

OPUS2

Manchester Arena Inquiry

Day 163

October 19, 2021

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Tuesday, 19 October 2021

(9.30 am)

(Delay in proceedings)

(9.39 am)

SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Greaney.

MR GREANEY: Sir, good morning. We are turning today to chapter 13 of the inquiry's oral evidence hearings and in this chapter of evidence the inquiry will focus on the radicalisation of Salman Abedi.

We will be stepping back from the facts of what happened at the arena on 22 May 2017 and how it happened in order to consider the important question of why it happened.

Sir, there is no doubt that the issue we've just identified is difficult to answer and possibly impossible to answer definitively. It is very hard indeed, we acknowledge, for anyone with a shred of decency to comprehend why a person could ever think of detonating a suicide bomb in the midst of a crowd, killing or maiming many innocent victims.

However, if we are to do everything in our power as a society to prevent such things happening in future, we must, we are certain everyone in this room will accept, do what we can to understand what motivated Salman Abedi to commit such a horrific act, and by doing so learn

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what we can about how to prevent others being drawn into a similarly warped mindset of violent extremism.

Chapter 13 arises from paragraphs 1.1 to 3 of the terms of reference, which require the inquiry to investigate the background of Salman Abedi, his relationship with relevant associates, including family members and others, and any relevant external sources, such as online material.

They also require an investigation into the knowledge of the various organisations and institutions, the security service, the police and others, about Salman Abedi and his radicalisation before 22 May 2017.

This is, without question, one of the most troubling and difficult issues for the inquiry to grapple with. Salman Abedi, of course, is dead and he himself left nothing behind explicitly or directly to explain the reason for the atrocity he carried out. We are therefore left to work out his motives and the path he followed, which led him to that appalling crime by looking at the surrounding circumstances and gleaned what we can about Salman Abedi's mindset from the people who knew him.

Sir, you will be assisted in your consideration and analysis of that evidence by hearing from an expert that you have instructed, Dr Matthew Wilkinson, who in fact

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sits in the witness box. Dr Wilkinson is currently the principal investigator on a research project entitled "Understanding of Conversion to Islam in Prison". He has conducted extensive research into radicalisation and violent Islamist extremism in the prison context, but also well beyond.

He has acted, as he will shortly explain to us, as an expert witness on extremism in more than 30 criminal trials, for both the prosecution and defence, as well as several sets of civil proceedings. His present research investigates the effects, both positive and negative, of the practice of Islam in prisons and how Islam can contribute to rehabilitation.

We will hear first from Dr Wilkinson today in order to set the scene. He will help you and the core participants to understand the key concepts, definitions and themes which it will be useful for us to have in mind as we investigate Salman Abedi's radicalisation.

Dr Wilkinson will give evidence today about the key features of mainstream Islam, ideological Islam and Islamist extremism and how to distinguish between them. He will provide an overview of the history and background of Islamist extremism and explain how and, to the extent that it can be understood, why its adherence can become violent. And moreover, we'll explore with

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Dr Wilkinson the process of radicalisation, the recognised pathways into violent Islamist extremism, and the factors or influences which appear to be important to making someone vulnerable to such radicalisation.

Finally, we will ask him to explain what actions may be taken in an attempt to prevent radicalisation.

Dr Wilkinson will not comment upon Salman Abedi specifically during this first stage of his evidence, although, sir, as you well know, he will return later in this chapter in order to do so.

Following Dr Wilkinson's overview, we will examine five main areas of Salman Abedi's life in order to understand how he came to be radicalised or whether signs of his radicalisation could have been spotted and remedial action taken.

First, we will look at his family. Second, his friends and associates. Third, his use of the internet and social media. Fourth, the education system and his engagement with it. And fifth, and finally, the mosques which he and other members of his family attended.

This week, sir, we intend that you will hear evidence, either directly from or relating to Salman Abedi's family and his friends and associates. The inquiry legal team, as you know, has done all it can to obtain evidence from Salman Abedi's immediate family.

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1 Ramadan Abedi, his father, Samia Tabbal, his mother, and
2 their younger children, are all presently in Libya, as
3 far as the inquiry is aware. Although Ramadan and Samia
4 have been contacted, they have refused to cooperate with
5 the inquiry or provide any statements or evidence of any
6 kind.

7 Salman Abedi's older brother, Ismail Abedi, does
8 generally still reside in the United Kingdom. It is
9 highly regrettable that he has also refused to provide
10 a statement or cooperate with the inquiry in any
11 meaningful way.

12 A Section 21 notice has been issued to him,
13 requiring him to attend the inquiry this Thursday,
14 21 October, in order to give oral evidence. However, we
15 understand that he is not currently in the country and
16 there is no indication as to when he will return.

17 Ismail Abedi clearly has important evidence to give
18 to the inquiry and we urge him today to make contact
19 with the inquiry legal team, either directly or through
20 his own legal representatives. As he surely must
21 understand, if he does not do so, the public may infer
22 that he has something to hide and so, sir, may you.

23 We expect that you will use such powers as are at
24 your disposal to compel his attendance and to respond if
25 he does not attend. And may we say, sir, that you have

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1 shown no hesitation in doing so in relation to other
2 witnesses.
3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Greaney. Just let me say
4 this, please, about Ismail Abedi. He is still summoned
5 to attend at this inquiry; as yet he has failed to do
6 so. So can I urge people not to make any sort of public
7 statement which may discourage him even further from
8 attending. If he fails to attend then obviously
9 everyone is free to make what comment about that they
10 wish but I don't want anything, as a result of what has
11 been said in the opening, to be seen by him as
12 discouraging him from coming and that may be a result of
13 any significant public comment.

14 MR GREANEY: Sir, we entirely understand those remarks. Our
15 purpose is the opposite of discouraging him; it is to
16 encourage him.

17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, no, I do understand that, but
18 clearly it will be a disappointment for people to know
19 that he is actually not within the jurisdiction.

20 MR GREANEY: Sir, we entirely accept the wisdom of the
21 remarks you have just made.

22 Salman Abedi's younger brother, Hashem Abedi, has,
23 of course, been convicted of assisting Salman Abedi in
24 planning and preparing the bombing and he has been
25 sentenced to life imprisonment.

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1 As you know, last year, the inquiry legal team
2 interviewed Hashem Abedi in prison and obtained
3 a written statement from him. In what he said on that
4 occasion, both orally and in writing, he confessed to
5 his role in the bombing and he set out his motivations.

6 Sir, we explored this in December last year with
7 Detective Chief Superintendent Simon Barraclough, the
8 Operation Manteline senior investigating officer. And
9 you will no doubt wish to take this into account, so
10 what Hashem Abedi said into account, in your
11 consideration of Salman Abedi's motivations and
12 radicalisation.

13 You should, of course, be mindful of the fact that
14 although some of the matters contained within what he
15 said can be verified by other evidence and are likely to
16 be accurate, it, his statement, is a self-serving
17 document, which amounts to pro-Islamic State propaganda
18 and therefore needs to be treated with some caution.

19 Nonetheless, in light of what Hashem Abedi has said,
20 you may find it safe to conclude that the arena attack
21 was influenced at least by the distorted ideology of the
22 so-called Islamic State.

23 The two other key witnesses for this week are
24 Abdalraouf Abdallah and Ahmed Taghdi. Mr Abdallah is
25 currently serving a prison sentence for terrorism

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1 offences. He was a friend and associate of
2 Salman Abedi, who visited him in prison in January of
3 2017. A Section 21 notice has been served on
4 Mr Abdallah, requiring him to attend the inquiry to give
5 evidence on 20 October. Last week you rejected an
6 application by Mr Abdallah to set aside that Section 21
7 notice. Mr Abdallah is currently therefore expected to
8 attend this hearing on Wednesday and to do so in person.

9 Ahmed Taghdi is a friend of Salman Abedi, who is
10 able to speak about his background and path to
11 radicalisation. His evidence was read at the criminal
12 trial of Hashem Abedi but was restricted to the issues
13 relevant in those proceedings, which were narrower than
14 the issues with which you, sir, are concerned.

15 Mr Taghdi has also been served with a Section 21
16 notice requiring him to attend this Thursday,
17 21 October. As he had told the inquiry that he did not
18 attend to comply with that Section 21 notice, sir, you
19 applied to the High Court for enforcement of the notice
20 and, at a hearing on Friday, obtained an order that
21 Mr Taghdi attend with an attached warrant for his arrest
22 if he refuses to do so.

23 Unfortunately, he attempted to leave the country
24 yesterday and, as a result, was arrested and remanded
25 pursuant to orders that you, sir, sought. As a result,

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1 he is currently in custody, so we have a high degree of
 2 confidence that he will attend the hearing on Thursday.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think we should perhaps add,
 4 Mr Greaney, before anything is prejudged, that it was
 5 Mr Taghdi's case that he was intending to return.
 6 MR GREANEY: It was Mr Taghdi's case that he intended to
 7 return and also, sir, at your invitation it is said that
 8 he was able to produce evidence of a return ticket for
 9 20 October, and that surely should be kept in mind.
 10 We will also hear evidence from Shaun Hipgrave and
 11 Paul Mott. We had hoped to hear from both this week,
 12 but it now seems clear, given the loss of time to
 13 witness issues, that we will only hear from Mr Hipgrave
 14 at this stage.
 15 Shaun Hipgrave, from whom you also heard in
 16 chapter 7, works, as you will recall, with the
 17 Home Office and he will explain the Prevent strand of
 18 the government's counter-terrorism strategy.
 19 This is part of the strategy which seeks to stop
 20 radicalisation and we will explore with Mr Hipgrave how
 21 this worked in 2017, what problems there might have been
 22 and what has been done since then to improve the system.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Again, I'm sorry to interrupt you, but
 24 the Prevent strategy, as a result of recent events, is
 25 very much the focus of public attention. There is also,

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1 let me remind everybody, an inquiry going on into how
 2 Prevent operates and whether it can be improved. So
 3 clearly, we do not want to tread in any way on the toes
 4 of that inquiry, but we will explore the matters as far
 5 as is necessary to deal with it in this case.
 6 MR GREANEY: Sir, that we entirely understand and you have
 7 mentioned recent events, everyone will know to what
 8 you are referring. It may be that at the end of this
 9 short opening, people will be struck by the fact that
 10 I will have made no reference personally to those
 11 events. That is not because we do not have them in
 12 mind, it is because there is currently a person in
 13 custody, not charged, and we do not wish to do anything
 14 to prejudge that situation or to prejudice any trial.
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That is very sensible. I think the
 16 focus of this inquiry will not be on whether Prevent
 17 works or is a good idea, because that is being looked at
 18 by another inquiry. The focus of this inquiry, at least
 19 so far as my intention at the moment is, is to
 20 investigate why Salman Abedi wasn't referred to Prevent
 21 at some stage on the assumption that Prevent may at
 22 least do some good in deradicalising people.
 23 MR GREANEY: That is indeed correct, sir. The terms of
 24 reference require you, and I'm not going to quote
 25 directly, to explore whether a Prevent referral should

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1 have been made for Salman Abedi and/or any other member
 2 of his immediate family.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 4 MR GREANEY: Mr Mott, who whom I've also referred, and from
 5 whom we'll probably hear in December, is the head of the
 6 Joint Extremism Unit of Her Majesty's Prison and
 7 Probation Service and the Home Office, which was
 8 established in April 2017 to be the strategic centre for
 9 all counter-terrorism work in prisons.
 10 He will give evidence about the steps taken to
 11 prevent radicalisation of and by prisoners, including
 12 changes made since 2017. In particular, we will
 13 consider with him why more was not done in relation to
 14 the visits by Salman Abedi and others to
 15 Abdalraouf Abdallah in prison, once Mr Abdallah had been
 16 convicted of terrorism offences and moreover before,
 17 when he was on remand awaiting his trial.
 18 Following this week's evidence, we will have to
 19 break from chapter 13 for 4 weeks in order to consider
 20 evidence relating to chapter 14 on preventability.
 21 That is to say whether there was anything that could
 22 have been done by the security service or police or
 23 anyone else to prevent the attack.
 24 We will return to chapter 13 in the week commencing
 25 22 November. So may we say that we would rather have

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1 dealt with chapter 13 as a single piece, but the
 2 enormous task of scheduling the evidence in this inquiry
 3 has made that simply impossible.
 4 When we return to chapter 13, we will read sections
 5 from witness statements provided by relatives of
 6 Salman Abedi, which will shed some light on the
 7 religious and political views of the Abedi family as
 8 a whole.
 9 Moreover, we hope to hear evidence from another
 10 associate of Salman Abedi, Alzoubare Mohammed, who has
 11 been out of the country for some time, but recently
 12 returned and from whom we're in the process of obtaining
 13 a witness statement.
 14 We will also hear again from detective
 15 Chief Superintendent Barraclough, who previously gave
 16 evidence in chapter 8. Mr Barraclough will provide an
 17 overview of the parts of the police investigation
 18 relevant to radicalisation. This includes details about
 19 some other friends and associates of the Abedis, but
 20 will also cover the third of our themes, social media
 21 and internet usage.
 22 At that stage, you will hear about the analysis of
 23 material used on certain devices used by Salman Abedi
 24 and Hashem Abedi as well as their brother, Ismail.
 25 The inquiry has heard evidence and will hear

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1 evidence from the police and government agencies about
 2 how the Prevent duty is and should be implemented. When
 3 the open evidence resumes at the end of November,
 4 we will hear evidence from those responsible for
 5 Salman Abedi's education about what this means in
 6 practice within those settings.

7 The inquiry will hear oral evidence from four
 8 witnesses in relation to this particular theme. They
 9 will address Salman Abedi's education from 2009 until
 10 2017 and the evidence will be given, we hope at least,
 11 chronologically.

12 First, we'll hear from Ian Fenn, the headteacher at
 13 Burnage Academy for Boys, where Salman Abedi studied
 14 from January 2009 to June 2011. As the inquiry has
 15 heard already, Salman Abedi was out of formal education
 16 between 2011 and 2012 when it is believed he spent
 17 substantial periods in Libya with his father and brother
 18 during the uprising against Colonel Gaddafi.

19 The second witness will be Rachel Pilling, who
 20 at the relevant time, although not now, was head of
 21 Department for Student Support and the safeguarding lead
 22 at Manchester College. Salman Abedi attended that
 23 college from September 2012 to December 2013.

24 Thirdly, we will hear from Michelle Leslie, the vice
 25 principal of the Trafford College Group, which was

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1 attended by Salman Abedi from September 2013 until
 2 June 2015.

3 The final live witness in relation to this chapter
 4 will be Andrew Hartley, who holds the role of general
 5 counsel at the University of Salford. It is there that
 6 Salman Abedi's education ended, studying for a BSc in
 7 business and management from 3 October 2015 until early
 8 in 2017. And evidence will also be read from
 9 Lisa O'Loughlin, the principal of Manchester College.

10 The evidence of those five witnesses whose names
 11 we've just given will describe Salman Abedi's insolent
 12 and aggressive behaviour towards these responsible for
 13 teaching him. It will also describe criminal activity
 14 of which his teachers were aware: theft, vandalism and
 15 violence.

16 There is plenty of evidence that those teachers
 17 were, to say the least, disappointed by his engagement
 18 with his education and that he was a difficult student
 19 to manage. And then finally, at university it is clear
 20 that he entirely disengaged from his studies.

21 However, what the inquiry will not hear is evidence
 22 that any person educating Salman Abedi had concerns
 23 about his radicalisation or extremism. They did not.
 24 So the inquiry will consider whether opportunities were
 25 missed, both to identify Salman Abedi's radicalisation

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1 and consequently to intervene.

2 The Prevent duty for schools was implemented in
 3 July 2015 after Salman Abedi left Trafford College. It
 4 was, however, in force throughout Salman Abedi's time
 5 at the University of Salford. The university, after the
 6 attack, commissioned an independent review which
 7 concluded that it had taken its Prevent responsibilities
 8 seriously. We will need to look, and you will need to
 9 look, sir, at whether that is correct.

10 We'll consider along the way how the university's
 11 own procedures have changed since the attack and we'll
 12 look too at the processes now and then at
 13 Burnage Academy, Manchester College and
 14 Trafford College.

15 Our fifth and final theme will be the influence of
 16 the mosques which the Abedi family attended. We will
 17 hear, we believe, two different perspectives about the
 18 links between the Abedis and the Manchester Islamic
 19 Centre, otherwise known as the Didsbury Mosque: one from
 20 Mr Fawzi Haffar on behalf of the trustees of the mosque,
 21 and an alternative view from Mr Mohammed El-Saeiti, who,
 22 until recently, was an imam at the mosque.

23 They will give conflicting accounts, we anticipate,
 24 of the extent to which the leadership of the mosque was
 25 aware of the Abedis holding extremist views, which sir,

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1 you will need to explore and investigate.

2 At the conclusion of chapter 13, we will hear from
 3 two experts. In relation to the education theme in
 4 particular, you will hear from Professor Lynn Davies,
 5 emeritus professor of international education at the
 6 University of Birmingham, who has conducted extensive
 7 research into extremism within educational settings. In
 8 her view, as matters stand, the schools, college and
 9 university did not fail to spot Salman Abedi's
 10 radicalisation given the information they had and the
 11 duties that they held.

12 You, sir, will need to consider both this view and
 13 some questions she raises about the extent to which the
 14 present systems to monitor extremism within education
 15 are sufficiently robust or could be improved.

16 Finally, Dr Wilkinson will return in order, we
 17 expect, to tie together the other evidence that has been
 18 heard and, in the light of it, to give his expert
 19 opinion on the specific path to radicalisation of
 20 Salman Abedi, the likely influences which were of most
 21 significance, and whether there were any missed
 22 opportunities to pick up warning signs and take
 23 preventative action to deradicalise him.

24 Sir, it's now to Dr Wilkinson's introductory
 25 evidence that we will turn to set the scene for this

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1 chapter, chapter 13, and to understand the key
 2 questions, or some of them, that you will need to ask
 3 and answer.
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Greaney.
 5 MR GREANEY: Sir, I'm going to ask that Dr Wilkinson is
 6 sworn, please.
 7 DR MATTHEW WILKINSON (sworn)
 8 Questions from MR GREANEY
 9 MR GREANEY: Would you begin by telling us your full name,
 10 please?
 11 A. Dr Matthew Loudon Nairn Wilkinson.
 12 Q. And Dr Wilkinson, are you an academic specialising in
 13 contemporary Islam?
 14 A. I am.
 15 Q. Are you also principal investigator on a research
 16 project entitled "Understanding of Conversion to Islam
 17 in Prison"?
 18 A. Yes, I am.
 19 Q. But would it be fair to say that your expertise goes
 20 well beyond Islam in a prison context?
 21 A. Yes, I look at manifestations of Islam in contemporary
 22 public settings, including in particular prisons and
 23 schools.
 24 Q. Do you, to put it in simple terms, have expert knowledge
 25 of Islamic theology?

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1 A. Yes.
 2 Q. Islamic ideology?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. And Islamist extremism?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. And would it also be right to say that that expert
 7 knowledge is derived from four related fields of
 8 experience that you have?
 9 A. That's correct.
 10 Q. So first, your academic research?
 11 A. That's right.
 12 Q. Secondly, the fact that you yourself have experienced
 13 a traditional Islamic education?
 14 A. That's right.
 15 Q. Thirdly, your personal experience as a Muslim of the
 16 Muslim community in Britain and abroad?
 17 A. That's right; I've been a Muslim for 30 years.
 18 Q. And fourthly, your work as an expert witness?
 19 A. That's right.
 20 Q. All of that, I know, and the chairman knows, is detailed
 21 in section 2 of your overview report of 13 March 2020.
 22 A. That's correct.
 23 Q. So given it is all there to be read, I'm just going to
 24 pick up on a small number of aspects of it.
 25 A. Of course.

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1 Q. Have you published extensively on the topic of
 2 contemporary Islam?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 Q. Including six academic papers?
 5 A. A few more now actually. Probably more like 10 or 11.
 6 Q. I'm quoting from 2020 when you did your report. So
 7 almost double now. I hesitate before suggesting two
 8 book chapters.
 9 A. That's correct.
 10 Q. And also two peer reviewed and acclaimed books?
 11 A. That's correct, shortly to be three.
 12 Q. The first book entitled "The Genealogy of Terror: How to
 13 Distinguish Between Islam, Islamism and Islamist
 14 Extremism"?
 15 A. That's right.
 16 Q. Which is a topic you're going to assist us with today.
 17 And the second book is "A Fresh Look at Islam in
 18 a Multi-faith World: A Philosophy for Success Through
 19 Education"?
 20 A. That's right.
 21 Q. The third book is entitled?
 22 A. "Islam in Prison."
 23 Q. Have you given expert evidence on behalf of both the
 24 prosecution and defence in many cases involving
 25 allegations of terrorism?

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1 A. I have.
 2 Q. And also given evidence in civil proceedings where the
 3 interpretation of Islamic issues has arisen?
 4 A. That's correct.
 5 Q. To put it in very neutral terms, in a number of cases
 6 your evidence has been accepted as being both accurate
 7 and helpful, has it not?
 8 A. It has.
 9 Q. As you've indicated already, did you embrace Islam in
 10 1991?
 11 A. I did.
 12 Q. As a result, did you receive what you describe in your
 13 report as a traditional Islamic education?
 14 A. I did. Yes, it was, broadly speaking, in what's known
 15 as the Maliki school, a very traditional school, which
 16 is rooted in North Africa and used to be rooted in Spain
 17 as well.
 18 Q. I was going to ask you just to summarise, if it's
 19 possible, in a few sentences what your traditional
 20 Islamic education involved and what it gives you in
 21 terms of providing your opinion in this case.
 22 A. Yes. Well, as you said, Mr Greaney, it was very
 23 traditional. I started off by memorising sections of
 24 the Koran. I memorised three, 42 chapters in total,
 25 which gives you the basis, alongside various of its

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1 meanings and various of the commentaries that have gone
 2 with the meanings to flesh out what they mean in
 3 different contexts.
 4 I memorised various texts to do with the study of
 5 Arabic grammar and in particular the texts of
 6 (inaudible) Al-Ajrumiwah. I studied some of the core
 7 sets of Islamic law in the Maliki school, such as
 8 Al-Muwatta by the eponymous imam, Malik, and other texts
 9 as well.
 10 I memorised and studied the meanings of a number of
 11 hadith collections and I studied the biography of the
 12 Prophet Mohammed, peace and blessing be upon Him, both
 13 some of the antique accounts and some of the
 14 contemporary accounts that have been adduced from those
 15 original sources.
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Do you mind telling me, you said it was
 17 1991, how old were you at that time?
 18 A. Sir, if my memory serves me right, I was 22.
 19 MR GREANEY: I'm not going to ask you about your path to
 20 Islam, that will be a matter which is acutely personal
 21 to you, but I believe I will be excused saying that your
 22 religion is a matter of vital importance to you as
 23 a person?
 24 A. Yes. I would like to think of myself as a sincere
 25 practising Muslim.

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1 Q. Along the way of what you have just said, you referred
 2 to the Prophet Mohammed and you referred to the Prophet
 3 in a particular way. Would you remind us of the way in
 4 which you described the Prophet, please?
 5 A. Certainly. I said, "the Prophet Mohammed, peace and
 6 blessings be upon Him". This comes from a Koranic
 7 injunction to bless the Prophet when He is mentioned, so
 8 in a religious setting people always have this honorific
 9 after the Prophet's name.
 10 Q. Would that apply just to the Prophet Mohammed or to
 11 other prophets as well?
 12 A. It often applies to the whole range of Koranic Prophets
 13 which will be familiar to many people in the
 14 Judaeo-Christian tradition as well: Noah, Jesus,
 15 Abraham.
 16 Q. In the evidence you're going to give today it will be
 17 necessary for you to refer to the Prophet Mohammed on
 18 a number of occasions. Will you be using the honorific
 19 each time in your evidence you describe the Prophet?
 20 A. I often won't be using it, Mr Greaney, because we're
 21 dealing with evidence, a lot of it forensic, not in
 22 a religious setting. So I've said it once to indicate
 23 respect and religious esteem for the Prophet, peace and
 24 blessings be upon Him, but hereafter I won't be using
 25 that.

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1 Q. It's important that everyone should understand that
 2 neither you nor I will be being disrespectful in not
 3 using that honorific during your evidence in what, as
 4 you say, is a forensic context.
 5 A. That's correct.
 6 Q. Are there any other sensitivities in relation to the
 7 language that we'll be using that we should bear in
 8 mind?
 9 A. That's probably the most sensitive linguistic matter.
 10 Muslims often mention the name Allah of God with
 11 an honorific, which means "May He be exalted and
 12 glorified". Again, perhaps if we said it once now.
 13 Q. Yes.
 14 A. God, may He be exalted and glorified, that will be
 15 enough.
 16 Q. But again, everyone should understand that we have no
 17 intention of being disrespectful in the approach that we
 18 adopt in that regard?
 19 A. No, again it's because we're looking at evidence.
 20 Q. We were dealing with your background and experiences
 21 before we turned to your instructions and the substance
 22 of your opinion. I referred to your grassroots
 23 experience as a Muslim of the Muslim community in the
 24 United Kingdom. This is a topic dealt with in your
 25 report at paragraph 2.4, page 16.

