



**A Counter-Productive
Extradition Policy –
The Effect of the Babar Ahmad
Case in Radicalising Muslims
in Britain**

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with foreword by Sadiq Khan MP

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Foreword by Sadiq Khan MP

I have known Babar Ahmad for over fifteen years. We both grew up in Tooting. We have both been privileged enough to go to university and to gain good jobs afterwards.

Unfortunately, our lives have taken quite differing directions in the last couple of years. Whilst I have been fortunate enough to be elected to Parliament to represent the constituency of Tooting, Babar has been detained in Woodhill Prison. He has been in prison now for two years, awaiting extradition to the USA.

There are concerns with the case against Babar, from reservations with the case for the prosecution to the grounds for his extradition. There are also concerns about the treaty which allows the US authorities to remove him from the UK: his country of birth, where he and his family have lived peacefully, where he has paid taxes and, perhaps most crucially, where the charges that he is facing are supposed to have occurred.

It is noteworthy that the British Police and Crown Prosecution Service have decided that there is no basis for Babar to be charged for any criminal offences here in the UK.

At the moment, the United States can make extradition requests to the United Kingdom without having to provide prima facie evidence about the case. However, the same is not true in reverse, and this signifies an inequity in the extradition law.

The point is not whether Babar is innocent or not, the point is that if he must stand trial it should be in front of his British peers, here in the UK, rather than in the American courts. It is only here that Babar will have his family and friends for support and the ability to mount a proper defence.

At present, as I write this, Babar is still awaiting extradition. He has an uncertain future ahead of him. His family and friends have been united in their support for him and their faith in him. They deserve our utmost respect.

The communities in Tooting have also shown their solidarity with Babar. This is not because of his personality, but because of the principles involved. This makes me even prouder to be the MP for Tooting.

Sadiq Khan MP
Member of Parliament for Tooting
June 2006

Preface

“The 7 July attacks highlighted - perhaps above everything else - the need to do more to tackle the radicalisation of British Muslims in the UK...We remain concerned that across the whole of the counter-terrorism community the development of the home-grown threat and the radicalisation of British citizens were not fully understood or applied to strategic thinking.”

[Intelligence and Security Committee Report into the 7/7 London Bombings, May 2006]

Babar Ahmad is a UK-born British Muslim from London who has been detained without trial in a British prison since August 2004 upon an extradition request from the US under the fast-track Extradition Act 2003 Category 2 legislation. He is alleged to have supported websites supporting Chechen and Taliban rebels whilst living in the UK. The legislation under which he is held is non-reciprocal and allows the US to demand the extradition of any British citizen without having to present a single shred of evidence before a British court. This report studies the effects of the case of Babar Ahmad on Britain’s Muslim community and how it has been counter-productive in the fight against terrorism.

During an anti-terror raid in December 2003, Babar Ahmad sustained over 50 injuries in a brutal physical and Islamophobic assault at his London home by officers from the Anti-Terrorist Branch. Photographic evidence of his extensive injuries has been shown on television channels across the world. To date, no action has been taken against any of the police officers involved in the attack.

In a project spanning several months, thousands of handwritten letters, emails, newspaper cuttings, online web postings and hours of television footage were analysed, culminating in the production of this report. Shockingly, the report provides evidence that, far from reducing the terrorism threat to the UK by isolating extremist elements, the manner in which Babar Ahmad’s case has been handled has actually acted as a recruiting sergeant in radicalising young British Muslims and sowing the seeds of mistrust, hatred and alienation.

It is hoped that highlighting the concerns raised in this report will persuade the British Government to reconsider the current extradition arrangements between the UK and US and their pros and cons in fighting terrorism and protecting national security. It is further hoped that this report will stress the urgency of satisfactorily resolving the case of Babar Ahmad, by either putting him on trial in the UK if there is any evidence of wrongdoing or releasing him back home to his family, friends and community.

1. Introduction

Background

32 year-old Babar Ahmad was born and raised in Tooting, South London. Known as a caring and helpful member of the local community, he worked with all age groups, in particular having a positive influence with the youth, encouraging them to be upright citizens in their schools, colleges and neighbourhoods.

He was not known to be an extremist by any who knew him, including his work colleagues. This has been testified to by hundreds of people of all ages; at demonstrations, through their letters to Babar and via the messages of support on the FreeBabarAhmad.com campaign website.

Babar's background was similar to that of many second-generation indigenous Muslims born in the UK to professional parents - attending school, university and graduating into a professional job. He excelled in his secondary education and graduated from Imperial College London, where he went on to work as an IT analyst until his arrest in 2004 on an extradition request from the US.

Released without charge, December 2003

Babar was first arrested on 2 December 2003. In the early hours of the morning, armed police forced their way into his Tooting house, hurling abuse and beating him continuously despite the fact that he offered no resistance. The notorious incident where he was forced into the prostration position and asked: "*Where is your god now?!*" has angered many British Muslims and is widely seen as evidence that the British and American Governments' 'War on Terror' is in fact a war against Islam.

His wife faced her share of psychological trauma as she witnessed all this and was herself mocked and handcuffed.

The abuse and assaults continued in the police van, resulting in severe physical and psychological injuries. When Babar was eventually allowed access to an independent medical examiner, a full day after his arrest, he was found to have blood in his ear canal which signified a possible skull fracture, and blood in his urine, which showed damage to the kidneys. The independent examiner identified no less than 50 injuries, two of which were life-threatening. All the evidence was photographed and documented in the presence of the Police Forensic Medical Examiner.

He was held and questioned for six days, while his house was thoroughly searched, his possessions removed for examination and his biometric data sent around the globe. On 8 December 2003, he was freed without charge. Babar remains to this day cleared by the Crown Prosecution Service of all charges of any crimes, and is completely innocent according to British law.

Complaint filed to IPCC, December 2003

Upon his release, Babar filed a complaint that was supervised by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). He was examined by an Accident and Emergency Consultant physician from University College London, Mr. Manolis Gavalas, who summarised: "*There is clearly unequivocal evidence that he [Babar] was subjected to a harrowing physical and psychological assault by police officers. He was clearly badly beaten up although in a reasonably*

controlled manner ... aimed at inflicting significant soft tissue trauma with pain, but not to cause any life-threatening injuries...I suspect the aim of those police officers involved in this sad case whilst waving the flag of 'fighting terrorism' was to inflict pain, humiliation and intimidation."

Since Babar had nothing to hide, he was not afraid to speak in public about his ordeal, and helped to launch a campaign against such state brutality.

Re-arrested without evidence, August 2004

In July 2004, after an eight month investigation by British authorities of material seized in December 2003, the Crown Prosecution Service declared that there was insufficient evidence to charge Babar with any criminal or terrorist offence.

Due to speak at a conference three weeks later in August 2004, he was arrested outside his workplace under the new Extradition Act 2003 Category 2 legislation, on US allegations of supporting Chechen rebel and pro-Taliban websites whilst living in the UK.

His family was dealt with insensitively, facing yet more house searches and the trauma of baseless allegations. He was taken to Woodhill High Security Prison, where he is still being held today, whilst he fights extradition to the US.

Misconduct Tribunal clears arresting officers, April 2005

During Babar's detention, the case against the original arresting officers continued. On 5 September 2004, the Crown Prosecution Service wrote to inform him that they did not believe there was sufficient evidence to prosecute any of the officers involved in his first arrest; this despite the independent medical and psychological expert opinions, the photographs and videos showing the injuries, and discrepancies in the police version of events.

The IPCC then pressed for the case against just one of the officers to be taken to a tribunal. On 13 April 2005, a closed-doors Police Misconduct Tribunal found that there was no case to answer against the officer in question. The Chair of the Tribunal concluded that the officer, "*...acted professionally with great bravery. We support his actions: he should be commended and not castigated.*"

The decisions to extradite, 2005

The 2003 UK-US Extradition Treaty was quietly sneaked into legislation by the former Home Secretary David Blunkett without any proper parliamentary scrutiny. The Treaty allows the US to request the extradition of British citizens without presenting any prima facie evidence to justify their demands. The same does not apply to US citizens wanted by the UK since the terms are deemed to contravene the American Constitution. It is a non-reciprocal treaty which infringes on British sovereignty. Notably, Britain's European neighbours refused to sign similar treaties with the US because of their one-sided nature. Moreover, as of June 2006, the US has still not ratified this Treaty more than three years after it was signed, yet it has made over 40 extradition requests of the UK in that same period.

The US has alleged that Babar supported websites supporting Chechen rebels and Taliban fighters from 1997 to 2002. Even though Babar was living and working in the UK during this period, the US has claimed jurisdiction because it is alleged that the files of the websites were physically located on computers in the US. Since no prima facie evidence has been presented by the US,

Babar's lawyers cannot challenge the allegations and they have therefore been restricted to challenging the legality of the Extradition Treaty itself, and human rights issues involved in extraditing Babar to the US.

If the British Government sanctions Babar's extradition, it is most likely that it will be colluding with the US in its breaches of international law. If extradited, Babar may end up in Guantanamo Bay and face a US military tribunal which does not rule out the use of the death penalty. He faces 'extraordinary rendition' to a third-party state where torture may be used during interrogation. This practice has been universally condemned as illegal by all multilateral bodies, including the EU and the UN.

Babar's is a test case, and marks a dangerous departure from the most rudimentary facet of British law which maintains that the accused is innocent until proven guilty.

After four court appearances at Bow Street Magistrates' Court, Judge Timothy Workman ruled on 17 May 2005 that Babar could be extradited to the US, but referred the final decision to the Home Secretary, Charles Clarke. Charles Clarke decided on 15 November 2005 that Babar should be extradited to the US, despite receiving extensive representations on Babar's behalf and a petition of over 18,000 signatures delivered to him by Babar's MP, Sadiq Khan.

Babar Ahmad's case has received extensive publicity in media channels throughout the world. Consequently, the campaign to seek justice for Babar has received an unprecedented amount of support from both Muslim and non-Muslim communities, including many councillors, MPs and members of the House of Lords. There have been protests of thousands of people in support of Babar as well as meetings, events, articles and lectures. Several hundred people have actively lobbied their MPs to raise this issue with the Home Secretary and to challenge the dubious UK-US extradition arrangements. The family and members of the public have called for Babar to be tried in the UK if he has committed any crime.

The current UK-US extradition arrangements have been condemned by civil rights' organisations Liberty and Justice in addition to QCs, barristers and solicitors. In 2005, the Conservative Party Shadow Education Secretary Boris Johnson MP fielded Parliamentary Early Day Motion 241 calling for Britain's extradition arrangements with the US to be brought into line with those for its European allies. To date, as a result of intensive public lobbying, at least 157 MPs from all parties have added their names to this campaign by signing EDM 241. In February 2006 Mayor of London Ken Livingstone met with MPs, lawyers and human rights' representatives at the London Assembly building and gave a publicly televised press conference with Babar Ahmad's family and MP, Sadiq Khan, to condemn the UK-US Extradition Treaty and to demand a halt to the extradition of Babar Ahmad.

In March 2006, the Conservative Party supported by the Liberal Democrats, tabled amendments to the Police and Justice Bill 2006. The amendments proposed that the US must present prima facie evidence to seek extradition from the UK until it ratified the 2003 Treaty; further that extradition can be refused by the UK if any part of the alleged offence took place in the UK. On 10 May 2006, following a rushed debate lasting only an hour, 293 MPs voted against the amendments, defeating the 224 MPs who voted for them. The amendments are expected to be vigorously contested in the House of Lords.

Babar Ahmad's appeal against extradition is due to be heard at the High Court in July 2006.

2. Public Demonstrations in Support of Babar Ahmad 2004-2006

DATE	DAY	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE	% MUSLIM	MEDIA COVERAGE
13/08/04	Friday	Home Office	500	90	National
03/10/04	Sunday	HMP Belmarsh	200	75	National
18/11/04	Thursday	Bow St. Mag. Court	100	90	International
28/11/04	Sunday	HMP Woodhill	200	80	National
02/03/05	Wednesday	Bow St. Mag. Court	200	90	International
18/04/05	Monday	Bow St. Mag. Court	500	90	International
30/04/05	Saturday	Marble Arch	4000	100	International
17/05/05	Wednesday	Bow St. Mag. Court	200	90	International
18/11/05	Friday	Imperial College	40	95	Regional
10/12/05	Saturday	Marble Arch	15000	100	International
21/01/06	Saturday	St. James' Park	200	10	National

Source: Free Babar Ahmad Campaign video archives

3. Messages of Support from the Public to FreeBabarAhmad.com

Several hundred messages of support from around the world have been emailed to the FreeBabarAhmad.com website. Excerpts of some of these messages are given below. More messages can be read on the website itself.

(Some quotes have been slightly edited for clarity.)

Excerpt 1

“The imprisonment of Babar Ahmad is absolutely and utterly out of order ... I study law, and this is absolutely shocking and disgraceful ... he should be allowed a FAIR trial here in the UNITED KINGDOM. None of this kidnapping business to the US.”

Z.B.N., London, 23 March 2005

Excerpt 2

“How can the husband of a QC (Tony Blair) let this happen? Has he no sense of humanity left in him? Or does he believe he will be granted a special pardon on the Day of Judgement? ...”

N.I., London, 28 March 2005

Excerpt 3

“... I am saddened to realise how our government is willing to relinquish our British sovereignty and rule of law to the American aggressors and oppressors. It seems that in the current political environment one of our govt’s primary aims is to create this ‘climate of terror’, so that any legislation relating to the eroding of civil and human rights particularly of Muslims may be introduced and accepted ...”

U.R., Cardiff, 15 April 2005

Excerpt 4

“This is a lesson for all the Muslims and those who believe in justice ... We are living in a world where sometimes the laws of the jungle are better ...”

A.H., London, 17 April 2005

Excerpt 5

“I believe that there is injustice being done by the British and American government on brother Babar and his family ...”

