

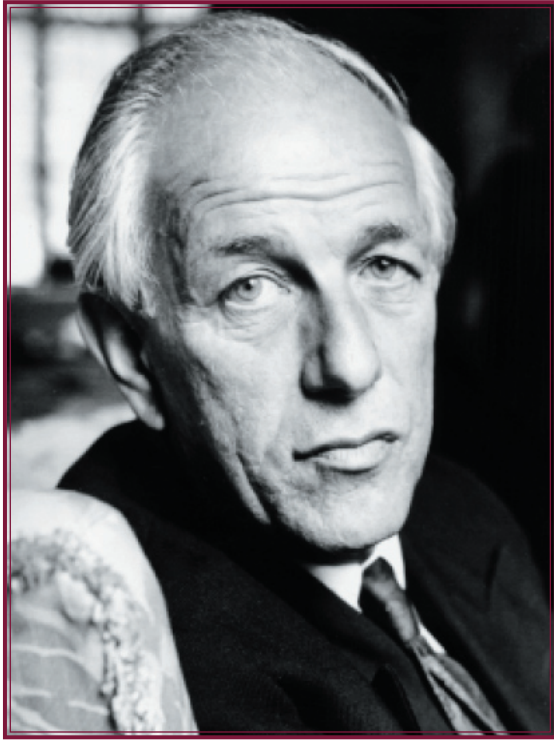
CANADA HOUSE PRESENTS



The Runnymede Trust's
Jim Rose Lecture 2005

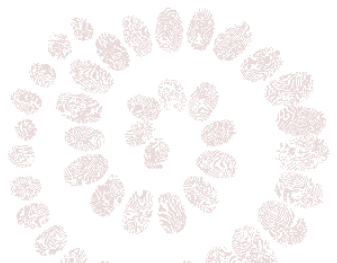


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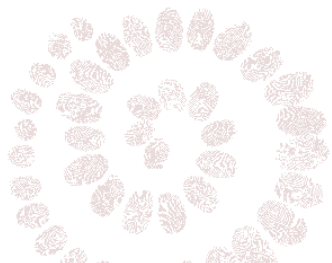
**Eliot Joseph Benn (Jim) Rose, CBE
1909 - 1999**

Photographed in 1963 by Jane Bown



Contents

1	Jim Rose Lecture
1	About the Runnymede Trust
3	The Jim Rose Lecture 2005
5	<i>Islam – A Third Way</i> by Lord (Waheed) Alli
6	Putting Values at the Heart of Islam
9	Who Defines These Values?
10	A Muslim ‘Third Way’
11	Choosing a Path
11	Making a Stand
12	Conclusion
13	Appendix 1 - Mini Rough Guide to Islam
14	Appendix 2 - The Main Features of Islam
15	Appendix 3 - Bibliography
19	<i>The Coming of Age of Multiculturalism</i> by Sally Armstrong
26	Afterword by Canadian High Commissioner Mel Cappe

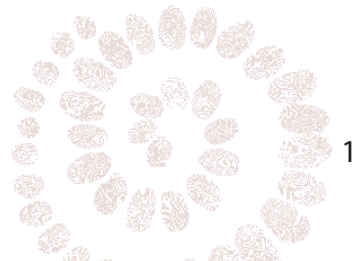


The Jim Rose Lecture

In 1968, Jim Rose and Anthony Lester co-founded the Runnymede Trust 'to counter racist propaganda and to develop programmes for an increasingly diverse society'. From then until his death in 1999, Jim Rose's contribution and devotion to racial justice and civil rights was unwavering and unbroken. He was a key figure in race relations in Britain over four decades and his seminal report, *Colour and Citizenship*, co-authored with Nicholas Deakin, has shaped the way we understand and think of racial equality today. The Runnymede Trust established the Jim Rose Lecture in 2003 to mark his enduring legacy.

About Runnymede Trust

The Runnymede Trust is an independent policy research organisation focusing on equality and justice through the promotion of a successful multi-ethnic society. Founded as a Charitable Educational Trust, Runnymede has a long track record in policy research, working in close collaboration with eminent thinkers and policymakers in the public, private and voluntary sectors. We believe that the way ahead lies in building effective partnerships, and we are continually developing these with the voluntary sector, the government, local authorities and companies in the UK and Europe. We stimulate debate and suggest forward-looking strategies in areas of public policy such as education, the criminal justice system, employment and citizenship. Since 1968, the date of Runnymede's foundation, we have worked to establish and maintain a positive image of what it means to live affirmatively within a society that is both multi-ethnic and culturally diverse. Runnymede continues to speak with a thoughtful and independent public voice on these issues today.