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1 Again, in a small number of sentences, could you
 2 explain what that brings to bear upon your opinion,
 3 please?
 4 A. Yes. After the traditional education that we've just
 5 mentioned, I acted as a role called imam khateeb, which
 6 means leader of the prayer who gives a Friday sermon, at
 7 a mosque in Norwich, and therefore I also ran the Koran
 8 school for children and some adults as well, which
 9 involved teaching the Koran and basic elements of
 10 Arabic.
 11 I had to deliver the sermon, which means you need to
 12 be aware of theological matters about how to deliver
 13 a sermon, its formulas, its purposes. But also one of
 14 the core purposes of the sermon is to know about issues
 15 that are facing the congregants in front of you, so
 16 you have to tap into their issues and their concerns.
 17 So it has a combination, meaning a theological awareness
 18 of what Islam is and how to teach it, but also of issues
 19 of daily concern facing your congregation.
 20 Q. I believe, moreover, that there was a period when you
 21 were a schoolteacher?
 22 A. Yes. I was a schoolteacher. I was a schoolteacher at
 23 a school that was then called the Brondesbury College
 24 for Boys, which had been set up by the singer Yusuf
 25 Islam, who was formerly known as Cat Stevens, which was

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1 an all-male Muslim faith school in the Borough of Brent.
 2 I taught there history, citizenship, some elements of
 3 Islamic studies, and again I often performed the role of
 4 the person that delivers the Friday sermon because that
 5 was done within the setting of the school.
 6 Q. Did that give you an insight into the everyday
 7 experiences and life of Muslim boys?
 8 A. Yes, it did. It gave me a very first-hand and close-up
 9 insight of the issues that face young Muslim males in
 10 Britain today, both the opportunities and some elements
 11 of the risks that they face as well.
 12 Q. Just the final issue in relation to your background and
 13 experience. As you confirmed, you've given expert
 14 evidence on many occasions. Has that given you, as
 15 a result of the nature of the cases you were involved
 16 in, first-hand analytical exposure to the ideologies,
 17 language, actors and events connected with what has been
 18 happening over a number of years now in Syria?
 19 A. Yes. I was first instructed in 2011. Obviously at that
 20 time I was shown evidence and required to explain the
 21 meaning of evidence to courts that was largely connected
 22 to Al-Qaeda-related terrorism. Of course, during that
 23 period of just over a decade, the evidence that I've
 24 been looking at has morphed more and more towards
 25 looking at stuff related to Islamic State and I have

25

1 seen a lot of the ideological material which is used to
 2 groom people into the violent Islamist extremist world
 3 view of those two groups.
 4 Q. This obviously is an important issue. To put it in
 5 simple terms, you have had substantial exposure to and
 6 have detailed knowledge of the ideology and theology of
 7 Al-Qaeda?
 8 A. Yes.
 9 Q. And associated organisations?
 10 A. Correct.
 11 Q. And also the ideology and theology and furthermore the
 12 claims to caliphate of the Islamic State group?
 13 A. That's correct and also the way that they infiltrate
 14 Western populations to attract people to travel to
 15 places where they have power.
 16 Q. And the way in which they radicalise?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. To jump ahead for a moment, one of the fascinating
 19 issues you're going to help us with is, in terms of
 20 radicalisation, there has been a movement from how
 21 Al-Qaeda radicalised individuals to how Islamic State
 22 did it?
 23 A. Correct.
 24 Q. As I've understood it, Al-Qaeda was much more face to
 25 face and now we're dealing with something which much

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1 more frequently happens over the internet?
 2 A. Yes, broadly speaking that's true. One can -- it's
 3 perhaps not quite as clear-cut as that. Al-Qaeda, as
 4 you said, certainly started off with much more
 5 face-to-face interaction, sending people off to camps
 6 and so forth. Usually, especially latterly, when people
 7 like Anwar al-Awlaki and others are doing stuff on the
 8 internet very powerfully, they moved into the internet
 9 age, so as a sort of hybrid combination.
 10 Q. Yes.
 11 A. But you're correct to say that Islamic State has
 12 developed what you might call a much more
 13 internet-driven style, a more branded, you might say,
 14 style of recruitment, where individuals can sort of
 15 build their Islamic State identity, sometimes almost
 16 entirely online, although it's usually accompanied by
 17 some sort of personal contact as well.
 18 Q. So would you agree this is one of the things that makes
 19 that situation so dangerous that you can have
 20 individuals who become radicalised, prepared to carry
 21 out attacks in the name of Islamic State, when they have
 22 absolutely no operational connection with that group?
 23 A. Yes, that's certainly true.
 24 Q. Anyway, we were jumping ahead to just one of the
 25 important aspects of the opinion that you're going to

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1 give.
 2 Next topic, and very shortly, your instructions.
 3 You were instructed as an expert by the inquiry to
 4 address a number of issues?
 5 A. That's correct.
 6 Q. And to do so in two stages: first of all, to provide
 7 your overview report and, secondly, to apply those
 8 principles to the circumstances of Salman Abedi?
 9 A. That's correct.
 10 Q. And today you are going to be dealing with the former
 11 but not the latter.
 12 A. That's correct.
 13 Q. And your instructions are dealt with at section 1 of
 14 your report, page 9. I should have given the INQ
 15 reference for your report. It's {INQ034709/1}.
 16 In simple terms, you have been asked to assist us
 17 today with the world view of different phenomena within
 18 Islam?
 19 A. Well, different phenomena that bear some relation to
 20 Islam in some way, but obviously they are not all within
 21 Islam.
 22 Q. I'm sorry.
 23 A. That's slightly technical.
 24 Q. That was my fault. I summarised and you obviously
 25 balked at that slightly and we'll understand why in due

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1 course.
 2 You've also been asked to provide your opinion on
 3 the origins of violent Islamist extremism globally and
 4 in the United Kingdom?
 5 A. That's correct.
 6 Q. You've been asked to provide your opinion on pathways to
 7 radicalisation ?
 8 A. That's correct.
 9 Q. And also, importantly, on pathways to deradicalisation?
 10 A. That's correct.
 11 Q. Each of those is a matter I'm going to ask you about
 12 today.
 13 First of all , I'm going to ask you to help us with
 14 this idea of a world view. Are, in your view, both
 15 mainstream Islam and Islamist extremism characterised as
 16 world views?
 17 A. I do characterise them as that, as world views, yes.
 18 Q. In as small a number of sentences as you are able to,
 19 can you explain what you consider a world view to be?
 20 A. Yes. I'll just read a clause of my report here, 3.2.1:
 21 "'Worldviews' are unified ways—of—being in the
 22 world, together with ways—of—knowing the world 'in which
 23 knowledge and action are knit up together and organized
 24 into a single view of life and the nature of the
 25 Universe.'"

1 So they're integrated ways of understanding how the
 2 world is and how to behave in it.
 3 Q. You refer in your report, paragraph 3.2.4, to the work
 4 of a well-known Belgian philosopher in which he
 5 described a world view as a descriptive model of the
 6 nature of world comprised of six elements.
 7 A. That's correct, yes. So Leo Apostel described — about
 8 a nature of — an explanation of the nature and the
 9 origin of the world, its ontology, its basic essential
 10 nature, and an answer to the question "Where are we
 11 heading?", both in this life and afterwards, an ethical
 12 framework about how we should behave, a theory of
 13 action, how we should go about attaining our goals,
 14 theory of knowledge or epistemology, what is true and
 15 what is false , and also a world view contains an account
 16 of how it came to be, sometimes it is a mythological
 17 idea about how the world came into existence, which is
 18 obviously an important element of various forms of
 19 extremism.
 20 So the point about what these various dimensions of
 21 the world view do is they allow us to understand how
 22 we are within ourselves in a relatively consistent way
 23 and how we respond to others in a consistent way.
 24 Obviously, for most people, these world views are
 25 constantly in a state of being adjusted and modified as

1 we meet people that we agree or don't agree with and so
 2 on and so forth. Most of us are in a constant process
 3 of modifying our world views, but we all have them.
 4 Q. Is the world view something that would be personal to me
 5 or you or Mr Atkinson or something that would be a view
 6 held by a group or both of those?
 7 A. Both. Obviously each one of us will have our
 8 individualised way of understanding who we are and how
 9 we respond to the world around us. Importantly, an
 10 element of world views is they are shared and propagated
 11 by collectives , often without those collectives knowing
 12 that they're happening.
 13 For example, I give an example in my report, the
 14 majority of citizens , by dint of being brought up in
 15 states where there is respect, broadly speaking, for the
 16 rule of law will understand that lawfulness is part of
 17 being a citizen , part of being a human, without actually
 18 ever having done an analysis of whether various elements
 19 of the law are just or fair or whatever, people just
 20 tend to obey the law because they've been brought up to
 21 do so, so they have a law-abiding world view. Obviously
 22 there are exceptions to prove the rule.
 23 Q. So they have just absorbed —
 24 A. Absorbed it. And most world view elements, in my
 25 opinion, are mainly absorbed. We don't realise it.

1 This is of course part of their danger because there
 2 have been examples of whole societies, one thinks of
 3 Nazi Germany, absorbing very obnoxious world views, with
 4 most of their members not being aware they're doing so.
 5 So world views are held and propagated by collectives
 6 often without members realising what they're doing.
 7 Q. That, no doubt, is something we need to bear in mind
 8 when we consider organisations like Islamic State?
 9 A. Very much so. And also obviously at certain times of
 10 life , people are more vulnerable to, you might say,
 11 absorbing ideas without thinking about them than at
 12 others. So obviously teenagers and people growing up
 13 are very vulnerable or prone, whatever the right word
 14 is , to the world view of their peer group. They want to
 15 be the same, wear the same clothes, want to have the
 16 same ideas. Any idea of differing can be a bit
 17 troublesome to them. They also often want to have
 18 a different world view from the generation above them,
 19 so if we think of mods and rockers or whatever and if we
 20 think about various different forms of youth culture.
 21 It's like saying, "We are this and we're not what the
 22 previous generation was". So young people in particular
 23 can be vulnerable to world views of different types.
 24 Q. Again, we're going to see that that's important when we
 25 look at the profile , my word, of people who become

1 involved in the Islamic State world view.
 2 A. That's correct, yes.
 3 Q. There is a particular profile, not invariable, but
 4 a particular profile of young men of a particular age
 5 from particular backgrounds?
 6 A. That's correct.
 7 Q. You use in your report a term, I'm sorry if my
 8 pronunciation is incorrect, but a term "deen". This is
 9 paragraph 3.4.
 10 A. That is correct.
 11 Q. First of all, what is the concept of deen and, secondly,
 12 how does it relate to this concept of world view about
 13 which you have told us?
 14 A. Deen is often translated — it's a Koranic Arabic world,
 15 it is often translated as religion, but it comes from an
 16 Arabic word which means to repay a debt, so it has
 17 connotations of everything that goes between the
 18 believer in order to pay their debt back to God. So
 19 it's regarded from the Koran and elsewhere as, again, an
 20 integrated notion of believing right things and then
 21 doing right things. And because deen is the word which
 22 is most usually — usually people talk about the
 23 religion of Islam as "deen al Islam" in Arabic, but
 24 because it has the idea of both belief and behaviour
 25 integrated, it maps closely to the idea that I have just

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1 described of world view, where behaviour and beliefs are
 2 knit up together and organised into a single view of
 3 knowing about the world and behaving in it.
 4 Q. I'm going to turn against that helpful background to
 5 paragraph 3.5 of your report, which is headed "Islam,
 6 Islamism and Islamist Extremism as World Views". I'm
 7 going to read out the next paragraph and then ask you to
 8 explain and develop it.
 9 You say:
 10 "The idea of the world view that draws together
 11 facts — and factions (a mixture of fact and fiction),
 12 which is typical of extremism — laws, norms,
 13 generalisations, answers to ultimate questions and
 14 suggests particular behaviours, provides a philosophical
 15 framework for understanding the differences between [and
 16 then you use this phrase] different religious phenomena
 17 which, on the surface, all look and sound Islamic and
 18 yet in reality are very different and have their own
 19 distinguishing characteristics."
 20 I believe this is an important matter that we need
 21 to bear in mind?
 22 A. Yes, thank you, Mr Greaney, it is important. Sir, it
 23 describes how I've applied this idea of world view and
 24 deen to understanding, as Mr Greaney said, phenomena
 25 that all look Islamic but are in reality very different.

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1 So this is a way of saying that there are different
 2 types of expressions of Islam, which were used very
 3 similarly or even the same doctrinal language, such as
 4 tawhid, such as all sorts of words of people that might
 5 do the prayer, but the outcome of their religious
 6 practice, the way they do their world view, is
 7 fundamentally different. So this is why the idea of
 8 world view is very important because it's not
 9 a theological distinction, so this is not a matter of
 10 distinguishing between different denominations within
 11 Islam, we're not distinguishing between different
 12 schools of law, such as the different what is called
 13 madhahibs, different types of Islam, such as the
 14 various, you know, you might think of the Barelvi or the
 15 Abandi(?) or the Sufi or Salafi. These are not
 16 distinctions between theological denominations, they're
 17 distinctions between basic philosophical world views,
 18 basic ways of understanding and acting in the world.
 19 Q. Where this takes us to, I'm sorry to try to express this
 20 in just one sentence, is that the differences between,
 21 on the one hand, mainstream Islam and, on the other
 22 hand, violent Islamist extremism could not be greater,
 23 could they?
 24 A. They could not be. They are utterly different, utterly
 25 distinct, both in core beliefs, but also mainly in

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1 outcomes in the world. So they're utterly different.
 2 Q. I'm certain you'll agree that's something very important
 3 for the public to understand, that the mainstream Muslim
 4 population would not for one second subscribe to the
 5 ideology of organisations like the Islamic State?
 6 A. No, that's true. There would be a whole set of beliefs
 7 and doctrines that would prohibit them from signing up
 8 to the world view of organisations like Islamic State.
 9 Q. You describe these things which all look and sound
 10 Islamic as religious phenomena. And in your report
 11 you have delineated and referred to those different
 12 phenomena, have you not?
 13 A. I have.
 14 Q. We are going to look at them in detail over the course
 15 of your evidence, but let's just identify them in
 16 headline form.
 17 A. Certainly.
 18 Q. First of all, what I've described as mainstream,
 19 probably the better description is traditional Islam, is
 20 it not?
 21 A. Well, just to be entirely clear, I sub-divide mainstream
 22 Islam into two types, traditional and activist.
 23 Q. Right. It's important that everyone understands this.
 24 So shall we deal first of all in a few sentences with
 25 what traditional Islam is?

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1 A. Certainly.
 2 Q. What is it, please?
 3 A. Traditional Islam falls within this mainstream idea of
 4 Islam, which is the world view of what I call unity and
 5 diversity, which is the world view of basic sameness and
 6 equality of all creatures before God. And it's a world
 7 view generated by the religious practice of those who
 8 accept and follow, to the best of their ability, the
 9 basic injunctions of the book of Islam, Al Koran, and
 10 the customary Prophet behaviour, a Sunna, of the
 11 Prophet Mohammed in a way that is appropriate to their
 12 circumstances and without their aspiring to bring about
 13 change in the political space.
 14 Q. Certainly what I've understood in reading your report,
 15 and indeed talking to you about it, is that this is
 16 a form of Islam which is very accepting of others and
 17 inclusive? Is that a fair way of putting it?
 18 A. This is a form of Islam in which people would often bend
 19 over backwards to be inclusive on the basic
 20 understanding that we are all creatures of God.
 21 Q. This is one strand of mainstream Islam. The second you
 22 told me is activist Islam. Again, in simple and short
 23 terms, what is that please?
 24 A. Activist Islam is the same world view of unity and
 25 diversity, of basic sameness before God, but where Islam

1 has been characterised by an ethos of change. In this
 2 activist model, world view, sir, the difference between
 3 Muslims and non-Muslims is sometimes extended. So for
 4 example, activist Muslims might try and promote the
 5 provision of prayer spaces at work or might ensure in
 6 prisons that the food was Halal and served in an
 7 appropriate way. Activist Muslims might, and indeed
 8 have, signed declarations on Islamic principles
 9 championing climate change activism, for example. All
 10 sorts of causes which can be — have their source in
 11 basic Islamic practices and principles and in the public
 12 space, but all done within the legal parameters of given
 13 jurisdictions.
 14 Q. The way in which you put it in your report is that in
 15 activist Islam, there is respect for the differences
 16 between Muslims and those of other faiths, that's
 17 emphasised, but within an overall understanding of
 18 similarity between all human beings?
 19 A. Yes. That's the basic world view position, that all
 20 creatures, human creatures, are created by God, that
 21 we will all answer to God, and in that essential
 22 equality and sameness, we are all the same.
 23 Q. I believe we're now going to move away from mainstream
 24 Islam because I'm going to ask you about the concept of
 25 ideological Islamism. Am I right that this marks

1 a movement away from mainstream Islam?
 2 A. This marks what I call the first big shift or I call it
 3 the paradigm shift. So this is away from Islam as deen,
 4 as deen as a religion which prioritises religious
 5 practice and belief, to Islam as revolutionary political
 6 ideology, which is directed at overthrowing rather than
 7 transforming existing political structures and replacing
 8 them with an Islamic state governed by an interpretation
 9 of Islamic law, Sharia. So it's the idea of not
 10 changing transformatively things that might be perceived
 11 to be unjust within any given society of un-Islamic
 12 principles, but actually overturning the entire
 13 apparatus of a political system.
 14 And it is — ideological Islamism as a world view is
 15 not characterised by this idea of basic unity and
 16 equality, but it's characterised by an exaggerated
 17 separation and difference between Muslim and non-Muslim
 18 people and the ideals and ideas of those people.
 19 Q. Is the concept of ideological Islamism sometimes called
 20 political Islamism?
 21 A. It's had a number of different names, Mr Greaney, that's
 22 correct, but its basic world view is it becomes — it
 23 starts to be the world view of us, Muslim, versus them,
 24 non-Muslim.
 25 Q. And this is an important concept that you're going to

1 explain to us over your evidence, this idea which has
 2 developed in some of the phenomena that you're telling
 3 us about of them and us?
 4 A. It's critical. Extremism of all types, and Islamist
 5 extremism is no exception, are always premised on the
 6 idea of us, the blessed or chosen in-group, the small
 7 group that's right, against them, the out-group, that is
 8 either wrong or, in extremist versions, damned or less
 9 human. That's always the basic dynamic of extremisms.
 10 Q. Let's move on to the next phenomenon: non-violent
 11 Islamist extremism. What does that term mean, please?
 12 A. This is the same basic Islamist world view but when the
 13 us-versus-them sharpens into an absolutely divided us
 14 versus them which stresses the absolute difference in
 15 the basic human difference between us, the blessed
 16 Muslim in-group and them, the damned non-Muslim
 17 out-group. And what makes this extremist is that the
 18 basic human qualities and properties, the essential
 19 human characteristics of the them non-Muslim out-groups
 20 are stripped away by various doctrinal and ideological
 21 means, so you get a world view in which the them are now
 22 less human.
 23 Q. So you've used the terms in-group and out-group. And
 24 those are terms you have deliberately chosen, are they
 25 not?

1 A. Yes, they are. They're following -- I know this is
 2 perhaps jumping the gun a bit, but in the writing of a
 3 chap called Tajfel, who wrote about what's been called
 4 social identity theory. This in-group means the us,
 5 it's just simply the us, and the out-group is just the
 6 them.
 7 Q. So we have on the one hand the Muslim in-group and, on
 8 the other hand, in, as they would regard it, opposition,
 9 the non-Muslim and, moreover, wrong Muslim out-groups?
 10 A. Yes, that's a very important point, which is that in the
 11 extremist Islamist world views the them out-group
 12 includes Muslims who don't overtly struggle to fulfil an
 13 Islamic polity or state. So these become wrong Muslims
 14 or in some versions they've been called partial Muslims.
 15 They are lesser Muslims than the Muslims that struggle
 16 to establish the state run according to Sharia law.
 17 Q. In non-violent Islamist extremism, the out-group are
 18 afforded a less human or sub-human status; is that
 19 correct?
 20 A. That's correct. And of course, with regard to what
 21 you have just referred to as the wrong Muslims, that
 22 means that in extremist models they are prone to what is
 23 called takfir, which can be broadly described as
 24 excommunication, so they are ejected from the fold of
 25 Islam in ideological terms and that means they can be

1 prone to all sorts of violent consequences within that
 2 world view.
 3 Q. Is this extremist world view the one that begins to
 4 suggest that an Islamic state should be fought into
 5 existence?
 6 A. That's correct. It begins to suggest that what I term
 7 as violent Islamist extremism -- which is the idea that
 8 Islam, the us, and kuffar, unbeliever, a system of
 9 unbelief, are in a state of eternal enmity and Islam
 10 must fight to prevail over kuffar, over unbelief, and
 11 that's an eternal state of affairs. So the violence as
 12 an extremist model sees the necessary eradication of
 13 non-Muslims and wrong Muslims as a necessary precursor
 14 to fighting an Islamic state into existence.
 15 Q. So we've now moved from non-violent Islamist extremism
 16 to this final concept or phenomenon of violent Islamist
 17 extremism?
 18 A. That's correct, which has these two components: one of
 19 the eradication of non-Muslims and wrong Muslims; and
 20 two, as a result of being able to fight an Islamic state
 21 into existence.
 22 Q. Each of those phenomena we're going to look at in more
 23 detail, but before we do so, I'm going to take you to
 24 paragraph 3.5.4, page 25 of your report, where you
 25 observe, and indeed there is a figure that illustrates

1 it, that attitudinal research of Muslim populations
 2 suggests that Muslims are overwhelmingly mainstream in
 3 their world view.
 4 A. Yes, that's correct. Various attitudinal surveys, such
 5 as Pew Research, have conducted surveys. Of course, on
 6 a global basis it is notoriously difficult to capture
 7 people's world views and attitudes, but Pew Research ran
 8 a survey gauging support for Islamic State and they
 9 found that 77% of all Muslims entirely rejected it, 19%
 10 of Muslims didn't know what they thought, and I think
 11 they found that 8% had some sympathy for it. So that's
 12 one survey. Other surveys have been conducted with
 13 attitudes to suicide bombing, and if you aggregate these
 14 various bits of information, the overwhelming evidence
 15 is that a huge majority of the Muslim world broadly sits
 16 within this mainstream world view of unity and diversity
 17 and broadly rejects violent Islamist extremism.
 18 Q. So at the risk of repetition, but this is a point that
 19 deserves emphasis, you are going to be describing some
 20 abhorrent views and behaviours, are you not, of those
 21 who subscribe to violent Islamist extremism?
 22 A. I am.
 23 Q. But the vast majority of Muslims in this country and
 24 this world would entirely reject those attitudes and
 25 behaviours?

1 A. Yes, they would entirely, even though they may have some
 2 Islamic-sounding flavour, or whatever, in Arab
 3 terminology, the vast majority of Muslims would reject
 4 that world view and its various component parts.
 5 Q. Page 27 next, Dr Wilkinson, and we'll start to explore
 6 more of these phenomena and we'll make a start on your
 7 evidence about the world view of traditional Islam and
 8 then we'll take a break in about 15 minutes.
 9 Could you remind us of the basic definition of
 10 traditional Islam, unity in diversity?
 11 A. Yes, traditional Islam is the world view of unity and
 12 diversity generated by the religious practice of those
 13 who accept and follow, to the best of their ability, the
 14 basic injunctions of Islam Al Koran and the customary
 15 prophetic, sunna in Arabic, of the Prophet Mohammed in
 16 a way that is appropriate to their circumstances without
 17 their aspiring to affect change in the political space.
 18 Q. Is the underlying Islamic principle that the whole
 19 universe as the creation of one god is essentially one
 20 interrelated reality?
 21 A. That's correct. In Arabic it's called the doctrine of
 22 tawhid, which is one of the fundamental doctrines of
 23 Islam, which has two parts: the unity and lordship of
 24 God Almighty, and the interrelated and connected nature
 25 of His creation.

1 Q. Does the tawhid state many things, but one of the
 2 important principles being that every human being is
 3 destined to return to God?
 4 A. Yes. Every human being comes from God and is destined
 5 to return to God.
 6 Q. At this level that we're talking about, the tawhid, what
 7 is the attitude towards those who are not born Muslim
 8 and those who are not practising as a Muslim?
 9 A. Two different things. The Koran explicitly states that
 10 not everyone was intended to be born as Muslim and also
 11 explicitly connects with a diversity of religious
 12 worship, so the Koran mentions the need to defend
 13 mosques, synagogues, monasteries, cloisters and so on
 14 and so forth. So the Koran specifically recognises
 15 religious diversity as something that's part of His
 16 creation.
 17 Q. The way in which you put it in your report,
 18 paragraph 4.2.10 is this:
 19 "The underlying essential unity of existence and
 20 humanity in God is also characterised by real second
 21 order differences: men and women are different; nations,
 22 countries and tribes are different; there exists
 23 a plurality of different religions, that is to say not
 24 everyone is born to be a Muslim."
 25 A. That's correct. I mentioned before this essential

1 sameness, equality and similarity between all human
 2 beings as a first order principle, but the Koran
 3 mentions real differences, as you have just mentioned:
 4 men and women, nations and tribes, you might say
 5 ethnicities. These differences between us are real but
 6 they are subservient to this overall unity.
 7 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: How does that affect the attitude of
 8 traditional Muslims to converting others, proselytising?
 9 A. There's a range of attitudes to that proselytising
 10 activity. Mainstream Muslims, you know, like anyone who
 11 follows a particular faith, will usually recognise that
 12 they think their faith is the truest and the best faith.
 13 There's sort of — if you choose something, it means you
 14 think it's good and possibly better than other things,
 15 but the accent of Islam is very, very strongly on
 16 respect for religious diversity and the Koran mandates
 17 it.
 18 This was effected in the very early days of Islam,
 19 for example, when the second tadhith(?) of Islam, a chap
 20 called Umar Ibn al-Khattab was involved in the takeover
 21 of Jerusalem, he forbade Muslims to pray in the Church
 22 of the Holy Sepulchre because he feared that that would
 23 mean that it would be turned into a mosque and he wanted
 24 to respect the religious practices that were already
 25 going on there. So respect for religious diversity is

1 strongly mandated in the Koran and Islam.
 2 MR GREANEY: As you observe in your report, 4.2.11, the
 3 differences that you have told us about are regarded
 4 within traditional Islam as intended by God to be the
 5 source of greater cultural enrichment and mutual
 6 understanding and not of conflict?
 7 A. That's correct. If I may, I think the best thing is
 8 perhaps here to just read the verse of Koran that that
 9 refers to.
 10 Q. If you think that would be helpful, of course.
 11 A. "People, we created you from a single man and a single
 12 woman and have made you races and tribes so you can get
 13 to know one another. In God's sight the most honoured
 14 of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is all
 15 knowing and all aware".
 16 Q. Dr Wilkinson, can I make plain to you that obviously
 17 there is a lot that we need to get through in your
 18 evidence today, parts of it I will be taking you to or
 19 summarising. If at any stage you think that I am moving
 20 too quickly over something that's important, it will not
 21 hurt my feelings for you to tell me so, so please bear
 22 that in mind.
 23 In your report you deal extensively with the outlook
 24 on humanity in general of traditional Islam. At
 25 paragraph 4.3 you deal with something you have just

1 touched on, respect for humanity regardless of faith or
 2 none. What does that mean, please?
 3 A. That means in a nutshell that all people have a right to
 4 respect of their life, their property and their honour
 5 in a nutshell. Muslims must respect those rights of all
 6 people.
 7 Q. You refer to a group that you call the People of the
 8 Book; what does that mean?
 9 A. The Koran refers to People of the Book, (inaudible).
 10 Usually the commentators have said this refers to people
 11 of the Abrahamic faiths who have been given a book, so
 12 Christians and Jews usually. Some commentators have
 13 included non-Abrahamic religions, such as the various
 14 forms of Hinduism, as well under that broad umbrella.
 15 It means any people that have followed a book of
 16 revelation given to one of their prophets by God.
 17 Q. So including obviously Christians and Jews. And does
 18 traditional Islam permit Muslims to marry women of the
 19 People of the Book and, as it's put, to share their
 20 meat?
 21 A. Yes, absolutely. The food of People of the Book is
 22 lawful for Muslims and, as you said, marrying women from
 23 the People of the Book is also allowed.
 24 Q. So we're starting to understand, are we not, this sense
 25 of inclusivity that marks out traditional Islam?