Anonymous, Scotland, 21 April 2005

Excerpt 6

“We pray to Almighty Allah to give our brothers and sisters release from the injustices and oppression they face from the UK/USA governments ... may you gain release and justice from these evil terrorists in power.”

M.H., London, 23 April 2005

Excerpt 7

“... O Allah! Make our revenge on those who have been UNJUST TO US! Help us against our ENEMIES ...”

Asmaa, London, 1 May 2005

Excerpt 8

“... becoming aware of your current situation is heartbreaking ... don't let the enemy get the best of you ...”

N.K., Bradford, 5 May 2005

Excerpt 9

“Our prayers are with you and all the innocent captives in this war against Islam. We put our trust in Allah, only He can help us from the tyrants ...”

Dr R.M., Watford, 14 May 2005

Excerpt 10

“The UK Government has totally sold out to the US. Are we any better than the worst third world dictatorships when we are prepared to extradite our citizens to the US without a case being presented? ...”

Habib, London, 17 May 2005

Excerpt 11

“... These people are doing as they wish, planning and plotting against Allah (SWT) ... I pray for you as well as the other brothers and sisters who are facing injustice in a so called just society. It is clear that Islam is being dishonoured globally, which is their target ...”

I.H.A., London, 17 May 2005

Excerpt 12

“It saddens me to read about your plight and to see the injustice you and your family face by the hands of our vicious government ...”

Mariam, Birmingham, 17 May 2005

Excerpt 13

“Words cannot describe how I am feeling right now, after having heard the verdict ... I no longer have any faith in this so-called justice system ...”

Usma, London, 18 May 2005

Excerpt 14

“Dear Brother Babar, may Allah keep you and your family strong. The brutal regimes in these countries cannot be mightier than Allah (SWT) ...”

Shahin, London, 18 May 2005

Excerpt 15

“It was very disheartening to hear the verdict on brother Babar Ahmad ... the wicked ones will be surely punished ... The real Court of Justice is the Court of Allah where everyone will be judged justly and the evil ones will never be able to escape ...”

A.H., London, 19 May 2005

Excerpt 16

“Babar, you are another fall guy for Tony's 'Phoney' war on terror. It's easy to lock up a brother, this could have been anyone of us, but the authorities for now are selective about who they keep. We all know the game, it's played out everyday. The more political violence abroad, the more there needs to be a bogey man to look at something to draw our imagination from the atrocities of a genocidal war in Iraq ...”

Idriss, Manchester, 19 May 2005

Excerpt 17

“I am horrified to hear of the silly allegations that they have made against you, and can only imagine what you and your family are going through, these people seem really pathetic and petty ...”

N.Y.R., Hertfordshire, 24 May 2005

Excerpt 18

“I am disgusted what this innocent man has gone through. Only Allah knows what other brutal things are happening in this country. My heart goes out to brother Babar Ahmad and his family and I pray for his quick release. Ameen.”

R.P., Midlands, 26 May 2005

Excerpt 19

“... May Allah make you firm in your test ... May Allah expose those who are doing injustice, not to only Muslims but to all humans who have the right to live. I believe a British Muslim should only be tried under a British court and not under another country’s law, especially AMERICA. The world knows America is a bully, does what it wants and does not care about anyone except its own interests. By extraditing Babar Ahmad to America, it puts a shame on our ‘British Justice’.”

M.I., Colchester, 9 June 2005

Excerpt 20

“... I’m shocked and outraged at the treatment of Babar and his family and hope and pray that there is light at the end of this dark tunnel. My faith in the judicial system is torn and I sincerely hope and pray that Babar is released.”

Ibrahim, London, 18 June 2005

Excerpt 21

“It is very sad and it really touched me to hear about what is going on ... The kafirs [infidels] are really trying to break us and our faith down ...”

Q. S., London, 1 July 2005

Excerpt 22

“Brother, I have to say that may ALLAH reward you and your family for the patience you are having against the enemy of ALLAH ... when I see you in court, brother, on that stand being trialled, I say to myself it is the QUR’AN being trialled so it is important that the whole ummah does something, so these criminals don’t take our beloved ...”

Mouad, London, 3 July 2005

Excerpt 23

“It is outrageous that this is happening in this country; again it shows that a cleverly worked ploy of fear by the government will make it acceptable for them to justify human rights violations ... we are in fear of becoming a police state that can kidnap and abuse its own civilians at will. Muslims are already the victims of unfair treatment by the authorities, but how long before they extend this to all British citizens ... how can you preach and fight for freedom in a foreign country when you deprive your own citizens of it?”

N.H., London 4 July 2005

Excerpt 24

“I am very much shocked and really hurt at the way Babar was treated, this is not justice ...”

Aamir, Luton, 8 July 2005

Excerpt 25

“Words can not even begin to express my indignation at the callous manner in which the UK Government has allowed this farcical case against Babar Ahmad to continue ... I am disillusioned with the Government which continues to fuel this fiasco with half-truths, only serving to further alienate the ‘moderate’ Muslims it seeks to recruit in the war on terror ...”

A.A., Scotland, 11 July 2005

Excerpt 26

“When justice is defined as ‘injustice’ the definitions become confused and the world turns to be in chaos ... Being a Muslim has become a danger to the United States as well as to any country that finds ‘justice’ conflicting with its own interests. The life of a dog or a cat is more valued than the life of a Muslim (a terrorist). The pain in the Muslim nation is engraved and nothing will make the scars banish until justice prevails ...”

Anonymous, (city not provided), 12 July 2005

Excerpt 27

“I am appalled at the torture of Babar Ahmad ... George Bush is supporting torture on Babar Ahmad ...”

A.M., Preston, 25 July 2005

Excerpt 28

“... It swells my heart every time I hear injustice takes place. I would like to say: remember this life is nothing, its a mere test on all humanity and remember the ones that are responsible for his torture and his injustice will pay for it in this life and the hereafter ... This injustice of course should not be tolerated and Allah (SWT) will show those responsible, Hell Fire, after this life ...”

D.K., Kent, 25 July 2005

Excerpt 29

“... these people of injustice will get their backlash. It is the COURT OF INJUSTICE; my heart goes to your family especially your wife who had to endure her beloved husband getting tortured ...”

Arifa, London, 26 July 2005

Excerpt 30

“... The case of Babar Ahmad is an outrage and one day the people who have treated this man so badly will receive their full recompense ...”

Anonymous, London, 28 July 2005

Excerpt 31

“I am a 15 year old Muslimah living in London. I was deeply angered and saddened to hear of Babar Ahmad’s plight. Although I am still quite young I fully understand the situation and environment around me ...”

T.B., London, 1 August 2005

Excerpt 32

“... MAY ALLAH GIVE STRENGTH TO BABAR AHMAD AND HIS FAMILY TO GO THROUGH ALL THE PAIN THESE ANIMALS ARE MAKING HIM AND HIS FAMILY GO THROUGH ...”

O.K., (city not provided), 8 August 2005

Excerpt 33

“Babar Ahmad has done nothing wrong whatsoever. I am disgusted at the behaviour of the police.”

Y.M., Lancashire, 14 September 2005

Excerpt 34

“I am disgusted at the police. They have absolutely no right to treat anyone this way. I am shocked and expected them to treat people better.”

Y.M., Preston, 14 September 2005

Excerpt 35

“... I pray that Allah gives me the strength to speak out but at the moment I am too afraid for myself and my family - if this can happen to you we are all in great danger - the British justice system I have trusted since childhood is dead ...”

Anonymous, London, 29 September 2005

Excerpt 36

“... I find it astonishing that this government is willing to hand over a British citizen on such baseless and flimsy evidence ... Charles Clarke is a disgrace to the country and to democracy.”

Z.A., London, 16 November 2005

Excerpt 37

“Babar Ahmad’s name is in the list of all-time-greats from human history. Name few such as Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and others who suffered in the hands of enemies of human rights. Even if Babar Ahmad will not get justice from corrupt courts in the UK or USA, history will give him justice ...”

I.A., Bolton, 16 November 2005

Excerpt 38

“... Every time they try to humiliate you, know that the humiliation of the Hereafter is unimaginably worse (and they get closer to that humiliation) ...”

Sachi, Scotland, 16 November 2005

Excerpt 39

“... I am very distressed to learn about last night’s news and decision by Clarke. You are absolutely correct: this will do nothing but further disaffect an already alienated Muslim community in this country ... but I feel a sense of suffocation, of anxiety and desperation from the government’s response - similar to how I felt in US custody and when interrogators refused to listen to me, or to see reason ... Britain has, characteristically, bent over backwards to accommodate its transatlantic cousin again, but there is no reciprocation ... UK citizens (overwhelmingly from the Muslim community) are again relegated to a lower class of animal both in the UK and US ...”

Moazzam Begg (former Guantanamo detainee), 16 November 2005

Excerpt 40

“... I am positively disgusted and angered beyond belief at the pain you and your family have suffered ... I pray that you are released soon and the animals that have tortured you will be brought to account ...”

Ali, London, 16 November 2005

Excerpt 41

“Today we face another hurdle in the case of brother Babar Ahmad and the fate of British Muslims ... justice and truth SHALL prevail over tyranny and injustice. May Allah expose the true criminals- Ameen.”

U.A., Sheffield, 16 November 2005

Excerpt 42

“I am very angered and disgusted with the decision by the Home Secretary ... This just goes to say we can't expect justice from such a government that treats its own citizens in this way.”

U.A., London, 16 November 2005

Excerpt 43

“... I AM SO SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT BABAR AHMAD ... I THINK WE ALL NEED TO START QUESTIONING.... WHAT IS HAPPENING AND WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS COUNTRY?-WHAT IS THEIR ULTERIOR MOTIVE? WHAT DO THEY REALLY WANT FROM US? WHY ARE THE MUSLIMS ALWAYS TARGETTED WITHOUT ENOUGH EVIDENCE? WHY PICKING ON ONLY THE RELIGION “ISLAM”? ... THE MORE THEY TORTURE, THE MORE STRONGER WE GO TO OUR *DEEN* [RELIGION]! ...”

Anonymous, Leicester, 17 November 2005

Excerpt 44

“... I was really disgusted with Clarke's ruling to send Babar to the US I woke this morning at approx 0400 for no reason whatsoever but still had that really upset feeling inside me. I could only think of two people; one was my brother Babar and the other my 13 yr old sister from Palestine who was shot 17 times and the man that did it walked free ...”

M.A.A., Bradford, 17 November 2005

Excerpt 45

“... Injustice against groups and individuals is the biggest method of recruiting violent activists. This simple act of sending a suspect to a country known for its human rights abuses may pacify US heads of state, but will simply fuel the existing fire of radical Islam. I urge ALL countries especially Israel and the USA to apply the rule of law fairly and to avoid adding fuel to the fire of an already angry and ignored Muslim community ...”

Y.A., Merseyside, 17 November 2005

Excerpt 46

“... I am appalled, disgusted, and upset to hear the news that our brother Babar will be extradited to the US ... as Muslims we need to start standing up to these so-called politicians running this country, why are all these Muslim groups that say they are working with the govt not doing anything? ... Why have they not condemned these actions? I am ashamed that these people are Muslims like me and yet sit back and do nothing when they have a certain position of authority.

... Please everyone lets continue to fight the terrorisation in the UK by our own politicians against civilians before we start on others. May Allah SWT ... punish those who do injustice to others. Ameen!”

S.P., London, 17 November 2005

Excerpt 47

“... I do not understand how the British Home Secretary allowed this extradition to the USA, the government of which is responsible for the biggest wave of terrorism in the world today? Why have the police team who tortured him not been prosecuted? Has Tony Blair's govt lost its mind?” *S.K., (city not provided), 17 November 2005*

Excerpt 48

“... I am getting more concerned every day about where my own country is heading. I have in the past considered this home of mine to be one of the most just political systems in the world. Indeed I gave 15 years of my life serving this country in its armed forces, 3 years of which were spent on active service ... I have become aware of the absolute negative attitude of the authorities towards the Muslims ... What is really intolerable is how this so called democratic government, of the mother of all democratic parliaments, can accept an agreement with another country to hand over its own nationals to them without having to show proof of any wrongdoing ... I am so shocked by the draconian laws and measurements, which are slipping into this land, that I feel I can no longer stay here and will be looking to move elsewhere where I know where I stand, even if the new country does not have democracy. At least I will know how I stand but will not feel persecuted and can lead a good and decent life ... I am embarrassed to be an Englishman! ...”

A.W., London, 17 November 2005

Excerpt 49

“... DEEPLY SADDENED TO SEE SUPPOSED ‘JUSTICE’ FROM A SO CALLED CIVILIZED COUNTRY ...”

A.R., London, 17 November 2005

Excerpt 50

“... I feel deeply saddened by the failure of this government to give you justice ...”

Anonymous, London, 18 November 2005

Excerpt 51

“... You may torture, abuse and hate us but NEVER, NEVER will we walk away from this ... WAY OF LIFE!!!! ...”

Anonymous, (city not provided), 24 November 2005

Excerpt 52

“... After Babar Ahmad many are now next. One by one, will you again see your brothers get arrested, beaten ... Does not even the thought of the wives, sisters, mothers being left while their husbands are beaten in front of them and taken away from them even touch you? And what about the kids?...Now there are many cases to come...The majority of the Shuyukh (Islamic scholars) have agreed it being obligatory to free the Muslim prisoners of war, by either sacrificing ourselves or by our wealth ...”

A. Khan, London, 28 November 2005

Excerpt 53

“... Mr. Blair is inviting the wrath of Allah upon himself and the country. Whenever injustice prevails then Allah (SWT) destroys the people of injustice ...”

H.R., Birmingham, 29 November 2005

Excerpt 54

“... THIS IS WRONG WRONG WRONG ... May Allah free all the innocent Muslim prisoners from all capture, and may ALLAH take action for the wrongful imprisonment of all MUSLIMS around the world ...”