Jim Rose Lecture 2005

At Canada House, Trafalgar Square, on 21 November Lord (Waheed) Alli delivered an address on *Islam – A Third Way*.

He spoke at the second event staged by the Runnymede Trust in memory of Jim Rose, who, with Lord (Anthony) Lester, founded the Trust in 1968. This year's Jim Rose Lecture was an event within the 'Canada House Presents' series of evening talks and panel discussions organised by the Canadian High Commission (London) and introduced by High Commissioner Mel Cappe.

Lord Alli's lecture, on *Islam – A Third Way*, argued that Islam needs to adapt and open its doors to all Muslims. He pressed for a modern set of values, founded in the Qur'an, to be placed at the heart of Islam and to replace orthodox and outdated customs. He argued that these values are a necessity for our shared humanity, and to help separate mainstream Muslims from Muslim extremists.

The events of 9/11 and 7/7 and the Madrid bombings, Lord Alli suggested, have created a climate in which people talk about Islam, but spend very little time trying to understand it. He challenged the view that terrorism by Muslims is a response to the West or western values; to his thinking the conflict is based on different sets of values within Islam itself. Lord Alli argued for a radical shift in our thinking on Islam and for a stronger, consistent and modern position to be supported by mainstream Muslims.

Sally Armstrong's speech entitled *The Coming of Age of Multiculturalism* addressed diversity and its implications for human rights – in Canada and elsewhere. She discussed the importance of multiculturalism for Canadians, from its beginnings, over 30 years ago, as a federal government policy in support of nation-building. However, with cracks now appearing in this point of national pride, Ms Armstrong examined the risks of ghettoising women and attracting extremists. In light of today's realities, she argued, multiculturalism may be far more fragile than we know.



Islam – A Third Way **An Address by the Lord Alli**

9/11, 7/7 and the Madrid bombings have created a climate in which people talk about Islam but spend very little time trying to understand the religion. The key issues in Islam today are deciding which values we should place at the centre of the religion and who should interpret these values. In this pamphlet, I argue that we must return to the modern values found in the Qur'an. We must attempt to reconcile the Islamic values of the 7th century with modern 21st-century life. And we must build a set of values that respect and preserve human dignity and life – a set of values that allow mainstream Muslims to separate themselves from the extremists.



Photographs: Benedict Hilliard

This pamphlet is based on the keynote speech given by the Lord (Waheed) Alli at the Runnymede Trust's Jim Rose Lecture 2005. The event took place at Canada House on Monday, 21 November 2005.

We live in a complex multimedia world, and we receive contradictory messages about Islam and terrorism. In the West, we are told that terrorism by Muslims is about 'the West and Western values' or the 'plight of the Palestinians', and in Muslim countries we hear that it is a holy war against 'crusaders (Christians) and Jews'. The truth is, however, that Muslim terrorism is no more a war against 'the West and Western values' than it is about 'Christians and Jews'. One has only to look at the death tolls in Iraq, Afghanistan, Nigeria, Indonesia and India to understand what Muslim terrorism is really about: values forged in the 7th century in conflict with those of the 21st century.

I believe the key issue facing Muslims is the Muslim community's reluctance to confront contradictory messages within the religion. It has become more important to some to recite the Qur'an in Arabic than understand it in English. It has become more important to adhere to the rituals of the religion than be faithful to the values of the Qur'an. It seems that mainstream Muslims have lost sight of what is important.

Putting Values at the Heart of Islam

And yet at the heart of Islam, front and centre of the Qur'an and the Hadith collections,¹ is expressed a set of modern values and rights which I believe all Muslims can live their lives by. A set of values and rights which are fundamental to 21st-century life. And a set of values that I think very few people – whether they are religious or not – would have any difficulty subscribing to.

Rather than outlining them all, I have selected from the Qur'an² seven values which I believe illustrate this point.

1. Right to Life

The Qur'an upholds the sanctity of human life:

'and slay not anyone whom Allah has forbidden except for a just cause'
(6:151)

¹ The Hadith collections are sayings and recordings from the Prophet Muhammad's life.