1 A. Yes, it's mandated in Islam, so we are required to
 2 accept the prophecy of all the Abrahamic prophets,
 3 including Jesus, Moses, so it is not just an attitude,
 4 if you like, it's actually a doctrinal obligation.
 5 Q. What are the fundamental sources of traditional Islamic
 6 belief?
 7 A. There are two. The first is, as I mentioned, Al Koran,
 8 the Koran, which means "the revelation" or literally
 9 "the recitation", and that's a book which is believed by
 10 Muslims to come directly from the presence of God,
 11 revealed through the Archangel Gabriel on the return of
 12 the Prophet Mohammed for the guidance of humanity.
 13 Q. Yes.
 14 A. The second source is called a sunna, which is
 15 a customary behaviour and religious practice of the
 16 Prophet Mohammed.
 17 Q. As you, and I will ask you more about that in a moment,
 18 point out in your report, without the sunna of Mohammed,
 19 there would be no Islam?
 20 A. That's correct. There's a very early -- an early --
 21 a companion of the Prophet Mohammed, and he put it very
 22 succinctly. He said: the Koran ordains it and the sunna
 23 explains it.
 24 Q. Let's just understand a bit more about the Koran and the
 25 sunna. Again, as simply and shortly as you're able to,

1 the Koran, please.
 2 A. The Koran is believed by Muslims to be the inimitable
 3 word of God, it was brought from the presence of God,
 4 Muslims believe, by the Angel Gabriel in stages to be
 5 delivered on the tongue of the Prophet Mohammed. It was
 6 revealed over a period of 23 years from 610 to 632CE.
 7 It is made up of 114 chapters, called surahs, and 6,235
 8 verses. Eighty-five of the chapters were revealed by
 9 the Prophet Mohammed when the early Muslim community
 10 lived in the city of Mecca, in what's now Saudi Arabia.
 11 The remaining 29 were mainly revealed after what's
 12 called the migration of the Prophet Mohammed with His
 13 companions to Medina.
 14 Q. And the sunna again, as simply and shortly as you are
 15 able to describe that, please.
 16 A. The sunna is derived from what's called hadith, which is
 17 the sayings and actions of the Prophet Mohammed with His
 18 companions. So essentially it was His example of how to
 19 do Islam. It was, for example, how to wash for the
 20 prayer, how to do the prayer, how to perform it, and how
 21 to sit with good manners in a group, all sorts of
 22 things.
 23 The sunna was essentially divided into two parts.
 24 One part of the sunna is the derivation of religious
 25 practices that have been mandated. And another part is

1 things that the Prophet Mohammed did, peace and
 2 blessings be upon Him, such as conducting Himself
 3 strategically in war, or whatever, or trading, which may
 4 provide the example of wisdom but are not actually part
 5 of religious practice.
 6 Q. Just to understand the relationship between those two
 7 sources, the Koran and the sunna. The Koran does
 8 declare that the prayer should be established at certain
 9 times?
 10 A. Correct.
 11 Q. So establishes what might be described as the principle
 12 or the rule?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. And the sunna illustrates what those times are, how they
 15 are calculated and the actions and words that must be
 16 performed to complete the prayer?
 17 A. That's correct.
 18 Q. In traditional Islam, are certain things prohibited and
 19 conversely certain things permitted?
 20 A. Yes, there are two basic divisions which are called
 21 permitted, halal, and prohibited, haram, and actually
 22 there are a number of degrees between them as well.
 23 Q. At paragraph 4.58 and following you describe what is
 24 halal and what is haram in traditional Islam. I'm not
 25 going to go through each of those, but among the things,

1 page 36, that are permitted in traditional Islam is just
 2 government?
 3 A. Correct, very important (inaudible).
 4 Q. Also permitted, but under very strict conditions, is
 5 war?
 6 A. Yes. That is -- obviously both its conditions and its
 7 conduct are highly regulated, so it's highly regulated
 8 defensive warfare.
 9 Q. And that is exactly what I was going to invite you to
 10 confirm. In traditional Islam, the strict conditions
 11 under which war may occur are effectively defensive?
 12 A. Yes. And the whole set of conditions prior to war have
 13 to be fulfilled, such as peaceful avenues need to have
 14 been explored by diplomatic means and so on and so
 15 forth.
 16 Q. In terms of what which is traditionally forbidden or
 17 haram, and I won't identify all of them, anyone can read
 18 them if they wish, but forbidden in traditional Islam is
 19 political oppression, rebellion, injustice and anarchy?
 20 A. Correct.
 21 Q. And also forbidden, gratuitous violence, terrorism, and
 22 unregulated and unjust war?
 23 A. Yes, that's right. Both those two categories come under
 24 a rubric of Koran which is roughly translated as causing
 25 corruption in the land or causing oppression in the

1 land. So jurists did use a number of things which were
 2 forbidden and they certainly include terrorism,
 3 gratuitous violence and unregulated and unjust war.
 4 Q. Murder is also forbidden?
 5 A. Yes, a very, very grave sin and crime.
 6 Q. And suicide is forbidden in traditional Islam?
 7 A. Yes, suicide is forbidden under all circumstances, so
 8 even what some people might describe as mercy killing,
 9 whatever, but in Islam all forms of suicide, taking
 10 one's own life, is forbidden.
 11 Q. So you told me earlier about the fact that there could
 12 not be greater differences between traditional Islam on
 13 the one hand and violent Islamist extremism on the
 14 other. We know, do we not, that those in the latter
 15 category use suicide bombing as a technique and that is
 16 a terrible event that this case is concerned with?
 17 A. Indeed. Terrible. And obviously from a mainstream
 18 Muslim point of view, that type of activity would
 19 constitute three grave crimes. It would constitute
 20 murder, suicide, and causing corruption in the land,
 21 terrorism. So it's really an amalgamation of the three
 22 of the most terrible crimes in Islam.
 23 MR GREANEY: Sir, we've been going for not far short of
 24 an hour and a half and that would be a convenient moment
 25 for a 15-minute break, please.

1 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you very much.
 2 (10.57 am)
 3 (A short break)
 4 (11.17 am)
 5 MR GREANEY: Dr Wilkinson, your report deals in considerable
 6 detail, which is to your credit, with traditional Islam.
 7 I'm not going to cover every detail, I just want to pick
 8 up on a couple of aspects and then we'll move on to the
 9 phenomenon of activist Islam.
 10 In your report, page 46, paragraph 4.10, you deal
 11 with one of the, as you put it, characteristic ethical
 12 themes and behaviour in traditional Islam, namely
 13 moderation.
 14 What should we understand by the concept of
 15 moderation in traditional Islam?
 16 A. Moderation is a key ethical plank of what mainstream
 17 Islam is. It has an Arabic term, wasatiyyah. It's
 18 derived from a Koranic verse, which shows that it's
 19 a divinely mandated principle in mainstream Islam.
 20 I will read the verse:
 21 "And thus we have made you a Middle Community that
 22 you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger
 23 will be a witness over you."
 24 And there's also a number of Koranic verses that
 25 forbid Muslims to go to excess in anything, including

1 religiously allowed behaviours and practices.
 2 Q. Can I just ask you to pause for one moment? I believe
 3 that the Prophet Mohammed himself is reported as having
 4 said, "Distance yourselves from being extreme in
 5 religion"?
 6 A. That's correct, amongst a number of hadith, which
 7 encourage believers not to go to extremes.
 8 Q. So this concept of moderation in traditional Islam means
 9 moderation in all things?
 10 A. In all things.
 11 Q. Next, although you have already touched on this,
 12 attitudes to war and violence in traditional Islam. So
 13 page 49, paragraph 4.12.
 14 Could you set for us, in simple terms, please, what
 15 traditional Islam teaches us about war and violence?
 16 A. Well, as I say in my report, the context of thinking
 17 about war and violence is the basic principle of
 18 mainstream Islam, of the sanctity of life, and in
 19 particular human life. So at the heart of the basic
 20 principles that structure Islam is the idea that each
 21 and every human life is sacred and obviously there are
 22 times when human life is threatened by aggression, by
 23 war, by people conquering, et cetera, et cetera, and
 24 this was no different in the lifetime of the
 25 Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon Him. In fact, in the

1 society of early medieval Arabia, fighting between
 2 tribes was endemic and they even had a pause in the year
 3 when people stopped fighting officially, because there
 4 was so much of it, to recover. So it was part and
 5 parcel of life.
 6 And once the Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon Him,
 7 had conducted His migration from Mecca to Medina and
 8 once His community became an established fact of Arabian
 9 life, it was attracting trading partners, it was
 10 becoming a much more consolidated reality, the Meccans
 11 were conducting various things to undermine its
 12 stability, so they were stealing property of Muslims
 13 left back in Mecca who hadn't migrated, they were
 14 attacking caravans, sort of low-level warfare. But it
 15 was having a grave effect on the property, morale and
 16 persons of the fledgling Muslim community.
 17 So the Prophet Mohammed had, for 13-odd years,
 18 actually held back from any acts of warfare or anything
 19 that was beyond talking and persuading and that type of
 20 activity because he'd never been mandated to do it and
 21 Muslims believe he never acted without a divine mandate
 22 from the Koran.
 23 Q. So there was a long period of more than decade of
 24 essentially trying to negotiate a solution to that?
 25 A. Negotiate solutions, yes, He tried to negotiate a place

1 for His community within Meccan society more generally,
 2 making sure that when His followers prayed they weren't
 3 attacked, et cetera, et cetera.
 4 Q. And after that 13-year period, what then?
 5 A. After that period, Muslims believe there was
 6 a permission to fight granted in the Koran and in this
 7 permission the Koranic verse starts:
 8 "Permission to fight is given to those who have been
 9 wronged."
 10 So the conditions for fighting was the party were
 11 aggressed against and they were allowed to fight back.
 12 Q. At paragraph 4.15.2, you identify a series of what are
 13 described as rules for the Muslim army.
 14 A. Yes. Well, just to bring things back a bit, obviously,
 15 again coming back to the Koran and the sunna, the Koran
 16 at this juncture had given the Muslim community
 17 permission to fight because you have been wronged. But
 18 then of course the sunna of Mohammed and His companions
 19 around Him laid out the conditions of warfare. So the
 20 first condition of warfare is a party is aggressed
 21 against and is suffering injustices. And then after
 22 that, there's a whole series of regulations, which built
 23 up which gradually became codified as what we now call
 24 one element of the doctrines of jihad, which is called
 25 Qutb, which is about fighting.

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1 Q. I'm going to ask you about those rules in a moment, but
 2 you have used a term which I did want you to explain to
 3 us. Although I know it gives rise to some complexities,
 4 we will keep it simple: jihad, what does that mean in
 5 this context?
 6 A. Jihad just is a nominative participle that means
 7 struggling, it just means struggling or striving. In an
 8 Islamic context there's an understood [Arabic spoken]
 9 there attached to it, which means "in the path of God",
 10 so it means struggling in the cause of God or God-given
 11 principles.
 12 Q. Is it synonymous with violent jihad?
 13 A. In mainstream Islam, absolutely not, and never has been.
 14 Once this doctrinal body starts to develop in the
 15 centuries succeeding the death of the
 16 Prophet Mohammed — obviously it didn't actually develop
 17 in His life in a fully fledged form, it was
 18 sub-categorised into various different categories yet
 19 went into 30 or 40 different categories. But some of
 20 the most established ones were developed by a Maliki
 21 jurist called Ibn Rushd, who was known in the West as
 22 Averroes, who divided struggling into: struggle of the
 23 heart, which was struggling internally to resist what we
 24 might say — resist temptation, resist sins; struggling
 25 by the tongue, which was concerned with speaking the

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1 truth and propagating Islam verbally, orally; struggling
 2 with the hand, which is what we might call activism,
 3 struggling to put something that's wrong right; and
 4 finally, the fourth, which is struggling by the sword,
 5 jihad bis saif, which is armed fighting in the defence
 6 of Islam and defence of Muslim life and property.
 7 Q. So armed struggle?
 8 A. Is the final category, yes.
 9 Q. Let's pull these strands together. In traditional
 10 Islam, an absolute recognition of the sanctity of human
 11 life?
 12 A. Yes.
 13 Q. Fighting or armed struggle, permissible but where
 14 attacked or subject to an injustice?
 15 A. Correct, with the proviso, always, in the Koranic guides
 16 that when the conditions for peace return, that you take
 17 it.
 18 Q. And a set of rules for the Muslim army, one of those
 19 rules being, I believe, that in armed struggle,
 20 non-combatant men, women and children were not to be
 21 harmed?
 22 A. Correct. And that persists to this day, those are
 23 obviously earlier rulings, but that persists to this
 24 day.
 25 Q. Is there any evidence in the accounts of early Muslim

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1 conquests of suicide as a means of warfare?
 2 A. In the days of the Prophet Mohammed, and His companions,
 3 the Prophet expressly forbade suicide, even in
 4 conditions of combat, so even for example when
 5 a companion was badly wounded and wanted to — sometimes
 6 in combat people are very, very, terribly hurt, even in
 7 those conditions, the Prophet Mohammed forbade suicide,
 8 so even in conditions for combat.
 9 After that — and it was regarded as again going to
 10 excess and trespassing a basic Koranic principle, so
 11 during the life of the Prophet and His companions,
 12 suicide was expressly forbidden both in combat and
 13 outside of it.
 14 Q. At page 55 of your report, paragraphs 4.15.5 and 6, I'm
 15 just going to read out your summary of the position:
 16 "Suicide is not only expressly forbidden in the
 17 Koran and the sunna, but also defeated the point of
 18 armed struggle, which was to see human life protected
 19 within the parameters of a divinely revealed religious
 20 and social dispensation."
 21 A. Correct.
 22 Q. Then you add this, which is important for our
 23 understanding:
 24 "This is why the 21st century cult of martyrdom, and
 25 especially suicide martyrdom, has nothing to do with the

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1 Islamic doctrine of armed struggle, so jihad , and
 2 everything to do with a nihilistic violent ideology."
 3 A. That's correct.
 4 Q. Is there anything you would like to add?
 5 A. Just to say this is because the two basic purposes of
 6 mainstream Islam are, (1), that God is worshipped and
 7 there's a set of rules in law to see that is done
 8 properly, and (2), to see that human life is both
 9 protected and flourishes , and there's a set of laws that
 10 cover that as well . So obviously, suicide killing ,
 11 apart from, as I said, flouting those basic forbidden
 12 activities of murder, suicide and terrorism, causing
 13 corruption, also undermines the basic purposes of why
 14 Islam exists .
 15 Q. So this cult of martyrdom is in fact diametrically
 16 opposed to the teachings of traditional Islam?
 17 A. Correct. Diametrically opposed to both the spirit and
 18 the letter of Islam.
 19 Q. We've dealt with traditional Islam in considerable
 20 detail and I hope sufficient detail so that when we come
 21 on to look at violent Islamist extremism we can
 22 understand the differences. But before we reach there,
 23 let 's deal with the second phenomenon, so activist
 24 Islam.
 25 What we've understood so far is that this is still

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1 a form of mainstream Islam subscribing to the concept of
 2 diversity and unity; is that correct?
 3 A. That's correct, yes.
 4 Q. But also involving Islam being practised at least in
 5 part in order to effect both personal change and
 6 transformative structural change in the public space
 7 according to the principles of Islam?
 8 A. That's correct, yes. So in this world view, it 's the
 9 same basic understanding of the position of all humans
 10 as created by God and answering to Him. But it's
 11 a recognition that within the Islamic tradition there's
 12 this idea both of the necessity for personal improvement
 13 and change. We all do things that are sometimes wrong
 14 that damage our own interests or those of others, and we
 15 need to change our behaviours and attitudes. So there's
 16 improving ourselves and so the Prophet, peace and
 17 blessings be upon Him, said, "I came to perfect good
 18 character", to improve people's character.
 19 And then there's the idea that if things are wrong
 20 in society, in the sense that they're inhibiting or
 21 preventing these two purposes, worship of God and
 22 well-being of humanity to exist, if they're preventing
 23 those then peaceful legal means can be taken within
 24 Islam to change that.
 25 Q. Within the United Kingdom, are there highly respectable

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1 organisations that we would know that subscribe to
 2 activist Islam?
 3 A. Yes. I don't know if they would call themselves
 4 activist Muslims, but they are inspired by that ethos of
 5 accentuating things that are particular to Islam, such
 6 as the provision of places to pray, that need to be
 7 protected. So think of Muslim community groups, Muslim
 8 Council of Britain, Tell MAMA, the Muslim Women's
 9 Network. There's a whole series of organisations that
 10 exist to protect and, to some degree, further in legal
 11 ways the practice of Islam within a multi-faith state
 12 like Great Britain.
 13 Q. So that might involve, just to give two examples,
 14 arguing for Sharia law's attitude towards divorce to be
 15 recognised within the United Kingdom?
 16 A. Yes, you might remember a few years back that became
 17 a debate in which the then Archbishop of Canterbury got
 18 involved, you know, the issue of divorce law and its
 19 relationship with English common law.
 20 Q. And to give a second example to which you've referred
 21 already, activist Muslims have also struggled on behalf
 22 of causes such as climate change and sustainable
 23 development?
 24 A. Very much so, yes.
 25 Q. What particular Islamic principles would they have been

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1 arguing in respect of in dealing with climate change?
 2 A. There's a very important Koranic concept of what we
 3 might call stewardship for creation, looking after
 4 creation on behalf of God, deputising for God, which
 5 I have called in one of my publications a theological
 6 caliphate, because the word caliphate is in the Koran as
 7 the idea of someone who deputises for God in His
 8 apparent absence. This is the idea that we all have to
 9 be custodians of the earth and look after it for the
 10 next generation.
 11 Q. So in activist Islam, the Muslim would pursue change in
 12 accordance with Islamic principles , but still within
 13 this idea of inclusivity ?
 14 A. Absolutely. In the Koran and the sunna, it's very clear
 15 that the primary locus of change is always in oneself.
 16 It starts from within and then goes out. The famous
 17 Koranic verse:
 18 "God doesn't change the condition of people until
 19 they change what's within themselves."
 20 So the locus of change is transformative and it
 21 starts with individuals changing their behaviour.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Why is that distinguished from
 23 traditional Islam? Why are we putting that in a
 24 different group?
 25 A. It 's within that mainstream, that basic mainstream world

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1 view, sir. So it's only distinguished in that -- you
 2 know, a lot of Muslims going around their daily business
 3 might not be concerned with how Islam is represented in
 4 various structures of society or whatever, they are just
 5 going about their work with that basic world view in
 6 place. Whereas, obviously, there are community groups
 7 that specifically have been set up to champion Muslim
 8 interests within the legal frameworks of this country,
 9 so it's a slight shift in that direction.

10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

11 MR GREANEY: Is a characterisation, an accurate
 12 characterisation, that it is a more interventionist form
 13 of mainstream Islam?

14 A. No, I mean, in my report I use the term diversity and
 15 unity, so if you like it just accents the points of
 16 difference which there are and the need sometimes to
 17 stick up for them. So I said, for example, a very
 18 simple one is the provision of a prayer space in an
 19 office, just for example.

20 Q. Thank you, that's very helpful. That's all I wanted to
 21 ask you about mainstream Islam.

22 We're now going to take, I believe, a distinct turn
 23 away from mainstream Islam, are we not?

24 A. We are.

25 Q. So I'm going to ask you to just help us again with the

1 world view of ideological Islamism. We're now at
 2 page 61 of your report.

3 A. Thank you. Ideological Islamism marks a significant
 4 shift from Islam as religion to Islam as revolutionary
 5 political ideology, directed at overthrowing, rather
 6 than transforming, as we've seen in the activist model,
 7 existing political structures and replacing them with an
 8 Islamic state governed by an Islamist interpretation of
 9 Islamic law, Sharia.

10 So it's an inversion of relationship between
 11 politics and religion which we have seen in the
 12 mainstream model.

13 Q. Is this phenomenon characterised by an exaggerated
 14 separation between Muslims or the right Muslims and the
 15 wrong Muslim and non-Muslim peoples' ideals?

16 A. Yes. As groups, so you get the nomenclature of the
 17 language of the Muslim versus the kuffar, the infidel,
 18 as a group en bloc, meaning not those who just reject
 19 God or whatever, but those -- everyone who is not signed
 20 up to being a Muslim, so you get these two big blocks,
 21 the Muslim versus the non-Muslim, and a third division
 22 in some versions of Islamism, you get this idea of the
 23 wrong Muslim, like we said before, who's the partial or
 24 uncommitted Muslim to the Islamic State.

25 Q. So this is where we see a very significant development

1 away from the idea of inclusivity to this strong sense
 2 of them and us, the in-group and the out-group?

3 A. Exactly, we get an exaggerated us versus them.

4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Not involved with violence necessarily?

5 A. No, not necessarily, no.

6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: How big is this group?

7 A. Again, it's difficult to say sizes. In the Pew research
 8 that I cited earlier, you might think perhaps 19% of
 9 that sample were in, broadly, this us versus them. In
 10 research I've done in prison, again actually 19% of my
 11 indicative sample had this us-versus-them exaggerated
 12 difference approach, so perhaps around that sort of
 13 mark.

14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

15 MR GREANEY: I just want to pick up on a couple of aspects
 16 of this. First of all, everyone in this room, I've no
 17 doubt, will have heard the term kuffar. Is that
 18 a relevant term in the context of what we are here
 19 describing?

20 A. It's very relevant, yes, because across these different
 21 world views that I've delineated it has very different
 22 meanings. So within that broad mainstream world view it
 23 has the idea of people who actively, and indeed
 24 sometimes violently, reject the message of the
 25 Prophet Mohammed and those that do it subsequently. So

1 it's what you might call an active or violent atheism or
 2 anti-Islamic behaviour or whatever.

3 When you move across that spectrum, it turns in this
 4 Islamist model, everyone that doesn't accept Islam, so
 5 for example Christians and Jews, who are regarded in
 6 mainstream Islam as believers, where they are known as
 7 People of the Book who have revelation, they are lumped
 8 in this idea of the kuffar, the rejecters.

9 And then of course in the extremist model, the
 10 rejecters are not only Christians, Jews, Hindus,
 11 everyone that is not Muslim, but also include those
 12 Muslims that are not signed up to the idea of
 13 a violently propagated Islamic state. So it becomes
 14 a much, much bigger out-group of kuffar.

15 Q. So in that extremist model, the kuffar are a group of
 16 people that are regarded as being sub-human?

17 A. Exactly, lesser human. That idea of -- the language of
 18 some of the core Islamists in this Islamist world view
 19 starts to use the language of the kuffar being impure,
 20 of being lesser, lesser humans. So that type of
 21 language starts to emerge within this Islamist world
 22 view.

