still perhaps is the case of Sudanese opposition leader, Dr Hassan Al-Turabi. He was placed under house arrest for over two years, then released... only to be rearrested months later. IHRC perseveres with his case.

IHRC firmly believes that freedom must always be given a chance – no matter how slim that chance may seem at times.

4. The next point follows on from the previous: it is that perseverance pays off.

Since 1997 IHRC has obtained the release of thousands of prisoners. Some

THE RISE AND RISE OF BRITISH ISLAMOPHOBIA

It has been truly a horrible year for Muslims in the UK – more so perhaps than many realise. As the following will highlight, Muslims have been barraged with negative stereotyping, profiling and polemic from media and politicians alike. This combined with ongoing world crises has meant that Muslims have become embattled and even more marginalised from the mainstream.

In the face of such aggressive Islamophobia it has been difficult for Muslims and those conscious of rampant Islamophobia to make any headway against this prejudice. The British Muslims Expectations of the Government project (page 3) was started this year as a way of breaking the cycle of negativity where Muslims simply react to mainstream (often unsympathetic or misguided) agendas.

IHRC has also responded to the crises of the year but has tried to combine this with raising the calibre of Muslim participation in the mainstream - from reactionary and compliant to dynamic and truly engaged for the betterment of all.

Islamophobia as a Vote Winner

As the country went to the polls in June, IHRC highlighted the Innovative Minds campaign resource on candidates with dubious records on human rights issues. Some of those mentioned had already espoused quite Islamophobic sentiments, including support for the hijab ban.



A new crusade?

IHRC organised campaigns against the activities of the Far-Right, in particular the British National Party and their attacks on Islam and Muslims. This included helping campaigners write to the DPP to investigate and prosecute members of the BNP for hate crimes in July, after BNP members were secretly recorded by the BBC planning and speaking of involvement in race hate crimes.

Media culpability

As usual the media fermented Islamophobia: from the day to day negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims in Iraq, Chechnya and Palestine to other forms of demonisation e.g. over the issue of 'honour killings'. IHRC produced another briefing highlighting the operation of such prejudice entitled, 'Language, Power and Honour: Using Murder to Demonise Muslims'.

More disturbing perhaps was the prevalence of Islamophobic content in the mainstream media, from the notorious Will Cummins / Sunday Telegraph case, to the issue by issue castigation of Muslims in The Spectator. The liberal left was not immune with many who undermined their progressive credentials with stereotyping of all things allegedly Muslim.

Intolerance
Slaughter
Looking
At
Molestation of Women

Surah 5, Araf 51: O believers, do not take the Jews and the Christians as Friends.

5:57:2 Those who say that Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary, are unbelievers.

5:48:20 Allah has promised you many signs.

5:48:6 The unbelievers among the People of the Book and the robbers shall be in the Fire of Hell, dwelling therein forever. They are the most vile of creatures.

5:60:4 Enmity and hatred have arisen between you and us (Christians and Muslims), forever. All you believe in Allah alone.

"Intolerance, Slaughter, Looking, At, Molestation of women." That's what Billie and Iridia say ISLAM really stands for: If you wonder why, the word-for-word quotations from the Koran below might give you a clue, and show you why the peoples who know this religion the best fear it the most.

5:123 Fight those of the unbelievers who are near to you and let them see how fierce you can be.

5:27:7 Seclude (fidelity and the completion of Muslims) is worse than murder.

5:32:3 Your women are a snare for you, so get to your flag wherever you like.

Justifying terrorism, murdering unbelievers, raping their women, taking their countries. Despite what Blair and the Bishops say, it's all in the Koran. Get a copy yourself, or learn more about the reality of Islam at www.bnp.org.uk

Part of BNP campaign pack

Other examples of media bias include the BBC World Service reporting on the release of Cehl Meeah. Whilst the human rights community were celebrating the release of a political prisoner after 3 years in detention, the World Service questioned his innocence. Other IHRC media related campaigns included a campaign to get the BBC website to remove a poll on whether headscarves should be banned, to BBC2's airing of 'Terror Tourists' with its skewed portrayal of Palestine.

Demonisation of the Palestinian cause was a notable factor this year and IHRC also campaigned regarding the appointment of a 'Middle East Police Man' at the BBC after accusations of anti-Israeli bias were levelled against it. Also of concern were Channel 4's 'Witness: Inside the Mind of a Suicide Bomber', as well as various BBC News on-line articles.

Taking on Challenging Casework

IHRC has continued to take on challenging casework and has assisted many cases facing employment and education discrimination this year. Many long term cases have come to successful conclusions this year, and others averted from becoming full scale legal battles with resolution at the initial stages. If you want to specifically donate towards this type of work, please see the details on page 11.

Internalised Islamophobia

Sadly all these efforts have been hampered by the increasing phenomenon of internalised Islamophobia.

In recent years there has been much

Want a terrorist for a neighbour?

VOTE LABOUR

Is there any difference between the far-right and mainstream anymore?



Wrongly equating Islam with terror

argument to stigmatise Muslims as somehow different from other citizens in that they need to show more loyalty to the British state. This is a significant symptom of Islamophobia.

However it has been digested by the community with the effect that some organisations have started acting upon this presumption, and are vying with each other to show how they are trying to encourage this mentality. Examples include the attacks by Muslims on Shabina Begum in Luton for wanting to wear a jilbab to school. More famously some organisations have been promoting the idea that Muslims need to report suspicious activities in mosques, thus presenting the idea that (a) Muslims would not normally report anything illegal and (b) that British mosques are havens of criminality.

IHRC has addressed these issues in various talks, media interviews and articles including 'Aliens in Their Own Country' by IHRC Chair Massoud Shadjareh, which was first published in the Guardian in April. Internalised Islamophobia is a phenomenon we should address with urgency. If we do not we will accelerate the Islamophobia that surrounds us rather than tackle it and turn the tide against it.

Amirah Ali

'Policing the Police'

Negative police interest in the Muslim community was propelled by events three years ago. As a result negative profiling of Muslims by society at large and the police has become a norm from operational criteria to intelligence gathering and motivation.

