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# Community Policing, Trust, and Muslim Communities in Relation to "New Terrorism"

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*The following article examines the role of trust between police and communities in the context of "new terrorism," drawing upon data that examined engagement and partnership work between communities and police within this context. A key finding is that in a low-trust context, as characterized by "new terrorism," it is important for police officers to focus initially upon building contingent trust by trust-building activities that demonstrate trustworthiness. Partnerships between police and members of Muslim communities carrying out sensitive intervention work with those deemed at risk from committing acts of terrorism appear to feature implicit trust. These partnerships are less focused upon short-term outcomes, but rather, individuals are committed to these relationships so that within the partnerships themselves trust is implicit between officers and Muslim community members. This suggests that police within specialist counter-terrorism units underpinned specifically by principles of community policing are best placed to provide the kind of long-term interaction and trust-building that is required for sensitive partnership work to take place, for contingent trust to be built into implicit trust.*

**Keywords:** Public Policy, Political Institutions, Counter-Terrorism, Trust, Community Policing, Muslim Communities.

*Basándonos en datos que examinan el compromiso y el trabajo conjunto dentro del contexto del "nuevo terrorismo" este artículo examina el rol de la confianza entre los oficiales de policía y las comunidades musulmanas. Un hallazgo clave es que en un contexto de baja confianza, característico del "nuevo terrorismo," es importante para los oficiales de policía enfocarse inicialmente en la construcción de una confianza contingente por medio de actividades que construyan y demuestren dicha confianza. La colaboración entre la policía y los miembros de las comunidades Musulmanas que realizan un delicado trabajo de*

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*intervención con aquellos que están en riesgo de cometer actos de terrorismo parecería mostrar una confianza implícita. Estas colaboraciones están menos enfocadas en resultados de corto plazo, en lugar de ello los individuos están comprometidos en estas relaciones para que la confianza entre los oficiales y los miembros de la comunidad Musulmana llegue a estar implicada. Esto sugiere que los oficiales de policía asignados a unidades anti-terroristas ancladas específicamente en principios de colaboración ciudadana están mejor ubicados para proveer el tipo de interacción de largo plazo y de construcción de confianza que es requerido para llevar a cabo un trabajo de colaborativo delicado, para que la confianza contingente sea incorporada en la confianza implícita.*

Efforts to counter Al-Qaeda-linked (AQ-linked) or -influenced terrorism are increasingly drawing upon community-based initiatives based upon engagement and partnership work between police officers and members of Muslim communities, in the United Kingdom, in some parts of Northern Europe, North America, and in other international contexts. Communities are being seen as key partners in countering the threat of AQ-linked or -influenced terrorism, and community policing models are increasingly being drawn upon, and utilized, to work toward countering AQ terrorism-related crime (Hanniman 2008; Innes *et al*. 2007; Innes 2006; Lowe and Innes 2008; Ramirez 2008; Spalek and Lambert 2010). While literature on the role of community policing within a counter-terrorism context refers to the important role that trust plays in relation to gathering community intelligence (Demos 2007; Hillyard 1993, 2005; Virta 2008), discussion concerning what constitutes trust in this context is almost completely absent, and this is despite the notion of trust having generated a substantial research literature from across a wide range of subject disciplines (Cvetkovich and Löftstedt 1999; Fukuyama 1995; Luhmann 1988; Misztal 1996; Nelken 1994). Moreover, many researchers have argued that post 9/11 and 7/7, the notion of "new terrorism" has gained increasing ascendancy across many policy and security contexts (Lambert 2010; Mythen and Walklate 2006). The notion of "new terrorism," as used by security experts and government officials, is one whereby "Islamist" terrorism has been declared an unprecedented and unpredictable global danger, and this has greatly contributed to the construction of Muslim minorities as "suspect," necessitating state surveillance and control (Mythen and Walklate 2006; Poynting and Mason 2008; Spalek and McDonald 2010). As such, the specific issue of what trust comprises, and whether trust can at all be built between police officers and Muslim minorities, within the context of "new terrorism," is a key question that research and policy needs to address urgently. This is especially significant, given that prior literature suggests that there can be an erosion of trust between communities and police when communities feel that they are being over-policed (Bowling and Phillips 2007; Bridges and Gilroy

1982; Hall *et al.* 1978; Jefferson, Walker, and Seneviratne 1992; Jones and Newburn 2001; Macpherson Inquiry 1999; Sharp and Atherton 2007; Sivanandan 1981; Smith and Gray 1985; Thacher 2005; Waddington, Stenson, and Don 2004).

To date, little is known about how police officers involved in community policing initiatives within a "new terrorism" context go about building trust between themselves and community members: whether trust is at all possible; whether there are different kinds of trust that can exist between police officers and communities and the significance of this for community intelligence; whether Muslim police officers may have religious, cultural, and other resources that can usefully be drawn upon when building trust with Muslim communities; whether for Muslim police officers to become involved in counter-terrorism policing they need to trust the aims and objectives of the counter-terrorism operations that they are being asked to engage in; and what factors serve to place strain upon trust-building between police and communities. This is a significant policy and research gap given that if, as the literature suggests, trust is a precondition to community intelligence (Demos 2007; Hillyard 1993, 2005; Virta 2008), then the success or failure of these initiatives will depend upon the extent to which trusting relationships are built between police officers and communities. As such, it is crucial for researchers, policy makers, and policing bodies to consider the notion of trust within community policing models in relation to "new terrorism." This article presents empirical data from a recently completed AHRC/ESRC funded research study that examined police-community engagement and partnership work within a "new terrorism" context. A case study that the research focused upon was that of the Muslim Contact Unit (MCU), a counter-terrorism policing unit formed in the aftermath of 9/11 by two Special Branch officers. The work of the MCU was underpinned by a community policing philosophy—policing by consent—and as such MCU police officers worked with Muslim communities as partners rather than informants. As such, the MCU model comprises a radical departure from traditional counter-terrorism policing, which has placed national security agendas and concerns before those of communities, and has viewed communities as informants rather than as policing partners (Lambert 2010; Murphy 2005). An analysis of the work undertaken by the MCU can help shed important light upon an under-examined research and policy area: that of the nature and the role of trust between police and communities in relation to community policing, particularly within a "new terrorism" counter-terrorism context. Before explaining the research study in more detail and highlighting key data that helps shed some light upon key issues in relation to trust between Muslim communities and police within a "new terrorism" context, the article will first consider the wider context to the study by looking at the wider literature in relation to community policing, counter-terrorism, and trust.

