

Smith, M. *et al.* (2011) More division over multiculturalism, Letter, The Guardian, 9th February
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/feb/09/more-division-over-multiculturalism>

More division over multiculturalism

The Guardian, Wednesday 9 February 2011

We believe David Cameron's statement that multiculturalism has failed was a dangerous declaration of intent (Blaming the victims, Editorial, 7 February). His speech was reminiscent of Margaret Thatcher's infamous 1978 statement that Britain was "being swamped by alien cultures". He has branded Britain's Muslims as the new "enemy within" in the same way as Thatcher attacked the miners and trade unions.

David Cameron is attempting to drive a wedge between different communities by linking Britain's multicultural society with terrorism and national security. His speech was made on the same day as the English Defence League brought its bigotry and violence to the streets of Luton. Mr Cameron's aim is simple as it is crude – to deflect the anger against his government's cuts from the bankers and on to the Muslim community. The prime minister is aping attacks by other European leaders like France's Nicolas Sarkozy, who passed legislation banning the veil, and Angela Merkel, who has also made statements denouncing multiculturalism in Germany. We believe our multicultural society and the respect and solidarity it is built on is a cause for pride, and reject any moves by this government to undermine and destroy it.

We must not allow this coalition government to turn the tide back to the days when it was acceptable, through ignorance and fear, for people with a different religion, culture or skin colour to be scapegoated and treated as inferior or outsiders.

Martin Smith . Love Music Hate Racism

Peter Hain MP

Jeremy Corbyn MP

Ken Livingstone

Salma Yaqoob . Respect

Bob Crow . National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

Billy Hayes . Communication Workers Union

Mark Serwotka . Public and Commercial Services Union

Zita Holbourne . TUC

Dr Rob Berkeley . Runnymede Trust

Ziauddin Sardar . writer

Farooq Murad . Muslim Council of Britain

Dr Rob Berkeley . Director, Runnymede Trust

Professor Tariq Modood, University of Bristol
Mohammed Sawalha, British Muslim Initiative
Dr Chris Shannahan
Benjamin Zephaniah, poet
Lauren Booth, broadcaster and journalist
Michael Rosen, author
China Miéville, author
Dr Avaes Mohammad poet, playwright, performer, analytical chemist
Sabrina Mahfouz, poet and playwright
Tulisa Contostavlos, Dino Contostavlos and Richard Rawson, N-Dubz,
Drew McConnell, Babysambles
Lowkey, musician
Itch, The King Blues
Daniel Stephens, musician
David Peter Meads, musician
Blaine Harrison Mystery Jets
Adio Merchant, Simeon McLean Kid British
Jeff Mirza, comic/actor
Sabby Dhalu, Unite Against Fascism and One Society Many Cultures
Lindsey German, Stop the War Coalition
Hassan Mahamdallie
Weyman Bennett, Unite Against Fascism
Gary McFarlane, NUJ and Expose the BNP
Kanja Ibrahim Sesay, NUS
Frances Rifkin, Equity
Dr Jonathan Githens-Mazer, European Muslim Research Centre
Shemiza Rashid, Creative Muslim Network
Laura Miles, University and College Union
Gargi Bhattachryya, University and College Union
Sean Vernell, University and College Union
Sue Bond, Public and Commercial Services Union
Revd Ray Gaston
Madani Younis, Freedom Studios, Bradford, and the Artists of Freedom Studios
Mohammed Ali, Aerosolarabic
Luqman Ali
Kinsi Abdulleh
Sarah Pickthall
Ayaan Aden
Tristan McConnell
Rabbi Lee Wax, Chairperson, Inter religious Conference for European Women
Theologians
Musleh Faradhi, Islamic Forum Europe
Bruce Kent, Pax Christi
Professor Danny Dorling, Sheffield University