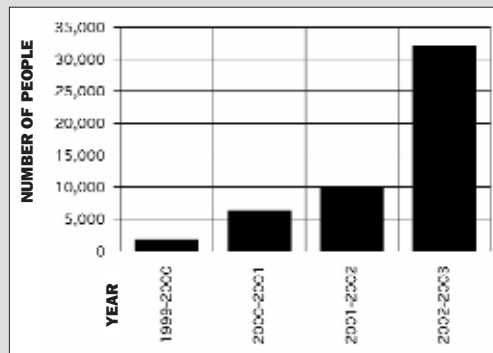
IHRC has been at the forefront of raising concern after concern with the police, from its pioneering report on 'Muslim profiling and police practice' in 2002 to its participation in the Muslim Safety Forum. Aside from this IHRC has continued to monitor incidents involving Muslim – police relations and interaction, from logging complaints and advocating for victims of harassment and inappropriate policing to negotiating between community and police to try and solve crisis issues.

As a result of its work, IHRC was asked to submit oral evidence to the Metropolitan Police Authority's enquiry into the use of Stop and Search, and we will be taking this issue further at various levels.

IHRC is concerned about the growing Islamophobic backlash in the UK as well as the nature, the rationale and the quality of the advice that is being sought and given to authorities by some Muslims. Both parties must realize that inappropriate advice which does not take on the real issues that face the communities will create major problems in the future.

IHRC has tried to tackle this in a variety of ways as outlined above. Part of this is through its participation in the Muslim Safety Forum (MSF) - currently a collection of Muslim organizations that have been meeting with the police for the last three years to discuss matters of security for the Muslims.

IHRC does not flinch from the unsavoury but absolutely essential task of telling the authorities in no uncertain terms what the reality of a situation is. Our foremost concern is the



Stop Searches under Terrorism Act

just treatment of Muslims in this country. In that endeavour we feel that it is necessary to counter the culture of sycophantism and the rubber stamping stance of some Muslim organizations to the actions of the authorities. IHRC believes that we need to be painfully honest about the situation if any real progress is to be made. This means we do not worry whether we will get invited for tea and biscuits with the police commissioner again if we walk out of his meetings on matters of principle or if the authorities do not like the legal team that we take with us.

It is perceived wisdom that every time an important issue

continued on page 10

Terror in the Name of Anti-Terrorism: Another Year of Muslim Profiling

The last twelve months has seen a marked deterioration in the treatment of Muslims as a result of anti-terrorist legislation and measures. Official government figures confirmed the community's suspicions that the anti-terrorism laws were being used disproportionately against it. In July 2004, the Home Office released figures indicating a 302 per cent rise in the number of Asian people being stopped and searched by the police. Earlier Home Office figures from 11 December 2003 show that in 2002-03 there were 32,100 searches overall under the Terrorism Act 2000. Statewatch, however, put this number at 71,100 as it can be inferred from statistical data that some police forces are recording "anti-terrorist" stops and searches incorrectly. Of these 32,100, only 380 (1.18%) have been arrested. The Home Office has itself admitted that "the majority" of these arrests "were not in connection with terrorism."

It is becoming clearer that Muslim profiling – the stopping and searching, even arrest of Muslims based on their religious appearance is a real and terrifying phenomenon.

In October 2003, IHRC and Arani & Co. Solicitors produced the follow up to the 'Know Your Rights' leaflet of which half a million copies were distributed. 'Know Your Rights, Part II' details the rights of people living in the UK regarding recent developments under anti-terrorism and immigration legislation, in particular, what to do if detained or questioned by security services whilst travelling; and one's rights under new laws regarding dual nationality.

Increasing numbers of cases were reported to IHRC of persons harassed whilst travelling, and often detained because they were unaware as to their situation under the new laws. This included not only notable Muslim public figures, but even Muslims who sat on local police consultative committees. It is becoming clearer that Muslim profiling – the stopping and searching, even arrest of Muslims based on their religious appearance is a real and terrifying phenomenon. In January, IHRC held a 'Know Your Rights' training evening in Luton to educate Muslim about their rights under British anti-terrorism legislation. IHRC is now running these workshops upon request around the UK.

Numerous raids and arrests of Muslims continued to be made throughout the country. Since 11 September 2001, a total of 631 people have been arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000. Of these just over 100 have been charged and only 15 have been convicted under the legislation. Although the majority of those arrested were Muslims, the majority of the convictions were of non-Muslims. On 2 December 2003, Babar Ahmed was one of several British Muslims arrested in a series of pre-dawn raids by the Metropolitan Police. Despite making no attempt to resist arrest, Babar was brutally assaulted by fifteen officers resulting in over 50 different injuries including urinary bleeding and severe bruising. The officers forced him into prostration with his forehead touching the ground and laughed at him as they asked him "Where is your God now?" After 12 days of interrogation, Babar and the other men were released without charge. Babar subsequently filed a complaint against the police for their brutality. Despite the evidence in September the Crown Prosecution Service decided that it had insufficient evidence to prosecute.

In August 2004, following an extradition request by the US government, Babar was arrested on suspicion of raising funds for Muslims fighting in Chechnya and Afghanistan. IHRC designed a protest letter for campaigners to send to the Home Office demanding that Babar be tried in a British court if there was evidence and not extradited to the US where he would be likely to face torture. IHRC also demanded that Babar's complaint against the police brutality he received be fully investigated and that the persecution of Muslims in Britain caused by Muslim profiling be stopped immediately.

In February, the Home Secretary outlined even wider counter-terrorism measures that constitute an even further erosion of civil liberties and fundamental freedoms in the UK. One such measure is the drafting of an offence of "acts preparatory to terrorism"

continued on page 8

Bush's War on Human Rights: From Guantanamo Bay to Belmarsh, UK

As George Bush and his right-wing zealots gear up for the November presidential elections, don't expect any meaningful discussions about the cherished American values of justice and freedom for all. To be sure, you can expect fierce debates about the lives of American soldiers in Iraq, but when it comes to the prisoners of Camp X-Ray in Guantanamo Bay – some as young as thirteen – who have been illegally detained since 2001, well, they don't mean as much. Even if the US has ratified several international conventions on the rights of humans.

The situation in Britain is not much better, either. Foreign nationals have also been detained in Belmarsh prison, most since the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act was passed in 2001. Like America, they did this by

ignoring international law. Highly publicised police raids and the detention of several Muslims have not resulted in any convictions, suggesting that the police force is perhaps abusing their emergency powers. However, what is worse, it

seems as though the British government is intent on making these incredibly unjust powers a more regular feature of the British justice system.

That is why IHRC has been working as hard as ever to see that this does not happen. The scope of our international campaigns has broadened and intensified to meet this crisis in the international justice system: through our work with the prisoners of Belmarsh prison and their legal representatives, with other human rights organisations, and through our own campaigns to pressure the government to bring about a change in policy.