## Community Policing within Counter-Terrorism

Since 9/11 the prevention of AQ-influenced and/or -instigated terror-related crimes has become a significant policy issue internationally, in countries across Europe, South Asia, North America, the Middle East, and Australasia. Government officials and security experts have been arguing that western liberal democratic states in particular face a heightened risk specifically, though not exclusively, from home-grown acts of terrorism. Within this heightened security context, countering terrorism has become a significant policy issue, and importantly, policing is viewed as playing a key role in initiatives aimed at preventing terror crime. Thus, in the United Kingdom, under the Prevention of Violent Extremism policy agenda, local authorities and the police are viewed as taking the lead in any strategies developed to counter terrorism (HM Government 2006). Communities are also seen as being key to countering terrorism, and in the case of AQ-inspired or -influenced terrorism, Muslims' responsibilities as active citizens are being increasingly framed by anti-terror measures so that Muslim citizens are expected to work with the authorities to help reduce the risk of terrorism (Spalek and Lambert 2008). This was reinforced through the publication of CONTEST 2 in March 2009, which highlights the continued centrality of communities in countering terrorism.

Emerging from within policing efforts to counter terrorism are community-based initiatives based upon engagement and partnership work between police officers and members of Muslim communities. Community policing models are being drawn upon, and utilized, to work toward countering AQ terrorism-related crime (Hanniman 2008; Innes *et al.* 2007; Innes 2006; Lambert 2010; Lowe and Innes 2008; Ramirez 2008; Spalek, El-Awa, and McDonald 2009). In the United Kingdom, although counter-terrorism policies and practices have been dominated by "hard-sided" strategies involving surveillance, intelligence gathering, the use of informants, and the implementation of a number of anti-terror laws under the Pursue strand of the government's CONTEST and CONTEST 2 strategy (HM Government 2006), post 7/7, the Prevent strand within the CONTEST and CONTEST 2 strategy is being given greater prominence[1] (see Smith 2008). Importantly, the "Prevent" strand has emphasized community-based policing principles for preventing AQ-inspired terror crimes, working with members of Muslim communities[2] (Gregory 2010; Klausen 2009). This emphasis upon "softer," bottom-up, approaches to

[1] CONTEST is the U.K. government's counter-terrorism strategy. The strategy is divided into four principal strands: Prevent, Pursue, Protect, and Prepare (Office of Security and Counter Terrorism 2010). Prevent work has gained greater prominence as a result of the 7/7 bombers being British born, leading to officials being concerned about "home-grown terrorism."

[2] The U.K. "Prevent" strategy clearly focuses upon "Al-Qaeda—influenced terrorism" which is seen as being the "new extremism" (HM Government 2006, 5) which includes "violent extremism" (HM Government 2006, 4). "Violent extremism" is not defined, but according to Gregory (2010) by reference to what HM Government sees as the causal factors of "violent extremism" it can be

counter-terrorism can also be seen internationally. For example, in the United States, counter-terrorism has traditionally relied on the analysis of domestic and friendly foreign government intelligence information rather than the engagement of communities and the development of partnerships between communities and local law enforcement agencies. However, more recently, there has been a movement toward the utilization of community policing within a counter-terrorism context, with partnerships being developed between Muslim, Arab, Sikh, and South Asian American communities and police (Ramirez 2008). Similarly, in Canada, there has been a movement toward the adoption of community policing within the remit of national security policing (see Hanniman 2008).

Community policing is not something that can be easily defined because it involves an organizational strategy that redefines the goals of policing while leaving the means to achieve those goals to police officers. Therefore, community policing models are diverse (Herbert 2006; Skogan and Hartnett 1997). According to Skogan and Hartnett (1997, 5),

> [c]ommunity policing relies upon organizational decentralization and a reorientation of patrol in order to facilitate two-way communication between police and the public. It assumes a commitment to broadly focused, problem-oriented policing and requires that police be responsive to citizens' demands when they decide what local problems are and set their priorities. It also implies a commitment to helping neighbourhoods solve crime problems on their own, through community organizations and crime prevention programs.

What is particularly surprising about the definition of community policing as set out above is the absence of the notion of trust. This serves to illustrate the lack of any substantial focus upon trust within literature on community policing. Therefore, it seems that future definitions of community policing should include the notion of trust. As the findings of this article suggest, an absence of trust can put severe limitations on community-police initiatives. One suggested definition of community policing here is: *community policing comprises community-oriented goals and objectives. It relies upon community consent in relation to policing initiatives and operations within communities. Trust between community members and police officers is an essential component of community policing.*

Importantly, Skogan and Roth (2004) view community policing as being the most important development in policing over the last 25 years. Indeed, according to Virta (2008), although it has previously been argued that community policing is no longer "en vogue," having been replaced by intelligence-led policing, community policing is still very much prominent in policing agendas. In Britain, since 9/11, and as a result of events, such as the urban disturbances in northern

understood as any conduct which promotes, justifies, supports, or carries out acts of or related to terrorism, as defined in the current anti-terrorism legislation and related laws.