A.H.N., Essex, 5 December 2005

Excerpt 55

“May Allah protect you and may His curse be on those who are responsible for your suffering...”

Imran, Manchester, 7 December 2005

Excerpt 56

“... I feel sometimes really angry and upset with mixed emotions when I see what’s happening around the world ...”

Aaliya, Birmingham, 8 December 2005

Excerpt 57

“... we will try as hard as we can to free and save Babar diplomatically but ... we might have to break you free from where ever they hold you ... we are not looking to let them execute you in our time ... we will try our best by their rules. Otherwise we will use their rules against them ...”

Raza, (city not provided), 10 December 2005

Excerpt 58

“... Us Muslims need to wake up and stop our brother from being taken away in front of our eyes.”

Aisha, London, 18 December 2005

Excerpt 59

“... Although I am only fourteen, I would do anything to help Babar Ahmad to be freed ... Allah has said that, people like these who have arrested Brother Babar will get punished once here on Earth and once on the Day of Judgment insha-Allah ... These people are abusing our brother and religion and Allah. Can you stand that? No, I thought not ...”

A.Z., Surrey, 22 December 2005

Excerpt 60

“... The oppressors are weak and those who rely on them are weak also ...”

Zubair, Bolton, 23 December 2005

Excerpt 61

“... It upsets me so much to see how Muslims are being treated just because they are Muslims ... We should never lose faith because no matter what the tyrants do Allah will always help the Muslims!”

A. M., Bradford, 28 December 2005

Excerpt 62

“May Allah (SWT) destroy the ones that attack the righteous! Their time will come; they won’t be able to delay it even for a second!”

S.I., London, 30 December 2005

Excerpt 63

“... I think all those police people are disgraceful and uncivilised people who will all be punished severely for what they did ... besides, they will all rot in Hell ...”

S.S., Leicestershire, 13 January 2006

Excerpt 64

“... Surely, these oppressors are inhumane. They are examples of ignorance and injustice. These oppressors are fearless of the punishment awaiting them in the hereafter ...”

Zulaikha, (city not provided), 14 January 2006

Excerpt 65

“... I hope and pray Babar Ahmad is spared the cruel handling by British police and the even more evil USA authorities... the USA and Britain as well as many other powerful nations are under the influence of powerful Zionists and their lobbies ...”

A.A., London, 15 January 2006

Excerpt 66

“... My brother is being held in HMP Belmarsh and I too know how it feels to have your loved one oppressed in this evil way. It is these brothers and sisters who understand the true colours of ‘western civilisation’ and ‘democracy’ and it is time that we all woke up to this, it could be any of us who is imprisoned as they have been, their only crime is that they are Muslim, no more no less.”

Anonymous, London, 23 February 2006

Excerpt 67

“... Well what can you say when someone that you know well is going through this injustice - it is fine for all us Muslims to make dua and ask our brother to stay strong but what are we actually doing about it collectively? I am not asking anyone to take the law into your own hands as that will only worsen the position of every single Muslim in the Britain today. But shutting Muslim businesses and not going to work for one day as a protest to this injustice might make more people listen.

This Labour government has been able to get away with one of the biggest lies ever told to a nation which in turn has quietly accepted this tyranny. It hurts me to say that I have no faith in British Law / politicians and to some extent the British people.

Babar Ahmad is a kind / learned and peaceful man. In all my years of knowing him he never once talked about hurting people in the name of Islam, in fact he always paid more importance to educating people. It is a travesty to see someone like him accused of these crimes. You are the strongest / most sincere and honest person I have known in my life. I pray for you everyday ...”

MO, London, 27 March 2006

Excerpt 68

“... I would just like to say that you are very fortunate to have such a supportive father whose relentless campaigning has brought so much recognition to your case... It’s a shame that our country is represented by absolute admirers of the Bush regime and all that is bad about the United States. There was a time when the English were admired for their chivalry and honour. Now, our country has succumbed to the dictates of blood-thirsty men (and one idiot in particular). It’s ironic that our PM is an intelligent man and should know better. For politicians the political interests of a country supersede the interests of its people (2 million on the streets of London!). As Palmerston said: “Nations have no permanent friends or allies, they only have permanent interests ...”

Abu Isa, London, 6 April 2006

4. Excerpts from Letters of Support to Babar Ahmad in Prison

Babar Ahmad has received over 2000 letters and cards of support in prison since August 2004. This has been an average of over 100 per month. The letters have come mainly from Muslims and express anger, frustration and dismay at the British and American justice systems, the politicians and the change in British laws.

Excerpts from a fraction of those received have been printed below. (Some quotes have been slightly edited for clarity.)

2004

Excerpt 1

“I heard about your arrest on Thursday and at first I was shocked that they had arrested you again. After what they did to you last December and how they tried to humiliate our faith, I couldn’t believe they were trying it again. But then I thought about it and it hit me: subhan-Allah (Glory be to Allah), this brother must be one of those dearest to Allah (SWT)...

The brutal treatment you suffered at the hands of the police has not been forgotten and although the physical scars may heal on your body, the scars they have left on our hearts are permanent. Our hearts were dead and hardened but, by the grace of the All Mighty, they were given a jolt last December and are beginning to awaken.”

F.A., Galway, Ireland, 7 August 2004

Excerpt 2

“We share every moment of your sadness since we read of your assault in December at the hands of our Majesty’s Metropolitan Police! The moment you were detained we were also detained. And we will continue to be detained until Allah provides for you a way out.”

‘Masood’, Bradford, 8 August 2004

Excerpt 3

“This is a wake up call to us all, that we need to do more for our brothers and sisters who are unjustly imprisoned and persecuted.”

U.Z., London, 9 August 2004

Excerpt 4

“I feel GUTTED! GUTTED! GUTTED! I was driving on Friday morning when I heard your name on the radio. I was in denial, I could not BELIEVE IT. Someone so innocent, who would not even hurt a fly, can be arrested for such stupid charges. You are on my mind all the time. Everyone is SHOCKED! Insha-Allah, Insha-Allah we will see you very soon. You are being discussed everywhere. From people who are not that religious to very practising. The saying is: ‘When you got arrested EVERY ONE of us got arrested!’ ”

‘Zubair’, London, August 2004

Excerpt 5

“When I heard about your first ordeal at the hands of the police, I realised how much we, as Muslims, need to stand up for each other and defend our rights. Because of your sacrifice and those of our brothers, my iman (faith) has been renewed and now my ultimate desire in life is to help the Muslim Ummah (nation).”

‘R’, location not given, 10 August 2004

Excerpt 6

“I’m really upset to hear that the devil British government has had you arrested again. At least they didn’t rough you up like last time...”

Anonymous, London, 10 August 2004

Excerpt 7

“We are all thinking of you and praying for you and will do whatever is within our means to stand up to the injustice that is being done.”

‘Rubina’, location not given, 11 August 2004

Excerpt 8

“Dear Babar, this is a message of support to you. I read of the appalling treatment you received at the hands of the police and the government. I am against the scape-goating of Muslims and this sick racist government. I hope enough people become aware of what is going on and stop any attempt to extradite you and others in your position.”

R. S., London, 12 August 2004

Excerpt 9

“Verily we feel your pain as well and long so much for you to be amongst us again. May Allah (SWT) protect you from the friends of shaytaan [Satan]...and their wicked plots. May Allah protect you from becoming a scape-goat from the plots of the devil’s dogs, the scums of the earth, the two-faced devils.”

S.R., London, 12 August 2004

Excerpt 10

“I saw what happened to you on the TV and the lies the police used to arrest you. I suppose anyone who practises the Islamic religion is, or has become, a suspected terrorist and therefore a threat to national security, but when I read about you in the newspapers and watched your story unfold on TV, everyone knew it was ridiculous and a complete set-up.”

O.K., London, 12 August 2004

Excerpt 11

“You have been imprisoned unjustly and wrongly accused. We, your brothers and sisters in Islam have been distraught and concerned by what has been happening to you and your family. It has shaken and touched us, due to the fact that we are Muslims. And we will not feel peace in our breast until you are released and returned in safety to your family.”

U.M., London, 12 August 2004

Excerpt 12

“Please know that there are many, many people who feel as I do and who are outraged by the actions of our politicians (and their police puppets).

...I suppose that other governments have always lied to us but the obviousness of the lies in the last few years have finally radicalised me and others. I’m horrified that our government can use trumped up charges from the US to extradite (or attempt to extradite) ‘difficult people’.”

S.B., London, 24 August 2004

Excerpt 13

“The oppressors and tyrants think they can break you, but how can they harm someone who is helped by Allah? They think they can scare and weaken the rest of the Muslims with your imprisonment; but every time someone is captured or imprisoned, his example awakens another ten who stand up in his place. This religion will surely be victorious whether we see this in our lives or not.”

‘Din’, location not given, 24 August 2004

Excerpt 14

“Let them plan and plot their evil schemes. History has borne witness to the struggle between the righteous and the people of conscious, against despotic pharaohs. We live at a time when people are becoming prisoners because of their faith, innocent people whose only crime is to believe ‘there is no being worthy of worship except Allah.’”

K.F.D., location not given, 25 August 2004

Excerpt 15

“You do not realise that you have actually brought the Muslims together and woken them up. Muslims and non-Muslims alike will not tolerate any more injustice.”

‘Aisha’, location not given, 2 September 2004

Excerpt 16

“Praise be to Allah, as a result of your arrest I believe a lot of the Muslims are waking up. I speak to brothers and they are much more aware of what these kuffar [disbelievers] and the British government are doing to us Muslims! Now more and more brothers are becoming more active, writing letters, protesting, etc.”

Faisal, London, 7 September 2004

Excerpt 17

“With the situation in the world fast becoming an oppressive one for Muslims, it is difficult not to feel fear and panic. Every page on the internet shows another graphic account of the slaughter of our men and debasement of our women and children, making the mind fit to explode. However, this is the very fact that has been cast into our hearts, one that we need to remove. Insha-Allah you are one of those people who is showing those of us afraid, that courage in the face of the establishment is the weapon of the believer and I pray very much that Allah delivers you back to your wife and family.”

Anonymous, London, 8 September 2004

Excerpt 18

“I am going to write to him [MP Edward Garnier] to complain how you were treated [at court]. Is there any reason why you were not allowed to wear your own clothes? To attend court with dignity, even murderers are allowed to do that.”

L.N., Leicester, 17 September 2004

Excerpt 19

“British justice is very cock-eyed at the moment at the moment, but as usual the authorities have shot themselves in the foot just because the images [of you in shackles] have angered people.”
Y.R., Durham, 18 September 2004

Excerpt 20

“I think Muslims are now tired and fed up of being demonised and wish to make a stand. Your case has been the “straw that broke the camel’s back” so to say.”
‘Umair’, location not given, 23 September 2004

Excerpt 21

“I am writing this letter though I can’t even begin to understand what you are going through. The injustice of your captivity makes me furious, but not surprised at the hypocritical satanic systems of this government.”
Anonymous, location not given, October 2004

Excerpt 22

“I am so unhappy about what has happened to you and I wish you aren’t exported [sic] to the USA, and we are doing all we can to stop that. My question is why do they take Muslims and say they are terrorists and not think Christians are? Why are they so racist? Why are Muslims the usual suspects for the racist police? Why are they like this? Why do they have to harm us? How can they predict that we are terrorists? Why would someone that prays a lot and is a holy man? What would he try to gain? I thought they are trying to stop terrorism but the way they are acting would make more people against them. I hope you are out of there soon.”
S.M. (9 year old boy), London, 5 October 2004

Excerpt 23

“I saw my brothers going through pain and agony from the police, being forced to have pork, with spit, being sentenced for no reason other than being a Muslim. It affected me a lot, bringing tears to my eyes. I hope you do not struggle, I remember you all the time in my prayers. May Allah forgive you and help you. I see wrong information about you my brother, in the newspapers, like links to bin Laden etc. It brings me anger and hatred when I read things like this.”
T. A., London, 10 October 2004

Excerpt 24

“We all know you are innocent of these ridiculous accusations put on you by these American hot dogs, insha-Allah hopefully Blair will stop being a poodle for Bush the devil in disguise. And insha-Allah you can be back with us, otherwise all of us have to realise, being a British Muslim don’t mean nothing, NOTHING, that maybe if we were British Hindu or Sikh or something else apart from British Muslim, then maybe we might receive some justice, some fair play, some respect and protection. But this is the reality, I suppose it doesn’t matter no more if our fathers were hard-working, honest citizens here.

I suppose it don’t matter that they abided by the law and never broke it once, I suppose it don’t matter anymore if you’re innocent or not no more, as long as you are a Muslim you’re guilty. And if they don’t have nothing on you, I’m sure the same government which boasts of equal rights, which boasts of equal opportunities for ethnic groups and protection for all British citizens will alas, with no remorse, no regret, plant something on you, as long as you’re Muslim, you’re guilty whether you like it or not, courtesy of the British government.”

S.R., location not given, 13 October 2004

Excerpt 25

“It’s shocking, I know, but there is a repugnant theme of racism in everything the US and the UK does, and to some extent there are hypocrites within our community who are blinded by ‘white supremacy’...”

Anonymous, London, 15 October 2004

Excerpt 26

“The SPT [Stop Political Terror] campaign has fired the imagination and given a focus to people who were frustrated. Now your arrest has ignited an anger I’ve not seen before in the community, and the demo proved this is not just a Muslim issue any longer.”

Y.R., Durham, 19 October 2004

Excerpt 27

“We need to realize that we have to be strong and united and stand firm against the Shaytaan [Satan] and zaalimeen [oppressors], we need to show them that the brotherhood of Islam is back and is as strong as ever.”