23 Q. We were, just before we get to the extremist models that
 24 you're going to tell us about, we are dealing still with
 25 ideological Islamism. Have I correctly understood that

1 ideological Islamists have tended to prefer the
 2 achievement of their goals by peaceful as opposed to
 3 violent means?
 4 A. They've tended to. Again, it's sort of advisedly in the
 5 middle of my world view schema because people have that
 6 populated that world view have gone in both directions.
 7 But some of the sort of big Islamist movements, you
 8 might have got Hisb ut-Tahrir, the Party of Purity, for
 9 example, which is one of them, they've been overt in
 10 their desire to replace democratic political structures
 11 with an Islamic state, but they've also tended to be
 12 overt in their desire not to do it violently.
 13 Q. So, I used the term goals, and for goals we should
 14 understand the goal is the replacement of a democratic
 15 state with an Islamic state?
 16 A. A global Islamic state, yes.
 17 Q. By using your hands, you seem to be describing
 18 a spectrum where we have traditional Islam at one end of
 19 the spectrum, subscribed to by the vast majority, and
 20 then we're moving away from that in the various other
 21 models that you are describing. Have I understood?
 22 A. We're moving — green and we're now in what you might
 23 call the amber zone before we move into the red.
 24 Q. So can I just understand one thing before we move into
 25 the red? We've understood that traditional Islam is

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1 based upon an understanding of the Koran and the sunna
 2 and is about understanding acceptance and inclusivity.
 3 The idea of them and us is the opposite of inclusivity.
 4 How have those who subscribe to ideological Islamism
 5 managed to get so far away from how you would interpret
 6 the Koran?
 7 A. Well, there's a lot of politics involved there is the
 8 answer to that. Because the conditions of the collapse
 9 of the Ottoman caliphate in 1924 and then, after the
 10 First World War, the various mandates of the Western
 11 powers across the Muslim world and so on and so forth,
 12 led to a feeling that the Muslim world had become
 13 fractured and disempowered for the first time in many
 14 centuries, so idealogues in some of the emerging states
 15 of Pakistan and the sort of post-British Egypt looked to
 16 Western ideological forms for inspiration about how they
 17 might reconstitute Islamic power.
 18 For example, they looked to fascism, they looked to
 19 communism, which they saw as homogeneous ideologies that
 20 had rallied people together around a core idea, and they
 21 applied that to thinking about Islam. So of course,
 22 what these fascist and communist forms did, if you'll
 23 pardon the phrase, very cleverly is they created
 24 a series of bogeymen against which they could rally
 25 people. So communists had the bourgeoisie, the Nazis

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1 had the Jews and non-Aryan people as bogeymen, and so
 2 for Islamist thinkers, the kuffar as a group became like
 3 the sort of bogeymen of Islam, like the ones who were
 4 not Muslim, that were somehow, as I said, impure.
 5 So it was curiously for something you might think is
 6 a very Islamic thing, actually it was inspired as much
 7 by Western ideology as it was in any way by traditional
 8 forms of Islam.
 9 Q. This is something that's emerging at an early point
 10 in the 20th century?
 11 A. Yes, we're talking about the 1920s and 1930s and 1940s
 12 and 1950s.
 13 Q. And it sounds from your evidence as if it effectively
 14 amounts to a form of political rallying cry?
 15 A. Yes. As I said, it's revolutionary political ideology.
 16 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But sometimes interpreted — claiming to
 17 be interpreted in the Koran, although not correctly as
 18 you've made clear?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Like so many religious texts it may be
 21 capable of different interpretations?
 22 A. Yes. Some of the traditional jurisprudential apparatus
 23 for deciding between when and how to use verses of the
 24 Koran was jettisoned, so there's a very important
 25 principle — please stop me if I'm being too

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1 technical —
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, it's fine.
 3 A. — between what's called the general and the particular
 4 verses of the Koran. The general verses of the Koran
 5 are thought to articulate principles that persist over
 6 time such as I mentioned earlier, the need to return to
 7 peaceful conditions as soon as you can after war and so
 8 on and so forth. There's a whole set of general verses
 9 and then there's particular verses which the early
 10 commentators regarded as referring to particular
 11 incidents that were faced by the Prophet and His
 12 companions that then wouldn't necessarily replicate
 13 themselves.
 14 So quite a lot of those very particular verses, such
 15 as verses that were revealed when the Prophet Mohammed
 16 was under direct threat of physical violence and was
 17 authorised to strike back hard, for example, are then by
 18 Islamists, and then particularly violent extremists,
 19 given a general application.
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 21 MR GREANEY: So we're going to move yet further into the red
 22 zone, as you describe it, and I'm going to ask you to
 23 summarise the world view of first of all non-violent
 24 Islamist extremism, so page 65.
 25 A. The world view of non-violent Islamist extremism is the

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1 Islamist world view as it sharpens antagonistically into
 2 an absolutely divided and separated us-versus-them world
 3 view. It stresses the absolute difference between the
 4 true ideological Muslim versus the non-Muslim and the
 5 wrong Muslim, who are afforded a less human or sub-human
 6 status.
 7 Q. So the difference between ideological Islamism and
 8 non-violent Islamist extremism is -- it's just
 9 a movement further along that spectrum?
 10 A. Correct, yes. It's a movement of even more absolute
 11 division and each more exaggerated stripping-away of the
 12 basic properties of the them non-Muslim and wrong
 13 Muslim.
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And includes the wrong Muslims for the
 15 first time?
 16 A. Includes wrong Muslims in a very -- yes.
 17 MR GREANEY: Exactly. So the kuffar, or unbelievers,
 18 wouldn't just include non-believers, Jews, Christians,
 19 but would also include what they would regard as the
 20 wrong type of Muslims?
 21 A. Yes, correct. That's because they are wrong because
 22 they're not committed to the building of an
 23 Islamic state.
 24 I suppose another characteristic of this non-violent
 25 extremist world view is it posits for the first time

1 that Islam and what's termed variously as unbelief or
 2 ignorance, capital I, jahiliyya, are in a state of
 3 eternal enmity, one cannot co-exist with the other. So
 4 in a sense that sets up a dynamic that if Islam is to
 5 exist, it needs to eradicate the other.
 6 Q. In non-violent Islamist extremism, are the adherents to
 7 it likely to treat and describe kuffar in derogatory
 8 terms?
 9 A. Yes, all sorts of terms that are used by these
 10 ideologues: poisonous, impure, the sort of ubiquitous
 11 language of pigs, dogs, all the stuff that -- I don't
 12 want to say the word scum, but all the stuff that
 13 dehumanises, that takes away the idea that the person
 14 you're talking to is somehow not really human.
 15 Q. Would these adherents tend to encourage those in the
 16 in-group to shun the kuffar?
 17 A. Yes. This is a very important element that non-violent
 18 Islamist extremism is structured upon, if I may expand
 19 a bit --
 20 Q. Of course, please do, yes.
 21 A. -- which is a doctrinal position which is called loyalty
 22 and disavowal, in Arabic, Al-Wala' wal-Bara', loyalty
 23 and disavowal. Essentially, this doctrine states in
 24 this extremist form that Muslims have to demonstrate
 25 their loyalty to Islam by shunning, avoiding,

1 denigrating, having hatred for all non-Muslim beliefs,
 2 habits, political forms, cultural forms. Anything that
 3 doesn't smack overtly of Islam, they are required to
 4 hate and avoid.
 5 Q. So not just hate the individuals, but hate the very
 6 structures of their society?
 7 A. From the individuals to the structures and the forms.
 8 Q. Is it an aspect of this form of extremism that they
 9 believe that the kuffar have relinquished their basic
 10 human rights?
 11 A. Yes, and they are to be avoided.
 12 Q. What I don't wish to do is to promote the source or the
 13 origin of this form of extremism, but again is this
 14 something which emerged in the 20th century?
 15 A. Yes, it did. If I may, it perhaps requires a little bit
 16 of explanation because it illustrates quite well how
 17 doctrines shift across these world views. So there's an
 18 element in the mainstream world view that by choosing
 19 a behaviour or a belief that is praised by God, for
 20 example marriage, you avoid and leave something that's
 21 not praised by God or made forbidden, such as adultery.
 22 So there's an element that by choosing the thing that's
 23 God, you avoid the thing that's wrong, and most Muslims
 24 would very much sign up to that or at least aspire to
 25 it.

1 But in that point, it's the behaviour or the
 2 particular element of belief that is the thing that you
 3 avoid. But in the extremist model, it's the whole group
 4 of society or the entire individual, the person
 5 themselves that become the repugnant and obnoxious
 6 thing, not just the particular element of behaviour that
 7 you might want to avoid.
 8 Q. In terms of stating when this form of extremism started
 9 to emerge, am I right that it really begins to emerge
 10 during the course of the 1960s?
 11 A. Yes. Its protoform came with a thinker called Sahid
 12 Qutb(?) in the 1960s, who, as I said, was very adamant
 13 that the only relationship that people have with each
 14 other is because of ties of faith and that this makes
 15 all other ties of nationhood or family, of all sorts of
 16 other things, obsolete. So he first stated it in that
 17 protoform and then it was taken up by later thinkers,
 18 including, in its violent model, the leader of Al-Qaeda,
 19 Ayman al-Zawahiri.
 20 Q. This takes us to your section 8, page 70, "The world
 21 view of violent Islamist extremism". So we have moved
 22 to the very margins now of the red zone. What is the
 23 world view of those extremists?
 24 A. If I use a definition:
 25 "Violent Islamist extremism is the absolutely

1 divided us—versus—them Islamist world view by which the
 2 cosmos is construed as an eternal manifestation — as
 3 a manifestation of the eternal struggle between Islam
 4 and unbelief, in which the non—Muslim and the wrong
 5 Muslim (those who do not fight to establish a global
 6 Islamic state) are construed as eternal enemies of true
 7 Islam and therefore are fit to be exterminated.”
 8 Q. We had understood that in traditional Islam, armed
 9 struggle may be permissible under certain circumstances,
 10 and in the form of extremism we are now looking at, do
 11 they still adhere to that or have they moved well away
 12 from it?
 13 A. No, one of the core characteristics of violent Islamist
 14 extremism is both — the conditions and the regulations
 15 for violent struggle were first tampered with in a
 16 number of ways and then ripped up entirely. So the
 17 conditions for fighting, such as being in declared war
 18 under a clear leader, with a set of conditions like
 19 that, were done away with, so you have this idea of
 20 a leaderless or ad hoc jihad that doesn't require any
 21 operational control. But you also have this idea that
 22 jihad doesn't have these various different categories,
 23 it's just subsumed into this one category of fighting,
 24 qital, so the only one that's actually real jihad is
 25 fighting.

1 Q. So this therefore has moved well away from the sense of
 2 defensive armed struggle which stops as soon as there is
 3 an opportunity for peace to the idea of aggressive
 4 violence?
 5 A. Well, again, in a sense we're sort of looking at what
 6 I call the genealogy of how this phenomenon appeared,
 7 which started in the crucible of the Afghan—Soviet
 8 conflict of the idea of defending a Muslim majority
 9 polity against an outside aggressor. Perhaps I won't go
 10 into the subtleties of what that is, but then gradually
 11 morphed into the idea of moving from what they called
 12 the "near jihad" to identifying the need to destroy
 13 polities that were far away that went some way against
 14 the establishment of a global Islam.
 15 Q. Just again a couple of things to pick up on. What has
 16 developed in this form of extremism is a desire
 17 proactively to eliminate the kuffar?
 18 A. Yes. That's the first point, that just as a point of
 19 what they are, not really because of what they do, using
 20 their language, but just because of what they are, in
 21 other words people that have rejected Islam and God,
 22 then they can be destroyed. They've reneged on their
 23 basic human rights by their rejection of God and of
 24 Islam.
 25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And the proponents of this justify their

1 beliefs by an interpretation of the Koran which is
 2 clearly wrong, as you've explained?
 3 A. Yes.
 4 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: By taking isolated quotations?
 5 A. Exactly, sir, yes, isolated verses, often particular
 6 ones that are then made general. So in particular,
 7 in that way, that's the way that again, if you'll excuse
 8 the technicality, armed jihad was regarded by the
 9 classical jurists by what they call a fard al—kifaya.
 10 So in other words, if a Muslim polity or area was
 11 attacked, a group of the community could defend the
 12 Muslim community and that was the obligation accounted
 13 for.
 14 But by using a selected range of Koranic versions
 15 that were particular, violent Islamist extremists have
 16 created this idea that armed jihad is what's called fard
 17 al—'ayn, which means an individual religious obligation,
 18 which means that every single Muslim in every place and
 19 at every time is required to do it. So that's a huge
 20 shift by using particular verses of the Koran and other
 21 sleights of hand.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 23 MR GREANEY: You mentioned along the way of one of your
 24 answers a short time ago the concept of far. And am I
 25 right that what you were describing a movement which has

1 occurred, perhaps over the course of the last 20 years,
 2 from the concept of near jihad to a concept of far
 3 jihad?
 4 A. Yes. That in a nutshell is it. When these first
 5 violent Islamist extremists/expression of Islamism
 6 appeared, which was largely as a result of the failure
 7 of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt to have any say
 8 in the constitution of post—colonial Egypt, when these
 9 versions first appeared, they were concerned with first
 10 of all branding Muslim regimes in the Muslim majority
 11 world as apostate, as kuffar, saying they're no longer
 12 Muslim, because they hadn't implemented Sharia enough.
 13 And then, as a second stage, overturning them from
 14 within. So that was the new jihad of putting a more
 15 Muslim regime in place.
 16 You can think of the assassination of Anwar Sadat,
 17 for example. That was Khalid Al—Islambouli shouting, "We
 18 have killed pharaoh". That was the idea of putting
 19 a more Muslim regime in place within Muslim states.
 20 Q. Or the LIFG in Libya might be another example?
 21 A. To some degree, yes, exactly, yes, of a more
 22 nationalised version of Islamist extremism. But in the
 23 context of the failure of the so—called Afghan Arabs to
 24 demob after the end of the Afghan—Soviet conflict and
 25 the fact that the regimes that had allowed fighters to

1 go there then didn't want them back -- we're slightly
 2 jumping ahead perhaps, but they didn't want them back,
 3 and the ideologues of what became Al-Qaeda,
 4 Abdullah Azzam and then Osama Bin Laden, start to
 5 generate this idea that actually it was the global
 6 hegemony of America oppressing Muslim lands that
 7 required the far jihad to take place against non-Muslim
 8 that were not in the Muslim majority world and that was
 9 presaged largely on the presence of American armies in
 10 what Osama Bin Laden called the Land of the Two Holy
 11 Precincts, that's in Saudi Arabia, at the time of the
 12 first Gulf War.
 13 So this was a construction that grew out of the far
 14 jihad -- the need for it grew out of the near jihad
 15 at the time of the end of the Afghan-Soviet conflict.
 16 Q. And the far jihad finds or starts to find its terrible
 17 expression in the events of 9/11?
 18 A. Exactly.
 19 Q. Let's unpack a little more of this. I'm now at
 20 section 8.5 of your report, page 73, where you deal with
 21 the themes and behaviour in violent Islamist extremism.
 22 You identify that the classic tropes of violent Islamist
 23 extremist include and number 1 is the act of seeking
 24 martyrdom. Would you explain that to us please?
 25 A. Yes. Again, if we think to the mainstream version in

1 original Islam, there was an idea then that if people
 2 died, they were killed fighting to defend Islam, to
 3 defend Muslim life and property, then they were
 4 legitimately regarded as martyrs to the faith. However,
 5 in the violent Islamist extremist model, the act of
 6 seeking martyrdom becomes the end in itself. And
 7 of course in the context of recruiting Westerners, this
 8 is often used as a recruiting device saying, "Come to
 9 Syria, we'll train you, become a suicide bomber and then
 10 you'll achieve martyrdom, which gets you various
 11 celestial goodies", the famous 72 virgins in paradise,
 12 for example.
 13 Q. Yes.
 14 A. So it's used partly as a recruiting tool and used, and
 15 this is quite important, in a quite symbolic way to say:
 16 we are absolutely different as Muslims from those
 17 kuffars. So you've got those kuffars, they just want to
 18 live, they love life and we are the ones that love
 19 death. And so you've prove your disavowal, again that
 20 doctrine of unbelief, by being prepared to be so
 21 different that you can kill yourself as a believer. So
 22 it becomes a tool of this doctrine of loyalty and
 23 disavowal.
 24 Q. And you have described it earlier in your report as
 25 a cult of martyrdom. Is that a phrase that you have

1 chosen carefully to represent your view about it?
 2 A. Yes, because it's been presented since the early days,
 3 again, of the Afghan-Soviet conflict in cultic terms.
 4 So the ideologues of that conflict spoke of corpses not
 5 decompressing on the battlefield and dying with a smile
 6 on their face and you have images and videos of corpses
 7 that are apparently smiling. That trope of a sort of
 8 cultic replication of the martyr has been a very key
 9 part of violent Islamist extremism of various different
 10 types in the Syrian Civil War. So online postings of
 11 large amounts of dead people smiling online to create
 12 this idea of this as a highly desirable outcome of your
 13 hijra and then your jihad.
 14 Q. Those who groom and then dispatch individuals to be
 15 suicide bombers, particularly in the places in the
 16 United Kingdom as occurred on 22 May 2017, what are they
 17 seeking to achieve?
 18 A. Well --
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, sorry. That makes the assumption
 20 that there were people behind this.
 21 MR GREANEY: It does.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Which we can't make the assumption of at
 23 the moment until we've considered all the evidence.
 24 MR GREANEY: That was a poor question. You're quite right
 25 to pull me up.

1 Those who were either behind it, if there are people
 2 behind it, or those who are, as they are sometimes
 3 described, lone wolves, who without leadership do it,
 4 the aims, is it possible to generalise or is that too
 5 complex a question?
 6 A. No, it's possible to generalise to some degree. Again,
 7 I suppose -- you did say in the United Kingdom, but
 8 perhaps I can be even more general.
 9 Q. You will answer the question in your own way, of course.
 10 A. There's what you might call a strategic and then
 11 a tactical outcome, which these groups mainly have in
 12 mind.
 13 So the strategic one, the high level one, is what
 14 a couple of violent extremist ideologues, one called
 15 Al-Maqdisi(?), and then his sort acolyte was Abu Musab
 16 Al-Zarqawi, who was the leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq,
 17 called the (inaudible) of savagery. This was really the
 18 idea that if you generated such a violent society with
 19 such unpredictable acts of violence and chaos,
 20 eventually you'd polarise it so much that the Muslim
 21 faction would have to seek the violent Islamist
 22 extremist faction for protection. So it was a device of
 23 what you might call societal radicalisation or
 24 polarisation, to force people into different camps.
 25 If you think about the political complexion of

1 Europe and Britain, to some degrees you can see, I don't
2 like to say it, but it sort of works, in that whenever
3 you get a violent Islamist extremist attack you also get
4 a spike in far right activity, so there is this sort of
5 polarisation. That was the strategic aim of it.
6 The tactical has often been to what you might call
7 soften up military objectives for more conventional
8 attacks, so Jabhat al-Nusra, for example, at the
9 beginning of the Syrian Civil War, the Al-Qaeda faction
10 in the Syrian Civil War, was known for using suicide
11 bombers to frighten the regime military targets, the
12 regime, which they then followed up with more
13 conventional infantry attacks.
14 Q. I asked the question, you've given me a very full, very
15 clear answer. I'm going to ask those who are viewing
16 these proceedings to make certain that I haven't adduced
17 anything from you that might be regarded as
18 operationally sensitive or capable of encouraging the
19 very thing that we want to avoid happening in the
20 future.
21 That's not your fault. If it's anyone's fault, it's
22 mine.
23 A. Stop me, sir, if I'm going too far. Again with the
24 shift from Al-Qaeda to the Islamic State style ideology
25 there was the idea that if you embed cells or

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1 individuals in the ranks of what were regarded as the
2 enemy, the kuffar, then if they do terrible things, such
3 as happened on 22 May 2017, if they do terrible things
4 they will cause chaos and fear in the ranks of the
5 enemy. So again it was a sign of generating maximum
6 chaos in societies that were seen to be eternally at war
7 with Islam.
8 Q. Thank you. I've understood that and I'm sure you'll
9 agree that the chairman was entirely right to pick me up
10 on the way in which I framed the question because there
11 may on the one hand be individuals who have an
12 operational relationship with Islamic State who are
13 dispatched to carry out these terrible events but
14 a mark, as you told us, earlier, of the Islamic State's
15 activities is that they may have no operational
16 connection with those who do these awful things but have
17 inspired them through social media and the internet?
18 A. That's correct. We go back to this idea of the world
19 view and they've absorbed the world view of
20 Islamic State through these non-contact sources.
21 Q. So we were dealing with the classic tropes of violent
22 Islamist extremist and item 2 in your list is the
23 tyrant. What does that describe?
24 A. This usually refers to what are regarded by these
25 ideologues as corrupt Muslim regimes who are corrupt,

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1 either because they don't follow Sharia law,
2 a literalistic version of it, stringently enough and
3 implement it enough, or else because they enter into
4 alliances with what are regarded as non-Muslim powers.
5 Q. And thirdly, the apostate.
6 A. Again this is a way of casting people that would
7 otherwise be regarded as inviolable, Muslims who you
8 can't attack, people who because of their political lack
9 of commitment to an Islamic state have, they believe,
10 effectively left the fold of Islam, they've apostatised
11 from their Islam. Again, these are means of branding
12 Muslims as non-Muslims.
13 Q. In your report at paragraph 86 you deal with the
14 attitude to war and violence in violent Islamist
15 extremism which I believe we've covered. I just want to
16 ensure we've understood correctly one aspect. You
17 explained to us that in traditional Islam the rules of
18 the Muslim army, certainly you've explained this in the
19 report, involve the necessity that there should be
20 a leader; is that correct?
21 A. Yes, clearly and a declared war.
22 Q. But in the approach of violent Islamist extremism, there
23 is the concept of unauthorised and leaderless jihad;
24 is that right?
25 A. That's right, and that's as a consequence, really, of

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1 having made armed struggle, armed qital (inaudible)
2 an individual religious obligation, so then it becomes
3 like doing the prayer, which of course doesn't require
4 any leadership, you just do it.
5 Q. Thank you very much for dealing in such detail and with
6 such clarity with the world view of these different
7 phenomena or models.
8 I'm going to turn now to the second but connected
9 topic on which you've been instructed to assist the
10 inquiry. This is your section 10, the origins of
11 violent Islamist extremism globally and in the
12 United Kingdom.
13 Obviously, within your report you have dealt with
14 this important issue in considerable detail. What
15 I would like you to do is just take us through it,
16 identify the head lines and where we need more
17 information, I will seek it from you.
18 So where does this all begin?
19 A. If you really cast our minds back into sort of what you
20 might regard as ancient history, a very early sect in
21 Islam, in the first century after the Prophet Mohammed
22 emerged, called the Carajites, which were opposed to any
23 type of rule after the Prophet Mohammed, any recognised
24 authority, they rule by the slogan, "The governance
25 belongs to God alone", and they were responsible for a

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1 series of political assassinations and engendered this
 2 idea of effecting political change by force of violence.
 3 At different times in different parts of the Muslim
 4 tradition, such as the [Arabic spoken] Hashshashin, the
 5 assassins, there's been a sort of fringe of violent
 6 extremism that's existed within Islam for a very long
 7 time. And, of course, Islam is not at all alone in
 8 this: a whole variety of different religious traditions
 9 and ideologies have had that, but its modern
 10 manifestation really emerges as a result of two big
 11 trends.
 12 So the first --
 13 Q. Let's pause for a moment. This is really what we need
 14 to focus on, the modern incarnation of this form of
 15 extremism. In terms of timing this in what century and
 16 what decade are we talking about this starting to take
 17 hold in the way in which it has?
 18 A. Well, in the way that it has, the start of it is --
 19 perhaps we could cast our mind back. In the way that it
 20 has, I suppose we're looking at the collapse of the
 21 Ottoman Caliphate in 1924 as a very key moment and, as
 22 I mentioned before, the sort of mandating of the Muslim
 23 majority world into various League of Nations mandates
 24 in the 1920s. Because for the first time at that point,
 25 Muslims globally found themselves without centralised

1 political and religious authority.
 2 Q. Let's just fix that in time. In your report at page 88,
 3 you describe an event that you characterise as "the
 4 Catastrophe". And is that a helpful place for us to
 5 start?
 6 A. Yes. We can carry on to there. So as a result of these
 7 mandates, and of especially the collapse of the British
 8 mandate in Palestine, the declaration of the state of
 9 Israel in 1948, and the retreat of the British, who
 10 tried for 20 years to try and mediate between Arab
 11 inhabitants and Jewish inhabitants, that broke down and
 12 as a result of that, in what had been a province of the
 13 Ottoman Empire, before it was a mandate, large numbers
 14 of Palestinian residents found themselves dispossessed
 15 and without a home.
 16 Q. So the way in which you put it in your report is that
 17 these events, which were happening from the 1920s,
 18 dented Arab Muslim confidence?
 19 A. Yes, they did. If you think about it -- we might not
 20 imagine it now, but in Muslim consciousness, certainly
 21 until the beginning of the 20th century, Muslims have
 22 regarded themselves as what you might call the shapers
 23 of civilisation rather than the shaped by. So there was
 24 a feeling that Muslims had lost respect globally, had
 25 lost power globally, were no longer masters of their own

1 fate.
 2 Q. Then you move on in your report to deal with the
 3 revolution in Iran in 1979. Is that also an important
 4 point in the history of understanding the development of
 5 extremism?
 6 A. Yes. So the failure subsequent to the declaration of
 7 the state of Israel of various Arab powers to deal with
 8 the situation as they saw it resulted in the loss of
 9 Sunni confidence but also the Iranian Revolution of 1979
 10 communicated to the Muslim world that the revolutionary
 11 overthrow of a corrupt, as they saw it, nominally
 12 Muslim, as the Shah was, regime was a possibility. It
 13 engendered this idea that revolutionary change on an
 14 Islamic/Islamist agenda could be achieved with
 15 relatively little bloodshed. Of course, what's regarded
 16 as a little bloodshed can be up for debate, but compared
 17 to revolutions like the Russian Revolution we can say
 18 relatively little bloodshed. So it communicated this
 19 idea that a violent takeover on an Islamist agenda was
 20 a possibility.
 21 Q. We then have, immediately following that, the
 22 Soviet-Afghan War between 1979 and 1989. Again, were
 23 the events during that period, and in particular how
 24 those events came to conclusion, important in
 25 understanding the development of this form of extremism?

1 A. They were utterly vital because you can imagine that the
 2 overthrow of the Shah and the takeover of
 3 Ayatollah Khomeini and his regime, they -- it sent shock
 4 waves around the Muslim world because, of course, other
 5 regimes throughout the Muslim world -- some of them, by
 6 anyone's standards of transparency and accountability,
 7 were corrupt, were dictatorial, and in a sense for lots
 8 of Muslim-led regimes around the Muslim world, the
 9 Soviet-Afghan conflict presented the perfect opportunity
 10 to deflect attention, revolutionary attention, from
 11 their own regimes to a war which everyone could rally
 12 behind.
 13 So lots of Muslim majority states, Saudi Arabia in
 14 particular, but across North Africa and elsewhere, they
 15 allowed and indeed in fact issued fatwas and encouraged
 16 young men to go and fight in the Afghan-Soviet conflict,
 17 partly because they obviously wanted to see the Russian
 18 aggressor expelled, as did the United States because it
 19 was in the Cold War, but partly because they could get
 20 rid of a troublesome constituency in their own
 21 countries. So of course the prosecution of that
 22 guerilla war, as it was, created an enormous feeling of
 23 triumph and well-being that after 85 years of
 24 humiliation here was a small group of Muslim guerilla
 25 fighters undoing a mighty super power like the Muslims

1 had done in the earliest days of the Sassanids and the
 2 Byzantines.
 3 Q. Can I make sure that I've understood what is happening
 4 over this period, 1979 to 1989? The idea of armed jihad
 5 becomes a very prominent one during this period?
 6 A. Correct, it's sort of resurrected.
 7 Q. Secondly, a group of persons from different parts of the
 8 world are engaging in this fighting and therefore
 9 developing those experiences?
 10 A. Correct. There was various mechanisms, offices set up
 11 to move people across the Muslim world into Afghanistan.
 12 Q. And thirdly, at the conclusion of the Soviet involvement
 13 in Afghanistan, was there a sense of victory on the part
 14 of the Mujahadin, the fighters we're speaking about?
 15 A. For a short while, before they descended into civil war,
 16 there was a massive sense of well-being. As I said,
 17 there was a sense that small bands of Muslim guerilla
 18 fighters could undo the mighty Soviet Union. So the
 19 inconvenient truth that actually they had been involved
 20 in a proxy war between the United States and the
 21 Soviet Union was sort of glossed over and you had this
 22 idea of plucky Mujahadin, which I have to say was fed
 23 into by Ronald Reagan and others, it certainly wasn't
 24 just the Mujahadin saying it, but the small, plucky,
 25 Mujahadin fighters could conquer a mighty super power.