English towns in 2001, and the more recent spate of terror attacks in the United Kingdom, community-based and intelligence-led policing models have come to be viewed as being complementary, with police services engaging with communities as part of a wider strategy of securing community-based intelligence so as to respond to local, regional, national, and international security risks (Hughes and Rowe 2007). Community intelligence might be thought of as comprising of community sentiments and concerns, concerns that may be linked to more standard forms of intelligence that police gather in terms of information about criminal activities, but which may also go beyond this to include information concerning tensions between individuals and communities, tensions which may have cultural, geographical, religious, racial, and other underpinnings. Community intelligence also includes citizens' stories concerning their lives, which may, in a counter-terrorism context, be particularly pertinent given that some individuals may have first-hand accounts of their interactions with terrorist suspects, either in the United Kingdom or in other places around the world (see Haqq-Baker 2010).

Within the post 7/7 counter-terrorism context within England and Wales, linkages between community-based policing and intelligence-based models of policing can most clearly be seen in the way in which the recently established "neighborhood policing" (NP) model is explicitly being connected to intelligence gathering. It has been argued that under the NP model, which contains elements of community policing, in responding to individuals' routine security concerns around issues such as anti-social behavior or crime police officers will be more likely to persuade community members of the benefits of assisting them. NP is being explicitly linked to counter-terrorism activities in that it is claimed that "neighbourhood policing is a process that can be harnessed to establish the presence of any suspicions about potential terrorist activities" (Innes 2006, 14). Moreover, it is argued that the indicators for suspecting terror activities may be subtle and not known to any one individual therefore NP should be well placed to handle the diffuse information coming from different individuals, due to the beneficial "weak community ties" developed between police and community members through such a policing model (Innes 2006, 14).

The NP model constitutes the dominant model in England and Wales for community-based counter-terrorism policing. Nonetheless, there is insufficient focus upon the notion of trust in this model, and it is taken for granted that in responding to individuals' everyday crime and other related concerns police officers will build sufficient trust for obtaining community intelligence in relation to terrorism-related incidents. The NP model wholly oversimplifies the wider dynamics and complexities to trust within a counter-terrorism context. As will be discussed through the use of empirical data gathered through a focus on the work of the MCU, building trust goes beyond responding to people's everyday concerns around crime, especially given the highly politicized "new terrorism" context whereby Muslim communities have been problematized by dominant social and government instigated discourses. Indeed, according to

Goldsmith (2005, 445), "trust is fragile due to its highly contingent character in most social relations. Its extent and very existence depends upon a range of factors both within and outside police control." The next section focuses upon "new terrorism" as the wider social and political context impacting upon police interactions with Muslim communities.

## "New Terrorism," Policing, and Muslim Communities

Since 9/11, government officials and security experts worldwide have used the terminology of the "new terrorism" to convey the sense of a heightened risk from terrorist activity faced by western liberal democratic states (Mythen and Walklate 2006). Importantly, within the notion of the "new terrorism" is the construction of Muslim minorities as "suspect," requiring state surveillance and control, since "new terrorism" is seen as a new form of religio-political terrorism linked to AQ-influenced groups. Within the "new terrorism" young Muslim men in particular have been viewed as constituting a "problem group" and a "fifth column enemy within" by media, politicians, the security services, and criminal justice agencies. They have become the predominant targets of anti-terrorist legislation and counter-terrorism surveillance policing in Britain (Poynting and Mason 2008) and other countries, such as Germany (Bakir and Harburg 2005), France (Body-Gendrot 2008), the United States (Huq and Muller 2008), Australia (Tabar, Noble, and Poynting 2003), and Canada (Poynting and Perry 2007). It is important to note, however, that Muslim communities generally have become "suspect" as their identities and citizenships have been increasingly problematized by "new terrorism" discourse (Spalek and McDonald 2010). Indeed, according to Body-Gendrot (2008), Muslims as a faith community are deemed an "at risk" group, with little attention paid to the complexities of multiple communities, or in differentiating between a terrorist threat and Muslims in general. Moreover, it has been argued that Islam is viewed in a number of normative discourses, including academic discussions, to be the source of "the threat," a sentiment that further increases Muslim alienation (Jackson 2005, 10).

The "new terrorism" context raises considerable challenges for community policing models within a counter-terrorism context. "New terrorism" policies are likely to have eroded trust between the police and Muslim communities, as the broader research literature suggests that trust in the police can be seriously undermined in situations where communities feel that they are being over-policed (Bowling and Phillips 2007; Bridges and Gilroy 1982; Hall *et al.* 1978; Jefferson, Walker, and Seneviratne 1992; Jones and Newburn 2001; Macpherson Inquiry 1999; Sharp and Atherton 2007; Sivanandan 1981; Smith and Gray 1985; Thacher 2005; Waddington, Stenson, and Don 2004). According to Gregory (2010), there is tension between community-based "soft" models of policing, which involve engaging with Muslim communities under the "Prevent" agenda, and the "hard" policing tactics traditionally used for intelligence gathering,

investigations, and arrests, under the "Pursue" strand of the British government's CONTEST and CONTEST 2 strategy. The erosion of trust is particularly significant, given that a number of research studies highlight the importance of trust in obtaining community intelligence. For example, Virta (2008, 30) views trust and confidence toward the police as a precondition to community intelligence, thus, she argues that "trust and confidence towards the police is a precondition to community intelligence. . . . It would be very difficult for the police to get community intelligence if people do not trust the police." Innes and others (2007) argue that low trust in the police can inhibit the willingness of individuals to pass community intelligence concerning a range of problems and issues, and a report by Demos (2007) highlights the importance of high trust relationships between communities and the police for effective national security in the age of "home-grown terrorism." According to Hillyard (1993, 2005), a breakdown of police-community relations can have serious consequences for policing, and in the context of counter-terrorism can halt the flow of vital information from communities. A lack of community intelligence may then lead to further intrusive, "hard" based policing strategies to be employed because suspicion tends to be of the community as a whole rather than being limited to specific groups or individuals and so generating and/or reinforcing community anger, frustration, and paranoia (Murphy 2005).