Anonymous, location not given, 21 October 2004

Excerpt 28

“The times of today are crazy; people are getting killed over mobile phones and petty things like that. People are born into slavery and all kinds of mad things, kufr (disbelief) is dominant over the earth, and the Muslim Ummah is being tried and tested. The Muslims are targeted, persecuted, killed, tortured and singled out simply because of their faith. My brother in Islam, you are another innocent victim who has been subjugated to torture and hardship simply because of your belief.”

‘Ramsey’, location not given, 22 October 2004

Excerpt 29

“During these difficult times, when the doors to evil have now been fully opened, the crimes that the powers that be are committing sees no end. The suffering of the Ummah is a prophecy that is coming true and this is due to its shortcomings. For the evil ones, it’s a prejudice that some are more human than others. The injustices that they have unleashed and the isolation and persecution that they are causing the community are mounting...”

Brother, a giant is awakening. It is only now that we have got to this situation that the thinking has begun.”

D. J., London, 26 October 2004

Excerpt 30

“Dear Babar, just a note to send you this letter from Caroline Flint MP trying to justify what they are doing. I don’t believe a word of it.

I saw your letter in the Socialist Worker, I subscribe to it, as it’s the only paper to tell the truth about the war and the police.”

L. N., Leicester, 8 November 2004

Excerpt 31

“The community has lost a very special person. Everyone knows you are innocent and are making dua [supplication] for you and your family. This is happening to you because you are such an important person in the sight of Allah. It is strange to see such an honourable person in prison, whilst murderers and drug dealers roam the streets free.”

A.G., London, 11 November 2004

Excerpt 32

“Brother, you are a role model to my children. It is my dua [supplication] at every prayer that one day they will grow up to be as faithful to Allah (SWT) as you.”

‘Farooq’, London, 12 November 2004

Excerpt 33

“I feel guilty that I can enjoy my family etc. and you are wrongfully incarcerated, *insha-Allah* [God willing] you will be free such as we will continue to highlight your plight and they will come to their senses. I will be joining the protests *insha-Allah* [God willing] and raise people’s awareness about the wrong they are doing to you and other brothers.”

‘Shakil’, location not given, 2004

Excerpt 34

“I spoke at an ISB [Islamic Society of Britain] event 2 days ago and began talking about your case - the local community cops got up and walked out making a hell of a noise. It seems they can dish it out but can’t take it.”

Y.R., Durham, 26 November 2004

Excerpt 35

“The outside world has not forgotten the plight of our brothers imprisoned at home or abroad. You are amongst the elite group that is singled out in the masajid [mosques] for du’a [supplication].”

Anonymous, location not given, November 2004

2005

Excerpt 36

“I hope you were encouraged by the level of support for you [at a demonstration at Woodhill prison] even on such a wet day!

I hope the lobby of MP’s is going well regarding the Extradition Act 2003. I tried to get my own MP Clive Efford to write to the Home Secretary but he declined. I hope your family is alright given the awful circumstances and that lawyers and politicians will do something to demand changes to this unjust law.”

S.B., London, 5 January 2005

Excerpt 37

“I hope this programme [on television, about Babar Ahmad’s plight] will shine a light on what is happening to you. I think while they can keep those things secret, they think they can get away with it.”

L.N., Leicester, 19 January 2005

Excerpt 38

“I was so moved by this terrible incident and very shocked by it...

Because I can't do much because I am a student, I am making lots of dua [supplication] insha-Allah, so that they can release you. And [that] they can understand that having a beard and wearing jubbah [robe] should not be a suspicion for an act of terrorism. Because nowadays when sisters walk down the street with hijab on, many people look at them as if they are a terrorist and many have abuses thrown at them, as I have experienced it myself many times.”

R.B., London, January 2005

Excerpt 39

“Never did it occur to me that the British legal system was capable of such brutal and callous behaviour nor can I recall feeling so devastated and distraught. My awareness raised, I felt urged to act, knowing that my heart would never find peace until I did something to help.”

S.C., London, 28 January 2005

Excerpt 40

“I was stunned to hear what my Brother in Islam is going through. It was not bearable to accept that my Muslim brother is actually going through all this. When I heard about you it brought tears to my eyes. Who do they think they are, treating our Muslim brother the way they feel like? As far as I know you are innocent. They feel that they can have power and control over the Muslims. Well let me tell you now, they can't control us Muslims.

I, with many others, will be trying our best to try and get you out of the terrible situation you are in. We will contact, as well as writing to, our local MPs regarding you. We are all going to protest regarding the unacceptable behaviour that the wicked non Muslims are doing to you.”

M.A.K., London, 30 January 2005

Excerpt 41

“I was shocked and deeply affected when I heard and saw your injuries due to the torture subjected by the British police. It is very sad that British society has reached such levels where they can let such blatant human rights abuses go un-noticed without a blink of an eyelid. In fact, I'm afraid that your case is just the tip of the ice berg.”

'Kashif', London, 30 January 2005

Excerpt 42

“[I saw] the pictures of your bruises and honestly I didn't know what to do or say. All I felt was hurt and guilt. I felt really hurt because of what was happening to you and of where you are now. Also you're my Muslim brother and if it happened to one of my real brothers or relatives, I wouldn't know what to do or feel. I feel so guilty because I never knew what happened to you... I never knew that the police force could actually be that rude and racist and heartless. I don't know what this world is coming to.”

R.B., London, January 2005

Excerpt 43

“To hear you, a fellow Muslim brother, be tortured in such unaccountable, unimaginable, inconceivable ways, brings me such despair and I am proper disgusted at the so-called civilised society. Despite all this abuse, all the affliction, all the pain you have experienced bro, I am honestly amazed at your reactions. The strength in your character and belief and hope in Almighty Allah have shone through.”

Anonymous, London, 31 January 2005

Excerpt 44

“Words cannot express the way I feel, Bro. May Allah help you, and your family, protect you, love you, strengthen you, fight for you, avenge for you, elevate you, have mercy on you, bless you, grant you success and all the bros and sisters in the world.”

A.M., London, February 2005

Excerpt 45

“I along with all the Muslims in the world (1.5 billion and still going up) feel the pain and anger you are going through, brother, never feel you are alone. In a hadith it is written that when one part of the body is hurt, then the rest of your body feels the pain, and if a Muslim brother is in pain, then the whole Muslim brotherhood will feel this pain.”

T.A., London, 17 March 2005

Excerpt 46

“I thought of you and how brutally the police officers stepped on your toes with their boots. But what hurts more is the sheer hypocrisy and double standards of our government. Had you been the son of an Arab prince or something, this wouldn’t have happened - or if you were from an Anglo-Saxon background. We pay our taxes too, so why us? And why are prominent ‘Muslims’ silent?”

“A.J.K. Zindabad”, location not given, 28 March 2005

Excerpt 47

“Dear brother, our eyes have been blinded from the reality because of our own faults. We think if it’s not our suffering, or our own blood it doesn’t affect us. This is where our imaan [faith] is weakest; the love the Ummah [worldwide Muslim community] used to have for one another has been torn apart. Brother, although I may not be able to understand how you’re feeling being tortured everyday of your life, I know for a fact the most hurtful part is hearing your own brothers and sisters saying all they can do is make du’a [supplication]. This is where we are wrong. Any Muslim should understand the fact that if something is happening against our religion we should fight back to succeed.

If this cannot be done then we should use our mouths to fight and if we can’t do that the last thing we should do is make du’a [supplication] and that is the weakest of imaan [faith]. I have to admit I myself feel guilty for not being able to do much except attend demonstrations and talks about people in situations like yours. I know for a fact me and my friends and family should have been there for you since day one fighting for your rights rather than finding out about you after all that torture had been done. ...”

S.A., London, 11 April 2005

Excerpt 48

“I started researching on what I can do to help and I came across simply writing letters. But that’s not all I’m going to do. I will do more insha-Allah [God willing] but I thought to write letters to the prisoners and to actively help until all innocent Muslims are released. I will dedicate my life to removing prisoners from these disgusting cells. I just wanted to let u know that you have one more person that will do more than just dua [supplication].

...Have patience because on the Day of Judgment they will be punished so bad and insha-Allah in this life as well, I’ll pray for their destruction. I’ll pray that Allah will remove their senses, will get their daughters raped and killed, their sons paralysed. Because if they can do this to humans, then insha-Allah [God willing] Allah will deal with them justly in this life as well as the hereafter.”

Anonymous, London, 12 April 2005

Excerpt 48

“Post September 11th the Ummah [worldwide Muslim community] has been running back to Islam in droves, accompanied by thousands of Muslim reverts who have accepted Islam in Britain. Just a few weeks ago hundreds of Muslim organisations and mosques set aside their differences and united for the first time to support their Muslim brothers in prison through a massive Muslim Unity march to Paddington Green police station. In this climate of fear they feared none but Allah (SWT). These are signs that the victory is close....

The War against Islam has failed. Britain, Europe and America have failed to convince the Muslim Ummah of the superiority of their ideology. As an act of desperation they have resorted to barbaric means to force their ideology on the Muslims through their wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as imprisoning yourself...

Moreover, their own native populations are rejecting their ideology, whether in the form of anti-capitalist demonstrations or through conversions to Islam like myself.

Although it may not be apparent to you, your sacrifice and steadfastness has given confidence and strength to thousands of Muslims in the UK and beyond, to stick to Islam no matter what the outcome.”

A.K.N., location not given, 4 June 2005

Excerpt 49

“I feel very emotional for the loss of your life and independence, but also very angry for the injustice being undertaken in such an inhumane way...

The disbelievers will receive a greater trial and punishment in the afterlife.”

A.U., London, July 2005

Excerpt 50

“Words cannot express what me and my family felt when we heard the Home Secretary’s decision to extradite you to America.

We will insha-Allah keep praying for you and doing everything in our power to insha-Allah help you and all the brothers around the world. Brothers whose lives have been ruined, who have been subjected to torture, deprived of food and water.”

F.Z., Essex, 10 November 2005

Excerpt 51

“The prospect of being sent to a country which is undoubtedly the foremost militant, bellicose and unabashed human rights violator on this planet would be enough to drive lesser mortals into the abyss of insanity or perhaps suicide...

Ultimately, brother, the Creator of All Things tests each and every one of us in whatever way He decrees. But I feel your test is also our test. For if the nefarious new extradition process succeeds, then I fear for myself and many others living here.”

Anonymous, location not given, 28 November 2005

Excerpt 52

“I am writing on behalf of over 90,000 Muslim students in the UK and Eire. I would like to express my deep felt sympathies for what you must be going through at this moment in time....

Whilst I can never fully understand the pain and anguish you must be suffering, I assure you that I and the entire Muslim student body are deeply saddened and concerned at this inexplicable decision [to extradite Babar]. We vow to fully support you in your pursuit to see justice served, as this decision sets an extremely dangerous precedent for British Muslims.”

Federation of Students’ Islamic Societies, London, 6 December 2005

Excerpt 53

“There is definitely a revival going on amongst the Muslims. If you just think about when we were young nothing was happening, now so much is going on and the youngsters are getting involved also, which is an excellent sign.”

A.M., London, 2005

Excerpt 54

“The current times are a new turning point for us Muslims in the UK. We have become too complacent and relaxed. Brother, by yours and others’ arrests, I hope it will awaken us especially as it is starting to hit nearer home, insha-Allah [God willing]...

Your arrest seems to have made the community become active and more aware of what has been happening to Muslims.”

Anonymous, location not given, 2005

Excerpt 55

“Those who are unjust and oppress will be exposed by Allah. Everyday, we read more and more stories about our supposed leaders and what lies and injustices they have misled us British citizens with.”

A.R., London, 2005

5. Statements by Muslim Organisations in Britain

Almost all of the leading Muslim organisations, mosques and centres have united in their support of Babar Ahmad and condemnation of the current UK-US extradition arrangements. Officials from the organisations have met Government ministers several times to express their concerns at the handling of Babar Ahmad's case. In July 2005 the Legal Affairs Committee of the Muslim Council of Britain made written representations to the Home Secretary against Babar Ahmad's extradition. Excerpts of some public statements made by some of these organisations are given below.

Excerpt 1

"There have been a number of charges laid out against Babar Ahmad, and he should be able to defend these according to his rights in a court of law.

The suspicion remains that after Babar Ahmad exposed last December the barbaric cruelty with which around 600 members of the Muslim community have been arrested under terrorism legislation, with only a fraction of them charged and virtually none convicted, he has become a marked man. With no evidence against him, there is an extradition request to send him to a country where this does not matter, and the use of torture has become legitimised. The US is far from being seen as impartial distributor of justice with smells like Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib hanging round their necks.

Babar Ahmad should be tried in the UK, if found guilty then punished according to the law, if innocent then given all the ability to live the rest of his life in a normal fashion."

Muslim Association of Britain, 9 August 2004¹

Excerpt 2

"The Muslim Council of Britain - an umbrella body representing over 400 national, regional and local Islamic organisations throughout the UK- views the US Extradition request against Babar Ahmad as wholly unacceptable.

British Muslims have scant confidence that Babar Ahmad will be tried fairly in the current hysterically anti-Muslim climate in the USA. It is notable that under the Extradition Treaty of 2003 the USA is under no reciprocal obligation to extradite any of its own nationals to the UK. This is plainly iniquitous."

Muslim Council of Britain, 1 March 2005²

Excerpt 3

"IHRC condemns the decision by District Judge Timothy Workman to approve the extradition of Babar Ahmad to the US.

In doing so, the Judge has set a dangerous precedent whereby British citizens may be extradited

¹ www.mabonline.net

² www.mcb.org.uk

to American custody without any evidence of wrongdoing. IHRC notes that on the contrary, the UK must provide evidence before any extradition of American citizens to Britain can take place.

This is further evidence that British citizens are no longer seen as equal in the eyes of the Americans which is symbolic of the slave-master relationship we currently have with the US.