Throughout the year, IHRC has called upon its supporters to



GHRC delegation outside the Supreme Court, Washington

lobby their local MPs, the government and even the United Nations, to highlight the injustices of detaining those prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and Belmarsh. March 2004 saw IHRC uniting their efforts with other organisations, notably the while they are in prison. Our caseworkers are in constant contact with the prisoners themselves, and their legal representatives, so as to see that their religious rights are respected, and that they are kept in good health and, where necessary, special needs and requirements are accommodated accordingly.



A 9/11 victim's sister and a father of a Guantanamo detainee light a candle for justice

This is done parallel to our continual efforts to bring about their release, including letters to local MPs and the Home Secretary, David Blunkett. So far, such efforts have led to the successful release of one detainee; however, IHRC is particularly concerned that the Secretary is seeking to extend the emergency powers of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001, due to run out in 2006, and continues to raise the issue with the Home Office. Its submission to the Home Office is available on-line at www.ihrc.org.uk However, if this happens, then the legal and human rights of every British Muslim, and not just foreign Muslims, is under a very real threat. IHRC therefore calls on all Muslims to help us remove the prejudices and injustices of the 'democratic' West.

IHRC is also working hard to protect the rights of those foreign nationals held in Belmarsh, not only to challenge the legal basis of their internment, but to ensure that their rights are protected

Shabnum Hassan



The detainees in Guantanamo Bay languish, but campaigners remain united and determined

Hijab and Democracy: The Abuse of Human Rights in Pursuit of Secularism

This last year has seen a catastrophic turn of events in Europe regarding the wearing of hijab and the interference of the state in this issue of religious devotion.

In France, new laws have been implemented that ban ostensible religious symbols – a ban which disproportionately affects Muslims girls and Sikh boys. The ban in itself is not new – similar regulations allowing head-teachers to enforce bans at their discretion have been in existence for 10 years in France, with some 400 girls being known to have been suspended for their refusal to comply. IHRC has been working on raising awareness of these and advocate in individual cases, as well as other forms of discrimination in France vis a vis hijab, including the cases of women denied passports with photos of them in hijab. Sadly not much attention was paid to this by Muslims in general until the situation became enshrined in law. Now Belgium and Germany are following suit. At IHRC we have seen a marked increase in cases of hijab discrimination at schools, with the arguments being propounded sounding more confident since the French bans. Indeed even some British MPs and journalists, have expressed support for such bans.

However these events are not solely the responsibility of Islamophobic governments and elites, or even mainstream societies. The recent court decision to refuse Shabina Begum of Luton the right to wear jilbab at school is not only an indictment of the legal system, but has exposed the British Muslim community to criticism regarding its own position on this girl's rights and those of other Muslimahs. Instead of rallying around her



© Innovative Minds



IHRC uses the media, protest and research as part of its strategy of campaigning for a better future for all.

their rights to practise their religion everyday without molestation and criminalisation, they need to stop believing themselves to be anything less than their other European counterparts.

At IHRC we have worked on hijab bans and hijab related cases since our inception. In 2003

we launched a long running research project on the perceptions of Muslim women in Europe. The questionnaire for Muslim women can now be filled in on-line at: www.ihrc.org.uk/hijab.htm. We have now completed qualitative work in the UK and will be launching a report in November on the UK situation as part of the British Muslims' Expectations of the British Government series (See page 3).

Our other work this year on hijab has ranged from organising vigils, creating campaigning resources, to writing briefings, making presentations and taking on cases. Indeed our annual event, the Islamophobia Awards (see page 2) spotlighted hijab as the example of the year's growing Islamophobia. Some of our work is highlighted below but is far

at preserving democracy.

This tragic fallacy needs to be routed out of the European psyche and that includes the apologetic mindset of many Muslim individuals and organisations. Ten years ago, some of us who went

power ourselves, we commit a grotesque act of treachery against any prospect of a truly cohesive society, where each of us has value on a par with the

tried to integrate headscarf-wearing women into the education and work sector by taking steps to accommodate their religious practices.

Muslim Women, Human Rights and Religious Freedom: Europe Under the Spotlight of National and International Law, 08 March 2004

How France, Germany and Belgium have undermined their own constitutions and violated human rights principles and laws in their proposed hijab bans.

Briefing:
Proposed French Ban on Religious Signs in School violates Freedom of Religion, and Rights to Education and

Work.

16 December 2003

One recurring difficulty for Muslim women in France is the ban on the Islamically prescribed headscarf from public institutions.

Audios of talks available to listen on-line:

'Hijab: the War on Freedom' A presentation by Sukeina Panjwani of Innovative Minds, on behalf of IHRC, April 2004

<http://www.inminds.co.uk/hijab-the-war-on-freedom.html>

There are also audio debates between IHRC officers and pro-ban politicians and activists, as well as articles covering these issues on the 'Articles' page of our website.

For campaign resources such as postcards and campaign letters please see page 11. An excellent resource for details of all campaigns (not just IHRC's or Innovative Minds') and reports on events, can be found at the Innovative Minds' website www.inminds.co.uk.

If you have experienced discrimination because of hijab at work or school and need help, please contact IHRC on 020 8904 4222, or email hijab@ihrc.org.

Amirah Ali



other.

IHRC's Europe-wide Hijab Project continued this year. Quantitative surveys are available in the following languages: English, French, German, Dutch, Danish, Spanish, German and Italian. It can be filled in on-line in English at:



The situation for Muhajibahs in Turkey remains dire with state discrimination descending into violence

right to interpret what hijab means for her, Muslims rounded on her to the extent that she was lambasted from a conference platform claiming to support hijab in Europe, as someone symbolic of Muslims who didn't know how to be grateful for what was allowed them.

If Muslims in Europe, in particular the UK are to avert the various laws that are encroaching on

from exhaustive. To see the full range four work on hijab, please visit the IHRC website search engine at www.ihrc.org.uk, and type in 'hijab'. We are also involved in taking two hijab cases to the European Court of Human Rights. This is a difficult task given the ruling in Sahin v Turkey that the Turkish state's ban on hijab at university was consistent with human rights as it was aimed

there have been many demonstrations, some of 10 people, some a 100, some a 1000 and even upwards of 4000. We wonder however isn't this just too little too late? The challenge for Muslims now is to learn from the last ten years of mistakes instead of repeating them. If we are simply to carry on acting as apologetic guests at the mercy of all-mighty hosts we not only disem-

www.ihrc.org.uk/hijab.htm. A survey requiring your written responses (for British Muslims) is also available to download from our campaigns page.