² Taken from *The Glorious Quran*, Abdul Majid Daryabadi, The Islamic Foundation.



and draws an analogy between the life of an individual and the entirety of mankind:

‘that whoso kills a person, except for a person, or for corruption in the land, it shall be as if he killed all mankind, and whoso brings life to one it shall be as if he brought life to all mankind’ (5:32).³

2. Right to Respect and Equity

The Qur’an asserts that all human beings are worthy of respect because they possess a rational faculty (over and above other animals) and because of their superior level of righteousness:

‘And assuredly We have honoured the children of Adam, and borne them on the land and the sea, and We have provided them with clean things, and We have preferred them with a preference over many of them whom We have created’ (17:70; 95:4; 2:62).

The Qur’an also recognises everyone’s right to equity:

‘And Allah knows well your belief, the one of you is as the other’ (4:25; 4:32).

3. Right to Justice

The Qur’an places emphasis on the right to seek justice and the duty to enact justice:

‘O you who believe! Be maintainers of your pact with Allah and witness in equity, and let not the detestation for a people incite you not to act fairly; act fairly; that is nigh unto piety’ (5:8).

4. Right to Liberty

The Qur’an decrees that no one but God can limit human freedom and that

³ There are many other verses in the Qur’an that support each of these rights, but I have selected these particular verses for their clarity. This is the case for all verses quoted in this pamphlet.

man should avoid dictatorship of any kind:

'It is not possible for a man to whom Allah has given the Book and wisdom and prophethood that he should say afterward to men, be you worshippers of me, beside Allah; but be you faithful servants of the Lord, seeing that you are wont to teach the Book and seeing that you are wont to exercise yourselves therein' (3:79).

5. Right to Acquire Knowledge

The Qur'an emphasises the importance of acquiring knowledge and encourages us to use our rational faculties:

'And you do not go after that which you have no knowledge; verily the hearing and the sight and the hearts, each of them shall be questioned about' (17:36).

6. Right to Work

The Qur'an states that every woman and man has a right to work and keep their earnings:

'To men shall be the portion of what they earn, and to women shall be the portion of what they earn' (4:32).

7. Right to Privacy

The Qur'an recognises the right to privacy generally:

'and spy not on one another' (Surah 49:12)

as well as in one's own home:

'O you who believe! Do not enter houses other than your own until you have asked leave and invoked peace on their inmates' (24:27-28).



Whilst there are other values equally worth mentioning (e.g., the right to basic necessities, the right to freedom of expression), I have selected these seven values because I believe they sufficiently demonstrate how relevant Islam is to modern-day life and how easily it can be adapted to speak to and for the 21st century.

But this, of course, brings up the question – if these rights are so clearly outlined in the Qur’an and the Qur’an is viewed as the definitive word of God, then why are there differences in opinion between Muslims?

I think the heart of the problem lies in the Qur’an itself.

Who Defines These Values?

The Qur’an was revealed to the Prophet Mohammed through the Angel Gabriel in the 7th century CE, and there is much that needs to be interpreted or elaborated. However, the crucial questions in Islam – to what extent 7th-century values can be reinterpreted for 21st-century life, and who should be allowed to reinterpret them – have remained unchallenged.

The result is that only Islamic scholars have been allowed to (re)interpret the Qur’an, and, more often than not, their interpretations have been literal and orthodox rather than holistic and modern.

This is a major problem. Because if you view the Qur’an and the Hadiths as literal texts, you will find in them sufficient bloodthirsty justification to kill, slaughter and maim as many human beings as you could possibly wish. Were you to use the Qur’an and the Hadiths as literal texts, you could execute a woman for adultery, even though she was raped. And if you used the Qur’an and the Hadiths as literal texts, you could hang two teenaged boys in north-eastern Iran, as was done only a few months ago, simply for being gay.

The Qur’an is a sacred text, but there are contradictions in the Qur’an.⁴ The Hadiths elaborate on the Qur’an, but there are verses justifying violence and death for non-believers. We have to stop avoiding these contradictions and

⁴ For example: is there or is there not a compulsion in religion? There are verses that state there is none: ‘No compulsion is there in religion’ (2:256); and there are others that say there is: ‘Fight them who do not believe in Allah or the Last Day’ (9:29).

start confronting them. We can no longer afford to be selective when working through religious texts, and we cannot divorce what we think are modern values from our religions. It is obvious that a debate conducted by the theological establishment alone is simply not going to be enough.