It is important to stress that partnership models that exploit trust for intelligence are intelligence-gathering mechanisms rather than true partnerships. Furthermore, despite researchers linking the notion of trust to gaining community intelligence within community policing models, there has been little engagement by researchers on the complexities of trust, particularly when looking at community policing based on community partnership rather than community intelligence models, as in the case of the MCU. In particular, there has been an almost complete absence of an exploration concerning the challenges faced by police officers when working within the context of "new terrorism" when trying to engage with Muslim communities. The empirical data from the research study that is being reported in this article suggests that the MCU gained the trust of certain key members of Muslim communities, those able to help prevent AQ-linked terrorism. Indeed, MCU officers are involved in partnership work with key individuals from Muslim communities in London who are actively challenging extremist preachers and also who are involved in preventative work with Muslim youth deemed at risk from committing acts of terrorism (see Haqq-Baker 2010; Lambert 2010). It might therefore be suggested that in focusing upon the activities of the MCU important light might be shed upon the notion of trust within community-based policing models within a "new terrorism" context, which as previously discussed in this article, presents particular challenges.

The next section sets out the research study that was conducted, before then presenting data that is helpful in exploring the notion and nature of trust between police officers and community members.

## The Research Study

This was a small-scale, but in-depth, research study utilizing qualitative research methods involving semi-structured interviews and participant observations of community and police meetings. The research was principally designed to examine police-community engagement and partnership work in a counter-terrorism context, focussing upon two case studies in London: the MCU and the Muslim Safety Forum (MSF), an umbrella organization consisting of a wide variety of Muslim groups which engages on a regular basis with police officers from the Metropolitan Police Service. While semi-structured interviews were conducted with MCU police officers and also with MSF members (current and past members), other actors involved in police-community engagement in London were also interviewed in order to gain an understanding of the wider policing context. Thus, in total, 42 individuals were interviewed. Thirteen of these participants were police officers—six were working as officers within the MCU, while three were police officers working within the National Community Tension Team (NCTT). The NCTT is an Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) unit whose remit is engagement with diverse communities, including with Muslim communities. The NCTT also monitors community tension issues. The remaining four police officers that were interviewed were ACPO officers. In the case of the MCU, access to officers was negotiated through liaising with the Head of the MCU as well as through a process of snowballing. Access to officers working within the NCTT and ACPO was also negotiated through the snowballing process, with initial contacts coming from those suggested by MCU officers. Twenty-nine research participants were members of Muslim organizations involved to varying levels in engagement with the police, either through the MSF or directly with the MCU or NCTT or ACPO. Access was negotiated through liaising with the MSF but also through contacts suggested by MCU officers. In terms of the research ethics, all participants were told that they were able to withdraw their consent from the research study at any time and that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained (see Spalek, El-Awa, and McDonald 2009 for further details). The study was funded by the AHRC/ESRC and there were no restrictions placed upon publishing the research data that was gathered.

Interviews took place between December 2007 and July 2008. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken from a concern to document the experiences and perceptions of police officers and Muslim community members. This approach is significant because within counter-terrorism arenas research has often been dominated by state-centric perspectives founded on secondary sources and lacking the input of primary data collection and analysis (Breen Smyth 2007; Jackson 2007). The interviews lasted between 90 and 180 minutes. All interviews were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis. The thematic analysis that was used here involved elements of grounded theory in that the first few interview transcripts were compared and interrogated, so that

analytical categories could be established which could encompass a large amount of data, with subsequent interview data being used to refine these initial categories (Arksey and Knight 1999). Themes that emerged from the data help to shed light upon the notion of trust and the nature of trust-building activities within the "new terrorism" context. This is significant, given the distrustful context of "new terrorism" as highlighted previously.

## Trust and Policing within the "New Terrorism" Context

Drawing upon some of the broader academic literature on the concept of trust, policing might be thought of as requiring the public's trust where "trust involves placing faith in a person or institution where something serious is at stake if such reliance turns out to be misplaced" (Nelken 1994, 4). Moreover, according to Luhmann (1988) personalized trust can influence institutional trust and ultimately systemic trust so that relationships of trust/distrust at a micro level can contribute to trust/distrust at a macro or systemic level. Relating this to policing, this literature suggests that the quality and type of micro-level interaction that takes place, often at street level, between police officers and members of the public is crucial to the trust or distrust generated toward policing at an institutional level. Therefore, community policing, with its focus upon police-community interaction and engagement, offers the potential not only to build trusting relationships between individual police officers and members of communities but also offers the potential to strengthen or build trust in policing at an institutional level.

According to Gianakis and Davis (1998) it is important for there to be trust between police officers and communities because the police are in a position of power over individuals. However, while the police as an institution may be in a position of formal public trust because of the extent of policing powers, there may not be actual trust between citizens and police officers. An absence of actual trust can significantly affect the kind of policing that takes place within a community because where there is limited, or an absence of, actual trust then there is limited or no policing by consent which means that policing is likely to be more arbitrary and heavy handed (Goldsmith 2005). Within the context of the "new terrorism," with heavy-handed police raids on Muslim homes, alongside the extensive use of stop and search powers under counter-terrorism legislation, the use of informants and surveillance, and other "hard" policing strategies (Pantazis and Pemberton 2009), it seems that achieving actual trust between police and members of Muslim communities is extremely challenging.