IHRC is also extremely shocked that the decision to extradite was taken despite concrete evidence from American legal experts that Babar would suffer gross human rights abuses if extradited to US custody.

IHRC calls upon all campaigners to continue fighting for justice for Babar and all political prisoners both in the UK and abroad.”

Islamic Human Rights Commission, 17 May 2005³

Excerpt 4

“The Islamic Forum Europe (IFE) denounces today’s decision at the Bow Street Magistrates’ Court, which upheld the extradition of a British Muslim national, Babar Ahmad, to America.

As a British citizen, Ahmad should be tried in Britain if he has any charges to answer for. IFE considers it a gross affront to the due process of law that the US is able to seek Ahmad’s extradition under the Extradition Treaty of 2003, which allows American prosecutors to request such a move without presenting evidence in a British court.

IFE calls on the Home Secretary to review and block today’s unfair decision to extradite Babar Ahmad to the USA.”

Islamic Forum Europe, 17 May 2005⁴

Excerpt 5

“The Muslim Council of Britain deplores in the strongest terms today’s decision to uphold the US extradition request against the British national, Babar Ahmad.

This is a very sad day for all who value fairness and justice. It is unacceptable that under the Extradition Treaty 2003 there is no longer any need for the US government to prove to a UK court or even to the Home Secretary that there is a prima facie case against British citizens. Instead the US can now simply order that British citizens be plucked from our streets and thrown into US jails by making serious – and wholly unproven – allegations against them. If our government has any evidence of wrongdoing on the part of Babar Ahmad then he should be charged in this country and put on trial here. We call on the Home Secretary to renegotiate the Extradition Treaty 2003, so that it better protects our citizens from this manifest injustice. This draconian treaty has reduced the judiciary in the UK to a rubber stamping instrument in reference to allegations that do not require to be proved before it. This is a clear violation of all civilised norms of justice.”

Muslim Council of Britain, 18 May 2005⁵

³ www.ihrc.org.uk

⁴ www.islamicforumeurope.com

Excerpt 6

“British Muslims continue to watch with dismay as step by step, civil liberties are eroded in Britain. Last week’s announcement that Babar Ahmad, a British Citizen, could be handed over to the US authorities – knowing full well the treatment of prisoners in Guantanamo Bay, where Babar could end up – is not only a gross violation of an individual’s rights, but a slap in the face of British traditional notions of fair play.

‘This goes beyond the rights of one individual, it is about the erosion of our national values and how we have changed as a society post-9/11 in the most worrying of ways,’ stressed Dr. Munir Ahmed, President of the Islamic Society of Britain. He added, ‘If Babar has broken the law, he should be tried in this country; if not, he should be released without delay. We urge the Home Secretary to allow Babar to remain in his country and agree with the Muslim Council of Britain that the terms of the Extradition Treaty 2003 are imbalanced and should be re-negotiated.’

Currently under the treaty there is no requirement for the US authorities to present a prima facie case, although the UK must do so when seeking extraditions from the US.”

Islamic Society of Britain, 24 May 2005⁶

Excerpt 7

“IHRC notes with great concern the first anniversary of the imprisonment without charge of British political prisoner Babar Ahmad.

Babar has spent 365 days in prison now while he awaits the British government to decide whether to extradite him to the US where he is likely to face torture or even death. To date, not a single shred of evidence has been produced in court to indicate his guilt.

Furthermore to date, not a single police officer has been held responsible for the brutal life-threatening assault on Babar during his initial arrest in December 2003.

Babar’s case has caused enormous alienation of the British Muslim community as the manifest injustice he is experiencing is visible to all. A common question among our youth is, ‘Who will be the next Babar Ahmad?’

IHRC calls on the British government to either try Babar Ahmad in a British court of law or to release him immediately. The indefiniteness of his imprisonment is only increasing resentment.”

Islamic Human Rights Commission, 5 August 2005⁷

⁵ www.mcb.org.uk

⁶ www.isb.org.uk

⁷ www.ihrc.org.uk

Excerpt 8

“The Muslim Association of Britain expresses its dismay at the decision made by Home Secretary Charles Clarke to extradite Babar Ahmad to the US to face trial. Commenting on the news, Anas Altikriti of MAB said: ‘The handling of Babar’s case by the government proves the worst fears raised by the Muslim community that they can be specifically targeted by unjustified decisions.’

‘The US is claiming that Mr Ahmad supported acts of terrorism in Chechnya and Afghanistan. Has the British government lost faith in our courts not to try him in Britain? Many feel that in the absence of credible evidence that he has committed a crime under British law it seems our Home Secretary and the government are merely carrying out the orders of the US State Department.’

Mr Altikriti further stated: ‘There is a strong feeling that Babar is merely another victim of the US-led war on terror targeted at Muslims, and the US and its allies are proving they are perusing this war at the expense of basic human values, civil liberties and international laws.’

MAB demands Babar Ahmad should be tried in the UK; if found guilty then he should be punished according to the law, and if innocent then he should be given the ability to normally live the rest of his life with his family.”

Muslim Association of Britain, 16 November 2005⁸

Excerpt 9

“The Islamic Forum Europe has received news of Charles Clarke’s decision to extradite Babar Ahmed to the USA to face trial on alleged terrorism offences with extreme disappointment. IFE fears that the decision will only further alienate the Muslim Community, particularly the youth.

Babar Ahmad is a British citizen and is alleged to have committed an offence on British soil. Not only does it seem ludicrous that he is not being tried here in the UK but more importantly a blatant undermining of our legal system, which is second to none. It appears we have not learnt anything about US justice from the countless abuses of detainees in Guantanamo Bay. For our Government to allow this is nothing but abandoning and letting down one of its citizens. Worst still, under the Extradition Treaty 2003 the US does not have to provide any evidence or even proof of there being a prima facie case against Mr. Ahmad.

IFE deplores the situation where a British citizen will potentially be deported to a country with a record of torturing terror suspects without being tried in British courts. This decision will have devastating consequences for the British Muslim community. It will further act as a recruiting sergeant for the small number of extremists, whilst at the same time destroying an already fragile government relation with British Muslims. Once again young Muslims will see Muslim citizens of this country being treated as second class citizens without the basic human rights; this will only reinforce images of international injustices against Muslims. IFE supports fully Mr. Ahmad and his family who have said they plan to appeal the extradition order in the High Court.”

Islamic Forum Europe, 16 November 2005⁹

⁸ www.mabonline.net

⁹ www.islamicforumeurope.com

Excerpt 10

“The Islamic Human Rights Commission is saddened but unsurprised by the Home Secretary’s decision yesterday to extradite Babar Ahmad to the US.

The decision to extradite comes without a shred of evidence having been produced in a court of law. Babar Ahmad has already been incarcerated for 15 months without charge. The decision to extradite him without any evidence to a country notorious for its use of torture is an affront to justice.

This decision comes as no surprise to the British Muslim community. The dual track system of justice in operation in Britain today has meant that due process for British Muslims has become the exception rather than the rule.”

Islamic Human Rights Commission, 16 November 2005¹⁰

Excerpt 11

“The decision to extradite Babar Ahmad to the US, where due process of justice seems to have been abandoned in the War on Terror, is one that is as predictable as it is outrageous.

The predictability of the decision stems not from the fact that Babar has been found to have committed any crime, but from the fact that the government's strategy is to silence voices that speak out against the colonialist agenda of Western foreign policy, voices that speak up for the occupied and oppressed in Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir and Iraq.

Babar Ahmad is the latest casualty of the ever more unjust, oppressive and totalitarian policies used to silence dissent against Western foreign policy and we should all support the campaign to challenge his extradition. It is time people wake up to the reality that the anti-terror laws currently before Parliament will mean that many more people could be imprisoned simply for voicing support for legitimate resistance movements abroad.”

Hizb ut-Tahrir, 17 November 2005¹¹

¹⁰ www.ihrc.org.uk

¹¹ www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org/english

6. Statements by Leading Figures in the Muslim Community

Excerpt 1

“I am concerned and deeply worried by the Home Secretary Charles Clarke’s decision to extradite Babar Ahmad to the USA and fear that it could contribute to further alienation among some Muslim youths.

It is unacceptable that under the Extradition Treaty 2003 there is no longer any need for the US government to prove to a UK court or even to the Home Secretary that there is a prima facie case against British citizens. It is quite regrettable that the Home Secretary has agreed to this extradition request and I believe all Britons should call on him to renegotiate the Extradition Treaty 2003 so that it better protects our citizens – whether Muslims or non-Muslims - from this type of manifest injustice. If our government has any evidence of wrongdoing on the part of Babar Ahmad then surely he should be charged in this country and put on trial here.”

Inayat Bunglawala
Spokesperson of the Muslim Council of Britain¹²

Excerpt 2

“We welcome the proposal to study the effects on Britain's Muslim community on the case of Babar Ahmad. It is important to consider whether measures supposedly taken with the aim of countering terrorism are instead alienating a peaceful, law-abiding section of British society. This project has our whole-hearted support.”

Dr. Muhammad Abdul Bari
Chairman of East London Mosque and Deputy Secretary General of MCB¹³

Excerpt 3

“There is a widespread perception amongst young British Muslims that the attempt to extradite Babar Ahmad is a ‘stitch-up’. They are aware of Babar's allegations of extensive police cruelty during an earlier arrest, substantiated by independent medical assessments, and the extradition proceedings have buried that issue. Extraditing Babar will only increase the alienation and radicalisation of some young Muslims who will also lose their faith in the British justice system.”

Dr. Usama Hasan
Masjid At-Tawheed, East London¹⁴

¹² www.mcb.org.uk

¹³ www.eastlondonmosque.org.uk

¹⁴ www.masjidtawhid.com

Excerpt 4

“As a faith community, the demand for examples of success and progress in the UK is more important now to the UK Muslim community than ever to keep them motivated, inspired and engaged with society...

As a community Muslims in the UK seem to be in terminal decline, without actively pursuing a positive reformation of themselves and their contribution to society, it is difficult to see this situation improving. It is in these times that examples of success and progress in education, enterprise and well-being are needed to provide a ‘guiding light’ on the best approach towards a more engaged and prosperous community and society.

Justice must be done and also must be seen-to-be-done; many from within the Muslim community feel that the persecution of Muslims like Babar Ahmad, is symptomatic of an environment that is becoming increasingly hostile toward them. In the current climate where the help, support and sympathy of the Muslim community is being sought by the government, outstanding issues like this serve to undermine any confidence or trust building that could possibly be developed.

A more fair, tolerant and compassionate society is the aim of any right-minded citizen and the fate of Babar Ahmad will be an important factor in the development of the Muslim community's contribution to this society. A positive outcome will no doubt form the impression of a victory of compassion and reconciliation over fear and anxiety - the message will be clear: fear has no place in our future.

Justice is perhaps the most elusive and fragile institution to achieve and maintain in a civil society, it is important that in this ‘new world’ it does not become another casualty, but rather that faith, community and perseverance stand up to support it.”

***ITT & Purpose of Life Centre Trust Annual Report 2005 [Patron: Shaykh Khalid Yasin]
The Purpose of Life Centre, Sheffield¹⁵***

Excerpt 5

“This is a very sad day for all who value fairness and justice...

It is unacceptable that under the Extradition Treaty 2003 there is no longer any need for the US government to prove to a UK court or even to the Home Secretary that there is a prima facie case against British citizens...

[The US] can now simply order that British citizens be plucked from our streets and thrown into US jails by making serious -- and wholly unproven -- allegations against them.

This draconian treaty has reduced the judiciary in the UK to a rubber stamping instrument in reference to allegations that do not require to be proved before it...If our government has any evidence of wrongdoing on the part of Babar Ahmad then he should be charged in this country and put on trial here.”

¹⁵ www.islamicinvitationcentre.com

Sir Iqbal Sacranie, Chairman of the Muslim Council of Britain, 17 May 2005¹⁶

Excerpt 6

“In giving this judgment in favour of the case to extradite, Judge Workman has walked away from his chance to set right a grave injustice. His summation clearly showed the political nature of the case and exposed the hideous flaws in this legislation which would see a British citizen forcibly taken to a foreign land to face an unsubstantiated case and possibly, torture and even death.”

Anas Al-Tikriti, Spokesperson for the Muslim Association of Britain, 18 May 2005¹⁷

Excerpt 7

“I am writing on the eve of the court date regarding my brother Babar’s case to convey to him and his dear family that they are in the prayers of tens of thousands of Muslims insha-Allah and that they have the support of all justice loving people.

May Allah redress the injustice that has been done to him. Whatever happens we will not abandon him insha-Allah, and will continue to speak out against the appalling treatment he has had, as well as the distress and suffering his family have undergone.

Let no-one be complacent - whatever has happened to Babar is just one precedent of what lies in wait for any critic of this government - especially if they are Muslim. May Allah grant you victory and respite, Babar...”

Salma Yaqoob, Respect Party Councillor, Birmingham, 19 February 2006¹⁸

¹⁶ www.mcb.org.uk

¹⁷ www.mabonline.net

¹⁸ www.respectcoalition.org

7. Muslim and Ethnic Media Coverage of Babar Ahmad's Case

PUBLICATION	FORMAT	FREQUENCY OF COVERAGE
Islam Channel	Satellite TV channel	Every 2 weeks
Al-Arabiyyah	Arabic news channel	Every month
Al-Jazeera	Arab news channel	Every month
The Muslim Weekly	Weekly Muslim newspaper	Every 2 weeks
The Muslim News	Monthly Muslim newspaper	Every month
Daily Jang	Daily Urdu/English newspaper	Every month
Eastern Eye	Weekly Asian newspaper	Every 2 months
Reflections	Muslim student magazine	Every 2 months
Q-News	Muslim magazine	Every few months
FreeBabarAhmad.com	Babar Ahmad campaign website	Every day
Islamic Republic News Agency	Iranian news website	Every 2 weeks
Black Information Link	Interactive site for Black communities	Every 2-3 weeks
StopPoliticalTerror.com	Civil rights website	Every month
Cageprisoners.com	Islamic human rights website	Every month
Islamic Human Rights Commission (ihrc.org.uk)	Islamic campaign, research and advocacy organisation	Every 2 months
Muslim Public Affairs Committee (mpacuk.org)	Muslim media lobby website	Every 2 months
Independent Race and Refugee News Network	News network	Every 2 months

Note: Period covered 2004 - 2006

8. Excerpts from Online Web Logs and Discussion Forums

(Some quotes have been slightly edited for clarity.)