A Muslim ‘Third Way’

I want to offer, if you like, a Muslim ‘third way’: the democratisation of Islam where the people take control of their religion.

- A religion which opens its doors to modern interpretations rather than being guided by a small number of traditional ulemas or Islamic scholars;
- A religion which focuses on the culture of rights rather than just ritual;
- A religion which will be more responsive to moral values than to archaic beliefs;
- And a religion which allows all Muslims – not just the scholars – to be involved in the understanding of their faith.

We need to think about the kinds of rights that we want to cherish. We need to discuss which rights are fundamental and which could have a social and cultural resonance. We need to talk openly about the rights of the individual versus those of the State. We are in an educated era now – one where we can all discuss the difficult issues that religion often throws up in a modern world.

We need to define what modern Islam means, what it is we believe and what it is we are trying to protect. We have to recognise there are those who do not share these values but want to live within Islam, and we have to ask ourselves if we can coexist with those who do not share our beliefs and do not share the values and rights we are seeking to protect.

These are important issues. Muslims make up nearly one-fifth of the world’s population. Muslims live on every continent and constitute a majority of the

population in 44 countries. And these issues will not go away.

Choosing a Path

The Muslim terrorist bombings have brought home the reality of what is happening within the Islamic religion. Two sets of powerful values are in combat within Islam: the values of a modern Islam versus a literal and antiquated set of values. And these orthodox values have no regard for human life, dignity or, in my view, the will of God. This century will be defined by this conflict. Make no mistake: it is a conflict of values.

I am proposing a 'third way' in Islam; but not as a solution, as a path. It is a means for de-monopolising Islam and building it around modern global values. It is a radical democratisation of Islam – involving mainstream Muslims in the interpretation of the Qur'an, in the application of particular Shari'ah laws (in Muslim countries) and in discussions of individual rights versus the rights of the state.

The 'third way' I propose will reconcile modern values in Islam with everyday values in modern life – recognising common ground between people and common ground between faiths. It would enfranchise all those groups – including women – who have previously been disenfranchised in Islam. It would be a positive and inclusive way of channelling views and beliefs – and an effective way of countering the ill-informed and intolerant views of Muslim extremists.

Making a Stand

Islam is changing and Muslims are at a crossroads. We need to make active choices about what kind of Islam we want to have and how we are going to reclaim it from the extremists. Muslims need to admit to themselves that their enemies are not external; they are within.

So mainstream Muslims must choose a path: either sit back like victims and watch helplessly whilst Muslim extremists reinvent our faith, or take action.



Verbal condemnations will not be enough.

It is hypocritical to condemn suicide killings in one country but condone them in another. It is weak to condemn the killing of innocent people without challenging the contradictions in the Qur'an on the right to life as a non-Muslim.

The 'third way' in Islam will be a radical shift of the status quo. It is about reclaiming Islam from those who are illegitimately trying to take it over. But in order to succeed, it will need effective organisation and strong leaders within the mainstream Muslim community. It will require difficult decisions by Muslim leaders, and it will mean stern action.

The message from the mainstream Muslim community to the extremists must be clear: 'We don't want your kind here because your values are not ours.'

Conclusion

So what kind of Islam do I want to be represented by?

I want one based on modern values. I want an Islam that focuses on rights and not rituals, where people are allowed to develop their faith in their own way and to fit within a modern lifestyle. I want a tolerant Islam – one that allows dynamism, difference and divergence. I want an Islam that represents us all – not just a few. And I want an Islam that we all have the right to question.

I think these modern values already exist in Islam, but only when we put them at the front and centre of Islam will we find a convincing defence against extremism. And only when we include all Muslims in the interpretation of their faith will we find a religion capable of defending itself against the extremist.

Waheed Alli
November 2005

Appendix 1

In my lecture on 21 November 2005, I attempted to outline some of the key features of Islam. I explained that I was not attempting to give a thorough description of Islam (if indeed there is an agreed version) but simply to give a *mini rough guide to Islam*. My intention in what follows is to offer some helpful background information.

Mini Rough Guide to Islam

Islam is an Arabic word which means 'peace' and being obedient to Allah.

The beginnings of Islam can be traced back to Adam – the first man created on Earth and the first of a line of Prophets that ends with Mohammed (born 570 CE).