Briefings available to read and print off, from our website:

Good Practice on the Headscarf in Europe 09 March 2004

An examination of how various European countries have

Instability and Insecurity in Iraq: Another Year of Protest

Despite the capture of Saddam Hussein and the alleged hand-over of sovereignty to the interim Iraqi government, the situation in Iraq continued to deteriorate as occupation forces defiantly refuse to leave.

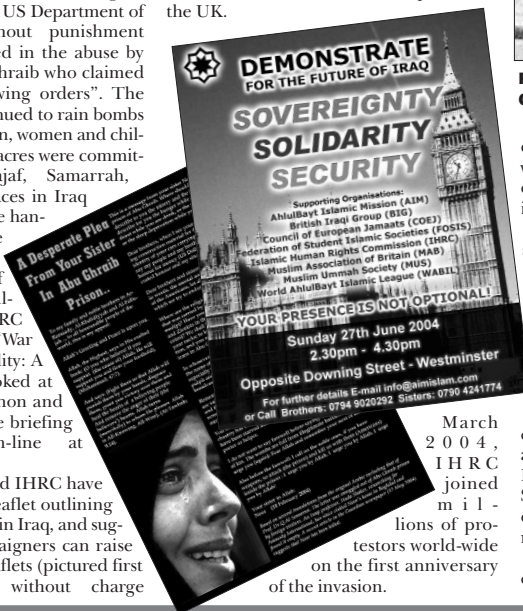
In April 2004, the now infamous images of rape, torture and death of Iraqi detainees by US Occupation Forces began to emerge from Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad. However, accountability was reserved for those directly involved in the abuse; higher ranking members of the US Department of Defence escaped without punishment despite being implicated in the abuse by prison guards at Abu Ghraib who claimed there were "only following orders". The Occupation forces continued to rain bombs down upon innocent men, women and children all over Iraq. Massacres were committed in Fallujah, Najaf, Samarra, Baghdad and other places in Iraq both before and after the hand-over of power to the interim Iraqi government. This level of aggression against civilians is not new, and IHRC produced a briefing 'War Crimes and Accountability: A Historical Analysis', looked at Vietnam, Algeria, Lebanon and Northern Ireland. The briefing can be found on-line at www.ihrc.org.uk.

Innovative Minds and IHRC have produced a campaign leaflet outlining the horrors of detention in Iraq, and suggesting ways that campaigners can raise their concerns. The leaflets (pictured first right) are available without charge

(although donations towards their distribution costs would be welcome). Just contact the office on 020 8904 422 or email info@ihrc.org.

IHRC participated in and supported numerous demonstrations against the war and the continued occupation of Iraq, including:

November 2003 'Stop Bush' demonstration to protest George's Bush visit to the UK. With over 200,000 people turning out, the demonstration was the largest ever mid-week demonstration to take place in the UK.



March 2004, IHRC joined millions of protesters world-wide on the first anniversary of the invasion.



Representatives hand in letter of protest to Prime Minister on behalf of AIM, IHRC, COEJ, MUS, MAB and FOSIS.

May 2004, IHRC supported a solidarity demonstration by Hizbut Tahrir of Muslim women in Britain outside the US embassy, demanding the release of women prisoners in Iraq.

IHRC also participated in a vigil outside Downing Street organised by the Association of Islamic Societies in protest against the egregious human rights violations committed by occupation forces in Iraq, including torture of detainees, violations of the peace and disrespect and violation of the sanctity of holy sites in Iraq.

June 2004, IHRC joined with several other Muslim organisations (see picture above) to support AIM's (Ahlul Bayt Islamic Mission) vigil outside Downing Street for the Future of Iraq. Protesters demanded sovereignty, solidarity and security for the people of Iraq.

IHRC continued to produce briefings on events in Iraq, and compilations of Iraq

related briefings are now available as hard copy reports (please see page 11). Individual briefings produced this year include 'Upholding the Right to a Fair Trial? Trying Saddam Hussein' (January 2004). This was an overview of the proposed 'Iraqi Special Tribunal for Crimes against Humanity' and the implication this would have for the furtherance of human rights law.

IHRC was also active in campaigning for the release of British citizens held by US Occupation forces. In November 2003, a 21 year old British student from the University of Manchester, Ursula Khan, was detained without charge in Iraq by the US military. His family was only informed four weeks after he was detained. IHRC campaigned on his behalf and Ursula was eventually released after a total of six weeks in detention.

Fahad Ansari

Darfur and Sudan: A Forgotten Crisis

2004 was the year when the world finally opened its eyes to the ethnic cleansing taking place in the Darfur region in the West of Sudan. The Sudanese government has been responsible for an organised campaign of destruction of life and livelihood in Darfur as well as the systematic plunder of property and wealth. The government response to the insurgency declared by the Sudan Liberation Army/Movement (SLA/M) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in February 2003 was to embark on a scorched earth policy in which over 50,000 people have been massacred and over one million left homeless.

IHRC campaigned vigorously against the Sudanese government, regularly reminding campaigners to continue writing letters to the Sudanese government and to their respective foreign ministers. IHRC also supported a demonstration organised by Friends of Darfur outside the Sudanese embassy in June 2004.

In July 2004, IHRC joined forces with the National Coalition of Anti-Deportation Campaign (NCADC) to prevent the deportation of Ahmed Ibrahim Bashari to Sudan. Bashari, a member of the

opposition Popular Congress Party, had already been subject to three separate periods of detention by the state security and there was a real and substantial risk that he would face torture and even execution, if forcibly returned to Sudan. IHRC thanks all campaigners for their swift action in writing to their MPs.

At the time of going to press however a further crackdown by the Sudanese government has seen a new wave of arrests and the situation remains tense. The Sudanese government's terrible reputation for detention and torture of dissidents has not abated. Ahmed Abdul Rahman Sulieman, a student was tortured to death whilst in detention in September 2004.