Survey data appears to reveal British Muslims' skepticism of the police. For example, according to a poll carried out for the Guardian in 2006 by ICM, involving a sample size of 501 Muslims, when asked whether "It is right for police to act to pre-empt potential terrorist attacks, even if the intelligence, information and warnings turn out to be wrong," while 31 percent of respondents answered

that it is right, as much as 57 percent answered that it is wrong (*The Guardian* 2006). In a survey carried out in April 2007 by GfK for *Channel 4 News*, involving a sample of 500 Muslims, when asked "If you were arrested in Britain, how confident are you, if at all, that as a Muslim, you will be treated fairly?" while 39 percent answered confident, a staggering 55 percent answered not confident. Moreover, to the question "To what extent do you think the policing tactics used when arresting Muslim suspects under the Terrorism Act can be justified?" 20 percent answered usually whereas 18 percent answered rarely and 10 percent never. In relation to the question "Do you agree or disagree that the tactics used by the police when arresting Muslim terror suspects are racist?" 15 percent responded that they strongly agree and 31 percent responded that they tend to agree (GfK 2007). Qualitative data also appears to suggest that trust in policing is strained. For example, in response to police stop and search statistics under counter-terrorism legislation, which showed a significant over-representation of Asians, according to the Muslim Council of Britain: "[t]he police are misusing their new powers . . . We think that the institutional racism highlighted by the Macpherson report is morphing into institutional prejudice against Muslims. We are worried a generation of young Muslim men is being criminalized" (Cowan 2004, 8; cited in Garland, Spalek, and Chakraborti 2006).

In relation to the Prevent strand within CONTEST and CONTEST 2, the following is a quotation taken from a Muslim activist, as presented in the report by Kudnani (2009, 27) *Spooked!*: "[t]he main impact of Prevent work locally has been greater mistrust of the police. It's impacted all the wrong way. And there is more reluctance on the part of the Muslim community to engage at all."

It seems that Prevent, while having an overall goal of engaging with Muslim communities to help defeat terrorism, may have alienated sections of Muslim communities because the policy may have encouraged community members to watch and share information on suspicious neighbors or friends with police.

Qualitative data from the study of the MCU reported in this article appears to further illustrate the absence of trust within the "new terrorism" context between police and communities, as the following quotation from an interview with a Muslim community member serves to reveal.

> Unfortunately is the problem that we have today . . . we have an incredible amount of mistrust on both sides of the fence. Prevalent throughout the police service, through the security forces, and unfortunately also throughout the community towards the other and that is I believe the greatest problem that we are having. (Muslim Community Member [1] 2009)

It seems that for actual trust between police officers and community members to be built engagement needs to be far broader than purely an information sharing and collecting endeavor, as community policing programs, when used to penetrate local communities to provide intelligence,

can rapidly alienate communities (Hanniman 2008). Trust is perhaps the key element to building initiatives between police and communities that involve community members perceiving and experiencing these initiatives as being community-focused rather than as part of a security apparatus that serves to stigmatize communities. As one community member stated,

> sometimes in order to air a kind of controversial, sensitive viewpoint, you have to trust those who are listening to you. Trust that they will take it from the kind of vein or context that it's meant to be made and also trust that they will view that kind of viewpoint in a prudence wise and constructive way. So trust is absolutely everything when dealing with, you know, authorities such as the MCU. Without that you go nowhere. (Muslim Community Member [1] 2008)

Within the context of "new terrorism," building trust between police officers and Muslim communities is incredibly difficult because of the wider arena of "hard" policing strategies. Indeed, this is illustrated by the following quotation from a Muslim community member.

> And trust is not only a feeling it manifests itself in actions and practices. Only when we do so, I mean it's no good saying or the police saying "listen, we do not suspect the Muslim community" when the figures show that the stop and search rates are through, are going through the roof. When Muslims are being detained and held by the terrorism laws, for no reason but hearsay, suspicion, maybe they're up to something, maybe they looked at something on the internet. It's no good just saying things when you're practising something else. (Muslim Community Member [2] 2008)

The importance of the research being reported in this article is that it highlights some of the complexities to trust and trust-building within the context of "new terrorism," as illustrated by the work of police officers within the MCU. Of course, communities' distrust of police officers is not necessarily something negative, as this may prevent the penetration of civilians to be used as spying networks (Goldsmith 2005). However, the concern here is to highlight the nature and role of trust in community policing within a "new terrorism" context with the associated argument that in a low trust environment "hard" policing tactics are more likely, leading further to the erosion of civil liberties. An implicit argument therefore is that trust between community members and police officers is something that can be positively harnessed in initiatives that view community members as partners and not informants within the counter-terrorism context of "new terrorism." At the same time, there is little understanding of trust in relation to Muslim police officers working within counter-terrorism policing units within the context of "new terrorism." It may be that trust with respect to the remit and role of counter-terrorism policing units is a key issue for Muslim police officers. The following sections therefore highlight some of the key findings of the article in relation to the issue of trust.

**MCU Police Officers: Trust and Transparency in the Context of "New Terrorism"**

Goldsmith (2005) argues that trust is rooted in experience, in individuals' interactions with other people. The research findings of the study being reported in this article would suggest that whereas Muslims' prior and ongoing interactions with police of course influence trust, it is also crucial to highlight the importance of context to trust. There are two dimensions to consider to the context in which interactions between MCU police officers and Muslims have taken place. The first dimension is that of "new terrorism," which as illustrated before, is a notion that has gained in ascendancy among policy makers and security officials in western liberal democratic states, implicitly problematizing Muslim minorities as "suspect" (Spalek and McDonald 2010). The second, related, dimension to take into consideration is that of the context of counter-terrorism more generally. It may be that, for example, whereas people have positive experiences of police officers in relation to ordinary volume crimes like burglary or car theft, those experiencing policing in relation to a counter-terrorism context have an altogether different experience, especially given the dominance of surveillance and the use of informants in counter-terrorism policing. Indeed, according to Hanniman (2008), national security policing derives its authority from a state or government and so national security police are agents of government and their primary purpose is its protection. National security policing traditionally employs policing strategies that are secret, and so do not require public consent or support and are not open to public or legal scrutiny.