1 So it left a massive myth in place of what was
 2 achievable militarily in the modern era.
 3 Q. So we've got armed jihad coming to great prominence
 4 people developing experiences of warfare, we have this
 5 sense of euphoria on the part of these fighters. And
 6 fourthly, do we also have something you mentioned
 7 earlier, which is people have been encouraged to leave
 8 their own countries, fight in this conflict, and
 9 I believe you told us that they were then not welcome
 10 back once it was over?
 11 A. That's right. A lot of them were not welcome back, you
 12 know, in places like Libya, for example. Very pertinent
 13 to our story.
 14 Q. And did that result, most importantly for our purposes,
 15 in a group of Arab Afghan fighters being left behind as
 16 a group in the north-west of Pakistan and in
 17 Afghanistan?
 18 A. Yes. And then moving fairly soon after to Sudan as
 19 well.
 20 Q. Out of that set of circumstances, what emerged or
 21 started to emerge?
 22 A. Well, two things emerged really, in a nutshell. First
 23 was that basic world view, violent Islamist extremist
 24 world view that became Al-Qaeda, the ideology behind
 25 al-Qaeda as base, and secondly, partly as a result of

1 just the sheer quantity of weaponry left behind in the
 2 Afghan conflict, the operational capacity actually to
 3 fight further conflicts along with the know-how to do
 4 it. There was quite a lot of debate about actually how
 5 much people knew, but there was certainly a lot of
 6 weaponry and a lot of guerilla warfare know-how.
 7 Q. So the fact of and the operational capacity of Al-Qaeda
 8 is emerging as a direct result of these circumstances
 9 that you've just described?
 10 A. Absolutely direct, yes.
 11 Q. Now let's bring our focus to a greater extent on the
 12 United Kingdom. When was it that the seeds of violent
 13 Islamist extremism were sown in this country?
 14 A. Again, it was at the time of both during the
 15 Afghan-Soviet conflict and immediately afterwards. So
 16 during it, because the United Kingdom was part of the
 17 allies against the Soviet Union, there was a toleration
 18 of sort of fairly low-level recruiting activity in the
 19 UK. And then afterwards, there was a tolerance and
 20 willingness to give asylum to some of those demobbed
 21 ideologues and fighters that not been allowed back into
 22 the Muslim-majority world.
 23 Q. In your report at the top of page 91 you say this:
 24 "Barred from their own countries, members of foreign
 25 Mujahadin fighters, such as members of the Libyan

1 Islamic Fighting Group, formed out of Libyans fighting
 2 with the Afghan Mujahadin, which later morphed into
 3 high-ranking connections with Al-Qaeda, were exiled in
 4 Britain, as were members of the Algerian Islamist
 5 Faction Front (FIS)."
 6 A. Yes. That is the case. By open source estimates, again
 7 probably about 500 Afghan-Libyan, you might call them,
 8 fighters went to Afghanistan and then that became the
 9 core of what became the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group,
 10 obviously with connections to what became Al-Qaeda and
 11 a lot of them were allowed asylum in Britain as former
 12 allies. That then had a platform to propagate elements
 13 of what became what you might call the nationalist
 14 Islamist ideology of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group.
 15 Q. As we have said already, we are not going to be dealing
 16 with Salman Abedi's own path to radicalisation today,
 17 but we'll just pause for a moment to recognise that when
 18 you do return at the end of chapter 13, we are obviously
 19 going to have to look very closely, are we not, at the
 20 association between his father and the LIFG?
 21 A. We are.
 22 Q. So we have people returning from fighting in Afghanistan
 23 to the United Kingdom --
 24 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Actually probably not returning. They
 25 are people being allowed in because they can't go back

1 to their own countries.
 2 A. Yes, that's right.
 3 MR GREANEY: And moreover, to boot, did a situation develop
 4 in which individuals with close connections to Osama Bin
 5 Laden, one of the founders of Al-Qaeda, settle in London
 6 around this time?
 7 A. That's correct. Along with a series of ideologues that
 8 you might say were sort of at one remove from that inner
 9 circle, who were tasked or took it upon themselves to
 10 spread the ideology of Al-Qaeda, especially things like
 11 the cultic world view of martyrdom and those types of
 12 tropes that became prominent in the Afghan war.
 13 Q. Is what happened that these assorted conflict veterans
 14 that you have told us about and the ideologues began to
 15 convey the idea to some young Muslims in this country
 16 that they were best taking matters of the pursuit of
 17 international justice into their own hands?
 18 A. That's right. The idea — the political conditions of
 19 the time played into this idea that the West, and
 20 therefore the kuffar, were determined to display their
 21 enmity to Islam and Muslims, so the breakdown of the
 22 Oslo Accords, for example, and that sort of had the
 23 effect of communicating to some sectors of the Muslim
 24 community that the international community was stacked
 25 up against Islam and Muslims.

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1 Q. So we're starting to develop a picture of a storm of
 2 factors which are all coming together?
 3 A. Yes, correct.
 4 Q. Then between 1991 and 1995 was what is sometimes
 5 described as the Bosnian War. Did that play a part
 6 in the development of this form of extremism?
 7 A. It did in a number of ways. So it provided a forum for
 8 the continued propagation — especially of the idea of
 9 martyrdom and the need to go and fight to defend Muslim
 10 lives, even if you're not part of that jurisdiction. So
 11 Muslims from this country travelled to form units that
 12 were loosely affiliated with the Bosnian National Army.
 13 In fact, until right towards the end of the war they
 14 were quite a nuisance in a number of ways because they
 15 conducted ad hoc killings, so it fed into the idea that
 16 was propagated by the Serbians in particular that what
 17 they were facing was an international Islamist takeover
 18 of the Balkans. So that was one thing. There was this
 19 tide — I wouldn't say a tide, a trickle of people that
 20 went to fight there.
 21 Q. And therefore developing similar experiences
 22 (overspeaking) as we have discussed?
 23 A. (Overspeaking) and that meant, of course, an
 24 amplification again of some of the key ideas of violent
 25 Islamist extremist, in particular the failure of NATO

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1 and the Western powers to intervene until right at the
 2 end of the conflict, after events such as the Srebrenica
 3 Genocide and so on and so forth.
 4 Q. If you just pause for one moment. So we've got factor
 5 number 1, we have a trickle of people actually going to
 6 engage in the conflict. Factor 2, we have the events
 7 such as the genocidal assault on the Bosnian Muslim
 8 community. Is the consequence of that that Muslims in
 9 Britain, especially young Muslims, are witnessing
 10 something absolutely dreadful happening?
 11 A. That's right, they were witnessing something that if it
 12 had been another group, a non-Muslim group, it would
 13 have been intolerable, but it was allowed to happen
 14 because it was Muslims and that fed into the
 15 us-versus-them world view of Muslims committed to jihad
 16 and the Islamic State versus them, the kuffar, who don't
 17 care if we die.
 18 Q. And in the context of this sense of grievance —
 19 am I describing it correctly?
 20 A. Yes, exactly.
 21 Q. In the context of this sense of grievance, did some
 22 particular figures emerge?
 23 A. Yes. There were infamous characters at that time, you
 24 may remember them, Abu Qatada and then Abu
 25 Hamza al-Masri, who you might remember sported a hook.

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1 They were ideologues that tried to establish themselves
 2 in, famously, the Finsbury Mosque, but then eventually
 3 were ejected by mosque management. But they attracted
 4 quite a group of acolytes, even if they were praying
 5 in the street, and other ones included a chap called
 6 Omar Bakri Mohammed, who was part of that global
 7 Islamist organisation that they called Hizb ut-Tahrir
 8 but broke away because, importantly, he was saying that
 9 Sharia and Islamic State should be established not only
 10 globally in traditionally Muslim countries, but actually
 11 here in the UK.
 12 Q. So these figures are emerging out of that sense of
 13 grievance, seeking to develop their credentials and so
 14 on, and people like Abu Qatada and Abu Hamza, are they
 15 characterised as adherents of this form of violent
 16 Islamist extremism?
 17 A. Yes, they tended to — how can I put this? In public
 18 they sort of flirted at the borders between non-violent
 19 Islamist extreme and violent Islamist extremist, and in
 20 private they were propagating violent Islamist
 21 extremism.
 22 Q. So these are all things which are happening, developing
 23 over time, in the United Kingdom. And pausing for
 24 a moment in the chronology, in the mid-1990s, you have
 25 explained to us there comes a time when the so-called

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1 near jihad morphs into the far or offensive jihad. At
 2 what time is that change occurring or starting to occur?
 3 A. Well, very particularly between 1996 and 1998 with the
 4 two famous/infamous legal fatwas of Osama Bin Laden who,
 5 in two different tracts, declared war on the Americans
 6 for all Muslims globally. That was the key shift.
 7 Q. And was that a message that was heard in the
 8 United Kingdom?
 9 A. It was heard everywhere. It certainly wasn't heeded
 10 everywhere but it was heard everywhere.
 11 Q. We have from you this sense and understanding of the
 12 development over this period in now the late 1990s of
 13 the us—and—them world view.
 14 A. Yes. And of course I think I should add, if I may, at
 15 the same time in the UK there was this much more
 16 proactive, perfectly legal self—representing idea of
 17 this activist Islam appearing as well. So the Muslim
 18 Council of Britain was founded in 1997, for example. So
 19 at the same time, British Muslims sort of took — laid
 20 claim to a more overtly Muslim identity.
 21 Q. In your report you say that this us—versus—them world
 22 view was fuelled by socio—economic deprivation in the
 23 United Kingdom; what do you mean by that?
 24 A. I don't want to eradicate what you might call individual
 25 responsibility from things, but of course at that time,

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1 the early 2000s/late 1990s, we saw the final collapse of
 2 some of the factory labour in the north, the mill towns,
 3 the labour that the migrations of Muslims in the 1950s
 4 and 1960s had come over to fill, that type of labour
 5 dried up, what one person in my research called scruffy
 6 work. So of course the competition between white
 7 British working class youth and Asian Muslim youth
 8 around things like jobs, limited availability of jobs,
 9 took a nastier turn around that time, 2001 I think it
 10 was, with the Oldham Riots and other related racial
 11 events.
 12 And also within some sectors of the Muslim
 13 community, small ones, again these shortages of labour
 14 and these glass ceilings fed into the idea that again
 15 the kuffar are depriving us of our rightful dues.
 16 Q. And we are now in the early 2000s and obviously on
 17 11 September 2001, the attacks in the United States upon
 18 the World Trade Center and other targets took place.
 19 Did that generate, within the United Kingdom and more
 20 globally, hostility towards Muslims and suspicion about
 21 them?
 22 A. Yes. It was for sort of Muslim self—awareness and
 23 perception of others about Muslim and Islam, it was
 24 a terribly polarising event. I don't think we've ever
 25 actually recovered from it as a community in the sense

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1 that, for obvious reasons, Islam suddenly became and
 2 Muslims suddenly became very closely connected with
 3 global terrorism in a way that had not existed before.
 4 In fact, I think I can say, as someone that was
 5 involved in the Muslim community in the 1990s, that the
 6 1990s represented quite a hopeful phase, you know, it
 7 was the phase of more proactive multi—culturalism more
 8 generally, when people were starting to accept Islam and
 9 Muslims in Britain as a part of daily life. So that had
 10 been actually — despite the stuff we talked about on
 11 the edges of British life — had been quite a hopeful
 12 period but 9/11 absolutely changed the game in that
 13 sense of majority society understandably associating
 14 Islam and Muslims with acts of terrible terror.
 15 Q. So with got a situation in the country that you've
 16 described and I am not going to go back over that. We
 17 know there are by this stage people within the
 18 United Kingdom who are promoting this form of extremism,
 19 this idea of them and us, and what happened in the
 20 aftermath of 9/11, I believe you're telling us, fed into
 21 that?
 22 A. Yes. Then the 9/11 triggered almost immediately the War
 23 on Terror, the Bush War on Terror and then on false
 24 evidence, as we now know, didn't know at the time, the
 25 invasion of Iraq and the famous weapons of mass

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1 destruction intelligence that actually wasn't
 2 intelligence at all.
 3 Q. We're going to come on to the effects of wars in Iraq,
 4 Afghanistan and Syria in a moment.
 5 I'm going to remain in that period in the early
 6 2000s for a moment. Out of all of these events, did
 7 individuals or groups begin to emerge in the
 8 United Kingdom?
 9 A. Yes, they did. In particular, there was a whole —
 10 there was a great sort of smorgasbord of groups and
 11 splinter groups that appeared at about that time. Some
 12 of them were what you might call Salafi—leaning
 13 organisations, like JIMAS which —
 14 Q. You're going to have to pause for a moment to explain to
 15 us what Salafism is in simple terms.
 16 A. Salafism is a form of Islam that looks, often slightly
 17 literalistically, to return uniquely to the earliest
 18 primary sources of Islam, so the Koran and the sunna and
 19 hadith material in particular, as the only viable source
 20 of Islam, rather than the various jurisprudential
 21 developments that have happened afterwards. So it is,
 22 if you like, looking to return to the pristine early
 23 forms of Islam. It comes from Salaf as—Salih, the
 24 righteous predecessors.
 25 Q. I interrupted you. You were explaining about

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1 individuals and organisations that started to emerge
2 during this period in the early 2000s.
3 A. Yes. So in this hostile environment, post 9/11, for
4 many young Muslims, not all but for many, some sought to
5 if, you'll pardon the language, sort of assert more kick
6 ass Muslim identity in the form of — the slightly rigid
7 forms of Salafism and these start to proliferate around
8 university societies and what have you. They attracted
9 sometimes thousands of adherents, but they slightly went
10 in and out of fashion and they were prone to a lot of
11 infighting.

12 But in particular, around that time, a splinter
13 group of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Britain, which has been
14 variously called Al-Muhajiroun, the Safe(?) Sect, Islam
15 For UK — I mean it's had a plethora of different
16 names — emerged, which had a much more aggressive
17 agenda of, on the face of it, bringing Sharia Law and
18 Islamic State to the UK. But it subsequently appeared
19 as actually an interface between what you might call
20 sort of disaffected Muslim young people and Al-Qaeda in
21 different parts of the world.

22 Q. Is it also relevant to note that during this period from
23 the late 1990s to the early and mid-2000s sees the
24 increasing use and, moreover, sophistication of the
25 internet?

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1 A. Yes. Obviously, that — I mean what violent Islamist
2 extremist ideologues tend to be rather clever at is
3 purloining new technology and of course the internet was
4 a perfect platform to reach an English-speaking audience
5 in large numbers for the first time, and it was used
6 aggressively by Al-Qaeda, through its then spokesperson,
7 a chap called al-Awlaki, who appealed to
8 English-speaking audiences because he spoke English very
9 well and could also speak Arabic and seemed authentic.

10 Q. So we have these, as they're sometimes called, radical
11 preachers, able to preach their hate to sometimes large
12 numbers. But also, we have people with an interest in
13 such ideas able to access lectures, speeches and so on
14 by actual members of Al-Qaeda.

15 A. Yes, and spokespeople, that's right. And of course, in
16 those early days, regulation was — well, was it
17 non-existent? I don't know what it was, but there
18 wasn't much of it.

19 Q. You mentioned a short time ago, and I said we'd come to,
20 the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, happening or
21 starting in the 2000s. What was the effect or effects
22 of those in terms of this type of radicalisation and the
23 development of this form of extremism in summary,
24 please?

25 A. Gosh, that's a very big question.

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1 Q. First of all, did it have an effect?

2 A. It had a massive effect. I suppose in those Muslim
3 majority countries, what it did, amongst many other
4 things, was create a chaos and a vacuum of power into
5 which violent Islamist extremist groups could move and
6 operate freely and with absolutely deadly violence. So
7 obviously, Al-Qaeda in Iraq is the classic example of
8 that, which in 2004 and 2005 was responsible for the
9 massacre of thousands of Muslims in Iraq.

10 What people often forget about this type of violence
11 is that of course in the Muslim majority world we're
12 often talking about hundreds and thousands of people
13 dying at the hands of these people. So that idea at the
14 same time that that part of the world view that
15 I mentioned earlier, this idea of the management of
16 savagery also started to take note and then, as a result
17 of the American surge and then the imprisonment and
18 disbanding — the imprisonment of violent Islamist
19 extremists and the disbanding of the Ba'ath Party, both
20 its military and its political apparatus, in various
21 internment camps such as Camp Booqa(?) these extremists
22 and Ba'ath Party nationalists came together and formed
23 the hybrid Statist violent Islamic extremist ideology
24 that was then to underpin Islamic State.

25 So it was a hugely radicalising war and also,

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1 of course, some of the methods used by the Western
2 powers, such as drone attacks in Afghanistan and
3 elsewhere, which did have terrible — I don't want to
4 use "collateral damage", murderous damage, really, let's
5 call it, in terms of civilian life, had a terrible
6 effect of also radicalising young people in those parts
7 of the world. So that's the sort of Muslim majority
8 world.

9 In what you might call the Muslim diaspora, again
10 those wars played perfectly into the idea of the — and
11 which I mentioned before — the eternal struggle of
12 Islam and Muslims against kuffar and the unbelievers.

13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Can I just stop you for a moment?

14 I think you're going quite quickly and we do have
15 someone making a note. I'm quite surprised at how they
16 can do it, particularly as they're not always the
17 easiest words that you're using.

18 MR GREANEY: It's someone who isn't in the room. That's my
19 fault.

20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's nobody's fault and I don't think he
21 has yet complained. He hasn't. So he's done remarkably
22 well, but it's actually quite difficult at the speed
23 you're going to take it all in.

24 A. I'm sorry, I apologise.

25 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Really don't apologise because you're

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1 giving us a lot of information and we're trying to do it
 2 in a reasonable length of time, so I quite understand.
 3 MR GREANEY: Let me just make sure I've understood and then
 4 we can move events on slightly. These wars have a very
 5 significant, to say the least, radicalising effect on
 6 a group of people?
 7 A. Yes, correct, both in the Muslim majority world and
 8 here. And you mentioned earlier, if I can just pick up
 9 on something, you mentioned that sense of grievance.
 10 Q. Yes.
 11 A. And that was, if you like, aggravated by the idea that
 12 the Western powers were just interfering in Muslim
 13 affairs.
 14 Q. As we know, one of the effects of that, and its
 15 radicalising consequence, was that people left from the
 16 West, including the United Kingdom, to go and fight in
 17 these war zones?
 18 A. They did, and then, of course -- and you may be going to
 19 come to it, but on 7/7 (inaudible) came back from
 20 training camps in the North-West Frontier Province of
 21 Pakistan and then the committed atrocities on the London
 22 transport network.
 23 Q. So far, we've been talking about Al-Qaeda, its emergence
 24 post-Afghanistan, and yet we know, or there is a belief,
 25 that what influenced the attack in Manchester on

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1 22 May 2017 was Islamic State. So what is the
 2 relationship between, on the one hand, Al-Qaeda and, on
 3 the other, Islamic State?
 4 A. Murky, in a word. In a nutshell, Islamic State grew out
 5 of what had been Al-Qaeda in Iraq and the various
 6 elements that were interned by the Americans, mixed with
 7 ex-Ba'ath Party officials and military operators. It
 8 had actually a couple of sort of what you might call
 9 false starts, if my memory serves me right, in 2006,
 10 where it tried to emerge and lay claim to territory, but
 11 it was sort of swatted by Al-Qaeda. But eventually,
 12 in the context of the Syrian Civil War and the complete
 13 ungovernability of huge tracts of Syria and
 14 north-eastern Syria and Iraq, it took possession of a
 15 large amount of territory in that area.
 16 Q. This is exactly the point I want to come to. As
 17 everyone will know, there comes a time in,
 18 I think, June 2014 when Islamic State declares
 19 a caliphate. First of all, describe in a few sentences
 20 what that means and then tell us, please, what the
 21 significance of that is in terms of understanding
 22 radicalisation within the United Kingdom context.
 23 A. Well, it's very important. What the caliph,
 24 self-declared caliph of so-called Islamic State was
 25 trying to do was trying to claim leadership of the

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1 entire global Muslim community, the ummah, on a model of
 2 the first so-called rightly-guided caliphs of Islam, who
 3 were those -- "caliph" just means successor to the
 4 Prophet Mohammed, who succeeded the Prophet Mohammed,
 5 are regarded as highly virtuous and praiseworthy leaders
 6 of early Islam. So by making that claim to be a caliph,
 7 to be a successor to the Prophet Mohammed, he was laying
 8 claim to being the supreme leader, if you like, of the
 9 entire global Muslim community.
 10 In fact, his attention was probably -- I say this
 11 advisedly because I can't know for sure -- was probably
 12 directed more at laying claim to leadership of the
 13 violent Islamist extremist factions that had been
 14 fighting each other in the context of the Syrian Civil
 15 War. But he was appealing to the entire Muslim global
 16 community to accept him as leader of it and the
 17 Islamic State that he had established as a place where
 18 righteous Muslims should go if they wanted to be
 19 complete Muslims and follow Islam properly.
 20 Q. What was the impact of that event on the development of
 21 this violent Islamist extremism in the United Kingdom?
 22 A. It was important and significant because him and
 23 so-called Islamic State had managed, apparently, to do
 24 something that Al-Qaeda had never managed to do, which
 25 was to govern with the apparent infrastructure of

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1 a working state of a big tract of land, you know, not
 2 much smaller at one point than the whole of the UK. So
 3 he'd managed to lay claim to having established
 4 a territory governed by Islamic law, which Al-Qaeda
 5 never managed to do, and he'd managed to apparently take
 6 on himself the mantle of the Prophet Mohammed. So these
 7 two acts were -- you know, in terms of appealing to
 8 idealistic or naive or vulnerable young Muslims were two
 9 very powerful statements of power, if you like.
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: And setting up a caliphate is something
 11 that can be supported by quotations from the Koran?
 12 A. No, setting up a caliphate has to be done by a consensus
 13 of ummah, of scholars of Islam, who would need to agree
 14 after a consultation, a shura, as it's called, or
 15 consultation, that a certain people is, 1, eligible and,
 16 2, appropriate. Conditions of eligibility vary, but
 17 appropriate would mean that it would be somebody of
 18 highly reputable character.
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: A slightly different point. That may be
 20 my misunderstanding. So the aim --
 21 A. You can't self-declare, sir.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You can't declare yourself a caliph,
 23 I understand what you're saying about that. But
 24 actually the aim of setting up a large tract of land
 25 which is governed by Sharia Law and is occupied entirely

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1 by Muslims, is that not something which can be justified
 2 within the Koran? I'm not saying it's a proper
 3 interpretation .
 4 A. Well, I mean, you can, it can be justified . The model
 5 of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon Him, was
 6 that, as I mentioned before, while He was in Mecca,
 7 Islam was an entirely religious practice, and then in
 8 Medina He took on the role of a statesman more and there
 9 were political elements and legal infrastructure that
 10 got put in place, partly, of course, because in the
 11 tribal society He was in, that just wasn't there. So
 12 there is obviously precedent for Islamic law and the
 13 Koran and the sunna to inform a legal process and a
 14 legal system.
 15 Of course, the other bit of what you said has never
 16 happened, there have always been within Islamic policies
 17 Muslims and non-Muslims living together. So there's
 18 never been a sort of entirely pure state in that sense.
 19 But yes, of course, in the early days of Islam there
 20 were caliphates.
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.
 22 MR GREANEY: So we've now taken the chronology from the
 23 1920s through to the events in Afghanistan in 1979
 24 through to 1989 and other developments such as 9/11, the
 25 wars in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq, and now to the

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1 declaration of the caliphate in June of 2014, obviously
 2 just under 3 years before the attack at the arena.
 3 The way in which you summarise the position at
 4 page 99 of your report is as follows:
 5 "Toxic, febrile and violent post-colonial
 6 geopolitical circumstances, underscored with theological
 7 fear and cultural nostalgia for a more glorious Islamic
 8 past, have sustained and fuelled Islamist extremism for
 9 the past 50 years."
 10 You then bring us slightly more up-to-date, much
 11 more up-to-date, in fact, with this:
 12 "Against this international geopolitical backdrop of
 13 war and upheaval in Muslim majority countries in Britain
 14 (a) the relative socio-economic deprivation of Muslims
 15 (b) the experience of anti-Muslim prejudice (c) the
 16 often unfettered preaching of increasingly violent
 17 Islamist ideologues, which is given rocket fuel by the
 18 internet and social media have provided the political
 19 and cultural conditions in which the world view of
 20 violent Islamist extremism has to some seemed
 21 a plausible account of the way the world is and has been
 22 allowed to thrive."
 23 Is that your view?
 24 A. Yes.
 25 Q. That is how that world view has developed and, in some

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1 quarters, been able to take hold?
 2 A. That's correct.
 3 Q. In your report you do deal with the position of prisons .
 4 That's going to be a very important topic when you come
 5 back at the end of chapter 13. But I simply want at
 6 this stage to remind you that in your report you express
 7 this view, paragraph 10.12.15:
 8 "There is no doubt that therefore, historically
 9 speaking, prisons have been an environment that have
 10 been both productive and destructive for Islam and
 11 Muslims and particularly so for those who either embrace
 12 or re-embrace Islam in prison."
 13 A. That's right.
 14 Q. So they are, or are capable of being, particularly
 15 concerning environments in your view?
 16 A. They can present significant opportunities and immense
 17 risks too.
 18 Q. Sir, I hope you are content that I leave prisons there
 19 for the time being, having identified an issue of
 20 principle, and we will most certainly return to that
 21 when the doctor returns.
 22 I'm just going to check with Mr Suter whether I'm
 23 able to go on until 1 o'clock, or just after 1 o'clock,
 24 and then we'll be able to complete all of the evidence,
 25 save for the issue of radicalisation and

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1 deradicalisation .
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The issue of?
 3 MR GREANEY: We'll get to a point at which we will have left
 4 radicalisation and deradicalisation, which I should be
 5 able to complete within an hour.
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's fine, I just didn't hear what you
 7 said, I'm afraid.
 8 MR GREANEY: Section 11 of your report, Dr Wilkinson.
 9 The heading is:
 10 "Violent Islamist Extremist Groups with Special
 11 Connections to the United Kingdom".
 12 We've dealt with much of this, but let's take them
 13 in turn. First of all, Al-Qaeda and Al-Muhajiroun, and
 14 the association between the United Kingdom and those
 15 groups, please.
 16 A. Well, in a nutshell, Al-Qaeda has never had a known
 17 operational presence within the United Kingdom, it's
 18 usually been mediated by other fronts such as groups
 19 like Al-Muhajiroun, and at that time, the late 1990s and
 20 early 2000s, those that wanted to affiliate to Al-Qaeda
 21 tended to travel to training camps to actually
 22 geographically and physically mark their allegiance to
 23 Osama Bin Laden and the cause.
 24 Q. And as you've pointed out already, the 7/7 attackers are
 25 known to have received training at such a camp?