Each Prophet was sent to remind people of the will of God (Allah).

The main features of the Islamic religion are broadly the six articles of faith and the five pillars of faith (see below). These are basic beliefs and practices that have evolved from the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet.

A summary of the articles of faith can be found in some of the verses of the Qur'an, and the five pillars of Islam are reflected in the Hadith collections, which record Mohammed's life.

The Qur'an represents God's word, and was revealed to the Prophet Mohammed through the Angel Gabriel. The Qur'an is divided into 114 chapters (*Surahs*) and each Surah has a number and title based on a word or theme within the Surah. The basic unit of a Surah is called a verse (*Ayah*), and overall the Qur'an has 6,200 verses.

Islamic law, prescribing how Muslims should behave, is called the *Shari'ah* and is derived from four main sources (including the Qur'an and the practices of the Prophet).

There are many divisions within Islam, but the two that we are most familiar with are the Sunni and Shia groups. The difference between the two groups dates back to disagreements over the Prophet's successor. The Shia claimed that the leadership of the Islamic community should come from the family of the Prophet (Ali ibn abul Taleb – the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet), whereas the Sunnis favoured Abu Bakr, the first elected leader after the Prophet's death. Over time, ideological differences have developed.



Appendix 2

The Main Features of Islam

Articles of Faith

- Belief in God (Allah)
- Belief in the prophets and messengers of God
- Belief in the books of revelation
- Belief in the Angels of Allah
- Belief in the Final Day of Judgement
- Belief in God's decrees

Pillars of Faith

- Testimony of faith and belief in one God
- Prayer
- Fasting
- Sharing one's wealth
- Pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj)

A summary of the core articles can be found in verses of the Qur'an (e.g., Surah al-Nisa: 136; Surah al-Baqarah: 177). The five pillars of Islam are reflected in the Hadith collections recording Mohammed's life.

Appendix 3

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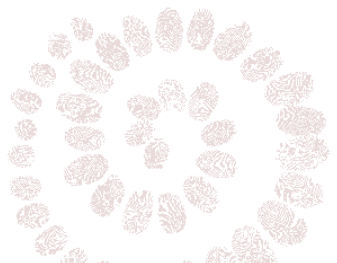
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The Coming Age of Multiculturalism by Sally Armstrong



Photographs: Benedict Hilliard

This speech was presented on the same evening as Lord Alli's at the Runnymede Trust's Jim Rose Lecture 2005, held at Canada House on Monday, 21 November 2005.

In light of recent events in the Paris *banlieue* and the potential firestorm in the Jane-Finch corridor of Toronto, our topic tonight brings new meaning to *après nous le déluge*. Hurricane Katrina was another canary in the mine that mixes race, cultural relativism and poverty with unrest. The good news is we've received a very loud message. The bad news is we don't seem to know what to do with it. Old formulas are not working. New ones haven't been tested. We have very little from past experience to draw a map for the way forward in today's fractious world community. Except, of course, for the fairly recent and almost reverent attention being paid to the concepts of human rights and multiculturalism. They are seen as the new panacea. There's evidence to suggest that they are just that.

It's not that the international community has ignored multiculturalism in the past. Consider the numerous cultural exchanges between the UK and France, between Quebec and the rest of Canada, between the US and Europe, between Africa and the rest of the world. What is the long-term connection of these attempts to bridge the divide? I have to draw the conclusion that our current and historical methods for celebrating diversity are simply not producing the crop we hoped for. It's one thing to pack your high school or university students off to a term of study in another country and have them return with cultural appreciation and a diary of good times. It's quite another when those same students become adults, take their place in the career world and make decisions based solely on the gross national product and the stock market index. Looking on their exchange with nostalgic memories, to the tune of Kumbaya, is not effective in terms of policy planning for today's world.

It is the moral courage of civil society along with government policy that is needed in the coming age of multiculturalism. Last year's extraordinary response to the Indian Ocean tsunami tells us two things: people do care about nameless people from other cultures and other places, and there is enough money to alter the course. Civil society is much more savvy and certainly more outspoken today. I suggest civil society does know what to do and – more than that – knows how to do it. But a collection of barriers that range from malignant indifference to suffocating political correctness stop us from making the changes we know need to be made.