The research data from the study of the MCU being reported in this article would suggest that an important part of building actual trust within a counter-terrorism context between MCU officers and Muslims has been openness and transparency. This has involved MCU police officers openly telling community members that they are counter-terror police officers working within a specialist unit. MCU officers that were interviewed argued that to be trusted by community members they have had to build up sincere relationships that are based upon being frank concerning the unit's remit. Without such honesty, the climate of fear generated by counter-terror laws and operations in Muslim communities cause people to be distrustful of any approaches from police, particularly those that are not clearly defined. Thus, as one MCU officer argued,

> we talked to people sometimes that ordinarily wouldn't have even dreamed about talking to us as a Police Service, let alone as a Intelligence Service or counter-terrorism officers, okay, cause that's what we are, we're counter-terrorism officers. You can't get away from that okay, so we don't pretend that we're anything else, we don't go round here and have a false identity or anything like that, you can't have that. It has to be trusted, open, sincere relationship and if it's not sincere, you can forget it. (Police Officer (1) 2007)

While this transparent approach to counter-terrorism policing is not one that has been adopted by all police services around the United Kingdom, it would suggest that transparency can be an effective way through which to build actual trust between police officer and Muslim community members. Indeed, the MCU has, within its remit, succeeded in reclaiming a mosque from hard-core violent extremist supporters and helped to put together community-based initiatives aimed at preventing violent extremism in London (Lambert 2010).

## MCU Officers: Contingent and Implicit Trust

It may be that in a low-trust context, as characterized by "new terrorism," it is more important for police officers to focus initially upon building contingent trust which, Goldsmith (2005) argues, can later become implicit trust which is a more advanced type of trust that can be found in committed, stable relationships. Contingent trust is about building trust through being engaged in trust-building activities and through actors demonstrating their trustworthiness (Goldsmith 2005). Contingent trust is likely to be instrumental in that it looks at shorter-term rather than longer-term objectives and seeks confirmation through exchange relations. Goldsmith's conceptualization of contingent trust appears to be validated by the research data in this article, for example one community member observed.

> Now, there is this, this, formality, this relationship which has been built on trust, the police service have had to trust us and have had to see our competences and our, our results, our activities. And we also have had to trust them as well and, and see some of their, you know, what they've done. And so now at least these thing can come to, you know, they can come to an eventual end, whether it's been achieved or it hasn't been achieved and then we can go back to the community and say "you know what? There's no point in engaging with them because they never do anything." Because look, this is it. We've got evidence. These are our minutes, these are our activities, and this is what they have said. So I think this is positive and this accountability and this partner . . . and this is where the partnership is. (Muslim Community Member [3] 2008)

Research data in relation to the MCU would suggest that MCU police officers were engaged in activities underpinned by an implicit methodology of building instrumental, contingent, trust. MCU officers were demonstrating their trustworthiness to Muslim community members through supporting independent community interests, and providing advice or other forms of support to help communities develop their own projects aimed at preventing terrorism. For example, community members have approached the MCU with ideas for projects which officers have been instrumental in facilitating, such as helping to provide advice on sources of funding and the writing of applications, as the following quotation from an MCU officer illustrates.

> It's not X and me sort of working with people who want to run a boxing club or people who want to do a project to keep young kids off the street and so on. We don't say to them you should do this, this and this. Where we see them is this, is this a project? Will it fit counter-terrorism objectives and things? And then we will again, brokering is a good word. We will help them to go and arrange a meeting with them, help them with whatever else help they need. And that's the partnership. (Police Officer (1) 2007)

This study has found that an important way for police officers to build instrumental trust with communities within the low-trust context of "new terrorism" is through empowering them by helping individuals and groups to access funding for projects as well as helping communities to implement changes that they wish to make in order to prevent terror crime. Thus, the MCU has worked toward contributing to Muslim community members' security through empowering communities with some of the resources they need for managing unease and uncertainty (Loader 2006). The work of the MCU illustrates the importance of reciprocity—that for communities to work with police, it is important for officers to reciprocate efforts by helping communities tackle issues of concern to them. This includes responding to violence experienced by members of Muslim communities and has involved MCU officers helping to facilitate public demonstrations, as the following quotation from a Muslim community member illustrates.

> I mean to be honest, you know, X [MCU police officer], he was the guy who I think on most things was great, you know, any issues that I had with regards to whether it's people that had been beaten up by the police, to something like a demonstration when we wanted to get permission to have a march through Y and the police were being difficult there . . . ring X [MCU police officer] and he would sort it out. (Muslim Community Member [4] 2008)

Importantly, another aspect to the work of the MCU was in building implicit relationships of trust with some community members. Implicit trust is found in committed, stable relationships and is less focused upon short-term outcomes than contingent trust (Goldsmith 2005). It may be that while building contingent trust should be an aim for police officers when interacting with members of Muslim communities generally due to the low-trust context of "new terrorism," building implicit trust is key for establishing long-term partnerships with those key members (notably, but not exclusively, members of Islamist and Salafi minorities) of Muslim communities who are best placed for intervention work with those deemed "at risk" from committing acts of terrorism. This suggests that while contingent trust can be a goal for police officers generally, building implicit trust requires specialist police officers based in specialist units as this requires more time, for established relationships to develop between officers and community members. Within the current context where police officers are rapidly

moved from one policing area and unit to the next, it may be that the goal of building contingent trust is achievable due to the short-term and instrumental nature of the trust that is being built. However, in order for the most sensitive prevention work to take place it may be that implicit trust is an important feature between all those engaged in such initiatives and this implies the need for specialist police officers working within specialist policing units who are not subject to being moved so quickly from one area of policing to the next.