IHRC, together with other organisations like the Sudanese Organisation Against Torture (SOAT), has been campaigning against the Sudanese government for many years due to its policy of torture of prisoners. In 2001, many members of the opposition Popular Congress Party (PCP), including its leader Dr Hassan al-Turabi, were arrested and detained under house arrest. Following years of campaigning by IHRC and others, Dr Turabi and eight other mem-

bers of the PCP were finally released by the Sudanese government on 13 October 2003. However, in another campaign of persecution by the Sudanese government against the PCP, Dr Turabi and 77 other members of the party were arrested again in late March 2004, it appears this time in connection with their increasingly critical stance of the Sudanese government's actions in Darfur. On 30 June 2004, Dr

Turabi and other detainees began a hunger strike to protest against the inhumane conditions in which they were being held, and IHRC has been trying to raise the plight of all detainees at various levels.

Many Darfur sympathisers and / or campaigners have been arrested and detained, and IHRC has called for the release of all political prisoners regardless of affiliation or background.

The situation in Sudan has been a crunch issue for Muslims everywhere. The initial silence from Muslims this year evidenced a combination of a lack of knowledge of the situation, a reluctance to take a stance when Muslims are oppressors and a genuine mistrust of news reporting.

The possible options for resolving this conflict are also difficult to negotiate, as much importance has been given to the option of military intervention. None of this complexity or confusion is sufficient excuse for campaigners to do nothing. IHRC has compiled a list of resources for campaigners to read to become familiar with the situation. It can be found on our website www.ihrc.org.uk, together with updates and alerts on the situation, and news from humanitarian organisations and aid workers. Please take a moment of your time to at least find out what is going on. The legacy of Darfur is already grave – let us stop it getting worse.

Fahad Ansari & Arzu Merali

Another Year of Muslim Profiling

continued from page 6

which would create an offence based on guilt by association. In August 2004, IHRC submitted a response to David Blunkett's policy paper regarding anti-terrorism legislation of February 2004. In it, IHRC discussed the effects of the anti-terrorism legislation on the Muslim community in Britain, comparing its situation today to that of the minority Irish community in Britain of yesteryear. The report is available on-line in its original format as well as a more detailed report

clarifying issues for the general reader.

IHRC has also continued to provide briefings on anti-terrorism related issues, notably a look at the implications of the Anti-Terrorism Crime & Security Act 2001 and the Civil Contingencies Bill of this year. Compilations of the briefings are now available in hard copy, or to download from our website. IHRC has also engaged in very public debate with other organisations on the issues of anti-terrorism and Muslims' response. The various newspaper articles and media interviews, including

our own opinion pieces published in the press are available to read on-line. The issue of terrorism is being used to demonise and marginalise Muslims and we must not feel cowed into accepting these positions on the outskirts of society. Please take time to become familiar with these issues and ensure you have the confidence to deal with the onslaught of negativity that characterises much of British debate around the idea of Muslims in society today.

Fahad Ansari & Arzu Merali

Volunteering for IHRC

'Through the Eyes of an IHRC volunteer'

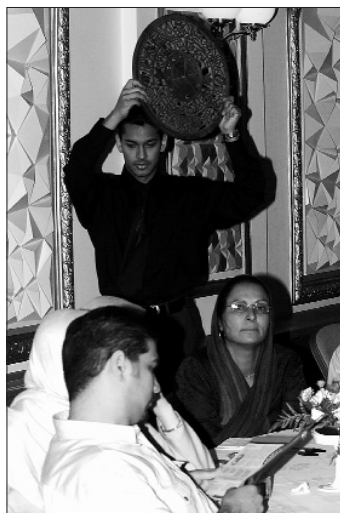
The commandments from Allah instruct us to help the poor, the oppressed and the needy and when we see evil we are commanded to remove it physically, and if we are unable to do this then to speak against it and if we are unable to do this then to reject it in our hearts, and this is the lowest form of rejection.

It is therefore, every Muslim's duty to stand up against injustice. Our brothers and sisters are harassed and abused throughout the world and it is obligatory upon us to strive against those inflictions with our wealth, might and voices. As Allah says to us "And cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when ye know (what it is)." Qur'an 002.042

Often our actions seem insignificant against those of the oppressors and it seems almost futile for us to make the effort but our duty is to Allah and our objective is to fulfil that duty and to please Allah, not to change the world.

Yes, we should act in a way that will cause positive change as Allah said to Muhammad, upon whom be peace; 'It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee.' Qur'an 003.159. This shows that we have to approach people and matters in a manner that is effective and not one that will cause people/things to 'break away' from us but, we do this knowing that the outcome is in the hands of Allah.

The effects of the work that is done by IHRC is visible, people, particularly Muslims, are far more aware of what is going on around the world and aware of the 'other side' of the story. Stories like those of American and British peace activists who are killed 'in cross fire' by snipers, or accidentally run over by bulldozers in daylight while the person is wearing luminous clothing and talking to the driver through a loud speaker. These are stories that are barely mentioned in the mainstream media and by being informed about these people are waking up to the brutalities of the governments and becoming proactive against them.



... to helping at fund-raising events



Join the thousands of IHRC volunteers in the UK

By doing nothing we can argue that we have caused neither harm nor good but the fact is that we are doing something – helping the aggressors. We fund them and support their actions with the food we eat, the clothes we wear and agree with them by ignorantly accepting the information they relay to us. We may be unaware of our contributions but, this will not avail us on the day of judgement if we do not make an effort to remove our ignorance.

The least we can do is free our minds and those of the people around us from the shackles the enemy has placed on us. By working with IHRC and informing people about what is actually happening in the world we stop being sleepwalkers in their midst and are no longer indoctrinated by

the 'unbiased' narration of half the story. We also stop 'imitating' them by blindly going into the same establishments they go into and making principled decisions about where we will shop and eat.

We are also the voice of our brothers and sisters who do not have a voice and let them know that the rest of the ummah does feel the pain and they are not alone in their suffering. They know that when they cry to Allah "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from thee one who will protect; and raise for us from thee one who will help!" Qur'an 004.075, their lord has listened to them and there are those who will help.

By working with IHRC we are doing something towards obeying Allah's com-

mandments and fighting for our rights and those of our brothers and sisters. We are encouraging the people to rise up against the brutalities and giving those who suffer greater strength to withstand it by letting them know they have support.

By Sister Akhtar



From family oriented events...

GET INVOLVED TODAY!

How you can volunteer for IHRC

Volunteering for IHRC is rewarding and varied. The work is extensive and alhamdulillah as our office and man power has expanded so has the amount of work we are able to take on.

If you are living outside London and wish to volunteer you should consider becoming an IHRC local co-ordinator or get in touch with us to find out if there is an existing sub group already working in your area.

