

A World Civilisation or a Clash of Civilisations conference, 20 January 2007

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Thank you for your warm reception. And I should also say whilst I'm here, I should say a thank you to the Mayor for organising the event today and being so very generous with other people's money.

I believe, like Dr Pipes, that we do not face a clash of civilisations, in fact I think we can agree that no one on this stage does believe in the clash of civilisations. It's a straw motion. But I would stress that I, like Dr Pipes, believe that we are facing and are involved in a clash of civilisation and barbarism, and just in case there is any doubt of what I mean by barbarism, it is Islamic fundamentalism, jihadism, led by jihadist ideology. That is the barbarism that primarily threatens us and which we should be fighting. Now, Muslims in this can be on the side of civilisation. Let no-one tell you that I am saying that there is a civilisational divide. There is not. There are Muslims who can be on our side, and many, many are. And there are Muslim countries that can be on our side. Unfortunately, far too many Muslims, largely because of people being elevated who should not be elevated, far too many Muslims are being, in this country and abroad, put on to the wrong side of this debate. We should be wooing the democrats in the Muslim world onto this side. We should be helping the moderate Muslims. We should not, in other words, be elevating organisations like the Muslim Council of Britain, the Muslim Association of Britain, Sheik al'Qaradawi, and others. That is to lead us to a civilisational clash.

Now I would stress, ladies and gentleman, Mr Livingstone has so far this morning explained how the Cold War was our fault, and I would stress that there is another similar re-writing of history from Ms Yaqoob here: all the problems of the world, all the problems of the jihad, all the problems of violence, come down to us, it is all to do with the Iraq war, it is all to do Afghanistan. You have heard it a million times, this is not new stuff. But I would stress to you that if that argument were true, to take it seriously for a moment – and we should – if that argument were true it doesn't explain quite a lot of things. In other words, as well as being in a fundamental way, I believe, racist – ie. the people who are doing the acts are not responsible. They don't even have culpability. They can't even make choices. They can't even screw up unless it is our fault. Apart from that it is also simply historically inept. If it is our fault, perhaps Ms Yaqoob or Mr Livingstone could answer this, if all the problems of the jihad are our fault, why are currently, and have been for a long time, Muslims slaughtering Hindus in India? Why are they slaughtering, and have been for a long time, Buddhists in Indonesia and Thailand? Why are they murdering Animists in the south of Sudan? Is that because of the Iraq war, Ms Yaqoob? Are we going to lay that one at the fascist junta of Bush and Blair as well? I don't think so.

What I would suggest for those like Mr Livingstone, and Ms Yaqoob, who think this is our fault and think there isn't a problem of jihadism here at home and elsewhere which we should be treating seriously, I would suggest for instance Mr Livingstone might look at his opposite number in Paris, Bertrand Delanoë, who was stabbed by a Muslim fundamentalist in 2002 - very nearly murdered. That Muslim fundamentalist stabbed the Mayor of Paris because he is gay and one of the neighbours and friends of that man said, 'we are all homophobic here because it is not natural, it is against Islam.'

Look at the case Ms Ghofrane Haddaoui, a Muslim woman stoned to death in Marseilles in 2004 for refusing the advances of a Muslim boy. This kind of Sharia killing, house keeping it is regarded in some sections of the Muslim community in France, is tolerated. I say it is intolerable, and the multicultural paradise which we have heard talked about this morning doesn't sound quite so nice when you have people believing it is acceptable to attack and kill gay men and women or Muslim women who will not submit to their tribal backward norms.

Now, the problem that we have come to here, the reason why this is an issue, is multiculturalism. It has been mentioned several times already this morning. Multiculturalism and the way it is practised here has been a disaster. It's been a profound disaster. The rule of law of the British state is not up for negotiation. The rule of law across the West and western traditions are not up for negotiation. And if you think that multiculturalism is something which somehow is going to be a universal world civilisation, I would ask you simple questions. How is multiculturalism going in Saudi Arabia right now? Try building a synagogue, or even praying to the non-Muslim God in Saudi Arabia, or across many countries in that region. It doesn't happen, ie. there is no reciprocity. On the other hand, here, just a few months ago, the Justice Minister of the Netherlands Piet Hein Donner announced that, when a majority of people wanted it, he was willing to institute Sharia law across the Netherlands. Now, on current demographics, that majority isn't too far away. What will the Netherlands look like when that happens? What will this country look like if people in this country go along with that idea as well? The point is that there is an answer to this. We keep the moderates and encourage the moderates to be on our side, and to believe in the rule of law, and the strength of the state. But the state at the moment here, and in the West, is not looking strong. It is looking weak. It is looking weak because leaders and others like the Mayor of London claim, and are seen to be claiming across the world, that this is our fault, that it is our problem. I say they should be giving off another sign which is to say to people this is a city with people of all different faiths and all different nationalities, and that is fine, but there are norms which you agree to. We are not giving out that message. We should be saying clearly, the Mayor of London should be saying far more clearly and far more regularly, there are some things that are not open for negotiation. We will not have Sharia – there are countries you could have it, sadly, but this will not be one of them.

Now Ladies and gentlemen, I should stress that this could have been said by any one at any time, but I should stress something about the people we are speaking with this morning, because we have seen this before. There is form from Mr Livingstone and Yaqoob on this one. In the last three decades, two different groups of people have tried to murder and have murdered, in large numbers, the people of this city. They have nothing in common: Irish Republican extremists and Islamist extremists. They have almost nothing in common in aims or anything else. One of the few things they do have in common is that both of them found an apologist in Ken Livingstone. And just as in those days he invited, whilst they were on the army council and planning the murder of people in this city, just as then he invited Adams and McGuinness whilst they were on the army council to Britain, so today he invites people like Mr Al-Qaradawi. And I would stress, ladies and gentleman, and he will say in response to this, that he somehow took part in the peace process. He did not. Nobody believes that the IRA came to the table for any reason other than the fact that they were defeated, operational incapable. That is how we defeat this enemy - not by inviting them to tea, not by rolling out the red carpets. That is how. Now he could have, today, invited as his co-debater, a moderate. He could have invited somebody from the moderate, secularist, Muslim Association in

France, of Muslim women, Neither Whores Nor Submissives, a wonderful organisation. He could have done that. He could have invited Irshad Manji, or Ayaan Hirsi Ali, or Wafa Sultan, but instead he invited Ms Yaqoob.

Ms Yaqoob, a spokesman for Birmingham Central Mosque, and for the head of that mosque Mohammed Naseem, who believes 7/7 wasn't carried out by Muslims, and so on. We could mention the fact that her political career as such started when she acted as the defender of the Yemeni Seven, the group of terrorists including Abu Hamza's sons who were out there, with her brother also involved in the campaign. And I would also point out on this one that she is a member of the Respect Party, a party so far beyond the pale of traditional political discourse, and neither does she or her party stand on the side of the moderates. Her party has called for the success of the insurgency of Iraq, the murder of the people of Iraq we should be supporting. She and her party, her line on this, and her party's line on this, is that the insurgency should survive. That is elevating the extremists and threatening, and elevating the murder of the moderates, and ladies and gentlemen we should not be on that side. We should not be on that side in Iraq, and we should not be on that side at home.

Thank you.