Within the most sensitive intervention work that both police officers and community members are engaged in, both are taking risks in working together toward countering terrorism. It may be, for example, that community members view the police as a "last resort" in preventing violence, preferring to first appropriately challenge and prevent violence themselves before seeking help from the police. Community leaders can not be seen to be overtly and repeatedly seeking help from the police as this can undermine their credibility with community members who may be suspicious of police. As one Muslim community member observed,

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

This kind of scenario of course involves risks because police officers are placing a certain amount of trust in community members to be able to sort out the issue themselves, only seeking direct police action as a last resort. It may also involve community partners tackling directly other forms of criminality within their communities, over and above terror-related offences, without involving the police, as the following quotation from an interviewee highlights.

> An individual turns up in a big mackintosh because he had a dispute with another Muslim and the size of the weapon he had down the back of his coat and what did we do? Did we panic and run and call the police? We took him round the corner, my colleagues, spoke with him, really calmly. What are you doing? You're coming to a religious place, this is the house of God, it's a mosque. And you're coming to kill a Muslim? Do you know that killing a Muslim means that you go to the hellfire straight away? Eyes wide. Really? So if I killed this individual I will be punished? Yes you will. And even if he was wrong and he do this you'll still do this because you are not an authority to take anybody's life. What did he do? Jumped in the car, went home, put his weapon away, came back, made up with the individual. (Muslim Community Member [5] 2008)

To give community members the space they need for prevention work and for partnerships to be characterized by the absence of coercion—whereby all

parties are free to stop interacting as and when they choose—it is important for there to be implicit trust between police officers and community members as both have to trust that each other will do the right thing as and when risky situations arise. At the same time, research with the MCU suggests that implicit trust is essential in intervention work based on partnerships between police officers and community members because various factors can place strain on police-community relationships, factors that lie outside the control of individual police officers and community members. Thus, international relations between nation states will influence British Muslim communities' perceptions of the British state, influencing their engagement with and perceptions toward state actors including the police. Indeed, the Muslim participants in the study being reported here talked about how, from its conception, "new terrorism" has been perceived by many as a war on Islam, causing reluctance within Muslim communities to help the police. As one participant said: "why would I want to help anything or anybody or do something that's going to help somebody who's got a particular agenda against Islam or against the Muslim community?" (Police Officer (1) 2007).

Indeed, in a survey carried out in 2006 by the 1990 Trust, based on a sample of 1,213 British Muslims, 91 percent of British Muslims surveyed disagreed with U.K. government foreign policy; 93 percent felt that U.K. government policy on terrorism is dictated by the United States; and 81 percent believed the "War on Terror" to be a war on Muslims (Thiel 2009, 27).

At the same time, national politics also come into play. Within the Prevent agenda, there appear to be normative assumptions concerning what kinds of Muslim identities should be engaged by the police and other state authorities. Muslim identities that appear to value the *ummah* over or even alongside feelings of Britishness, or who appear to isolate themselves from wider society, can be negatively judged, viewed as a threat to social cohesion and thus actively marginalized from engagement processes (Spalek, El-Awa, and McDonald 2009; Spalek and Imtoual 2007; Spalek and Lambert 2008). Events that take place outside of police-community engagement, for example the bugging of MP Sadiq Khan, can create tension, placing strain upon ongoing dialogue and partnership work. As one Muslim community member observed,

> the main issue just at the minute is the bugging of the MP when he visited Babu Ahmed recently . . . bugging an MP in this country is totally illegal and . . . of course why was it a Muslim MP? I can not imagine the authorities going eavesdropping upon a non-Muslim MP. Directly we get the impression well we are being targeted. It's always our community that seems to be zoned in on or focused upon as being a threat. (Muslim Community Member [6] 2007)

It may be the case that while trust existed between MCU police officers and members of Muslim communities, there was also a degree of trust in the MCU

as a small policing unit, and so wider events like the bugging of a Muslim MP did not necessarily impact negatively upon trust between community members and police officers within the MCU. This suggests that in contexts characterized by a quick turnover of police officers then incoming police officers might be able to build on the trust already placed in a specific policing unit like the MCU.

The work of the MCU demonstrates that implicit trust between police officers and members of Muslim communities can enable effective partnerships to exist despite considerable strains being placed due to international and national political and other processes. MCU officers built implicit trust through officers spending many years gaining an in-depth understanding of the Muslim population of London, a major task due to the layers of complexity making up this diverse population. This has involved many years of sustained and focused engagement, which may include things like taking part in seminars concerning terrorism hosted by community members, attending wedding or death ceremonies, responding to religious hate crimes experienced by community members. As one Muslim community participant observed,

> and he [MCU officer] used to visit people in their homes. Not to ask for information, but on social gatherings. To participate in weddings, in death ceremonies. So he made good social relations . . . This is social. So they [MCU officers] attended all my seminars, especially on terrorism and the training courses. (Muslim Community Member [7] 2008)

Underpinning the methodology of the MCU has been an active concern to understand and explore the root causes of terrorism and ways of countering it from the perspectives of Muslim community members. This methodology, implicit within the working practices of the MCU, may be conceptualized as a more grass roots orientated, horizontal "bottom-up" approach to engagement, within a counter-terrorism arena dominated by state-centric "top-down" approaches that fail to understand terrorism and counter-terrorism through the perspectives and experiences of those who comprise "suspect communities." Meaningful dialogue also involves police officers endeavoring to answer queries that communities have in relation to issues such as the scope of counter-terror powers and investigations and possible impacts on communities, and reassuring community members that police officers are keen to support communities if experiencing Islamophobic attacks and/or racism. For example, one MCU officer said,

> we are very transparent you know, we are counter-terrorism police officers, our interest is Al-Qaeda, you know, do you have any kind of, any broad knowledge of this phenomena, can we have a discussion and that was our question that I think we, at the outset, we were also very equally interested in communities' wider responses you know, how they felt, how they felt about 9/11, how they felt about the response to 9/11 so far, so those early discussions were very broad ranging. (Police Officer [2] 2007)

The role of Muslim police officers within the MCU also has to be noted here, as Muslim police officers have been instrumental in building bridges with members of mosques, developing trusting relationships with mosque communities and then extending these relationships to the non-Muslim police officers working on the MCU. They have also brought important cultural and religious understandings to the unit. The following is a quotation from an interview with a Muslim MCU police officer.