The United Nations – with its charter, its declaration of human rights, its covenants and conventions that almost every country in the world have signed – simply isn't working. The documents were written with the best of intentions, but there isn't a single word about accountability in a single document. With no iron fist of accountability, the documents we rely on are instead the politics of embarrassment.

Look at the Taliban. Here's a gang of mostly illiterate thugs who hijacked their own religion out of political opportunism. They claimed they were acting in the name of God. There's not a word in the Koran to support what the Taliban did. There's nothing that says a woman cannot work, or a girl cannot go to school or even that a woman must cover her face. Yet until 9/11, the world looked the other way in the face of this human rights catastrophe. Even the United Nations felt its hands were tied. I remember a UN regional director finding me on his doorstep in Kandahar and saying with enormous impatience, 'When are you going to get it through your head that what's happening to the women of Afghanistan is cultural! What happened to the women of Afghanistan was not cultural – it was criminal. Everyone knows that silence is seen as consent.'

In many of the articles I write, the issue of cultural relativity is raised. The people in power tell me the status of women is not my business, that I'm not part of their culture or religion, that I speak as a Western woman. Well, women the world over have long known that the misogynist acts used against them in the name of culture or religion aren't cultural or religious at all – they're misogynist. But there's a taboo about speaking of such issues, and that taboo works effectively to maintain the sometimes life-threatening ties that bind a woman to her husband or father. It's played like a cultural trump card to keep the silence and maintain the status quo.

There's a poem written in the Dari language that, roughly translated, goes like this: 'If you've come to help me, you're wasting your time and mine. If you've come because your liberation is linked to mine, then let's join hands and work together.' I believe that's where we are today.



Some look to Canada for the prescription for those ills. After all, we wear multiculturalism like a badge of honour. It's how we define ourselves. Entrenched as federal policy more than 34 years ago, it is seen as a form of nation-building. We have affirmative action and hiring and admission targets. We have aggressive hiring of minority teachers and police officers. Our schools celebrate Diwali, Kwanzaa, Ramadan and Chinese New Year. In fact, recently there was a kerfuffle when the leader of a political party suggested a national election be held on a date that coincided with the 10 days of Chinese New Year celebrations. How could he be so culturally insensitive, the pundits roared? The fact that he is married to a Chinese woman didn't count.

The subways of Toronto look like the United Nations – you can hear a dozen different languages being spoken in the station and on the platform. Indeed, Canada has become a country where it is politically smart to appoint a Haitian female immigrant as Governor General. It seems we don't care what people wear on their heads or what building they pray in as long as they are tolerant of others and in particular of what we see as Canadian values.

And Canadians are very proud of this. This is a country that was never a coloniser. Everyone in Canada with the notable exception of the First Nations people came from someplace else. Young people seem to be colour-blind when it comes to mixing up the races. Most of the top high school graduates in Toronto last year were children of immigrants, and polls suggest that half the children of Canada's immigrants will intermarry. On the outside, it appears that Canada has found the formula for effective multiculturalism.

Columnist and author John Ibbitson, in his new book *The Polite Revolution: Perfecting the Canadian Dream*, writes:

'We are fashioning the world's first truly cosmopolitan society. The result is nothing less than a miracle. Certain cities in Canada are becoming places where no race is dominant. In the process we have inculcated a myth, even a joke of being fanatically polite. Politeness is not some accidental quality of being Canadian. It is at the core of what we are. It is the means by which we accommodate

each other. It is the secret recipe for a nation of different cultures, languages and customs whose citizens all get along.'

Well, maybe we do. But today there are cracks appearing in the foundations of this national point of pride. The ghettoising of women is one example of a flawed foundation; encouraging separateness and attracting extremists is another. A recent poll suggests there is a line the country is prepared to draw. Diversity is a value Canadians prefer, but loyalty to Canada is a demand that comes first.

In light of today's realities, multiculturalism may be far more fragile than we know. Recent research done by University of Toronto sociologist Jeffrey Reitz reveals an alarming and disquieting analogue to the demographic portrait of the French *banlieue*, says author Michael Valpy. 'It shows an emerging population of Canadian-raised daughters and sons of visible minority immigrants whose accents and cultural reference points are as Canadian as maple syrup, but who in many respects feel less welcome than their parents.' One young woman told Reitz, 'The word *immigrant* is used to mean coloured. *Canadian* is a code word for Caucasian.' Add that perception of non-belonging to their socio-economic class – racial minorities have the lowest relative household income and the highest poverty rates – and one can presume that multiculturalism as a roadmap still has a distance to travel. The data also show that 30 percent fewer visible minorities vote in federal elections than do whites. As well, visible minorities are 30 percent less likely to perceive themselves as Canadian.