Excerpt 1

“I’m very disappointed that the British Government has engaged itself with the United States in an extradition case like this when no evidence is offered. For a British citizen to be taken over to the United States is an outrage. I think if it does take place then the British passport is not worth the paper it’s written on.”

From an interview with Moazzam Begg (Ex-Guantanamo Bay detainee)
<http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=8022>

Excerpt 2

“[Babar Ahmad’s case]...is the current ‘crusade’ against Muslims. May Allah free him from the hands of the kuffar [disbelievers].”

Abu Rahmah, 18 August 2004

Forum: ‘Send Messages of Support to the Family of Babar Ahmad’
<http://forums.cageprisoners.com/showthread.php?t=761&highlight=Babar+Ahmad>

Excerpt 3

“Glad to see this case getting more attention – it’s a real scandal.”

bat020, 19 November 2004

Web log ‘Daniel Brett’
http://www.danielbrett.com/2004_11_01_archive.html

Excerpt 4

“For how long will we let this go on!?...you can’t get away with making us an under class, you can’t get away with demonising us, criminalise us or play one Muslim against another. We Muslims must stand shoulder to shoulder.”

Nur al Ayn, 15 May 2005

Web log ‘Nur al Ayn’
<http://spaces.msn.com/bintmahmood/Blog/cns!1pKPoI-e2e7Dbd9TVezWGmMw!290.entry#commentcns!688FA03658312042!290>

Excerpt 5

“...we will not back track on opposing arbitrary terrorism legislation nor will we stop protesting the police’s brutal treatment of Babar.”

Umm Zakariya, 17 May 2005

Forum topic labelled ‘Babar Ahmad - JUDGE TO GIVE FINAL VERDICT ON 17 MAY 2005’

<http://forum.mpacuk.org/showthread.php?t=1214&highlight=Babar+Ahmad>

Excerpt 6

“I guess the notion of “innocent until proven guilty” does not apply to Muslims accused of terrorism.”

Anonymous, 16 November 2005

Web log ‘The Vol Abroad’

<http://thevolabroad.blogspot.com/2005/11/is-that-threat.html>

Excerpt 7

“...fighting for Babar Ahmad does not only mean against the government.”

‘Smiley’, 10 December 2005

Forum topic labelled ‘HSBC Closes Babar's Account and Joins War on Terror’

<http://forum.mpacuk.org/showthread.php?t=4452&highlight=Babar+Ahmad>

Excerpt 8

“British Passport for Muslims doesn’t mean anything the way they are treating us, if they can Extradite British Citizens to USA without NO evidence (see <http://www.freebabarahmad.com>) than what is there to be proud of ?”

‘Al Farooq’, 14 January 2006

Forum topic labelled ‘Are You Proud To Be British?’

<http://www.gawaher.com/index.php?showtopic=24267&st=0>

Excerpt 9

“Does British law protect you? Not any more!...Not surprising, since it [the extradition] amounts to legalised kidnapping...How can British citizens be denied the right to defend themselves in a British court ?”

Mailadmin, 5 November 2004

<http://www.cageprisoners.com/forums/archive/index.php/t-898.html>

Excerpt 10

“Rather than risking the embarrassment of setting him free, Babar will be sent to the US, who can hide him in any one of their secret dungeons without needing to follow International Law...What has happened to Britain’s policy, not to extradite suspects to countries which practise torture ?”

Shagrid, 16 November 2005

<http://www.gawaher.com/index.php?showtopic=21804&hl=Babar+Ahmad>

Excerpt 11

“The allegations being made...are just...a load of rubbish, stupid government.”

Lateral, 1 December 2004

<http://www.gawaher.com/index.php?showtopic=3264&hl=Babar+Ahmad>

Excerpt 12

“May God grant them [Muslim prisoners including Babar] justice and repeal the draconian laws that have swept across Europe.”

Greek-Cypriot, 1 December 2004

<http://www.gawaher.com/index.php?showtopic=3264&hl=Babar+Ahmed>

Excerpt 13

“There is only a facade of human rights and freedom. Human rights & freedom etc., etc. are only reserved for a ‘certain’ section of society. And if you don’t belong to that section of society, then your human rights go out the window. Ask Babar Ahmad.”

Anti Capitalist, 1 January 2006

<http://forum.mpacuk.org/showthread.php?t=5282&highlight=Babar+Ahmed>

Excerpt 14

“This whole charade has focused on our brother Ahmad, locked up and soon to be given as lamb to the slaughter to the wolves and leopards.”

Idriss, 19 May 2005

<http://al-ghurabah.blogspot.com/2005/05/release-him.html>

Excerpt 15

“... read more about Babar Ahmad - a British citizen in Belmarsh prison without having a fair trial because the US thinks he is a terrorist. Is this about the British values of ‘fair play’? One wonders quite why anyone would want to come to Britain today...”

Snowball, 2 August 2005

<http://histomatist.blogspot.com/2005/08/tristram-hunt-what.html>

Excerpt 16

“What a beautiful example of justice the British government has used to exemplify its true nature. How? Well let’s see, first, you lock someone up for more than year in a maximum security prison, obviously only based on the most suspect and flimsiest evidence you can find. Then after you realise that your own courts won’t accept such uselessly weak evidence, you send them off to a country that on the basis of no evidence would be more than happy to put you in a 9ft cage. But that’s not a problem, because even though that country has a wonderful track record of abuse, torture and ‘extraordinary renditions’ – it also has a magical way of making everyone believe that its way of life is the beacon and saviour for the world.”

Afs-M, November 2005

<http://islamicpolitik.com/2005/11/%e2%80%9cthis-decision-should-only-come-as-a-surprise-to-those-who-thought-that-there-was-still-justice-for-muslims-in-britain%e2%80%9d.html>

Excerpt 17

“[In response to Babar Ahmad’s treatment by the police]...‘brave police working hard’, does anyone still believe that?”

Dr Sahib Mustaqim, 7 November 2005

<http://flyingimam.blogspot.com/2005/11/british-police-display-racist.html>

Excerpt 18

“As I listened to Babar Ahmad's Father speak yesterday I felt ashamed to live in a country where good people could be treated so unjustly... none of us...live in the land of the free.”

Mother Damnable, 10 December 2005

<http://motherdamnable.blogspot.com/2005/12/we-are-all-babar-ahmed.html>

Excerpt 19

“Contrast this with the case of Babar Ahmad. Babar was seized in 2003 under anti-terrorism legislation and brutally assaulted by police...Extradition Act 2003 which means that extradition requests from the US can be fast-tracked without the need for safe-guards or evidence. There is a right to appeal before the High Court and subsequently to the House of Lords, but at no time are the US authorities being asked to submit any evidence. There is no money in standing up for human rights, and British judges are not likely to conclude that extradition warrants by the inventors of Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib could ever be politically motivated. I suppose you get what you pay for which is not the same as justice. It’s called the Rule of Law.”

Dr Sahib Mustaqim, 26 December 2005

<http://flyingimam.blogspot.com/2005/12/double-standards-as-usual.html>

Excerpt 20

“The story begins in December 2003, when, in the early hours of the morning, armed police forced their way into his house, hurling abuse, and physically brutalising him as he was arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Act. The now famous incident where he was knelt into the prostration position and asked: ‘Where is your god now’, reflects the true nature of those who partook in his arrest...

We owe it to Babar to support his cause. Those who know him are convinced of his innocence. One only needs to read the messages of support given by his work colleagues and friends...

Yet even if you don’t know Babar, it is only right that if he committed crimes while resident in the UK, that he be tried here; even aside from the unjust treatment of Muslim suspects in the US. This is all that his defence team is asking for; that he be tried fairly in the UK, where he can be assured of fair judicial process and an objective ruling....

If you run a website or blog, please link to this page, and to the Free Babar Ahmad website. Even if he does get extradited, it is only fair that people witness the injustice of this case, and do what they can.”

<http://www.saracen.nu/free-babar-ahmad/>

9. Poetry and Music by the Public about Babar Ahmad's Case

1. 'Forgive Us Babar Ahmad' Poem

The following poem was written and sent to Babar anonymously by a member of the public. The verses were later illustrated in a highly moving flash video which is accessible from the StopPoliticalTerror.com website. It has been shown at various Muslim events and lectures to raise awareness and mobilise support for Babar's case.

Forgive Us Babar Ahmad

I knew you but I didn't help you,
I heard your plea but I didn't respond to it,
My wealth didn't help you, my business didn't help you,
My degree didn't help you, my career didn't help you,
Forgive me Babar Ahmad.

I saw your injuries but they didn't move me,
I felt your blood but it didn't touch me,
My hands didn't help you, my limbs didn't help you,
My tongue didn't help you, my speech didn't help you,
Forgive me Babar Ahmad.

I claimed to be your brother but I distanced myself from you,
I claimed to be your sister but I pretended not to know you,
My beard didn't help you, my muscles didn't help you,
My hijab didn't help you, my tears didn't help you,
Forgive me Babar Ahmad.

I saw you in shackles but I slept in peace that night,
I read your words but forgot them moments later,
My brain didn't help you, my knowledge didn't help you,
My skills didn't help you, my talents didn't help you,
Forgive me Babar Ahmad.

We saw them take you away but we remained silent,
We let them torture you and we never raised a finger,
Our titles didn't help you, our slogans didn't help you,
Our organisations didn't help you, our conferences didn't help you,
Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

We watched them slander you but we never defended you,
We let them ridicule you and we were not there for you,
Our scholars didn't help you, our mosques didn't help you,
Our leaders didn't help you, our cowardly 'men' didn't help you,
Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

You would never have lost had we practised our deen,
You would never have suffered had we implemented the Quran,
You would never have been kidnapped had we been united,
You would never have been tortured had we feared none save Allah,
Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

You would be at home with your family had we stood up for you,
You would be praying in our mosques had we not turned them into spying centres,
You would not be caged like an animal had we not abandoned you,
You would not be going to America had we not sold you out,
Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

When we all stand before the King of Kings,
When He grabs us and asks us why we didn't help you,
When you confront us to hear our excuses,
When we are abandoned like we abandoned you ...
Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

From Britain's Muslims
May 2005

2. Description of the Free Babar Ahmad Flash Movie¹⁹

The video begins with a backdrop of the night sky, with sounds and images of bursts of lightning. Prison bars and chains emerge on the screen. This is followed by the 'Free Babar Ahmad' campaign logo.

A short and arresting summary of Babar's arrest in 2003 and 2004 appears in white writing:

December 2003:

- Babar Ahmad was arrested by Anti-Terrorist police and released after 6 days without charge
- During his arrest he was beaten up severely by the Anti-Terrorist police in front of his wife at home.

August 2004:

- Babar was re-arrested on an extradition request from the United States
- He is denied the right to challenge the 'evidence' against him in a British Court
- Babar Ahmad's case is a representation of many other nameless prisoners in the UK.

[The original text of the poem appears on the screen, these are highlighted in bold. The accompanying images in the video are described in italics.]

“Forgive Us Babar Ahmad – a poem sent to Babar Ahmad at Woodhill Prison anonymously”

I knew you but I didn't help you,

I heard your plea but I didn't respond to it,

A school photograph of Babar when he was young, alongside an image of a man covering up his ears with his hands.

My wealth didn't help you, my business didn't help you,

My degree didn't help you, my career didn't help you,

Images of piles of pound coins, another showing English bank notes, followed by an image of a graduation hat and scroll.

Forgive me Babar Ahmad.

Pictures of the front entrance of HMP Woodhill Prison, followed by video footage of Babar being escorted to a court hearing, made to wear a lurid green and yellow jumpsuit.

I saw your injuries but they didn't move me,

Three of the shocking medical photographs taken after Babar had been severely beaten by the police during his arrest in 2003. One shows the injuries to his arm, another shows the injuries to his back, the final one shows the many injuries to his face and ear.

I felt your blood but it didn't touch me,

Shocking pictures of Babar's injury to his arm and elbow, and a blood splattered sheet.

My hands didn't help you, my limbs didn't help you,

My tongue didn't help you, my speech didn't help you,

Images of Muslims giving public lectures.

Forgive me Babar Ahmad.

¹⁹ Source: StopPoliticalTerror.com

I claimed to be your brother but I distanced myself from you,

Images of two people shaking hands, and two young Muslim boys embracing one another, followed by a lonely desolate figure sitting with his head in his hands.

I claimed to be your sister but I pretended not to know you,

Photograph of a row of Muslim women in hijab sitting in an audience.

My beard didn't help you, my muscles didn't help you,

Pictures of a bearded man, and a muscled arm next to some weights.

My hijab didn't help you, my tears didn't help you,

An image of a woman wearing the hijab, alongside a tear drop.

Forgive me Babar Ahmad.

A black and white photograph of Babar when he was a baby.

I saw you in shackles but I slept in peace that night,

A repeat of the picture of Babar being escorted to court, shackled and wearing a lurid green and yellow jump suit, followed by a picture of a man sleeping, and the front of a safe and comfortable house.

I read your words but forgot them moments later,

A picture of a man writing words on a piece of paper, followed by paper burning on a fire.

My brain didn't help you, my knowledge didn't help you,

A picture of a tall pile of books, joined by another picture of a full book case.