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1 A. That's right, yes.
 2 Q. Carry on, please.
 3 A. So what Al-Qaeda contributed to the development of
 4 violent extremist Islamism in the UK ideologically was
 5 the idea that embedded cells of fighters that they'd
 6 trained up could then conduct relatively spontaneous and
 7 ad hoc leaderless jihad within the countries where they
 8 were residing as citizens. So that's that idea that
 9 even citizens that have a contract of security in the
 10 countries that they live in are able to conduct jihad
 11 was obviously the thinking behind the 7/7 attacks and
 12 was the contribution of Al-Qaeda to that development.
 13 Q. In your report you inform us that Al-Qaeda was the first
 14 violent Islamist extremist group to actively propagate
 15 what you've told us about: ad hoc leaderless jihad by
 16 individuals and small groups embedded in civilian
 17 populations.
 18 A. That's right. They made other -- I'm not sure -- they
 19 use the word "contributions" advisedly such as they --
 20 in particular they propagated the idea which resulted in
 21 a number of violent attacks such as the Charlie Hebdo
 22 attacks in Paris, that people that insulted the person
 23 of the Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon Him, there
 24 cartoons or whatever, anyone that insulted the Prophet
 25 could then be attacked in an ad hoc way without any need

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1 for authorisation or what have you. So they contributed
 2 that idea that, you know, again the kuffar could then be
 3 attacked in their own territories.
 4 Q. At paragraph 11.1.4 you express the view that Al-Qaeda's
 5 ideological and logistical presence in Britain has been
 6 mediated through a number of mechanisms.
 7 A. Yes. The one that then appeared more and more, once the
 8 security forces recognised the pattern, was through this
 9 group Al-Muhajiroun, this splinter group of the Hizb
 10 ut-Tahrir, that I mentioned, that had been initially led
 11 by Omar Bakri Muhammad, but then when he was -- he now
 12 lives in Lebanon, I can't remember, I think he was not
 13 allowed back in on a certain occasion. It was passed to
 14 his successor, a chap called Anjem Choudary, who's been
 15 the sort of figurehead or the ideologue that's been
 16 connected with a huge range of attacks right up to the
 17 present day.
 18 Q. You also express the view that the presence of Al-Qaeda
 19 in the United Kingdom has been mediated through members
 20 of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group; is that correct?
 21 A. Well, as we'll probably come on to, the relationship of
 22 the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group to Al-Qaeda is
 23 difficult to establish.
 24 Q. We'll come on to that, shall we?
 25 A. Especially in the United Kingdom. But certainly, people

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1 that have been associated with that group, that have had
 2 residential status in the United Kingdom at some point
 3 are also thought to have been connected to Al-Qaeda as
 4 well.
 5 Q. And also its presence in Britain has been mediated
 6 through -- and we won't give the names of these --
 7 extremist websites, and also bookshops?
 8 A. Yes. There were quite a few front, geophysical fronts,
 9 such as bookshops and websites.
 10 Q. And you make clear that since 2008, Al-Qaeda's influence
 11 has been on the wane because of its failure, as you've
 12 told us, to create an Islamic state?
 13 A. Yes, that's correct, and also in a way the success of
 14 9/11 in terms of destructive power slightly meant they
 15 were a busted flush after that, they could never do any
 16 better.
 17 Q. And in some quarters the position of Al-Qaeda has
 18 contrasted poorly with the declaration of caliphate by
 19 the Islamic State?
 20 A. Yes, in terms of both that declaration, but also in
 21 terms of just the sheer savagery that those two groups
 22 were prepared to tolerate, especially in the Muslim
 23 majority world. So Al-Qaeda at some point has actually
 24 tried to rein in Islamic State, it sounds hard to
 25 believe, but they've actually tried to rein them in

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1 because they thought that the level of savagery was
 2 actually alienating the entire Muslim majority
 3 population against both them and Al-Qaeda.
 4 Q. So the position I think you're describing to us is that
 5 the appalling savagery of the Islamic State has provided
 6 to those who may be attracted to it a more readily
 7 identifiable violent Islamist extremist brand?
 8 A. Exactly.
 9 Q. Next in terms of organisations or groups that have
 10 a special association with the United Kingdom that may
 11 be of importance to us in understanding the development
 12 of this extremism, the LIFG, the Libyan Islamic Fighting
 13 Group. First, as you've just explained, this group has
 14 what you tell us is a rather murky and on/off
 15 relationship with Al-Qaeda.
 16 A. Yes. I think it's perhaps worth making the point more
 17 generally that these violent Islamist extremist groups
 18 are often quite porous, so people sort of move in and
 19 out.
 20 Q. And the LIFG, as we've agreed, is of potential
 21 particular relevance to us because of the belief that
 22 Ramadan Abedi belonged to that group. So it's important
 23 that we should understand, first of all, what did that
 24 group stand for?
 25 A. It stood for two things: overthrowing the nationalist

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1 regime of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya and then, at
 2 a national level, implementing an Islamic state run by
 3 Sharia Law.
 4 Q. On the spectrum that you told us about at the very
 5 beginning of your evidence, where does the LIFG sit?
 6 A. Well, I'd have to say it's a violent Islamist extremist
 7 group, albeit of a slightly more contained form than
 8 some of the other groups we've discussed. For example,
 9 they use the trope, or used when they were active, the
 10 trope of the apostate and the tyrant and all these ideas
 11 to cast Muslim regimes as not Muslim enough.
 12 Q. And Islamic State, you've told us a good deal about that
 13 organisation and its history, its conduct marked by the
 14 establishment of the caliphate in 2014?
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Sorry, the connection of LIFG and
 16 Al-Qaeda, are they interrelated in some way or is it
 17 just people going from one to the other and is it
 18 uniform that they all go from one to the other?
 19 A. LIFG was made out of fighters that had been part of the
 20 Afghan Arab Battalion, or whatever you want to call it,
 21 that obviously then had at some point operational
 22 connection to the predecessor of Osama Bin Laden,
 23 Abdullah Azzam, and then Osama Bin Laden. Because at
 24 that time Al-Qaeda didn't really exist, so they were in
 25 the mix and they shared some of the aims of Al-Qaeda

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1 that were then declared in the sense that they wanted to
 2 overthrow the Libyan state and put an Islamic state
 3 there. They've always been, from what I've read,
 4 ambivalent about whether they're committed to a global
 5 Islamic state or not, but the accent of their attention
 6 is definitely on Libya itself.
 7 Some of their people that have been associated with
 8 them, some that have come up, Anas Al-Libi is known to
 9 have been an Al-Qaeda operative in different contexts as
 10 well. So, as I say, they -- and at various different
 11 times they have proactively dissociated themselves from
 12 declaring allegiance to Osama Bin Laden and others. So
 13 if you see what I mean, their relationship again is
 14 on/off, let's say.
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 16 MR GREANEY: Just to pick up on a few of those points, is
 17 a person called Noman Benotman, a former Al-Qaeda
 18 commander?
 19 A. Yes.
 20 Q. And is he of any relevance to us in terms of
 21 understanding the relationship between the LIFG and
 22 Al-Qaeda?
 23 A. Well, he again, like I mentioned, says that operatives
 24 that became part of LIFG were both indoctrinated into
 25 the Al-Qaeda world view and trained in their training

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1 camps in Afghanistan in the 1990s.
 2 Q. And as I think you've told us already, a number of
 3 high-ranking al-Qaeda operatives have also been linked
 4 to the LIFG?
 5 A. That's correct.
 6 Q. But on the other hand, it's reasonable to observe that
 7 the LIFG has, as you told us, a more limited strategic
 8 aim?
 9 A. That's correct. You might call it a nationalist aim.
 10 Q. It has disavowed Al-Qaeda's strategic use of suicide
 11 killing?
 12 A. Latterly it has.
 13 Q. And indeed in 2007, the LIFG issued a statement
 14 specifically denying its affiliation to Al-Qaeda and
 15 disavowing Al-Qaeda's strategy of targeting civilians?
 16 A. Correct.
 17 Q. So we were just turning to deal finally before lunch
 18 with Islamic State. We've dealt with the key
 19 features: declaration of the caliphate and the impact
 20 that had upon the development of this form of extremism;
 21 its absolute and terrible savagery in respects that
 22 don't need to be repeated. Is it also the position that
 23 Islamic State has claimed responsibility for a large
 24 number of what are sometimes described as lone actor
 25 attacks in Europe, America and Australia?

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1 A. Yes, there's been regular, what you might call, post hoc
 2 claims of people to be warriors of Islamic State after
 3 events have happened.
 4 Q. Well, Dr Wilkinson, thank you very much indeed. Those
 5 are my questions on the topics about world view and
 6 organisations.
 7 Sir, unless you have any questions about those
 8 matters I was going to suggest we take lunch.
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The contract of security and the
 10 statements of Al-Narni(?), are they matters which you
 11 were going to deal with or not?
 12 MR GREANEY: I can certainly deal with those, sir, yes.
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Either after lunch or now.
 14 MR GREANEY: Can I deal with those after lunch?
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Absolutely, thank you.
 16 (1.05 pm)
 17 (The lunch adjournment)
 18 (2.12 pm)
 19 MR GREANEY: Sir, good afternoon.
 20 Before lunch, you raised the issue of the contract
 21 of security and a statement made by Abu Mohammed al
 22 Narni. I've had a chance to have a word with
 23 Dr Wilkinson about that. The position is that he would
 24 rather that we gave him a little more context in
 25 writing, the opportunity to reflect, and so that's

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1 an issue that he will deal with when he returns at the
 2 end of chapter 13.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you very much.
 4 MR GREANEY: So long as you are content with that.
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, no, absolutely.
 6 MR GREANEY: We're going to turn now to the issue of
 7 radicalisation . I'm going to begin with the simple --
 8 I say simple -- simple but important topic of what
 9 radicalisation is .
 10 Is the starting point for understanding
 11 radicalisation this concept of in-groups and out-groups
 12 that you told us about?
 13 A. That and world views, yes.
 14 Q. When you say "that and world views", what are you
 15 communicating to us?
 16 A. That radicalisation involves both increasing adherence
 17 to an extremist in-group, a group of people, and the
 18 world view that they hold.
 19 Q. Let's try to understand that in a little more detail.
 20 Obviously, in-groups which hold extremist views may take
 21 a number of different forms. They may be violent
 22 Islamist extremist organisations or they may be violent,
 23 far right extremist organisations, to give just two
 24 examples.
 25 A. Yes, or violent far left organisations and so on.

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1 Q. But is it the position, based upon your research, that
 2 all extremist in-groups require individuals to go
 3 through what you've called a process of induction into
 4 their world view?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. What do you mean by that, just dealing with matters in
 7 general terms at the moment?
 8 A. I mean they have to go through a process whereby they
 9 accept the world view of the extremist in-group as the
 10 best account of the way the world is and the way they
 11 should be in it .
 12 Q. And is causing a person to accept that world view also
 13 described as the process of radicalisation ?
 14 A. It is . In this context, we're talking about Islamist
 15 radicalisation , but radicalisation as you've just
 16 alluded to can be induction into any number of forms of
 17 extremism.
 18 Q. So it is the process of causing someone to accept and
 19 adhere to the group's world view?
 20 A. Yes. You might say to first accept and then act upon is
 21 the usual process.
 22 Q. Accept and then act upon. And the people that we are
 23 talking about may, indeed almost certainly I suppose
 24 will , come to that process with a different world view.
 25 Does that make sense as a proposition?

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1 A. Yes, absolutely . So the process of radicalisation --
 2 I describe it as a process of shifting world views from
 3 a different world view to the extremist world view.
 4 Sometimes that journey, that shift, may be quite short,
 5 sometimes it can be a very long one and sometimes it can
 6 fluctuate backwards and forwards.
 7 Q. I want to ask you about that in a moment. The
 8 pre-existing world view may well be based on things such
 9 as one's family?
 10 A. Yes, absolutely . That's the seminal world view that
 11 most of us absorb.
 12 Q. One's local community?
 13 A. Yes.
 14 Q. And perhaps also the country within which one lives?
 15 A. Yes, nations have cultures, yes, for sure.
 16 Q. So a person may associate very strongly with their
 17 nationality ?
 18 A. They may well do.
 19 Q. Does a group such as Al-Qaeda or Islamic State accept
 20 the possibility that one might hold their world view but
 21 also hold a world view connected for example to one's
 22 family?
 23 A. No. These extremist world views, especially via the
 24 Islamist extremist world views, specifically obliterate
 25 identifiers with other forms of in-groups, such as

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1 family, such as nations.
 2 Q. So their approach is to entirely replace one's
 3 identification , for example, with one's family?
 4 A. Yes, for example, exactly. The key words there, as you
 5 said, are to replace one's identification .
 6 Q. Replace. So the way in which you put it in your report
 7 is that extremist world views of the sort we are
 8 concerned with cannot sustain contact with alternative
 9 world views and the people that exhibit them; is that
 10 correct?
 11 A. That's right. They survive because the myths, the
 12 stories , the fictions that sustain them have internal
 13 consistency within the world view and the in-group that
 14 talks about it, but they will not sustain exposure to
 15 other types of world view because often they are
 16 fantastical and they can be debunked very easily, so
 17 they are kept hermetically sealed within the in-group.
 18 Q. Islamist radicalisation -- I'm now at page 120 of your
 19 report -- is defined, you tell us, as:
 20 "The process of shifting of world view together with
 21 its in-group identification from typically a secular
 22 culturally Muslim or Islamist world view into the world
 23 view of violent Islamist extremism"; is that correct?
 24 A. That's correct.
 25 Q. You told us already that that can happen quickly, slowly

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1 or over a moderate period of time, I suppose?
 2 A. Exactly. It can take months, years or days.
 3 Q. What, notwithstanding how long it takes, is that process
 4 of Islamist radicalisation likely to be marked by?
 5 A. Well, there's a number of models that I put in the
 6 appendix in my report that have tried to substantiate
 7 this process. I've digested them all and produced what
 8 I think are very typical stages of Islamist
 9 radicalisation which I can rehearse for you.
 10 Q. In summary, is it the position that the process is one
 11 that involves the assumption of increasing hostility
 12 towards the world views and adherence of all non-Muslim
 13 and wrong Muslim out-groups?
 14 A. Yes, the process is that essentially the feelings and
 15 actions of hostility to the out-group become
 16 increasingly hostile and the feelings of love and
 17 attachment, love and identification with the in-group
 18 become increasingly intense.
 19 Q. I next want to consider with you, please, the factors
 20 and causes of Islamist radicalisation. So we are now at
 21 page 121 --
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I want to just ask something about the
 23 mechanism of it. It sounds like it can be quite
 24 a skilled operation to do this sort of radicalisation,
 25 taking someone through the stages, or is it a fairly

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1 basic thing really? It sounds like a teaching skill
 2 almost.
 3 A. There are certainly people that know what buttons to
 4 press, if that's --
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Are they people within -- we're talking
 6 about radical Islamism. Are there people within that
 7 who know a lot about it and teach other people how to do
 8 it or send out literature?
 9 A. All of the above. There are people have that a natural
 10 charisma, there are people that handle the type of
 11 primary sources that extremists use skilfully as part of
 12 the bundle of making it look appealing. There are
 13 people that have recruited through offering more
 14 material things, you know -- at one point I refer to
 15 this as sex, salary, and certainty, they know how to
 16 dangle the carrots. So there are definitely people who
 17 are skilled in what might be called grooming people into
 18 this world view.
 19 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 20 MR GREANEY: So there are known buttons which may be
 21 pressed. But equally, as we're going to see, the extent
 22 to which a person is capable of being groomed, capable
 23 of being radicalised, is also likely to depend upon the
 24 type of person that they are?
 25 A. Exactly and the underlying factors in their life.

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1 Q. Exactly. So there are some people who might be thought
 2 to be highly unlikely to be susceptible to
 3 radicalisation?
 4 A. Quite true.
 5 Q. And others who are, for a variety of reasons we're going
 6 to look at, much more likely to be susceptible to
 7 radicalisation?
 8 A. That's right.
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: But age presumably is a factor?
 10 A. Yes, there are a number of important factors. Age is
 11 a very significant one, sir, because of a variety of
 12 reasons.
 13 MR GREANEY: I'm going to park that for a moment. We are
 14 going to look at issues such as age, sex and background.
 15 I do appreciate that no radicalised person is going to
 16 be the same, but there are some features, are there not,
 17 to many of them?
 18 A. That's right, as the saying goes in the field, there's
 19 no typical terrorist, but there are patterns that can be
 20 observed.
 21 Q. We will get to those and deal with them in headline
 22 form.
 23 What I wanted to deal with first of all were the
 24 factors and causes of Islamist radicalisation. I've
 25 made that sound like a simple topic, but is it the

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1 position that there is a very considerable debate in
 2 social sciences generally and in conflict and terrorism
 3 studies in particular about this topic?
 4 A. There's a massive amount of debate about it and it sort
 5 of taps into that age old thing about how much
 6 individuals can be said to be responsible for their
 7 actions and how much their actions are determined by the
 8 cultures and societies around them.
 9 Q. I believe that notwithstanding that health warning,
 10 there are some factors in Islamist radicalisation that
 11 do feature commonly and which you're able to identify
 12 for us?
 13 A. Yes, there are factors that lay the groundwork for
 14 making a radicalisable environment.
 15 Q. And have you divided these factors into malign presences
 16 and the second category, malign absences?
 17 A. That's right, I have. If I may say, I did this because
 18 I think it's important to recognise that the mechanisms
 19 that generate radicalisation are both things that are
 20 present in someone's life but also things that are
 21 missing.
 22 Q. So can we deal with them in turn, just trying to deal
 23 with these issues in headline at the moment. We will
 24 return to look at them when you return in order to deal
 25 with Salman Abedi specifically.

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1 So under the heading of malign presences, you have
 2 first listed celebrity culture. What do you mean by
 3 that?
 4 A. I mean that the types of people that are vulnerable to
 5 either being radicalised or self-radicalising are often
 6 those people that are looking for status within the
 7 youth peer group and in the context of social media and
 8 the internet, they can become micro online violent
 9 extremist celebrities. So people can create an image
 10 and a star-like presence for themselves online.
 11 Q. So bizarre though it might sound, one of the malign
 12 presences is a desire to, what, become famous or
 13 a celebrity?
 14 A. Exactly, yes, to become famous. And I think it's worth
 15 pointing out generally that obviously, as you pointed
 16 out, it does seem incomprehensible to decent people that
 17 an event that we're talking about should happen and that
 18 someone should do it, but a lot of the factors that go
 19 into producing violent Islamist extremism are things
 20 that our society is manifesting in some way anyway, if
 21 that makes sense.
 22 Q. It does. Second malign presence, the internet and
 23 social media. Again, what do you mean, please?
 24 A. Well, I mean is that social media and the internet
 25 provide relatively hidden platforms that make it

1 relatively easy for people to exchange noxious views and
 2 world views wholesale without being detected by the
 3 authorities. Of course, one of the things extremist
 4 views have become very clever at is embedding material
 5 in websites that otherwise you might think were
 6 completely undetectable as extremist websites, so it's
 7 become a whole platform for hiding and disseminating
 8 extremist material.
 9 Q. Just jumping forward in your report under the same
 10 heading to page 124, because it may be that this malign
 11 presence is connected. You've listed:
 12 "Easy access to violent Islamist extremist
 13 ideologues and their world views."
 14 What is meant by that, please?
 15 A. It just means that a massive amount of material is
 16 posted online. Some of the major, some of the big
 17 headline fatwas briefly go up online and then usually
 18 get removed very quickly, but they can linger in more
 19 hidden bits of the internet. It has been an engine of
 20 spreading the violent Islamist extremist world view very
 21 easily since the early 2000s.
 22 Q. And is a massive problem?
 23 A. It's a huge problem. Obviously it throws up all sorts
 24 of other issues about censorship and freedom of speech
 25 versus freedom of religion and all those other knotty

1 issues.
 2 Q. The next topic under this heading of malign presence is
 3 "Drugs, gangs and petty crime". Again, your explanation
 4 please.
 5 A. Although one can over-egg the relationship between
 6 violent Islamist extremism and crime, I think it's
 7 broadly speaking fair to say that it's part of
 8 a criminal world view, part of a criminal mindset. Even
 9 if you think of the relationship of the Taliban with
 10 massive opium smuggling and heroin production and all of
 11 rest of it.
 12 Increasingly within the Islamic State, the rank and
 13 file recruits, certainly from European jurisdictions,
 14 came from people that had associations with petty crime,
 15 gangs. The West London gangs became famous around
 16 Mohammed Emwazi, the so-called Jihadi John, and it can
 17 be understood that the rise of Islamic State's kudos in
 18 Western jurisdictions can partly be traced to the idea
 19 of their laying claim to be the baddest gang, the most
 20 savage, as I said before, the gang prepared to do the
 21 most brutal things.
 22 Q. Next, hypocrisy and anti-Muslim prejudice.
 23 A. We mentioned earlier, and you said this sense of
 24 grievance that Muslim young people were not getting
 25 a fair shot at things. But also, one of the generators

1 of that disease that was documented around the 7/7
 2 bombing was this idea that the elder generation of
 3 Muslims had abandoned core Islamic practices and beliefs
 4 and were acting hypocritically. I don't just mean not
 5 doing their faith well, I mean things like getting
 6 involved in prostitution and things that are blatantly
 7 against Islam.
 8 Q. This was something I believe that the 7/7 attackers --
 9 it was a feature of their case that they had become
 10 disgruntled with their religious leaders because they
 11 were thought to be involved in prostitution?
 12 A. That's exactly right, and they set up a gang, which
 13 I think was then called The Mullahs, to try and police
 14 this racket.
 15 Q. Next, the presence of conflict in jurisdictions with
 16 which young Muslims have close cultural and ethnic ties.
 17 Perhaps that's obvious.
 18 A. Again, it's that sense of grievance, at what I think has
 19 been called the distant suffering of fellow Muslims, so
 20 a sense of empathy for Muslims that may be family
 21 members or one distance away from being family members
 22 that are caught up in these terrible conflicts.
 23 Q. Mental illness?
 24 A. Yes. So again, I say this advisedly and with a certain
 25 degree of caution because obviously there's an ongoing

1 debate that I'm sure my learned colleagues will know
 2 about, about how much rationality is involved in
 3 terrorism or not.
 4 Q. Yes.
 5 A. But especially with lone actor terrorist attempts such
 6 as Nicky Reilly in Exeter, there's been a pattern of
 7 connection of fragile mental health, especially with
 8 self-radicalising by the internet.
 9 Q. And to identify another malign presence, it might be not
 10 making contact with these ideas over the internet, but
 11 it might be something as straightforward as meeting
 12 a charismatic radicalising personality?
 13 A. That's right. What we've been talking about up to now
 14 has been these factors, so these charismatic moments of
 15 meeting someone either in the flesh or online, or it can
 16 be more than one person as well, is more like a trigger
 17 or a cause. So it's the sort of match that can light
 18 the tinder, if you like.
 19 Q. Next, malign absences, so things that are missing from
 20 the lives of people that may create an environment in
 21 which Islamic radicalisation becomes more likely.
 22 We can just list these: lack of healthy, especially
 23 male, role models?
 24 A. Yes, research that I've done about the connection of
 25 Muslim males in crime generally has shown that there's

1 often been missing parents in the formative years of
 2 early childhood.
 3 Q. Lack of a proper religious education?
 4 A. Yes. Of course again, what can appear to people to be,
 5 if you like, an excess of Islamic zeal or even knowledge
 6 often disguises the fact that people that are persuaded
 7 to act in a violent Islamist extremist way actually have
 8 no religious education whatsoever -- and by that I mean
 9 both almost no religious education in school settings
 10 and also very little or no religious education in mosque
 11 settings.
 12 Q. Lack of parental connection and supervision?
 13 A. Yes. Again, so I mentioned just now that some of these
 14 things are more things we recognise more generally. But
 15 there's a pattern that you can see, especially in recent
 16 Islamic State-style attacks, of parents saying, "Gosh
 17 I just had no idea". Recently we have this terrible
 18 event with Sir David Amess and the father of the suspect
 19 saying, "I'm traumatised, I had no idea". The same
 20 happened with Shamima Begum and the girls that travelled
 21 to Tahan(?). It is the parents who don't know what
 22 their kids are up to and really have no idea of the
 23 power of these online connections.
 24 Q. Lack of prospects may also be a malign absence?
 25 A. Yes, indeed. Obviously here perhaps, especially in

1 Western jurisdictions, we're talking about a relative
 2 lack of prospects because fortunately in a place like
 3 the United Kingdom there are opportunities for people to
 4 earn money in fair ways and get on. But it can be
 5 seeing the apparent ease with which one group of people
 6 can get very rich and prosperous and well-off compared
 7 to the difficulty that some people find with getting on
 8 their feet. So it can be the relative lack of
 9 achievement compared to qualifications. This is more
 10 chronic actually in the Muslim majority world, where
 11 of course --
 12 Q. You're talking very fast, even I'm noticing it now.
 13 I do understand you are trying to get through a lot of
 14 information.
 15 In any event, we've understood the point as you made
 16 clear. It's a point that's capable of applying more
 17 broadly than just radicalisation.
 18 And then the final malign absence may be a lack of
 19 civic community or national identity?
 20 A. Yes, again one can overdo this point because lots of
 21 surveys have shown that in Britain, for example, the
 22 Muslim community here actually identifies as strong as
 23 any group with their British nationality. Nevertheless,
 24 in cases of Islamist extremism such as Islamic State for
 25 example, Aqsa Mahmood was a woman who recruited for

1 Islamic State for a period. Her -- she went from
 2 a documented position where she said, "I'm proud to be
 3 Scottish", I paraphrase, to saying, "I don't feel
 4 I belong in Scotland any more, I'm not of here". So
 5 that can be one of those identifications that you
 6 mentioned before of a relinquishing an identification to
 7 the previous in-group and moving it exclusively to the
 8 violent Islamist extremist in-group.
 9 Q. I believe what you're saying to us is that the matters
 10 that have been identified over the course of the last 10
 11 or 15 minutes are all things which may play a part
 12 in the cause of radicalisation but in the case of any
 13 one of them, not necessarily so?
 14 A. That's correct.
 15 Q. Next topic, the process or, as the chairman described
 16 it, the mechanism of radicalisation. So I'm going to
 17 take you straight to paragraph 15.1.8. Again, I believe
 18 that this topic is not without controversy.
 19 A. Very much so.
 20 Q. But that typically, it's thought that there are or may
 21 be a number of distinct stages to the individual
 22 radicalisation of a person?
 23 A. That's right. Typically, I suppose one can say it's
 24 a staged process and some of those stages are
 25 identifiable.

