



## The moderate mosque

(Published in *National Review*, January 29, 2007)

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Colaboraciones n° 1558

March 15, 2007

“Mosque” is a term that covers a multitude of architectural sins these days, but the one at Regents Park in London is the real deal. Big golden dome above the tree tops, 140-foot minaret. I used to live nearby and I must have strolled past it hundreds of times and, if I ever did give it a second glance in those days, it was only to marvel: “Wow! That Hindu temple is totally awesome.”

I walked by it the other week for the first time in a long time. How did it get to sit on such a piece of prime London real estate? Well, you can thank His Majesty’s Government for that. In 1940, they allocated a hundred thousand pounds to buy land for a London mosque. The British Empire had millions of Muslim subjects and on the whole they’d been supportive of the war effort and it seemed appropriate that this should

be acknowledged in the heart of the metropolis. King George VI opened the Islamic Cultural Centre on the site in 1944. It’s the best attended mosque in Britain. If there is a “moderate” Islam in the west, this is it.

So what goes on there? Well, if you swing by the bookstore, you can pick up DVDs of hot preachers like Sheikh Feiz, who does these hilarious pig noises every time he mentions the Jews - “Oh, Muslim, behind me is the Jew. [snort-snort] Come and kill him. [snort-snort].” You can also buy tapes from Sheikh Yasin, a celebrity American “revert” (ie, convert) to Islam, in which he explains that you should “beat women lightly”, and that a Muslim can never be friends with a non-Muslim, and that Christian missionaries deliberately introduced Aids to Africa by putting it in the vaccines for ot-

her diseases. Another “revert”, Jermaine Lindsay, got the jihad fever at the mosque and then went and self-detonated in the July 7th bombings.

If the Regents Park Mosque has been “radicalized”, then there are no non-radical mosques.

When I lived in the neighborhood, you’d see t-shirted tourists snapping each other with the dome in the background. That’s what it was for most of us: an exotic backdrop. Inside, one assumed, they talked about Allah and Mohammed, and where’s the harm in that? We looked on it in multicultural terms – that’s to say, as a heritage issue: a link for immigrants back to the old country. It never occurred to us that it was an ideological bridgehead. But listen to Dr Ijaz Mian, secretly taped by Britain’s Channel 4 at the Ahl-e-Hadith mosque in Derby:

*“King, Queen, House of Commons: if you accept it, you are a part of it. If you don’t accept it, you have to dismantle it. So you being a Muslim, you have to fix a target. There will be no House of Commons. From that White House to this Black House, we know we have to dismantle it. Muslims must grow in strength, then take over... You are in a situation in which you have to live like a state-within-a-state - until you take over.”*

Where’s the religious content? Where’s the contemplation of the divine? Don’t look for it at the Sparkbrook mosque in Birmingham recently praised by Tony Blair for its contribution to tolerance and diversity. Last June they were celebrating the

killer of a British Muslim soldier in Afghanistan:

*“The hero of Islam is the one who separated his head from his shoulders.”*

These aren’t sermons and these men aren’t preachers. They’re ideological enforcers on an explicitly political project with branch offices on Main Streets across the western world. Imagine the Second World War with St Adolf’s Parish Church on every English village green, or the Cold War with a Soviet Orthodox Church in every mid-sized town in all 50 states.

Dr Mian trained in Saudi Arabia. The bookstore at the Regents Park Mosque is run by a company headed by a Saudi diplomat, Dr Ahmad al-Dubayan. The Saudis control mosques, and schools, and think-tanks, and prison chaplaincy programs and much else, too. I’d be calling for a blue-ribbon commission to investigate Saudi subversion of the US but pretty much everyone who’d wind up sitting on it would be on the Saudi gravy train one way or another. As Christopher Hitchens put it:

*“If, when reading an article about the debate over Iraq, you come across the expression ‘the realist school’ and mentally substitute the phrase ‘the American friends of the Saudi royal family,’ your understanding of the situation will invariably be enhanced.”*

Very droll. The trouble is there are so many “American friends of the Saudi royal family”. Jimmy Carter’s Carter Center was founded on King Fahd’s mountain of cash and, in the

last year, its biggest donors included Saudi Prince Al-Walid bin Talal. It never occurred to me in the fall of 2001 that five years on nothing would have changed, except that we'd be shoveling even more gazillions of petrodollars into Saudi Arabia and they in turn would be shoveling even more back at us in a brilliantly synergized subversion operation, funding not only the radical imams and their incendiary progeny

but also the think-tanks and study groups and Nobel Prize winners who ponder the best way to appease them. The Saudis are hollowing out Britain from within, and in America are hollowing out significant non-military components of national power - diplomatic, academic and cultural. Listen to the men in those mosques and then ask: Where's our ideological offensive?

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