My skills didn't help you, my talents didn't help you,

Fingers typing on a computer keyboard, alongside a picture of a medical stethoscope.

Forgive me Babar Ahmad.

We saw them take you away but we remained silent,

A repeat of the picture of Babar with his head down being escorted to court, wearing a lurid jumpsuit and shackled.

We let them torture you and we never raised a finger,

More disturbing photographs of Babar's serious injuries after his arrest in December 2003.

Our titles didn't help you, our slogans didn't help you,

Our organisations didn't help you, our conferences didn't help you,

Pictures of Islamic conferences and audiences.

Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

A picture of Babar's father, Ashfaq Ahmad.

We watched them slander you but we never defended you,

Images of George W. Bush and his spokesperson.

We let them ridicule you and we were not there for you,

A picture of an armed police officer, followed by a Muslim man in the prostration position during prayer, and the words "WHERE IS YOUR GOD NOW?" in bright red text flash across the screen (alluding to the circumstances of Babar's arrest).

Our scholars didn't help you, our mosques didn't help you,

A picture of an Islamic library, alongside a picture of a domed mosque.

Our leaders didn't help you, our cowardly 'men' didn't help you,

A row of Muslim men, dressed in traditional Muslim robes, standing in prayer.

Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

You would never have lost had we practised our deen,

A page from the BBC News website, dated 17 May 2005, the day which Judge Timothy Workman ruled that Babar could be extradited to the US pending on the Home Secretary's decision. The webpage pictures Babar being taken to court in the jumpsuit with the following headlines:

You would never have suffered had we implemented the Quran,

Image of the Quran, alongside a photograph of one of Babar's injuries inflicted by the police during his arrest in 2003.

You would never have been kidnapped had we been united,

Three images: A man's hands in hand-cuffs, a photograph of the entrance to South Kensington Tube Station in London and a photograph of a police van.

You would never have been tortured had we feared none save Allah,

Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

You would be at home with your family had we stood up for you,

A photograph of Babar's father, Ashfaq, giving a speech at a rally for Babar Ahmad, alongside a photograph of Babar's young niece holding a placard saying 'Free our Uncle Babar'.

You would be praying in our mosques had we not turned them into spying centres,

A picture of men bowing in prayer in a mosque, followed by men sitting in prayer behind a caged fence.

You would not be caged like an animal had we not abandoned you,

Pictures from the outside of hands gripping on to prison bars.

You would not be going to America had we not sold you out,

An image of an aeroplane, alongside a photograph showing rows of prisoners with black sacks over their heads, their hands and feet shackled, watched by an armed US soldier.

Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

When we all stand before the King of Kings,

An image of the millions of people attending the Hajj pilgrimage, signifying the gathering of people for the Day of Judgement.

When He grabs us and asks us why we didn't help you,

An image of the earth, alongside the Arabic text for 'Allah'.

When you confront us to hear our excuses,

An image of a finger pointing towards the screen and the viewer.

When we are abandoned like we abandoned you ...

Forgive us Babar Ahmad.

Final pictures of Babar, wearing a lurid green and yellow jumpsuit, shackled as he is escorted to a court hearing, alongside images of a prisoner in Guantanamo Bay, shackled and wearing an orange jumpsuit behind a cage-fence.

From Britain's Muslims.

Ends with the plea, "Join the Campaign", with an image of a white campaign balloon printed with the 'Free Babar Ahmad' logo, and the website address: www.freebabarahmad.com.

3. 'Free Babar Ahmad' Rap by The Truth Commission

In the spring of 2005 a rap video was produced by members of the young Muslim community in support of Babar Ahmad's case. The rap video has frequently appeared on various websites and satellite television channels. The audio version of the rap has been widely distributed on the internet, audio cassette and CD and it is widely listened to.

VERSE ONE

Truth and lies come to the fore
And the hearts of men cannot ignore
Can the righteous see and know for sure
Through the mists of peace and the fog of war?
Now just because we keep saying 'Free Iraq and Palestine'
You wanna grab a pal of mine, lock up and send to swine
I just had to write a rhyme
And export my frame of mind
We need to seize the time
People, read between the lines
Now what do I need to do to make you see that
You must set Babar free
You need to read the black and white
Where's the civil right?
One Muslim's fight against the might
Of Pharaohs minions raids in the night
Alight the whole world with revolutionary sight
And recite the words that provide the solution tonight!
FREE BABAR AHMAD!

[CHORUS]

Democracy died today
The minute they lock anyone away
Who cares for the ones who've gone away
I pray to Allah we don't go astray
Free Babar Ahmad...Free Babar Ahmad...
[We want justice, that's what we want...justice that's what we deserve]

VERSE TWO

Orwell turns in his grave
Do we learn from the mistakes
We make when they take away our brothers cos they hate
All those who supplicate...
Then some say they moderate
And we can't fight these snakes of the United States
Who take away our rights so they can extradite
A citizen of Britain now the law gets rewritten
I insist you tell me who's the real terrorist?
Because a brother with a beard isn't one to be feared
When a lying politician Tony Blair is revered
By those of weak faith who bow down before the STATES

Now we must demonstrate before the hour comes... too late
When you stand in front of God then you can't fabricate
Excuses... of why 95% are useless
And we all stand still and watch them do their Abu Ghraib abuses
And there's brothers in Belmarsh, Guantanamo, Diego Garcia
Don't let some yankee doodle take our brother away from here...

4. Description of the ‘Free Babar Ahmad’ Rap video²⁰

[The original words of the rap are written here in bold, with the accompanying images in the video described in italics.]

The video begins with a blank black screen onto which appears in white:
Free Babar Ahmad by the Truth Commission

Sound of a heart beat can be heard
Photo emerges of Hazel Blears, smiling, with the caption across the screen:
“Hazel Blears: Minister responsible for ‘counter-terrorism’ ”

Followed by a quote from her: “Muslims will have to accept as a reality that they will be stopped and searched by the police more often than the rest of the public”

Image of a policeman in body armour bursting through a door, bearing a rifle
Red text appears: BRITAIN POLICE STATE 2005

Background music and vocals in emotive Arabic begins

A montage of photos of smiling young Muslim boys and girls engaged in daily activities: Photos show (in clockwise) a large group of young girls in line at school in their headscarves; a group of girls, some wearing headscarves, some without, proudly presenting their school display about the Muslim month of Ramadan; a teenage boy dressed in typical youth dress; young black Muslim children, sitting in their classroom dressed in green uniforms and caps; young pupils on the computers at school; Muslim boys and girls playing in the school playground; a young girl reading short chapters from the Qur’an; girls wearing headscarves, studying in class.

The following words, in white text, appear separately on screen over the montage:
“WE – ARE – ALL – BABAR – AHMAD”

Truth and lies come to the fore And the hearts of men cannot ignore

A picture of US President George Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair superimposed upon a scene of Baghdad under a smoke-filled sky. The words: “WMD – WORDS OF MASS DECEPTION” are written across the screen.

A photo of the Iraqi desert, a US tanks looms in the background, with soldiers bearing guns. In the foreground, four Iraqi men sit on the ground pleading with two armed US soldiers standing in front of them and ordering them to move.

Can the righteous see and know for sure Through the mists of peace and the fog of war?

The screen is split into three vertical columns; a different image appears in each. The first is of a severely injured child, whose neck and torso is burnt and covered in blood, the second is of the statue of Saddam Hussein being toppled, the third is of an anti-war demonstration depicting the huge crowds and their anti-war banners.

²⁰ The Free Babar Ahmad Rap video can be downloaded from www.stoppoliticalterror.com

The three columns on screen are filled with one image showing the inside of a US military plane filled with the coffins of US soldiers killed in Iraq, each draped with a US flag.

The image is replaced by one of a US tank driving through the ruins of an Iraqi street; followed by anti-war demonstrators holding a banner, with the words: “WE SUPPORT OUR TROOPS WHEN THEY SHOOT THEIR OFFICERS”.

Now just because we keep saying ‘Free Iraq and Palestine’

The screen is filled with a banner, held by many demonstrators, protesting against the war in Iraq. Followed by an image of graffiti on a wall which depicts ‘PALESTINE’ in large black letters.

You wanna grab a pal of mine, lock up and send to swine

I just had to write a rhyme

And export my frame of mind

Video footage of Babar Ahmad, handcuffed, head down and wearing a lurid green and yellow jump suit, being escorted to court.

We need to seize the time

People, read between the lines

A montage of newspapers, with headlines appearing one by one on screen: “PLOT TO KILL BLAIR”, “FACTORY OF DEATH”, “POISON GANG ON THE LOOSE”, “Terror raid on poison factory”, “WAR: Bush vows to crush a new deadly enemy”. Large black text “ISLAMOPHOBIC MEDIA” appears on screen over the newspaper images.

Now what do I need to do to make you see that

You must set Babar free

The screen is split into six boxes; within them the video footage of Babar Ahmad being taken to court is replayed. Each box then shows photos of Babar when he was young.

You need to read the black and white

Where’s the civil right?

A photo from an anti-war demonstration, showing faces of young Muslims in the crowd.

A video of many lambs jumping out of a truck, having been transported to the slaughter house; followed by a photo of a shackled Guantanamo Bay detainee, in a lurid orange jumpsuit, being escorted by two US guards behind barbed wire fences – the camera zooms in to focus on the shackles on the detainee’s wrists.

One Muslim’s fight against the might

Of Pharaohs minions raids in the night

A video of President George Bush giving a televised statement; the image of a skull is photo-imposed onto his face while he continues to speak.

Alight the whole world with revolutionary sight

And recite the words that provide the solution tonight!

Image of an anti-war demonstration; the camera zooms out from a banner reading: “SHOW US SOME REAL EVIDENCE”, until the entire photo disappears into the image of the earth visible from space.

A photo of a protest to free Babar Ahmad outside Bow Street Magistrates’ Court, showing a young English Muslim boy holding the microphone as he reads out a speech for Babar Ahmad.

He is standing next to a STOP POLITICAL TERROR banner. The words from the rap appear across the screen: “AND – RECITE – THE – WORDS – THAT – PROVIDE – THE – SOLUTION – TONIGHT”.

[CHORUS]

FREE BABAR AHMAD!

Video footage of one of the ‘Free Babar Ahmad’ protests outside his court hearings, showing the many banners supporting him and condemning the British and US governments. The camera focuses on the placard which reads “FREE BABAR AHMAD”.

**Democracy died today
The minute they lock anyone away
Who cares for the ones who’ve gone away?
I pray to Allah we don’t go astray**

A photo of one of Babar’s injuries after his first arrest in December 2003 is shown (shows severe bruising and swelling all over his arm) with the caption: BRITISH JUSTICE appearing across the screen in red letters.

The screen is split up into six boxes, each box is filled with the shocking and disturbing photos of Babar’s injuries to different parts of the body sustained during the arrest; to the shoulder, to the arms, ear and face. The words “BRITISH JUSTICE” remain on screen throughout the images.

Free Babar Ahmad...Free Babar Ahmad...

[We want justice that’s what we want...justice that’s what we deserve]

An image of the US flag raised aloft, with the words written across the screen: “IN PREPARATION FOR...US JUSTICE” followed by a photo of a prisoner in Abu Ghraib, on the floor, being abused by a US soldier.

**Democracy died today
The minute they lock anyone away
Who cares for the ones who’ve gone away?
I pray to Allah we don’t go astray**

More photos are shown: a US guard appears to be punching a prisoner; a US guard stands on top of a prisoner lying on the floor; the famous photo of the hooded prisoner standing with electric wires attached to his outstretched arms. This is inter-changed numerous times with an image of the British statue bearing the scales and sword of justice. The words US JUSTICE remain on screen throughout these images.

Free Babar Ahmad...Free Babar Ahmad...

[We want justice that’s what we want...justice that’s what we deserve]

Video footage of a Guantanamo Bay detainee, followed by a spotlight gradually highlighting the words “FREE BABAR AHMAD” written on prison walls (computer-generated image).

A photo of the façade of the Royal Courts of Justice; the word ‘Justice’ is converted to ‘InJustice’.

[While the chorus is repeated]

The screen is divided into three columns of footage from a ‘Free Babar Ahmad’ protest; one shows the crowds of supporters; another shows a police man standing on guard and the many placards being held; the last shows Babar’s father Ashfaq Ahmad speaking at the rally.

[VERSE TWO]

Orwell turns in his grave

Do we learn from the mistakes?

Video footage of armed riot police running through a corridor; followed by footage of a dark hall filled with people watching a man on a large screen announcing “BEWARE OF ALL MUSLIMS,” i.e. indicating that the public are being influenced by government scare-mongering into viewing Muslims as enemies.

We make when they take away our brothers cos they hate

All those who supplicate...

Footage of US guards carrying Guantanamo detainees on stretchers, and detainees in shackles under the shadow of armed watch-towers.

Then some say they moderate

And we can't fight these snakes of the United States

Image of the statue with the sword and scales of justice; gradually dwarfed by the background image of 'Mr. America' dressed in US paraphernalia pointing his finger at the screen and the words appearing: “We own your country”.

Who take away our rights so they can extradite

Footage of Babar Ahmad being escorted to a court hearing, followed by footage of a Guantanamo Bay detainee being escorted by US guards.

A citizen of Britain now the law gets rewritten

An image of the Houses of Parliament and the River Thames, immediately followed by a detainee being attacked by a police dog.

I insist you tell me who's the real terrorist?

A 'WANTED' poster of President George Bush, with the text: “WANTED for crimes against humanity and the planet. Beware if you meet this man! He suffers from delusions that he is the democratically elected President of the USA.”

The screen zooms into a BBC News web-page quoting thousands more civilian deaths in Iraq.

Because a brother with a beard isn't one to be feared

An image of a bearded man; followed by image of the front cover of 'World Press Review' which asks: “Fear of Islam: Is it a real world menace or just the latest 'evil empire?'”

