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Friday 10th February 2012

Dear Sir,

We write in regard to the column published in today's Daily Mail by Leo McKinstry, 'A prophet sacrificed to appease the mob,' (Daily Mail, Friday 10th February), in which he eulogises the recent death of Bradford headmaster, Ray Honeyford.

He writes, "*The passing of time has shown that Honeyford was equally justified in his warning about Muslim separatism, which has dramatically accelerated in the 28 years since his Salisbury Review article. That process is reflected in the growth of Muslim faith schools and the informal official acceptance of sharia courts.*"

It may come as some surprise to Mr McKinstry that Shari'ah tribunals in the UK are voluntary and mandated under the Arbitration Act, a piece of legislation that permits Beth Din and other religious courts to arbitrate in civil disputes.

Furthermore, his reference to the "growth of Muslim faith schools" ignores the far greater proportion of faith schools in the UK that are Christian or Jewish.

To refer to equality under the law for Muslims, as for other faith and non-faith groups as examples of "Muslim separatism" is not only specious but vindictive. Would Mr McKinstry rather have Muslims live as unequal citizens in Britain, deprived of the rights extended to other minority faith communities? And would that not constitute anti-Muslim prejudice?

Yours sincerely,

Shenaz Bunglawala
ENGAGE