In shades of Paris burning – this in the land of Voltaire, after all – separate is never equal. The very foundations of multiculturalism actually encourage separateness. Celebrating neighbourhoods that reflect other cultures is grand; in Toronto's China Town, it's even a tourist attraction. But if those neighbourhoods are isolated by language, religion and culture, they're also isolated from mainstream Canadian values and opportunities. The recent ruckus surrounding Shari'ah law in Ontario is an example. Women's groups across the country were horrified to discover that women who felt they'd escaped harsh religious laws in places like Iran and Saudi Arabia were



ghettoised in Canadian communities where they had no choice but to obey extremist leaders – this in the name of multiculturalism. And when the secular laws of Ontario were overruled by Shari’ah law, the hue and cry from citizens on both sides of the debate was loud and nasty. Although the Government of Ontario is now in the process of annulling religious courts, these are some of the consequences of multiculturalism that were unheard of a decade ago.

We live in a post-9/11 world. We are the traumatised aftermath. Accusations and even arrests, some of them culturally or racially motivated, threaten to undo the accomplishments of multiculturalism. I believe that the way forward lies less with government and policy and more with each one of us.

The lesson from social activist June Callwood is that it is not unusual to want to help someone in trouble, right a wrong, stop an injustice. What is exceedingly rare is any of us feeling we have the power to do that as individuals. When we see something that is wrong, we can be altruistic and try to do something about it or we can look the other way. The philosopher and writer Hannah Arendt was absorbed for much of her life with an effort to understand the nature of good and evil. In her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem, a study of the trial of Adolph Eichmann*, the Nazi who bore a major responsibility for the Holocaust, she directed her considerable intellect to an analysis of evil. Her conclusion was that evil thrives on apathy and cannot exist without it; hence apathy is evil. When injustice encounters inertia, it uses that passivity exactly as though it was approval, and in the absence of protest evil is nourished and can flourish. June Callwood concludes that the nature of goodness therefore bears a keen resemblance to intervention. Individuals who seek to serve their conscience, find meaning in their lives or simply experience the quiet splendour of moral growth are obliged to participate in society.

Most people, as theatre critic Walter Kerr once put it, cast themselves in the role of spectator whatever the provocation to take action. The excuses are that no effort of theirs would succeed, or that in any case they don’t know what to do, or they might look foolish or what they do might make matters worse. But, Callwood notes, ‘innocent bystander is an oxymoron.



People who do not intervene when something is amiss, give tacit permission for injustice to continue.'

You can make all the laws and quotas you like, but as long as citizens are made to feel separate, the honour badge of multiculturalism will tarnish. And human rights, the tools to fix the wrongs, will be powerless.

But it takes awesome moral courage to go against the grain. Upsetting the status quo, braving the disapproval of your colleagues, the censure of your friends, and risking the wrath of society are formidable tasks. It's been said that moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or even great intelligence. But it is the one essential vital quality for those who seek to change a world that yields most painfully to change.

Sally Armstrong
November 2005



Afterword **by Canadian High Commissioner Mel Cappe**

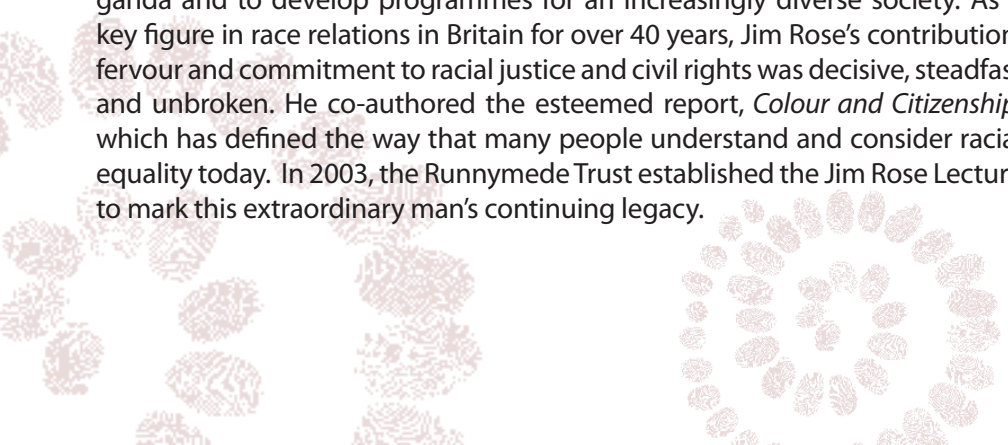
Recently, the Canadian High Commission has hosted several very rousing talks and debates on the issues surrounding multiculturalism in our little piece of Canada on Trafalgar Square.