A local coordinator is our point of contact in your area and would be responsible for encouraging likeminded people to build a core group of volunteers to campaign. The campaigns undertaken will reflect IHRC projects, may regard demonstrations or even involve issues in your local community.

As an IHRC volunteer you could be helping in admin, research, campaigning, distributing and much more. You may have a particular campaign, country, prisoner or field you have had experience in or feel passionately about and hence may choose to work in that area.

Whether you do these jobs from home or the IHRC office if you live locally to us can be flexible.

If you are restricted for time you can be added to our campaigners database to which we send out regular alerts. This way you can be kept updated with our campaigns, so you are able to respond when convenient.

Volunteering is helpful to us but also helps you in developing your own personal skills and broadening your mind. It is an excellent way to become familiar with what practical action you can take to pursue justice and preserve human rights. You also become aware and are up to date with the current issues/challenges and persecution facing the Muslim Ummah.

Finally, if you are unable to donate your time we would greatly appreciate your financial support. This could be in

the form of standing order, one off donation or selling various products that we produce such as eid cards and t-shirts.

For further information please call us on 020 8904 4222. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for the IHRC please send in your C.V. and cover letter to PO Box 598, Wembley, London, UK, HA9 7XH. Alternatively you can email abidah@ihrc.org

Abidah Merchant



Help at a stall



Use your talent

'Policing the Police'

continued from page 5

which has serious implications for Muslims has arisen, the police have failed to deliver. More often than not their decisions appear coloured by political rather than ethical considerations. Examples of our many concerns include:

1. Last year's raid on Finsbury Park mosque. This has massive implications for all Muslims, or believers of any faith. To date we have not had a satisfactory response as to why: 150 police officers and 2 helicopters were used to invade the sanctity of a masjid with public fanfare; the police closed it down and became implicated in what appeared to be a regime change. The police are now trying to make amends and the integrity of the officers involved is not in question. However, one cannot help but be deeply confused by this good cop bad cop approach.

2. The anti-terrorism poster headed 'Help us [police] defeat terrorism' depicted eyes like that of a face-veiled Muslimah. When challenged, the police were 'sorry for the offence that had been caused' but could not explain why this poster had gone out without consultation with MSF.

3. There has been no adequate explanation as to why some hajis were singled out at airports and searched by police dogs and their eham rendered unclean

It would be unfair to not mention the integrity of some sections of the police e.g. the Muslim Contact Unit. MCU have attempted to address some injustices that Muslims have been subjected to, and this has brought relief for individuals and some communities when IHRC has raised some of these injustices.

Although this is appreciated we must remember that all we are asking for are our rights, not any special favours. The powers that be must also remember that throwing crumbs of comfort at us using the integrity of principled police officers is not enough.

IHRC's role has been to warn and warn and warn again of the perils of this systematic perpetration of the many injustices fuelled by Islamophobia.

The author represents IHRC at the Muslim Safety Forum and is currently the MSF chair.

Raza Kazim

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Salamun alaykum

wa rahmatullah wa barakatuh,

These are challenging times for our global community – these pages have outlined just a small fraction of the crises facing us. Whilst the majority of the world's oppressed are Muslim, Muslims and indeed Islam are still increasingly being equated with barbarism and terrorism.

The level of demonisation and Islamophobia is reaching saturation point. For many of us it has become a confusing time, where the basic rights of the oppressed e.g. in Palestine and Iraq and elsewhere have been taken away and replaced by accusations of terrorism and extremism. Negative propaganda has become so intense and powerful that so many of us have not only accepted these stereotypes but we have become promoters of them. Often this has been done unconsciously.

As Muslims these depressing realities have also created great opportunities. Opportunities to re-evaluate ourselves, our purpose in life according to the Qur'an and tradition of the Prophet (peace be upon him). It is tempting to focus on only 'our' problems, and become even more inward looking. Let us remember that the Prophet (peace be

upon him) was **Rahmatul Aalemeen** – a mercy to creation – and if we truly take him as a role model then we should have the compassion that is needed to bring a change not just for our own sakes but for the sake of humanity at large.



We can only do that if we regain our confidence in our moral and spiritual values.

The roots of our belief bring light that can truly transform the world into a better place – if we truly believe it. Whatever we do, whether it is like the work of IHRC or any other endeavour we must not give in to the negativity and pressures that surround us, and continue to struggle for what is good and right.

Let us remember that the only thing that is required of us is to do the right thing, the result is in the hand of Allah s.w.t.

Yours in Islam,

Massoud Shadjareh

Other IHRC projects and activities

Training for Community Activists

IHRC has continued to develop challenging and professional training workshops for the community. In addition to the training provided for volunteer co-ordinators (see page 9), IHRC provides training events on: media monitoring, analysis and response; campaigning techniques; and this year it has developed a 'Know Your Rights' training event.

The first of these 'Know Your Rights' events was run in Luton this year, in response to community concerns at the increased targeting of Muslims by the police and security services (see page 6). These workshops not only provide a way for the community access expert advice on their rights in an increasingly draconian state, but provides a way of the community

to give its feedback and share its experiences with an organisations and professionals who can then formulate ways to address these issues. Amazingly in one of the first workshops, in one break-out session it transpired that more than three quarters of participants had been stopped and searched.

Please contact the office if you would like to arrange a 'Know Your Rights' or any other training event please contact the office on 020 8904 4222 or email info@ihrc.org, writing TRAINING in the subject line.

Empowering the Community

Empowerment and engagement have become the new mantras of the Muslim community in Europe. Part of IHRC's ethos has been to create an organisation where not only Muslims, but Islamically ori-



Running workshops for European Muslim Youth Leaders, Zurich

ented and led work has an equal footing in society, and is used for the good of society.

As part of this, one of IHRC's founder Demir Mahmutcehajic spoke at the Council of European Jamat's Youth Network Desk in Zurich this year, highlighting the need for principled engagement and the dangers of blind participation in societal apparatus that have failed all communities let alone marginalised ones such as Muslims. IHRC also provided workshops at this conference.

Other such events took place around the UK with IHRC involvement, and again those interested in arranging for IHRC to send (a) speaker(s) or (a) trainer(s) to their event please contact the office on 020 8904 4222 or info@ihrc.org.

Consultations

IHRC was again asked to make submissions to and at various fora.