1 Q. (1) An unsettling and shattering of inherited world
 2 views?
 3 A. That's right, often through a crisis event such as
 4 a divorce or other things. The attachment or the
 5 holding of inherited world views, such as the parental
 6 world views, such as the world view that has been
 7 inculcated through school education, becomes unsettled
 8 or broken.
 9 Q. (2) A re-evaluation and shift of core values?
 10 A. That's right. That shattering leads then to some core
 11 inherited values to be thrown up in the air and the
 12 person will think: what are these, do I believe in them?
 13 Q. An introduction to the world view, thirdly, of
 14 a violent, Islamist extremist in-group?
 15 A. Yes, often, for example, especially in the cases of
 16 converts to Islam that become extreme, that process of
 17 re-evaluating values will lead them to look for Islam
 18 because they're looking for a deeper purpose or
 19 whatever, but they'll encounter extremist ideas and
 20 charismatic individuals either online or in their daily
 21 lives.
 22 Q. (4) The identification with and/or joining of the
 23 violent Islamist extremist in-group.
 24 A. Yes, once the connection is made then usually
 25 identification will deepen, whether that's in person or

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1 online.
 2 Q. And then (5), as you describe it, reflection,
 3 self-evaluation, re-identification or drawing back, and
 4 this may require a little more explanation. What do you
 5 mean by that?
 6 A. Well, there's quite a number of documented cases,
 7 especially in that phase we're talking about of sort of
 8 Al-Qaeda-style radicalisation, when, for the first time,
 9 people that have bought into the basic world view
 10 travelled to training camps or to actually meet someone
 11 for the first time who was connected operationally to
 12 the group. And often, for example the rhetoric didn't
 13 meet the reality at all, so they find themselves in
 14 rundown camps that were not well-run, there was no
 15 ammunition or whatever. So the rhetoric just didn't
 16 match the reality and there are cases of those people
 17 then just suddenly having a --- you know, "I've got this
 18 wrong", so about-turning and coming back to this country
 19 and sometimes being arrested indeed and being convicted
 20 but not actually engaging in operations.
 21 Q. Yes.
 22 A. And of course ---
 23 Q. You tell us in your report that there are examples of
 24 people turning up with an expectation of being a fighter
 25 and being presented with the reality of being a cleaner?

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1 A. That's correct, exactly that: a cleaner and then
 2 becoming a suicide bomber.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The real difficulty there is identifying
 4 which comes into which camp, ie those who return because
 5 they've actually turned away and those who returned
 6 intent on carrying out what they've been trained to do.
 7 A. Indeed.
 8 MR GREANEY: (6) Moving to act violently for the violent
 9 Islamist extremist in-group.
 10 A. That's right, the actual operational stage of actually
 11 deciding to do something violent against the out-group,
 12 against the damned them. So that's the final stage.
 13 Q. This is a process, as you've explained to us, that can
 14 happen over a prolonged period of time, but experience
 15 demonstrates it can happen literally within days?
 16 A. Yes. Depending on other factors like under an intense
 17 peer group or under a crisis moment, such as the
 18 Bataclan attacks, that can accelerate the process.
 19 Q. We, of course, are interested in the approach to
 20 radicalisation, first, of Al-Qaeda and then of
 21 Islamic State and really, the former, just so we can
 22 understand how the latter is different.
 23 In summary form, there are some similarities between
 24 the approach of Al-Qaeda to radicalisation and the
 25 approach of Islamic State to radicalisation?

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1 A. Yes. The basic world view is pretty much the same.
 2 Q. By my question, what I was driving at, and I'm not going
 3 to name them, they are widely known, but each
 4 organisation has a history of making publications on to
 5 the internet; am I right?
 6 A. Yes. I think what you're alluding to is that the
 7 propagation and creation of suicide messages and that
 8 type of material?
 9 Q. Yes, exactly.
 10 A. Al-Qaeda tended to remain more obviously and
 11 operationally connected to the actual events by ---
 12 Q. Can we take it in stages? It's my fault.
 13 First of all, there are similarities between the
 14 approach to radicalisation so that materials were
 15 published by each of them on to the internet ---
 16 A. Certainly.
 17 Q. --- at various stages? But there are also differences,
 18 which we've touched upon already, between their approach
 19 to radicalisation? Sir, I'm at page 145.
 20 Have I understood correctly that the process of
 21 Al-Qaeda or Al-Qaeda-style radicalisation has generally
 22 involved face-to-face or real life encounters?
 23 A. Yes, it was much more face to face, in person. It
 24 tended certainly in the late 1990s, early 2000s, the
 25 induction was done through rallies, through sort of

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1 fronts such as Al-Muhajiroun. They would try and
 2 identify people that could be organised into cell-like
 3 groups in non-Muslim jurisdictions and then eventually,
 4 at some safe moment, they would travel for training. So
 5 there was a much more flesh and blood connection.
 6 Q. Yes, and that was characteristic of their approach.
 7 Whereas the approach of Islamic State differs, does it
 8 not?
 9 A. Yes, it does. The process of Islamic State has been
 10 much more individualised. It's been much more driven
 11 online. And it has been, as you said, you used the word
 12 before, much more branded. So it's been creating the
 13 idea of the Islamic State brand, which, as I mentioned,
 14 includes having created the infrastructure of
 15 a functioning state, so you'll get videos of fighters
 16 patrolling a border, of border checkpoints with the
 17 Islamic flag there, of a process of a welfare state with
 18 Islamic State operatives handing out sweets and
 19 medicine, of courts of law in session. So they've
 20 created much more of an online presence, an idea of
 21 a sort of functioning state.
 22 Q. That is a marked development as on the approach of
 23 Al-Qaeda?
 24 A. Yes, it is -- they are very different. Al-Qaeda much
 25 more played upon the idea of a sort of guerilla-style

1 masculine bravura of young men who had gone to fight a
 2 sort of guerilla war, but actually had not really got
 3 a state at all. Whereas Islamic State, as their name
 4 suggests, were very keen to show that they had
 5 a functioning operational state.
 6 Q. Let's turn next to the issue the chairman was interested
 7 in, namely, if I can put it this way, the types of
 8 people who become radicalised. So doctor, I'm now at
 9 page 148 of your report.
 10 It's important, is it not, as you have acknowledged
 11 already, to say that there exists no completely typical
 12 terrorist profile?
 13 A. That's certainly true.
 14 Q. And history has shown that those radicalised into
 15 violent Islamist extremism, some have been rich, some
 16 have been poor, and some in between?
 17 A. That's correct.
 18 Q. Some have been in apparently ordinary mental health and
 19 some in a quite different mental state?
 20 A. Correct.
 21 Q. Some have been well educated and some illiterate?
 22 A. True.
 23 Q. Some have been migrants and some third generation
 24 Muslim?
 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And some have been born Muslim and some have been
 2 converts to Islam?
 3 A. That's right.
 4 Q. But notwithstanding the appropriateness of acknowledging
 5 that, in Western countries in particular, is there
 6 anything that can be said about a profile of a violent
 7 Islamist extremist terrorist?
 8 A. They are disproportionately young, male, relatively
 9 undereducated, unemployed and have a previous
 10 involvement in crime.
 11 Q. So these are all features which don't arise in every
 12 case, but they do commonly arise and arise in
 13 combination?
 14 A. And arise in combination?
 15 Q. Yes. Arise in combination, so you tend to see all or
 16 a number of these features?
 17 A. A number of them, yes. Of course there are many
 18 exceptions to the rule.
 19 Q. So let's go --
 20 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: When you say disproportionately young,
 21 what sort of age bracket are we talking about?
 22 A. Typically, sir, 16 to 26.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 24 MR GREANEY: In simple terms, bearing in mind the limits of
 25 your expertise, what are thought to be the reasons why

1 it is that age group who are more likely to become
 2 radicalised?
 3 A. The first is what I call that period, a period that
 4 people that know about the adolescent period call
 5 a period of moratorium, when young people seek their own
 6 value systems and world views to be different to those
 7 of their parents and the elder generation. The example
 8 we mentioned, that born Muslims may typically seek
 9 a purer or less compromised form of the religion than
 10 that they regard as the compromised form of their
 11 parents. That's the first, youngsters seeking their own
 12 values.
 13 Secondly, idealism. Young people are prone to
 14 believe that the world needs to change and that they
 15 possess the power to change it. So for example,
 16 I mentioned earlier the idealism or naivete of youth
 17 might make the utopian violent Islamist extremist
 18 aspirations for a caliphate of so-called Islamic State
 19 seem likely.
 20 Q. And on the other side of the coin, alienation?
 21 A. Yes, the same thing, that young people are more prone to
 22 believe the world is inherently unjust and stacked
 23 against them.
 24 Q. It's thought, is it not, that people in that age group
 25 are more likely to be engaged in the risk-taking type of

1 behaviour that this involves?
 2 A. That's right. I'm not going to go into it because it's
 3 not my specialism at all, but there's a lot of evidence
 4 to show that because of the way the brain develops,
 5 youngsters of that age are more inclined to take risks.
 6 Q. And terrible though it is to say, there may also be an
 7 element of peer group affirmation and conformity?
 8 A. A lot of that.
 9 Q. Along with a need for certainty?
 10 A. Yes, and that goes along with this moratorium period,
 11 once you've thrown up your inherited values and world
 12 view for questioning, some young people seek certainty.
 13 Q. What the distorted ideology of Islamic State does do is
 14 provide certainty?
 15 A. Absolutely. It provides a rigidly organised view of the
 16 universe, which is: us, Muslim, good; them, non-Muslim,
 17 wrong Muslim, bad. It's a very simple dichotomy.
 18 Q. Them and us, as you have explained. So that's the age
 19 bracket. You told us that usually people who are
 20 radicalised into violent Islamist extremism are male.
 21 A. Yes, overwhelmingly.
 22 Q. When you say overwhelmingly, are you able to give us
 23 a percentage?
 24 A. Around 94%. That's not to say that women and girls
 25 haven't been involved in both being recruited and

1 recruiting. Partly, they have been more noticed in the
 2 media and elsewhere because obviously it seems more
 3 shocking in some ways that women and girls should be
 4 attracted to what seems like a very savage and
 5 masculinised world view.
 6 Q. Thirdly, these people who are radicalised often have
 7 criminal records and connections to gangs?
 8 A. Increasingly, especially with Islamic State recruitment
 9 in Western jurisdictions.
 10 Q. Over the page to 153, often they are poorly educated,
 11 both religiously and in a secular sense?
 12 A. That's right, often show very low commitment and
 13 engagement, both to school in general and to actually
 14 achieving qualifications.
 15 Q. They are likely to be unemployed or underemployed?
 16 A. Yes, both. So either unemployed or else, especially
 17 in the Muslim majority world, working at a level that's
 18 not commensurate with their qualifications.
 19 Q. Does experience and research show that converts to Islam
 20 are disproportionately likely to be radicalised?
 21 A. Yes. In one French study in 2018, 74% of violent
 22 Islamist extremists that they looked at in a sample were
 23 born Muslim, heritage Muslims, and 26% were converts.
 24 So if you consider that on average, in the UK and across
 25 Europe, the convert population is about 3% of the Muslim

1 community, so it's a massive skewing towards converts to
 2 Islam.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So the explanations for that could be
 4 that it's the radicalisation which is actually part of
 5 the attraction of them of becoming a Muslim in the first
 6 place?
 7 A. I think there are a number of things, sir. The first is
 8 obviously when you move from one religion to another, in
 9 a sense you're rejecting an old us and taking on a new
 10 us, so the us-versus-them mindset is more prone to kick
 11 in. And of course when you enter a new faith, you
 12 actually have no idea who is telling you authentic
 13 versions, so you could easily get hooked into
 14 a charismatic person or website or group that are
 15 telling you that, "This is authentic", when suddenly you
 16 find yourself radicalised.
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 18 MR GREANEY: We've dealt there at a high level with the
 19 types of person who may be radicalised. As you will
 20 appreciate, when you return we will look to see to what
 21 extent those features did or did not apply to
 22 Salman Abedi.
 23 I am next going to ask you to help us -- I'm now at
 24 page 157, your section 17 -- with the topic of
 25 deradicalisation and again invite you to deal with it at

1 a high level.
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Just before we get there, and this is
 3 just a thing for the future, and you may be able to help
 4 or you may not, there may be a feeling current among
 5 some people that we have insufficient legislation to
 6 actually deal with radicalisation and that more of it is
 7 allowed to happen because we haven't addressed the
 8 problem enough. I'm not saying that's right or wrong.
 9 If you had any views on it that I could make use of when
 10 I come to make recommendations, then it would be
 11 helpful. We'll tell you afterwards if you like, you
 12 don't have to make a note now.
 13 A. I think that's one that I'd be very happy to go away and
 14 have a good think about.
 15 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That would be very helpful because it
 16 may be that at the moment it's relatively uncontrolled
 17 and there may be -- I'm not making any conclusions about
 18 this, but there may be more that could be done to try
 19 and prevent it.
 20 A. Can I make an initial comment?
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes.
 22 A. The legislation is something I would definitely need to
 23 think about hard and refer to the necessary sources.
 24 I think one thing that has been lacking for a long time
 25 is clear definition of the terms that can then lead to

1 effective legislation .

2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think that was the problem with the

3 proposed legislation in 2015 (overspeaking).

4 A. That's been a problem for many years.

5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

6 MR GREANEY: This is the benefit of having Dr Wilkinson

7 back: he can return and deal with these issues which

8 have arisen and deal with them in light of the other

9 evidence that we hear on radicalisation .

10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.

11 MR GREANEY: That's why I'm trying to identify these topics,

12 your views at a high level , and we'll descend into

13 greater detail when you return.

14 So deradicalisation . I think it would be fair to

15 say, easy to say, more difficult to achieve?

16 A. Definitely difficult to achieve. Not impossible though,

17 I would add.

18 Q. No. That's the hope that you're going to give us.

19 Am I right that deradicalisation , as a matter of logic ,

20 has to involve two things: disengagement from the

21 obscene world view and engagement with a positive world

22 view?

23 A. Absolutely true, yes. And if you don't reengage, like

24 you have just said, with a new world view, you leave

25 people prone again to just reengage with the old one.

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1 Q. Around the world are there deradicalisation programmes

2 in existence?

3 A. Yes, there's a plethora of them. What's called the

4 strategic approach has been developed in Saudi Arabia,

5 which involves training people up, giving them work,

6 even providing them with opportunities to marry and so

7 on and so forth.

8 Q. The programmes show, as you've said already, that

9 deradicalisation is difficult to achieve but not

10 impossible?

11 A. Yes. There are high rates of terrorist recidivism ,

12 returning to terrorism, but they're not so high as to

13 suggest it never works.

14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: One of the problems, as I understand it,

15 is a way of actually verifying that any of these

16 deradicalisation schemes work is you'll need to go back

17 to the person who's meant to be deradicalised some time

18 in the future and find out if they have indeed been

19 deradicalised or whether they have started something

20 again. As I understand it, the material is not yet

21 available in order to prove one way or another whether

22 they're working.

23 A. I think that's certainly true. Also longitudinal

24 assessment of where people are at is notoriously

25 difficult .

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1 MR GREANEY: Because people can learn to say the right

2 things, can't they?

3 A. Very much so.

4 Q. And identifying when that's what they're doing as

5 opposing to expressing a genuine change of view is not

6 easy?

7 A. Not easy at all .

8 Q. In terms of some of the things that may help with

9 deradicalisation , you have listed them in your report

10 from page 158. Religious education, by which you mean

11 proper and appropriate religious education, and a sense

12 of religious purpose?

13 A. Yes. Since we are talking about Islamist

14 radicalisation , which even if it only superficially and

15 wrongly has a connection to Islam, I think it's

16 important to recognise that putting this world view

17 right also needs to involve a religious element. I have

18 researched very heartening and hopeful examples of

19 people that have been very seriously radicalised and

20 involved in plots that have undergone forensic

21 chaplaincy of very good imams that have shown them how

22 texts are abused by Islamist extremists in the ways that

23 I was describing a bit earlier . They show them hadiths

24 that have been misused or that are weak or fabricated

25 that have bolstered the world view and gradually, as the

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1 relationship of trust emerges, the new religious

2 education starts to trump the old world view and I've

3 seen that happen very skilfully .

4 Q. That is heartening. Secondly, psychological

5 intervention may help?

6 A. Yes. Giving people a forum to reflect about their

7 values, what they are, where they come from, who they

8 are at heart is obviously very important and trained

9 counsellors can do this. There are interventions in

10 prisons, such as the healthy identity intervention, for

11 example, where people are trained to stimulate this type

12 of intervention .

13 They can be prone to people feeling that they are

14 just being engineered by the kuffar to believe something

15 else and to become, you might say, good secular

16 liberalists . So they can be prone to backfire, but they

17 don't always. So they can set up a helpful platform for

18 reflection .

19 Q. Thirdly, the process of maturation.

20 A. Yes. This is an enormously important factor. I suppose

21 perhaps the most important one is that as people that

22 have been radicalised grow older, sometimes in

23 conditions of confinement, they have time to reassess

24 their life in the whole, they start to feel guilt for

25 the shame they've brought on their families, for the

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1 fact that they are not there to bring up their children,
 2 the tales of masculine bravura and fantastical rewards
 3 in paradise become less appealing and they just grow out
 4 of it.
 5 Q. Fourthly, "Association with different others", as you
 6 put it. What does this mean?
 7 A. This means you get exposed to a whole different range of
 8 types of people with their world views essentially. You
 9 can't sustain, as a result of that this completely
 10 divided and separated us versus them any more. Once you
 11 have met a large number of people of different religions
 12 and different backgrounds, you can't think, "This group
 13 is all bad and we're all good", you see the complexity
 14 of real life.
 15 Q. Fifth, valuable work and education.
 16 A. Yes. So this is obviously vital. Reconnecting people
 17 with this idea that they can make their way in the world
 18 legitimately, they can earn a living in a way that's not
 19 only fulfilling materially but also gives them a sense
 20 of satisfaction and purpose.
 21 Q. And sixth, building relationships with interested
 22 others?
 23 A. Yes. This again perhaps harks back to the absences that
 24 can generate vulnerability to extremism, which is that
 25 people are missing relationships of trust. You know,

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1 they are abused, they might be abused at home, they
 2 might be abused in a peer group, and so part of becoming
 3 deradicalised is building relationships of trust with
 4 people who have their interests at heart.
 5 Q. So deradicalisation --
 6 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: This may appear to be just one
 7 completely random question, but there is a belief that
 8 compared with, say, the normal average prisoner
 9 population, that terrorist prisoners tend to be on the
 10 whole more intelligent. Is that correct or not? Or is
 11 it just across the board?
 12 A. I think that's... In my personal experience...
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: You have more experience than most of
 14 us.
 15 A. I think I would say that when people want to conduct
 16 themselves criminally, they can be incredibly ingenious,
 17 from whatever sort of walk of life they come. I think
 18 again, you know, there are huge parallels between
 19 extremist criminals and other criminals and they can all
 20 be ingenious when they want to be.
 21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I just wondered if it is in any way --
 22 A. It doesn't really square with my experience.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: So becoming involved in terrorism can be
 24 connected to underachieving in any way?
 25 A. Well, as I say, I think if you have underachieved at

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1 school and you're undereducated, these very mythologised
 2 and sweeping us--versus--them accounts of the way the
 3 world is can be very appealing. They plug the gap
 4 quickly and easily.
 5 MR GREANEY: In your report, just to deal with a final topic
 6 and to do so briefly, you make, if I may say, the
 7 obvious point that deradicalising someone is something
 8 and is important but much better to prevent
 9 radicalisation in the first place?
 10 A. Much better.
 11 Q. You identify a number of levels of engagement that have
 12 to be mobilised, not only in the United Kingdom but
 13 around the world, if violent Islamist extremism is to be
 14 stopped or mitigated.
 15 A. I do.
 16 Q. I'm simply going to summarise in my own words because
 17 some of these matters may stray a little outside your
 18 area of expertise. I am going to summarise what
 19 I believe I mean and you can simply say yes or no to
 20 tell me if I've correctly understood.
 21 Level of engagement 1 is what you call the mega
 22 level of international geopolitics.
 23 A. Yes.
 24 Q. Essentially, I believe the point you're making is that
 25 there are some very long--standing geopolitical conflicts

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1 around the world which involve Muslims?
 2 A. There are.
 3 Q. And solving those would go some way to help?
 4 A. That's right. We spoke earlier about the conditions of
 5 breakdown and fragmentation of the Muslim world that led
 6 to the rise of Islamist extremism, so settling or moving
 7 towards settling some of those risks would be of
 8 benefit.
 9 Q. Although probably beyond the ability of the chairman or
 10 this inquiry.
 11 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I think I would accept that, yes!
 12 MR GREANEY: Second level, the macro level of national state
 13 intervention. Here, you're dealing with topics that we
 14 have heard about and that we'll hear, in one respect,
 15 more about tomorrow. We're talking about the state, the
 16 government scheme, Protect and Pursue and Prevent.
 17 A. That's right. Obviously that's the realm where the
 18 state has a duty to protect its citizens from harm.
 19 Q. Thirdly, the meso level of community intervention.
 20 A. Yes. Again, there's an emerging body of research that
 21 suggests that this is actually a very productive area
 22 and it's in the context of the -- I'm not sure quite
 23 what the... I'm not quite sure what the... the collapse
 24 or demise of the voluntary youth sector, youth clubs,
 25 all the types of activity and institutions that helped

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1 young people into their teenage years.
 2 Q. And give people a sense of identity in that community?
 3 A. Yes, with the community and with each other in a healthy
 4 way.
 5 Q. And the fourth level, the micro level of parents,
 6 guardians, families and teachers. So people, loved
 7 ones, those close to them having daily contact with them
 8 and setting them the right example?
 9 A. That's right. I suppose broadly under the rubric of
 10 good, responsible parenting.
 11 MR GREANEY: That may be thought a good place for me to end
 12 my questions. Sir, unless you have any questions at
 13 this stage I'm going to call on those core participants
 14 who have permission to ask questions.
 15 Both advocates are going to be joining us by the
 16 link. Mr Cooper, can I ask you, first of all, please,
 17 to pose your questions of Dr Wilkinson?
 18 Questions from MR COOPER
 19 MR COOPER: Thank you very much, Mr Greaney.
 20 Dr Wilkinson, I represent some of the families with
 21 an interest in this inquiry, as you'll probably realise,
 22 and I'm grateful first of all for the illuminating
 23 information that you have given us for us all to
 24 consider.
 25 I really only have one topic I want to take you to

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1 and develop with you and that's, my words, not yours,
 2 the possible lack of overall governing bodies as far as
 3 Islam is concerned and worship, particularly focusing
 4 for instance on the Muslim Council of Britain as an
 5 example, the Mosques and Imams Advisory Board, two
 6 organisations, and I know there are others.
 7 Is it right in your view that there is no real
 8 umbrella governing body here such as one might see in
 9 Catholicism, the Vatican, the Church of England? Is
 10 there a difference here where there's no such governing
 11 or overarching body?
 12 A. Well, there are genuine differences in that sense
 13 between the way that the basic sort of human/divine
 14 transaction is done in Islam. Officially in Islam there
 15 is no priesthood and every individual stands before God
 16 without an intermediary. So there is that sense, that
 17 it is a less institutionalised faith. Nevertheless,
 18 throughout Muslim history there have been authorised
 19 centres of religious authority that have the training,
 20 qualifications and outreach to affect the way Islam is
 21 practised and taught. They do to some extent still
 22 exist, so for example Al-Azhar University in Cairo is
 23 one, there are various muftis throughout the Muslim
 24 world, the Muslim mufti of Jerusalem, who issue edicts
 25 that guide the Muslim world more generally.