In October 2005, for instance, Canada House presented Canadian author and activist Ishrad Manji who debated with Sir Trevor Philips, Chair of the Commission on Racial Equality and David Goodhart, Editor of *Prospect* magazine on *Notions of Identity and Multiculturalism*.

A fortnight later, we held a roundtable discussion with Canadian Senator Donald Oliver and representatives of Operation Black Vote and other leading UK groups dealing with race, ethnicity and equality on the subject of *Diversity*.

As part of our ongoing dialogue on multiculturalism and related issues, we were very honoured to partner with the Runnymede Trust in co-hosting the 2005 Jim Rose Lecture on November 21, 2005. For 37 years, the Trust has been at the forefront of the fight against social injustice and racial discrimination. As an independent and influential policy research organisation, Runnymede has worked tirelessly toward achieving a successful multi-ethnic Britain: by building civil society-government links; stimulating debate; and articulating strategies in public policy areas including education, employment, citizenship and justice.

Jim Rose co-founded the Runnymede Trust in 1968 'to counter racist propaganda and to develop programmes for an increasingly diverse society.' As a key figure in race relations in Britain for over 40 years, Jim Rose's contribution, fervour and commitment to racial justice and civil rights was decisive, steadfast and unbroken. He co-authored the esteemed report, *Colour and Citizenship*, which has defined the way that many people understand and consider racial equality today. In 2003, the Runnymede Trust established the Jim Rose Lecture to mark this extraordinary man's continuing legacy.



The 2005 Jim Rose Lecture was delivered by the illustrious Lord (Waheed) Alli. Former renowned television director, highly-successful entrepreneur and politician, Lord Alli was appointed a Life Peer in 1998 – becoming the youngest member of the House of Lords. He is Chairman of Chorion Plc – an intellectual property rights owning company – and is very active in the House of Lords where he takes a particular interest in issues concerning equality. Lord Alli is also a trustee of The Elton John Aids Foundation, Vice President of UNICEF, Governor of the London School of Economics, President of the National Youth Theatre, and a patron of a number of other voluntary organisations.

In a poignant lecture, Lord Alli spoke to us on the topic of *Islam – A Third Way*. Following his speech, we heard from a distinguished Canadian thinker who we were also delighted to have at Canada House: Ms Sally Armstrong presented a rousing talk on *The Coming Age of Multiculturalism*.

A Canadian human rights activist, documentary filmmaker and award-winning author and journalist, Sally Armstrong is a contributing editor at *Maclean's* – Canada's leading weekly magazine. Through numerous articles, books and documentaries, she has recounted the stories of women and girls in conflict zones all over the world. From Bosnia and Somalia to Rwanda and Afghanistan, Sally's reporting has earned her much praise and many awards. In 1998, she was made a Member of the Order of Canada.

And so we were very fortunate to have these two most remarkable individuals address us and lead us into what was a very lively discussion afterwards...

In fulfillment of my duties at Canada's High Commissioner in the United Kingdom, allow me to briefly underline the importance to which the Government of Canada attaches to the public debate on the future of multiculturalism. It is a debate that is presently raging in this country, elsewhere in Europe and around the world. It is also an issue being debated in Canada – a country that believes that being a nation of immigrants is a *good thing* and that remaining a peaceful nation requires respect for all of its citizens and its citizens to be.

But even with the best intentions, the partnership of cultural communities is at times fragile and one that may never be perfect. This is why we must all continue to work tirelessly to ensure that while it may never be perfect – we will do everything in our power to make it *right*.

And so the debate continues, and as we have seen, it can be fiery, wrangling and contentious at times. But still, from our perspective, it is a necessary, even essential, debate for democracies to engage in. And I believe that we are very fortunate that we can continue to come together – across borders and oceans – to have it.