This year's submission to the British government's plans to change and extend anti-terror laws provided IHRC and Arani & Co. human rights solicitors, an opportunity to make policy relevant submissions to the government. IHRC was also asked to submit oral evidence to the MPA commission on Stop and Search as well as being called to address the Association of Chief Police Officers conference to speak about police Islamophobia.

IHRC has continued to attend Muslim – Foreign Office meetings on a variety of consultative issues.

IHRC representatives also participated in academic, activist oriented and other conferences worldwide, including Sydney, Melbourne, Zurich, Brussels and Paris.

Researching Human Rights

IHRC has been asked to present papers and participate in various

conferences across the year. Massoud Shadjareh will be speaking at the British Council's Eye to Eye conference in November 2004. His paper, 'Whose Rights are they Anyway?' - reaching a Critical Understanding of Human Rights Speak in the 'Twenty-first Century' will be published by the British Council in October. Other IHRC papers published this year include, 'Mad Woman in the Burqa: Muslim Women as Exemplar Feminists' in the University of Brisbane's journal 'Hecate'.

Charter 3:103

IHRC has continued to protest sectarian violence around the world and this year has seen many more individuals and organisations add their name to this declaration, particularly after the slaughter in Karbala in March.

A website dedicated to the charter is planned for next year. Those interested in signing the charter please email us, info@ihrc.org.

Resourcing the Media

The polarisation between prejudiced and open media became more pronounced this year. IHRC as with many Muslim organisations was made the (un)flattering subject of articles, as well as being quoted and interviewed on current issues and its work. Links to a selection of these can be found on the articles page of our website www.ihrc.org.uk.



Training a new generation of European Muslim Youth Leaders

News about the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust

The Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust is a charity that raises money to fund purely charitable work. This includes e.g. work to raise awareness about human rights or to ensure that existing human rights laws are being properly enforced. It could also provide relief to victims of human rights abuses and their families.

If you wish to donate money that will be used for purely charitable purposes as defined by the Charity Commission you can send donations to the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust. Please make cheques payable to the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust and send it with the completed form below. UK tax payers are able to utilise Gift Aid when donating to Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust, by ticking the relevant box(es) below. This means for every £1 you donate IHRC will be able to reclaim a further 28p.

May Allah s.w.t. reward all your efforts. Ameen.

Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust

Details of donor

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Forename(s)

Surname

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I would like a receipt

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NOTES

You can cancel this declaration at any time by notifying the charity.

If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains equal to the tax that the charity claims, you can cancel your declaration.

If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self-Assessment tax return.

If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief ask your local tax office for leaflet IR 65.

Please notify the charity if you change your name or address.

Please note the charity cannot fund any political work or lobbying for a change in existing law (please see page 12 if you are interested in donating to all of IHRC's work including its non-charitable work).

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Please tick the box next to the items you want and fill in your name, address and contact details on the form overleaf and send your payment to: IHRC, PO Box 598, Wembley, HA9 7XH, United Kingdom. If you are based outside the UK, please contact IHRC before purchasing items, as there may be additional postage costs involved.

Please make cheques payable to 'Islamic Human Rights Commission'. Please allow 28 days for delivery for items other than Eid cards. If you require any of the following before Eid 2004 please specify when you send us the order.

REPORTS

All IHRC reports are available to download from our website without charge, or can be emailed to you. If you still require a hardcopy please send £4 for each report you require. Our entire list of reports from 1997 - is available on-line now www.ihrc.org.uk.

Bringing Israel to Account: The Role of International Law (July 2004) IHRC's latest report, by Uzma Karim, looks at how international law has failed in affording any redress to the Palestinian people.

Terror in the Name of Anti-Terrorism: The UK in 2004 (November 2004) A comprehensive look at what is wrong with current Anti-Terrorist laws and proposals in the UK. Based on IHRC's submissions to the Home Office, this guide has been designed for activists and campaigners.

Dual Citizenship: British, Islamic or Both - Obligation, Recognition, Respect and Belonging (November 2004) The first in the British Muslims' Expectations of the British Government Series, looking at the crunch issues of citizenship and belonging for Muslims in the UK. This report costs £7.

An International Oddity: Iraq's Journey (November 2004) Based on IHRC's briefings on Iraq over the last two years, this report looks at different aspects of the Iraq conflict - from the various arguments used to define the allies invasion of Iraq, to the allies' use of cluster bombs and its dubious legality.

Hijab & Democracy: The Ways of and against Secular Fundamentalism (November 2004) Based on IHRC briefings, this report looks at the movements for and against women in hijab in Europe at the current moment. Chapters look at international law, human rights, as well as good and bad practice.

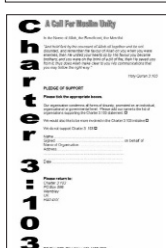
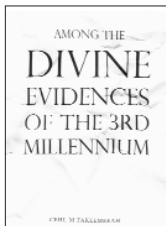
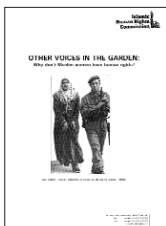
Dissent, Difference and Terror: A Review of Global Anti-Terrorist Laws (November 2004) Based on IHRC reports and briefings, this report is a compilation of work by various authors looking at governmental moves in various countries that effectively silence dissent and criminalise minorities and refugees in the name of anti-terrorism.

To Liberate or Not to Liberate? Islam, Universalism & Human Rights (September 2003) A presentation by Arzu Meralli dealing with the problems of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from a Muslim perspective.

Fundamental Human Rights in Islamic Sharia (September 2003) British Barrister Osama Daneshyar looks at the concepts of fair and free trial, privacy and free expression in Islamic sharia law and the ECHR.

The Religion of Human Rights (September 2003) Dr. Saesed Bahmanpour sets out the dilemma faced by most people who are faithful to God and at the same time want to make sure that the basic rights of human individuals are safeguarded.

Further titles for 2004 include two more in the British Muslims' Expectations of the Government series on Hijab and the other on University Experiences. Other titles include one on Burmese Muslims. Please contact the office or join our email list for news of more reports.



IHRC CAMPAIGN PACKS

IHRC Campaign packs are also available to download from the website www.ihrc.org. If you require us to send you hard copies, please send us £1 per item as below to help with postage and packing. The best way to keep abreast of IHRC campaigns is to join our email list. Please email subscribe@ihrc.org to join.

Boycott Zionism Pocket sized card This latest card gives details of pro-Israeli companies on the boycott list in a handy pocket size for you to take wherever you go. Per batch of 50. (If you require only a few copies please call the office on 020 8904 4222).