Cartoon image of Mr. America arm in arm with Britannia, marching through war-stricken lands with the heading: “America and Britain reconquering the world!”

When a lying politician Tony Blair is revered

By those of weak faith who bow down before the STATES

Video footage of Tony Blair giving a televised statement; a mask of the devil is photo-imposed onto his face while he speaks, followed by soldiers carrying US flags, and footage of a person walking a poodle.

Now we must demonstrate before the hour comes... too late

Video footage of crowds of people being gathered up, with the text: “US CONCENTRATION CAMPS FOR MUSLIMS” written across the screen.

When you stand in front of God then you can't fabricate

Footage of Muslims in the Islamic Hajj pilgrimage in Mecca.

Excuses... of why 95% are useless

And we all stand still and watch them do their Abu Ghraib abuses

Footage of a black prisoner lying on the floor being walked on by a guard.

And there's brothers in Belmarsh, Guantanamo, Diego Garcia

The screen depicts three images of prisons and detention camps: Belmarsh; Guantanamo Bay and Diego Garcia.

Don't let some yankee doodle take our brother away from here...

Image of a detainee dressed in the orange jumpsuit of Guantanamo Bay, crouching on the floor of a cell, with the words: "Locked up in solitary confinement 23 hours a day – for speaking out against oppression."

[CHORUS]

Democracy died today

The minute they lock anyone away

Who cares for the ones who've gone away?

I pray to Allah we don't go astray

Text appears on screen with accompanying images:

"Now anyone who speaks out for the oppressed ...

IN IRAQ (image of a Muslim girl wearing a headscarf at an anti-war demonstration carrying placards)

IN CHECHNYA (image of dead bodies, covered and lying in a truck, followed by people praying against a backdrop of burning villages)

KOSOVO (a young child is handed over barbed wire to his family on the other side),

TARTASTAN (rows of people in prayer)

XINJIANG

BOSNIA (rows of gravestones)

MYANMAR, THAILAND, PALESTINE, KASHMIR, MINDANO (various images of injured people, and war zones)

...Could be arrested and labelled a terrorist" (photo of an elderly English man and Asian Muslim man exchanging flyers at an anti-war demonstration).

"...Just like our brother Babar" (footage of Babar being escorted to a court hearing).

Free Babar Ahmad...Free Babar Ahmad...

[We want justice that's what we want...justice that's what we deserve]

The video ends with footage from protests in the campaign to free Babar Ahmad, showing the crowds of people, the placards writing, "Justice for Babar" and "Free Babar Ahmad".

Finally a summary of the case appears on screen while the final two lines of the chorus are repeated:

“BABAR AHMAD

02-Dec-03

Arrested and assaulted by police officers in London, UK who amongst other acts of brutality forced him into the Muslim prayer position of prostration and said, ‘Where is your god now? You are in prayer,’ whilst mocking and laughing.

08-Dec-03

Released without charge. Files complaint against police assault to Police Complaints Authority.

05-Aug-2004

Re-arrested on Extradition Warrant from the US...The US has offered no evidence of any value and Babar has not been allowed to see any of evidence allegedly against him.

If extradited, Babar faces life sentence in the US, execution or he could be sent to another country to be tortured on behalf of the US Government.

This will mean that any citizen Muslim or non-Muslim who is critical of US policy or who the authorities wish to silence could be removed from Britain by the US. This could mean the end of the so-called Democracy which America and Britain claim to be bringing to the rest of the world.

Today it is Babar Ahmad.

Tomorrow it will be you.

NOW WE ARE ALL BABAR AHMAD.”

The music fades out until only the words “Free Babar Ahmad” can be heard in the background...

10. Conclusion

The evidence cited in this report clearly demonstrates a higher than average level of interest, and indeed anger, about Babar Ahmad's case among the Muslim community in Britain. The Muslim community have, in the past, been notoriously difficult to mobilise over political issues, preferring to express their anger over purely religious issues such as the Salman Rushdie affair.

Wars in so-called Muslim countries, ranging from the first Gulf War in 1991, wars in Bosnia and Chechnya in the early 1990s, and the on-going conflicts in Palestine and Kashmir, although exacerbating tension, frustration and anger among British Muslims, had until recently failed to mobilise them into political action in Britain. Meanwhile, the plight of Muslim 'political prisoners' at home or abroad, perceived as extremists and, to an extent, deserving of their fate, received virtually no attention from their Muslim counterparts in Britain and the West.

Even after the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and the subsequent US invasion of Afghanistan, the increasingly politicised Muslim community in Britain remained divided about how best to respond to the challenges facing them. In the same vein, anti-terror legislation of 2000, which was updated after 9/11 and vehemently opposed by human rights organisations, was passed without scrutiny from the Muslim community. In the aftermath of 9/11 there was an upsurge of Muslim arrests in Britain, beginning with the wrongful arrest of Algerian pilot Lotfi Raissi, wanted on extradition charges from the US and later cleared by the British courts.

Yet despite this knee-jerk rounding up of Muslim suspects, the wider Muslim community were conspicuous in their silence. There were no collective or structured campaigns to support the hundreds of detained suspects prior to Babar Ahmad's arrest in 2003; any Muslim anxiety and opposition to the Government's policies and actions of the police remained scattered and subdued. This can be explained with three reasons: some members of the community deliberately sought to distance themselves from detainees who they perceived as 'trouble-makers'; others were cowed by the climate of fear despite their growing anger and frustration; the majority were ignorant of the arrests and had underestimated the impact that the 'war on terror' and new legislation was having on Muslims in Britain.

Babar Ahmad's first arrest in December 2003, and his re-arrest in August 2004 did much to turn around this apathy and fear of speaking out in the Muslim community. The first arrest occurred at a time when relations between British Muslims and the Government were already tense following the Coalition's invasion of Iraq in March earlier in 2003. This had already sent yet more signals to the Muslim community that the 'war on terror' was in fact a war on Islam and Muslims.

However, the impact of Babar's arrest was markedly different. Babar was born and raised in the UK and his family's background closely resembles that of most of the immigrant Muslim communities in Britain. Babar spoke English, was educated at a private school and at one of the country's top universities; he was a law-abiding citizen and worked hard as an IT analyst. Babar was married, had a loving family and was well-known in his community. Babar was one of the many young and aspiring second-generation Muslims in this country who believe Britain is their home, who have worked hard against all obstacles to live a normal life and to contribute to British society. British Muslims could relate to Babar and his family; therefore his arrest was all the more shocking and upsetting for the Muslim community.

In particular, the circumstances of Babar's first arrest, the humiliating mockery of his and of all Muslims' faith in God and observance of prayer, the disregard for a Muslim's honour when they exposed Babar to 'search' him, the cold insensitivity shown towards Babar's wife as she watched her husband savagely beaten, and the unnecessary force and brutality meted out to Babar, infuriated and alienated British Muslims in a way that no other case had done in the past. The widespread anger felt on this occasion can partly be explained by the rapid publicity of Babar's ordeal and the fast and far-reaching circulation of photographs of Babar's terrible injuries at the hands of the Anti-Terrorist police.

While police corruption and discrimination in the US had been well-documented after the Rodney King episode in the early 1990s, such police brutality against Muslims was not previously known in the UK. Despite their many flaws and the allegations of institutional racism after the Macpherson Inquiry into the Stephen Lawrence case in 1993, even the most cynical of Britain's Muslims had not expected the police to be capable of what amounted to torture.

The effect on Britain's Muslim youth has been especially profound. Many of Britain's Muslims long-suspected the 'war on terror' to be a war against Muslims; in the eyes of the angry, disaffected Muslim youth, Babar's arrest confirmed that belief. The infamous words of the police during the arrest – "*Where is your God now ??*" – were clearly reminiscent of previous accounts of Muslim persecution: similar words were used by the Serbian army when abusing Bosnian Muslims, while many torture victims in the Middle East have recalled the same words being used by their torturers.

For many British Muslims, Babar's arrest created a clear link between the current political climate in Britain and the 'global struggle' faced by Muslims around the world. When one of the policemen who had been responsible for Babar's severe injuries was cleared of any wrong-doing by a tribunal in April 2005, and was even described as 'brave' and worthy of praise, it fuelled the growing belief that 'the Establishment' were colluding against Muslims and that there was no real justice for Muslims anymore.

British Muslims' suspicions of foul play and injustice have been compounded by the apparent futility of their peaceful, democratic and lawful campaign for Babar's release. They have held demonstrations, they have lobbied their MPs, they have signed petitions, they have raised awareness in the media, they have voiced their anger to the British Government and have argued their case in a democratic way, and yet none of this appears to have made a difference. Brief optimism when the belligerent David Blunkett was replaced by Charles Clarke has now given way to greater frustration and mistrust of the British Government.

The folly and unfairness of the 2003 UK-US Extradition Treaty, which makes British citizens subservient to US law, has confirmed without doubt in the minds of British Muslims that this government has turned Britain into a second-class state and a 'pillion passenger' in America's war on terror. British Muslims are outraged that a law-abiding citizen of the UK and a valued member of their community can be detained without charge for nearly two years, abused and tortured, and possibly extradited to a country that is proven to have no regard for the human rights of Muslim 'suspects', despite the fact that no evidence has been presented to this day, all for the sake of a one-sided alliance. This, along with Britain's foreign policy, has meant that the current government has irrevocably lost the trust of British Muslims.

With its treatment of Babar Ahmad, and his detention without trial or evidence for nearly two years, it appears that the British Government has only succeeded in fuelling the ranks of extremists and making a 'martyr' out of Babar Ahmad. This effect has not been repeated in the

cases of other Muslim ‘terror’ suspects who have been subjected to a fair and open trial under the due process of British law. Judging by the increasing level of public interest in this case it would be dangerously naïve to assume that this matter will quietly fade away if Babar Ahmad is eventually extradited to the US

The messages of support received by the Free Babar Ahmad campaign demonstrate the extent to which this case has already radicalised a new generation of British Muslims. They describe how injustice against Babar is an injustice to all Muslims and they speak of his possible extradition as being the “straw that breaks the camel’s back”. The fury, bitterness and ominous threats heaped on the British Government and western establishments leave no doubt that British Muslims are being pushed towards extremism by the Government’s failure to listen to their pleas and their blind persistence with an unjust and dangerous extradition policy.

Appendix A: Timeline of Events of Babar Ahmad's Case

02 December 2003	Babar Ahmad arrested and assaulted by anti-terrorist police officers in London, UK
08 December 2003	Babar Ahmad released without charge. Files formal complaint about police assault
16 December 2003	Babar Ahmad examined by A&E Consultant Mr. Manolis Gavalas
15 July 2004	Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) refers case to Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for possible criminal charges against the police officers
16 July 2004	CPS advises Anti-Terrorist Branch that there is insufficient evidence to charge Babar Ahmad with any criminal offence under UK law based on material seized in December 2003
05 August 2004	Babar Ahmad re-arrested upon extradition request from the US and taken into custody
10 September 2004	CPS announces decision that they felt there was insufficient evidence to prosecute the police officers who assaulted Babar Ahmad
14 January 2005	IPCC directs Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to conduct a disciplinary tribunal against 34 year old James Bowen for assaulting Babar Ahmad
13 April 2005	Police Misconduct Tribunal at Woolwich Crown Court dismisses the case against PC James Bowen and praises him for his "bravery" and "professionalism"
05 May 2005	Babar Ahmad stands for MP from prison for the Peace and Progress Party in Brent North winning 2% of the votes (685 votes)
17 May 2005	Senior District Judge Timothy Workman at Bow Street Magistrates' Court approves Babar Ahmad's extradition to the US and refers the case to the Home Secretary for a final decision
04 July 2005	On US Independence Day over 100 human rights activists, lawyers and journalists join MPs and Lords from all parties at the House of Commons to demand an end to unjust UK-US extradition arrangements
20 October 2005	Babar Ahmad's MP, Sadiq Khan, presents a petition of over 18,000 signatures to Home Secretary Charles Clarke demanding a halt to Babar Ahmad's extradition
16 November 2005	Home Secretary Charles Clarke approves Babar Ahmad's extradition in a decision that is widely condemned by the public and the media

10 December 2005	Almost 15,000 Muslims protest in Central London in support of Babar Ahmad
14 February 2006	Mayor of London Ken Livingstone adds his support to at least 157 MPs who have signed EDM 241 criticising the one-sided UK-US extradition arrangements, in a televised press conference with Babar Ahmad's family and MP
16 February 2006	Second meeting at the House of Commons attended by over 150 people demands an end to unjust UK-US extradition arrangements
March 2006	Conservative Party proposes amendments to the Police and Justice Bill 2006 that will require the US to present prima facie evidence before extradition and that extradition can be refused if any part of the offence took place in the UK
10 May 2006	224 MPs vote in favour of the amendments to modify the existing UK-US extradition arrangements but they are defeated by 293 MPs who reject these amendments
July 2006	Babar Ahmad's appeal against extradition due to be heard at the High Court

Appendix B: Useful Contact Information

1. Free Babar Ahmad Campaign:

PO Box 45798
London
SW16 4XS
Tel: 07963 537 779
Web: www.freebabarahmad.com
Email: info@freebabarahmad.com

2. Solicitors representing Babar Ahmad in his extradition case:

Birnberg Peirce & Partners
14 Inverness Street
London
NW1 7HJ
Tel: 020 7911 0166
Fax: 020 7911 0171
Ref: Ms Gareth Peirce or Daniel Guedalla

3. Solicitors representing Babar Ahmad in his police complaint case:

Bhatt Murphy Solicitors
27 Hoxton Square
London
N1 6NN
Tel: 020 7729 1115
Fax: 020 7729 1117
Web: www.bhattmurphy.co.uk
Ref: Fiona Murphy

4. Babar Ahmad's MP:

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SW1A 0AA
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