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1 So for example, the chairman asked earlier about the
 2 process of appointment of the caliph and various muftis
 3 and religious authorities annulled that
 4 self-declaration. They said this was not a fair
 5 declaration.
 6 Whether the UK needs such a body is a very moot
 7 point. I think one issue that emerges is that a number
 8 of fledgling organisations that might have taken on this
 9 role, you mentioned yourself MINAB and the Muslim
 10 Council of Britain, have been undersupported, both
 11 in the Muslim community and from without, underfunded,
 12 often part-time, people just doing voluntary work as
 13 best they can. Even at one point, I'm not sure what
 14 it is now, the secretary general of the Muslim Council
 15 of Britain at one point was a volunteer and that was at
 16 a time when Islam was already being very contentious in
 17 society.
 18 So I think there is a need for some more centralised
 19 authority within the UK that can send out the right
 20 messages and also that can monitor and guide the
 21 messages in particular that are coming out at the Friday
 22 sermons because that's obviously the main interface
 23 between daily Muslims and religious authority. So I do
 24 think there is the need for some sort of authority or
 25 some sort of centralised monitoring agency to guide

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1 mosques in the messages that they send out.
 2 Q. You touch upon the follow-up question that I am going to
 3 ask you. That is for instance when ambiguous language,
 4 I'll be as neutral as I can here, is used in sermons,
 5 one might say such as occurred in 2014, we'll go into
 6 that when you return, but if such a situation arises,
 7 the role of an umbrella governing organisation, however
 8 it may be structured, might be to clarify that language
 9 and to ensure that there's consistency according to the
 10 good tenets of the faith of Islam?
 11 A. Yes, I think some process of authorising who delivers
 12 Friday sermons, for example, would be a good step
 13 forward. Often, as you've just suggested — mosque
 14 managements are often responsible and they don't want
 15 dangerous things to be said from their pulpits. But
 16 sometimes stuff happens and it's usually a reactive
 17 response to saying, "You can't say that, you're not
 18 going to teach here again", but then of course for some
 19 people the cat's out of the bag.
 20 Q. One of the problems that might be solved by, I'll keep
 21 referring to an overall governing body, you know the
 22 sort of thing I'm driving at here, one of the issues of
 23 concern is that some mosques, not all perhaps, take
 24 a rather passive role and some might say too passive as
 25 to what is said, I'm not suggesting criminal, but simply

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1 ambiguously what is said in sermons and maybe mosques
 2 generally should be less passive in the governance of
 3 their own local mosques. Would you agree with that?
 4 A. That to me feels a bit more like the second area of what
 5 we're coming to, if you don't mind me saying.
 6 Q. Of course. I'm happy to place that there.
 7 A. That sounds a bit more — yeah, that feels a bit more
 8 in that territory .
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: We'll park it, as we regularly say.
 10 MR COOPER: Of course. May I say, for clarification,
 11 I wasn't in this question driving at any particular
 12 mosque. As you say, we will —
 13 A. I know.
 14 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: That's true, Mr Cooper. I just wonder
 15 whether it's better when we do get round to dealing with
 16 the particular mosque to deal with the general at the
 17 same time as we deal with the particular so they are
 18 side by side.
 19 MR COOPER: Yes, of course, of course.
 20 That rather cuts out a great number of questions
 21 I was going to ask.
 22 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm sorry about that, but you'll be
 23 coming back to them.
 24 MR COOPER: I say it with relief, in no other way.
 25 Could I move on to something else then? You have

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1 spoken of the Islamic faith and how it's understood
 2 generally as far as Muslims are concerned. But there
 3 are different cultures, there are different people of
 4 the Muslim background who have, for instance,
 5 backgrounds in Afghanistan, Somalia, Saudi Arabia,
 6 Eastern Africa, I could go on and I'm sure you could add
 7 to the list. Are there nuances in approaches or
 8 beliefs? I'm speaking of mainstream —
 9 A. Huge, yes, a huge number of nuances and different
 10 expressions. And sometimes different elements of
 11 culture are interwoven with elements of religious
 12 practice and people don't know quite which is which, so
 13 yes, a huge range of denominational and cultural variety
 14 within those basic world views. As I say, I give a very
 15 basic and simple philosophical characterisation of the
 16 outlook and the way that behaviour comes into the world,
 17 but you're right, there's a huge range of cultural
 18 difference within those basic world views.
 19 Q. Is there room, perhaps, for an understanding of the
 20 situation here for the authorities, whatever you may
 21 say — I'm not talking about those governing or
 22 overseeing the faith, as it were, I'm talking about
 23 governmental involvement here — general governmental
 24 involvement here, political involvement? Is there an
 25 understanding, do you think, or a sufficient

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1 understanding there of these nuances, perhaps more than
 2 nuances, of these differences and is there perhaps
 3 a risk at the moment that all are being put into the
 4 same container of those who are Muslims, those who
 5 practice the Islamic faith, and perhaps the government
 6 and other bodies responsible for understanding the
 7 issues that you've raised today need to look a little
 8 closer at those differences?
 9 A. They certainly need to look closer at the differences .
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: The government do?
 11 A. The government and agencies of the government. There's
 12 been a tendency, and I'm not saying that — Mr Greaney
 13 spoke briefly about the parts of the CONTEST strategy,
 14 Pursue, Protect, Prevent and so on and so forth. I'm
 15 sure, you know, great professionals have been involved
 16 in that and they've done sterling work. Nevertheless,
 17 there haven't been clear definitional guidelines about
 18 how to make the types of distinctions which I'm trying
 19 to help the inquiry with. There's tended to be a what
 20 you might call the elephant in the room approach: we'll
 21 sort of know what extremism is when we see it. And
 22 I think that's partly an inheritance from the British
 23 state's dealings with Northern Ireland: the state feels
 24 that we've had that experience, we sort of know what
 25 it is, which to some extent is true, but of course the

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1 complexion of Islamism and Islamist extremism is very
 2 different .
 3 So I think there is — as the chairman mentioned, at
 4 the moment this type of stuff is under review, but
 5 I think definitional and therefore legal clarity has
 6 been sorely wanting for a long time.
 7 MR COOPER: Is the manifestation of extremism and in
 8 particular the use of violence different or can it be
 9 different given the different backgrounds, culturally,
 10 of those who are or might be considered extremists,
 11 whether they come from Afghanistan, Somalia, Saudi
 12 Arabia or Eastern Africa?
 13 A. No is, I think, the answer to that. The nuances you're
 14 talking about tend to be entirely benign nuances just to
 15 do with daily life. Basic things: food, clothes, how
 16 you hold yourself in the prayer a bit, whether you wear
 17 something in the prayer or not. But the actual chosen
 18 methods of violence have tended to be dictated both by
 19 the conditions of where people live, so you can easily
 20 pick up a kitchen knife and run out and stab someone,
 21 anyone can do it and people — the fatwas of Abdulhamid
 22 (inaudible) for example, encourage people to use
 23 anything they can find and then, of course, the weapon
 24 of choice, the bomb, the IED. So in that, there's been
 25 a great degree of uniformity.

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1 Q. This is my last question on the same subject. So the
2 understanding of these cultural differences, if I may
3 put it that way, are perhaps more relevant as to how one
4 deals with deradicalisation or the prevention of
5 radicalisation such that it's not considered
6 a one-size-fits-all approach?

7 A. Yes, that is a very good point. For example, you
8 wouldn't want a situation where someone that might dress
9 very Islamically, they might wear a long robe or
10 something on their head or they might have
11 a resplendently long beard whatever, you wouldn't want
12 that to be per se regarded as a marker of extremism
13 because it just wouldn't necessarily be that way. As
14 you say, it might be a cultural thing, it might be a
15 whole range of things, it might just be someone wanting
16 to be a bit more obviously Muslim. So I think
17 understanding there's -- you're quite right to say that
18 that's an important part of deradicalisation and
19 prevention.

20 MR COOPER: Thank you, sir. I have no further questions.

21 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Cooper.

22 MR GREANEY: Thank you very much, Mr Cooper.

23 Sir, could we have a short break at this stage?

24 I know that Mr Weatherby doesn't want to be very long
25 but I want to check on the arrangements tomorrow so

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1 I can make an announcement to the core participants if
2 necessary.

3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Yes, a quarter of an hour. Not before
4 3.30.

5 MR GREANEY: Thank you.
6 (3.16 pm)

7 (A short break)

8 (3.42 pm)

9 MR GREANEY: Sir, I'm going to call finally on Mr Weatherby.
10 Questions from MR WEATHERBY

11 MR WEATHERBY: Dr Wilkinson, can you see and hear me?

12 A. Yes, thank you.

13 Q. I only have a few questions for you and they're rather
14 matters arising from the evidence that you have given
15 and I don't think anything too difficult. In your
16 report and in your evidence to us already, you've spoken
17 about the rise of groups like Al-Muhajiroun and the
18 influence of a number of recruiters around that group
19 and similar groups in the 1990s and early 2000s; yes?

20 A. That's correct, yes.

21 Q. You say that they were responsible for radicalising
22 hundreds of young British Muslims and in fact some or
23 many of those then travelled to fight elsewhere; is that
24 right?

25 A. That's right.

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1 Q. Can you help us in terms of -- that situation changed
2 and did it change because of changes in the law and
3 actions by the authorities to make the activities of
4 groups like Al-Muhajiroun and the individuals associated
5 with it, to make it more difficult?

6 A. Yes, I mean, I can't remember which Home Secretary it
7 was, but a variety of Home Secretaries became more
8 proactive about proscribed groups that had previously
9 gone under the radar for a variety of reasons. And
10 Al-Muhajiroun was proscribed but then it cropped up with
11 a variety of different names and sort of gave them
12 a game of cat and mouse with the law.

13 Q. But the realisation of what was behind what they were
14 doing and the actions taken to combat it made
15 a difference and their ability to radicalise and recruit
16 waned?

17 A. Well, one of them, Anjem Choudary, was definitely
18 recruiting and radicalising right up to the time he was
19 prosecuted because he was very clever, really, about
20 staying just this side of the law. He would be
21 eventually prosecuted for encouraging people to join
22 Islamic State.

23 Q. Yes.

24 A. So yes, (overspeaking) --

25 Q. -- wasn't stopped?

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1 A. It certainly didn't vanish.

2 Q. Yes. But the emphasis then, I think, as you've told us
3 already, is that particularly with IS, the emphasis on
4 radicalisation and recruitment went online, which was an
5 altogether different prospect?

6 A. Yes. It became propagated much more aggressively online
7 and very --

8 Q. (Overspeaking). Sorry. (Overspeaking).

9 A. I was just saying with the dark web and all that sort of
10 stuff.

11 Q. Sure. So although the problem of your Anjem Choudarys
12 continued, that kind of approach waned, but this more
13 difficult recruitment online in particular then came to
14 prominence together with certain other individuals, not
15 just Mr Choudary but other individuals who were and have
16 been discovered acting on their own or in small groups?

17 A. That's right. There did spring up a small cadre of
18 ideologues that were based in Western countries,
19 Australia --

20 Q. Yes.

21 A. -- Jamaica, the UK, that were encouraging people to make
22 what's called hijra, to make migration to Syria to join
23 the Islamic State. They were active, both online and
24 also in small study groups, so it certainly didn't
25 entirely become an online phenomenon.

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1 Q. Yes. So --
 2 A. And --
 3 Q. (Overspeaking) -- approaches -- sorry. There seems to
 4 be a slight delay which is why I keep talking over you.
 5 I'm sorry about that. Please continue.
 6 Please continue, doctor.
 7 A. Thank you. I was just going to say that Islamic State
 8 picked up on what you might call a genre or a method of
 9 Al-Qaeda, which was to make grand fatwas, legal
 10 statements, of what Muslims should do. So for example,
 11 they had a new fatwa, "Indeed your Lord is
 12 ever-watchful", encouraging people to fight, amongst
 13 other people, "the filthy French wherever you find them
 14 So there was that genre of big pronouncements which had
 15 been started by al-Awlaki with Al-Qaeda. So there was
 16 that -- that became a sort of -- again, you'd get a big
 17 pronouncement, a big statement, often that would then
 18 stimulate a lot of terrorist activity, and then it would
 19 be topped up with smaller cross-referencing of the
 20 bigger statement in smaller subsidiary media
 21 productions.
 22 Q. So given that there was this shift from the
 23 Al-Muhajiroun approach to what you've just described,
 24 are you able to say whether that shift reduced or
 25 increased the number of people who were radicalised?

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1 Did the actions of the authorities in the early 2000s
 2 and beyond begin to solve the problem or did it just
 3 come out somewhere else?
 4 A. In terms of numbers, I'm afraid I don't feel very well
 5 placed to say. We've just experienced recently that
 6 after a lull one tends to get a cluster of copycat
 7 attacks that crop up, horribly. So I mean, obviously
 8 the collective ability of noxious groups to gather and
 9 have face-to-face radicalising experiences, if you like,
 10 has waned, but I don't feel that the level of
 11 radicalising threat has been significantly reduced.
 12 Q. Thank you. A different point: a common thread between
 13 the groups and the individuals and the online activity,
 14 a common thread, is the justification of the
 15 unjustifiable, ie atrocities committed against civilians
 16 in Manchester or London or elsewhere by the actions and
 17 policies of the UK and other Western governments in
 18 places across the Middle East, Afghanistan, Syria,
 19 Libya, Iraq.
 20 A. Yes.
 21 Q. That's a common thread in a lot of radicalisation, isn't
 22 it?
 23 A. That's true, certainly. The logic of it tends to go
 24 that voting publics, by being complicit in democracies
 25 that then vote in governments that then fight in Muslim

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1 countries are complicit and responsible for the actions
 2 of those governments and their militaries. That tends
 3 to be the argument. So that is a very common thread.
 4 Q. That's very helpful. I'm not going to go into the
 5 rights and wrongs of foreign policy, that's way beyond
 6 the inquiry's terms of reference, but that is one of the
 7 common threads and that's why you note at chapter 18,
 8 under your mega level, the international politics
 9 section, that, and I quote you:
 10 "The solution of international conflicts would
 11 likely draw the venom from violent Islamist extremism."
 12 A. I think it would. To what degree, I can't say. But
 13 I do know, for example, that the situation in Israel and
 14 Palestine and acts of injustice that are seen to happen
 15 there crops up endlessly in violent extremist propaganda
 16 material and has done for 20 or 30 years, and still
 17 replicates itself. So that tends to suggest that's
 18 a running sore.
 19 Q. I'm not going to be seeking a recommendation from the
 20 chair as to how to solve the Palestinian issue. But the
 21 corollary of all of that is that some of these
 22 intractable problems, or perhaps not even intractable
 23 but long-standing or not problems, mean that we're
 24 likely to have to live with the threat of this sort of
 25 extremism certainly as long as these conflicts persist?

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1 A. I fear so.
 2 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I'm not in any way disputing what you're
 3 saying about this, but the reality is, how do those
 4 international conflicts have anything to do with the
 5 stream of people going out to Syria to fight for
 6 a caliphate?
 7 A. Because they do two things, sir. They generate that
 8 sense of grievance and they feed into that basic world
 9 view that the kuffar, non-Muslims, are eternally out to
 10 get Islam and Muslims. So they just feed into that
 11 basic binary of us and them.
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 13 MR WEATHERBY: So although there are many things that can be
 14 done, and you've gone through some or many of them,
 15 there remains a real intractable issue here; is that
 16 right?
 17 A. Well, I mean, in this country there are -- is it,
 18 I can't remember, is it 4.8 million Muslims in the UK?
 19 4.7 million, so 99.99999%, live as peaceable,
 20 law-abiding citizens, despite the fact that the world is
 21 riven by intractable problems, many of which involve
 22 Muslim majority countries. So I don't think one should
 23 use it in any way to justify that world view or acting
 24 upon it. Islamic law and that mainstream world view,
 25 properly understood, would allow for Muslims to agitate,

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1 to use legal means to try and solve these problems, to
 2 put pressure on their governments to bring about
 3 solutions. But that's still not a justification for
 4 violence against civilians .
 5 Q. Believe me, I'm in no way suggesting it is. I'll move
 6 on to the LIFG, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and
 7 its relation to Al-Qaeda. You deal with this in your
 8 report and you have addressed it to some extent this
 9 morning and this afternoon. As I understand your
 10 evidence, the LIFG started as a Libyan (inaudible:
 11 distorted) group trying to topple Gaddafi?
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Mr Weatherby, I'm really sorry,
 13 something has just happened to you and you have gone
 14 stuttery, so we had difficulty understanding you.
 15 Could you go back and repeat the question for us?
 16 MR WEATHERBY: I'm sorry about that, I can see and hear you
 17 clearly .
 18 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: It's not your fault, I think the witness
 19 needs to hear and understand the question.
 20 MR WEATHERBY: Of course.
 21 The LIFG started life as a Libyan nationalist
 22 Islamist group to topple Gaddafi and institute an
 23 Islamic regime in Libya, yes?
 24 A. Correct.
 25 Q. And its connection and the allegiance with Al-Qaeda was

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1 through some of its leading members and its history in
 2 Afghanistan?
 3 A. Exactly.
 4 Q. Is that a fair summary?
 5 A. Very fair, yes.
 6 Q. Therefore, some parts of the LIFG were closely aligned
 7 to Al-Qaeda and some weren't?
 8 A. At some point, exactly, they were. Some were and some
 9 weren't.
 10 Q. Yes. And you've mentioned Mr Al-Libi in particular and
 11 that may be relevant when we come on to consider
 12 Ramadan Abedi at a later point.
 13 A. Exactly.
 14 Q. I just want to put to you some dates and it may be that
 15 you're not in a position to actually remember the
 16 specific dates, but they're from UN and UK Government
 17 websites regarding the proscription of the LIFG. I'm
 18 going to put them to you and then perhaps you could
 19 consider them later and if I've got any of them wrong
 20 then you'll correct me.
 21 I think it's right that the UN added the LIFG to
 22 Al-Qaeda's sanctions list on 6 October 2001, very
 23 shortly after 9/11. Then, according to UK Government
 24 websites, the LIFG was proscribed in the UK on
 25 14 October of 2005 under the terms of the Terrorism Act

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1 (2000) by the minister of state. Then the LIFG remained
 2 a banned organisation in the United Kingdom until
 3 November 2019 when the then minister of state,
 4 Baroness Williams, deproscribed it, indicating in
 5 Parliament that the British Government had always
 6 considered the LIFG "a brutal terrorist organisation",
 7 but deproscribed in 2019 as effectively defunct.
 8 I don't suspect you'll remember those dates in
 9 particular, but does that sound about right and can you
 10 go away and check it for us?
 11 A. Yes, certainly. It sounds very plausible, I'll
 12 certainly go and check it.
 13 Q. It comes directly from UN and UK Government websites.
 14 Earlier today, you made the entirely reasonable
 15 comment that the membership of an organisation, of LIFG,
 16 was uncertain, that people would move in and out of such
 17 groups. Is that — I've paraphrased you. Is that about
 18 right?
 19 A. I think I said they were porous and people moved in and
 20 out.
 21 Q. Indeed. It's not always straightforward to be able to
 22 ascertain whether somebody's actually a member or not?
 23 A. Quite true.
 24 Q. And the fact that an organisation is proscribed may be
 25 an important reason why someone might want to distance

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1 themselves from actual membership of it; would that be
 2 right?
 3 A. Very much so.
 4 Q. Moving on. I only have two short topics (inaudible:
 5 distorted) and Libya. The height of Islamic State's
 6 success generally was 2014, wasn't it?
 7 A. Yes, it was probably from March to June 2014.
 8 Q. Yes. And as you've told us, it came out of Al-Qaeda in
 9 Iraq, but it also had a significant presence in Libya,
 10 didn't it?
 11 A. Well, yes, and that presence became more significant as
 12 the so-called Islamic State's presence and ability to
 13 operate in Syria and Iraq became increasingly precarious
 14 after the coalition formed and started to attack it.
 15 Q. The Islamic State body in Libya is or was Katiba
 16 al-Bittar al-Libi, ABL; is that right?
 17 A. Yes.
 18 Q. And it certainly had training camps in the Sabratha
 19 area?
 20 A. Yes. They had camps around Derna, I think it was, and
 21 then around Sirte, when they took it or controlled
 22 substantial parts of it, which, if my memory serves me
 23 right, was July 2014.
 24 Q. I was going to move on to Sirte. They controlled
 25 a whole area round Sirte, certainly from 2014 until the

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1 end of 2016, didn't they?
 2 A. Mm—hm.
 3 Q. And this would have been well—known to any observer of
 4 Libyan affairs?
 5 A. Yes.
 6 Q. Finally, a point, it may not matter and you may not be
 7 able to help us with it, but it's a matter of some
 8 little concern. You in your report deal with the choice
 9 of targets by violent Islamic extremists. I don't want
 10 to ask you about targets, but it's connected, it's
 11 dates. Is it right that sometimes bombings and other
 12 attacks are undertaken at particular times or on
 13 particular dates of importance?
 14 A. Well, this was brought up in questions from core
 15 participants and comments on my report. Um...
 16 Q. Can I just say, I'm picking it up from that question.
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Before you carry on, you were about to
 18 answer, I think, were you, or would you prefer not to
 19 answer?
 20 A. The answer is I don't really know about the significance
 21 of dates. I haven't noted any particular pattern in the
 22 selection of dates.
 23 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right.
 24 A. I suppose the only thing I'd say about that is, we've
 25 spoken about these knock—on or clusters of events that

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1 one extremist event triggers another by sort of giving
 2 licence to the next person to go ahead. So there's
 3 a proximity and clustering. Obviously, London Bridge
 4 has been subject to two copycat style attacks and so on.
 5 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay, thank you.
 6 Mr Weatherby.
 7 MR WEATHERBY: The reason I was so rude to interrupt you,
 8 having asked the question, was I wanted to give you the
 9 full picture. You were asked in the written question by
 10 one of the other family teams whether you thought there
 11 was any connection between this attack on 22 May 2017
 12 and the murder of Lee Rigby committed on 22 May 2013.
 13 But it goes a little further than that because you
 14 mentioned Nicky Reilly earlier and Nicky Reilly was the
 15 man who tried to blow up a restaurant in Exeter in 2008,
 16 again on 22 May.
 17 As I say, it may not matter, but the question really
 18 is: is there any significance to 22 May so far as
 19 violent Islamic extremism goes or is there anything at
 20 all that you can help us with?
 21 A. No. I see what you're saying. It does seem to be a bit
 22 of a coincidence, but beyond saying that, you know, I'm
 23 sure — I think an Exeter connection might be explored,
 24 for example. So perhaps that's again one that might be
 25 worth parking.

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1 MR WEATHERBY: Yes, sure, okay. There is something of
 2 a tenuous connection with Salman Abedi and a man who was
 3 arrested in connection with the Exeter bombing,
 4 Mr Al—Anezi, but perhaps we can park that and come back
 5 to that when you come back to give your evidence
 6 in December.
 7 Dr Wilkinson, thank you very much. Those are all
 8 the questions I have for you.
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you, Mr Weatherby.
 10 MR GREANEY: And sir, I have no further questions, bearing
 11 in mind that the doctor will return. Do you have any
 12 questions at this stage?
 13 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: No, thank you.
 14 MR GREANEY: I am going to ask Dr Wilkinson to bear with me
 15 for what should be no more than a couple of minutes so
 16 I can provide you and the core participants with an
 17 update about tomorrow.
 18 Shortly before 2.40 this afternoon, the inquiry
 19 received by email a letter from those who represent
 20 Abdalraouf Abdallah. That letter makes an application
 21 to adjourn the evidence of Abdalraouf Abdallah from
 22 tomorrow to a date in the future on the basis of an
 23 expressed need for further disclosure. Sir, obviously,
 24 that application cannot be ignored.
 25 Our submission is that the following should occur,

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1 that Abdalraouf Abdallah should attend the hearing
 2 tomorrow, as should his lawyers, and they should be
 3 ready for him to give evidence in the afternoon.
 4 However, if the application for an adjournment is
 5 persisted with in light of the time that they will have
 6 in the morning tomorrow, and in light of any further
 7 disclosure that we, the inquiry legal team, consider it
 8 appropriate to give, we know that you will, of course,
 9 give that application serious consideration.
 10 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: I will. It's contained in a letter.
 11 That letter needs to be distributed to core participants
 12 and the point of getting him here is that we will not
 13 only bear in mind the considerations made by him but any
 14 objections that core participants may have. But I give
 15 anyone the opportunity — I know you've only just heard
 16 about it, but if anyone wants to make any comment or say
 17 anything at the moment or approve or disapprove of what
 18 is being proposed, then you'll have every opportunity to
 19 do so now.
 20 MR COOPER: Obviously, we've just heard of this development
 21 and naturally we need to maturely reflect on it. But
 22 certainly the views of those we represent is that this
 23 matter needs to be expedited and we'll no doubt develop
 24 our position on this. But Mr Abdallah should have the
 25 same protection as everyone else has had, they should be

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1 the same and no special treatment should be given.
 2 We will reflect on this, but the families are anxious to
 3 hear from this man. I think there's little I can say at
 4 the moment and we'll reflect on that.
 5 MR ATKINSON: Sir, the approach just outlined seems entirely
 6 sensible and of course we'll make any further
 7 submissions when we've seen the letter.
 8 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you. Obviously, I will consider
 9 any application for an adjournment on the basis of more
 10 disclosure in order to answer the questions properly and
 11 consider it and we'll see where we go when we hear the
 12 application outlined and what can be done tomorrow.
 13 MR GREANEY: Mr Weatherby has a contribution to make on the
 14 issue.
 15 MR WEATHERBY: Yes, very briefly. I'm just a little bit
 16 worried about the time if he doesn't give evidence until
 17 the afternoon.
 18 MR GREANEY: Well, there were good reasons -- I know I often
 19 say this -- why it was considered that Mr Hipgrave
 20 should give evidence in the morning and
 21 Mr Abdalraouf Abdallah give evidence in the afternoon.
 22 In part, that was connected with a desire to ensure that
 23 his lawyers, who were concerned about the amount of time
 24 that they would have with him, would have more time to
 25 receive final instructions. I hope that makes sense,

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1 Mr Weatherby. I do understand the concern.
 2 MR WEATHERBY: Indeed.
 3 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: All I can say is we are doing our
 4 absolute best to make sure that Mr Abdallah is here to
 5 give evidence, gives his evidence, and we will consider
 6 the application for the adjournment tomorrow on its
 7 merits.
 8 MR GREANEY: Indeed.
 9 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Right. Shall we look forward to doing
 10 that tomorrow?
 11 MR GREANEY: We will, sir. 9.30 tomorrow, please.
 12 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Okay. Thank you very much.
 13 Thank you, everyone, for today, and thank you,
 14 Dr Wilkinson. A complex subject that you have made as
 15 clear as it's possible to be, I think.
 16 A. Thank you.
 17 SIR JOHN SAUNDERS: Thank you.
 18 (4.10 pm)
 19 (The inquiry adjourned until 9.30 am
 20 on Wednesday, 20 October 2021)
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