> Well one critical factor in our success is having officers on the unit who are experienced Special Branch officers, working together hand in hand with Muslim officers who have an experience in policing community matters and live and work amongst that community with a certain degree of religious credibility and respect. Why? Because when you're dealing with people who are very passionate about their religion, who are prepared, in many cases, to die for their religion because Jihad or whatever, they feel very strongly . . . You have to have religious sincerity and credibility, again community credibility and respect to be able to turn round and engage and help engage. There are people that we go and talk to where we open the doors for our colleagues to come and join us and talk to them. (Police Officer [3] 2008)

This article illustrates the importance of police officers' religious identities as Muslims when considering the role of trust. It appears that, within the context of "new terrorism," Muslim police officers working within the MCU had to trust the role, focus, and methodology of this policing unit, as the following quotation from a Muslim MCU officer illustrates.

> First of all I wasn't sure exactly where the so-called war on terror was going. If you recall back in 9/11 the way the Muslim community perceived it was not a war on terror, it was a war on Islam and I'm from the Muslim community, I'm not immune from those kind of things. And as I say being a police officer as well I know how certain things worked, I know how the police service as an institution worked, you know. I know how policy, public policy works and so on . . . having first trusted what X and Y were doing, I think trust was a major issue. Once I was happy that I trusted both of them, we then started to . . . I started to take them to mosques and things and people that I knew within the community and that's how we built it up. (Police Officer (1) 2007)

The above quotation appears suggests that for Muslim police officers to become involved in counter-terrorism policing they first need to trust the aims and objectives of the counter-terrorism operations that they are being asked to engage in. It seems that their identities as Muslim police officers mean that they have a concern that counter-terrorism operations are conducted to prevent terrorism, not to act as part of a wider politicized regime of denigrating Islam.

This serves to demonstrate the complexity to trust, whereby perhaps Muslim police officers working within counter-terrorism units will have concerns that are specific to them as Muslims in relation to developing trust toward the policing units that they are working in. Another important factor to consider is the backlash that Muslim police officers who are openly involved in counter-terrorism community policing may face from within their own communities, which can have negative experiences not only for them but for their families. As one Muslim MCU police officer argued,

> and I was certainly very open about the work, what I was doing . . . And people believed us. The only setback . . . and people trusted us and we still maintain that trust. The only setback I had was that one particular very influential guy had spoken about me in very negative, I have to say, had lied about me in terms of certain conversations and things and I could prove it. So much so to the extent that he was calling me a fool and a hypocrite in certain circles that he was holding . . . and it shows the extent of this guy because my sister was at that talk and she was pregnant at the time . . . Now he had made life very difficult for myself in particular, for my wife and children and including my mother. And I had to go through a few months of very hard times where I was being blamed by my younger brothers and sisters who'd been married and were settling in with kids and things and they're well known in the community. (Police Officer (1) 2007)

The above quotation illustrates the difficulties facing Muslim police officers who are prepared to engage in community policing strategies in relation to countering terrorism. This quotation raises the further question of whether partnership approaches are possible when communities seem so reluctant to engage with the state. Interestingly, the number of Muslim police officers engaged in community counter-terrorism work is extremely low—27 individuals nationally at the time of writing, of whom two are women (NAMP and Demos 2008, 8). This may further point to there being a general absence of trust between Muslim community members/police officers and the police within the "new terrorism" context, despite initiatives like the MCU.

## Conclusion

It appears that the notion of trust in relation to policing is an under-researched phenomenon. Moreover, trust, policing, and engagement with Muslim communities within the context of "new terrorism" are themes that rarely receive in-depth analyses from researchers. This article has focused on presenting some of the results generated by a study examining the work of one specialist counter-terrorism policing unit formed in the context of "new terrorism," the MCU. The study raises some interesting data in relation to trust, policing, and counter-terrorism. Specifically, a key finding appears to be that in

a low-trust context, as characterized by "new terrorism," it is important for police officers to focus initially upon building contingent trust by trust-building activities that demonstrate trustworthiness. Police officers working with Muslim communities can engage in such activities through the dominant NP model that has been implemented across England and Wales whereby officers are responding to individuals' everyday concerns regarding crime, anti-social behavior, and other issues. The findings reported in this article, however, suggest that in initiatives based on partnerships between police officers and members of Muslim communities who are carrying out sensitive intervention work with those deemed at risk from committing acts of terrorism then it would appear that implicit trust is a feature of these partnerships. Here, implicit trust between police officers and Muslim community members is a feature of these partnerships in that the partnerships are less focused upon short-term outcomes but rather individuals are committed to these relationships. This suggests that police officers within specialist counter-terrorism units specifically underpinned by principles of community policing are best placed to provide the kind of long-term interaction and trust-building that is required for sensitive partnership work to take place, for contingent trust to be built into implicit trust. The case study of the MCU illustrates that specialist counter-terrorism units, perhaps more traditionally associated with "hard" intelligence-led models of policing, can effectively develop "softer" community-based approaches to counter-terrorism if appropriately guided toward building implicit trust between police officers and community members. The study reported here also illustrates the important role that Muslim police officers can play in community-based counter-terrorism policing. However, it is important to note that Muslim police officers may face a backlash from some individuals from within their own communities, which can have negative experiences not only for them but also for their families. As a result, the involvement of Muslim police officers in counter-terrorism policing is a complex issue. This article reported here also highlights the importance of implicit trust as a mechanism for ensuring long-term partnership work within a "new terrorism" context where engagement between police and Muslim communities can be affected by national and international politics.

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