Awareness Raising Leaflet on Police Islamophobia in the UK (January 2004) IHRC and LMC's leaflet outlining issues of recent police Islamophobia in the UK. Per batch of 20.

Boycott Marks & Spencer / Boycott Zionism Leaflet, updated September 2004 (September 2004) Per batch of 50. (If you require only a few copies please call the office on 020 8904 4222).

Prisoners of Faith Campaign: Intisar Saatcioglu, Turkey (January 2004) New campaign pack for Hijab ban activist in Turkey.

Protest Flyer for French Hijab Ban The following leaflet was handed out at the IHRC / IWVO vigils outside the French Embassy on 11th January 2004, but can be used to raise awareness amongst Muslim and non-Muslim communities regarding the hijab ban in France. Per batch of 20.

Letter to campaign against indefinite detention of foreigners in the UK (December 2003) The Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 Review Committee has called on the British government to scrap laws that allow the detention of non-British nationals indefinitely. Join the campaign by writing to the British Home Secretary. Per batch of 20.

French Hijab Ban: Letter to British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw MP (December 2003) Updated campaign letter to British Foreign Secretary. This can also be used as a model for (with relevant adjustments) for Foreign Ministers in various countries. Per batch of 20.

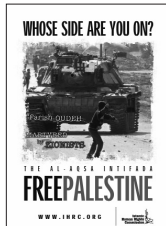
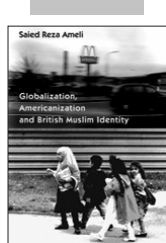
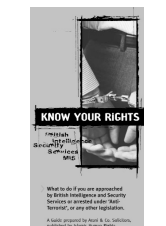
French Hijab Ban: Protest letter to Jacques Chirac (December 2003) Updated campaign letter to Jacques Chirac regarding the ban on religious symbols in schools. Per batch of 20.

Prisoners of Faith: Nureddin Sirin postcards (October 2003) Per batch of 25
 Cards calling for the release of Nureddin Sirin. They can be sent plain or with addresses of various people to send them to. Please specify if you want address and message labels added either on this form:
 Jack Straw MP, British Foreign Secretary
 Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkish Prime Minister
 Chris Patten, EU Commissioner for External Affairs

'Oppressed in the Name of Freedom' postcards (October 2003) Per batch of 25
 Specially printed cards regarding the plight of women discriminated against for wearing hijab. Currently being used to campaign for hijab rights in Turkey. Please specify which cards you require
 Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkish Prime Minister
 Chris Patten, EU Commissioner for External Affairs

Charter 3:103 (July 2003) Per batch of 10 (If you only need a couple of copies call the office on 020 8904 4222)
 CHARTER 3: 103, a document which outlines simply the Qur'anic verse which calls for unity amongst Muslims.

Prisoner of Faith: Imam Jamil Al-Amin, USA (November 2002) Imam Jamil, the well-known and outspoken cleric was sentenced to life imprisonment without the chance of parole this year despite serious flaws in his trial and the evidence against him.



Prisoner of Faith: Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, USA (November 2002) More details on how to campaign for the Sheikh imprisoned under laws not used since the American civil war.

LEAFLETS

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS (May 2002) Leaflet written by acclaimed human rights solicitor Mudassar Arani and published by IHRC is an invaluable guide for anyone concerned by the activities of the British secret services, and police. It explains how to deal with approaches from the security services and police.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS part II (November 2003) Leaflet outlining what to do if you are stopped by security services whilst travelling and your rights under new immigration and nationality laws in the UK.

VIDEOS

All videos are £7 including postage & packing from the UK.

The Hidden Victims of September 11: Conference Video Featuring Yvonne Ridley, the late Sulayman Abedin and Mudassar Arani, with papers from Sultana Tafadar and Natalia Garcia.

Oppressed in the Name of Freedom (formerly The Violation of Hijab in Turkey) A moving look at the exclusion of Muslim women from Turkish society (approx. 20 mins).

Human Rights, Justice & Muslims in the Wake of 9/11 Seminar from October 2001.

BOOKS

Among the Divine Evidences of the 3rd Millennium by Cehi M Fakeemeeah, 109 pages, A&Z Design Consultancy, 2003. Cehi Fakeemeeah was a prisoner of faith (see page 4). This book looks at some of the issues surrounding Fakeemeeah's imprisonment as well as discourses on the nature of Allah. This book costs £5.50 including postage and packaging.

Globalisation, Americanization and British Muslim Identity by Dr. Saied Reza Ameli. 340 pages (1 August 2002) Islamic College for Advanced Studies (ICAS); ISBN: 190463020. This book by one of IHRC's founders, looks at the development of British Muslim identity and the challenges to it from the globalisation of Hollywood culture. This book costs £14 including postage & packaging.

BANNERS

These banners can be displayed as posters or used at demonstrations and vigils. Printed in colour on canvas. They cost £7 each including postage and packaging.

Whose Side Are You On? Boy and tank design. 32" x 47"

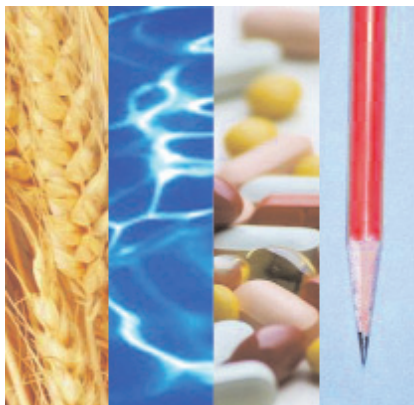
The World Stopped Nazism, The World Stopped Apartheid, The World Must Stop Zionism. With small Zionist flag crossed through. 32" x 47"

LANYARDS

Lanyards with Palestinian flags print £2 each. Ideal for clipping keys or mobile phones to.

EID CARDS

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IHRC has grown and developed through the generous donations of its supporters without whom, we could not have survived. Please remember us this year with your du'a and your financial assistance.

Please help us in whatever way you can - a small monthly contribution (see supporters' form below) is as valuable as a generous one-off donation. If you wish to donate solely to IHRC's charitable work, please complete the form on page 11. Otherwise please fill in the appropriate form on this page.

There are many worthy causes, and we request that you remember IHRC's work when donating, in the best way that you can.

May Allah s.w.t. reward all your efforts in this world and the next. Ameen.

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QUR'AN SET 2**

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I would like more information on how to volunteer
 I would like a Media Monitoring Response pack

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