

Essential ingredients for integration ...by Michael Wade

With over 2m immigrants settling in the UK over these past 10 years, and an estimated 1.3m British Pakistanis already UK citizens, the concerns of our *indigenous* population are often expressed with **alarm** as they make demands for a curtailment of further immigration into the UK. *British Future* found that one in three Britons believe that *division* within society is heightened by tensions between immigrants and British born residents. Many British Pakistanis themselves express concern for the previous 'open door' policy by the Labour Government. And so I suggest that current Government policy must be right in continuing to reduce the intake of immigrants into the UK as a part of the objective to enhance living standards & social harmony.

Britain has always embraced immigrants.....

For centuries, Britain has *accepted and welcomed* immigrants from across the world; these citizens have *enriched* our society both economically and culturally – over the generations diverse peoples have integrated within our communities and achieved their own aspirations.

At a time of economic stress, combined with such large numbers of immigrants, we must *work together* in examining the current issues and seek *solutions* to barriers that *might* exist to prevent, or arrest, successful integration into British society.

We all have a role to play in ensuring a successful integration....

We *all* have a role to play and, sometimes, the relevant topics are a challenge to admit and address – and so a spirit of *honest* tolerance – and a 'two way street' form one of the *first* essential ingredients to integration. A respect and sense of fairness need to prevail; David Cameron said in 2007 'We wouldn't be *half* the country we are without immigration...We can only *live* together if there is *proper* integration.'

And these are largely cultural – not legal – issues....

These are *not* matters to be addressed *just* by legislation, but by *building* bridges at all levels of society; whilst the immigrant *should want* to integrate – so, too, must our Society *actively* extend the invitation to do so. The two way street. The Governments ‘Creating the conditions for Integration’ Paper looks at promoting participation, responsibility, and social mobility as key aspects in creating an integrated society. Clearly Government has an important role to play, but it must be focussed around establishing the right framework and conditions for integration to occur - thereby enabling success naturally in our society.

I would like to focus upon the British Pakistani citizens; only 13% vote Conservative, and their communities are concentrated within 20 constituencies – demonstrating their close knit communities. Lord Ashcroft’s ‘Degrees of separation’ research suggests that ‘less than a third of men from a Pakistani background said that they would never vote Conservative’ - So the scope for *our* Party is for a 66% target !

Immigrants must become embraced within the mainstream political parties...

Bringing British Pakistani citizens into mainstream politics has the potential to impact upon British politics, as a whole .

In launching the Conservative Friends of Pakistan last year, the Prime Minister, David Cameron, said that the *first task* is indeed to embrace the British Pakistani citizens into the *political parties* – hopefully, to our own Party – but as the *secondary* objective to their political engagement in mainstream political parties.

The Conservative Party is still not seen as an aspirational one for immigrants...

The *fact* is, that the Conservative Party has not been successful in reaching out to the British Pakistani community; and so they, in turn, have not looked to the Conservative Party as the one that represents *their* interests. (This is clear from the 2010 General Election result, which saw 60% of the British Pakistani electorate voting Labour).

We are generally viewed as a 'white, educated middle class' party; Lord Ashcroft's Paper shows that 'a perception, that the Conservative Party does not stand for fairness,, is *actively* hostile to people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds,, - its policies have shown this to be the case and were the strongest factors for Muslims who say they would *never* vote Tory. The evidence could not be *clearer* that the Conservative Party has not done enough to engage with the British Pakistani community.

Pakistani immigrants should be natural supporters of the Conservative Party...

Pakistani instincts, are ones of striving; seeking education, wanting to improve and aspire to generate wealth for their families. They are *noble* in their beliefs, they respect the Christian traditions and ethics – they reject, the so called 'Islamic Extremism'.

British Pakistanis are sometimes *perplexed* by Britain's support for the US drone strikes,, they are *angered* by the £18k income requirement for a British citizen to earn, before bringing another to the UK; and they feel *strongly* that there is a lack of equality and opportunity for their children – both in the education and job markets.

Conversely - it is not untypical for the *indigenous* citizen to be *completely* alienated from the British Pakistani community; it is a closed community to them. They have *no* idea what *relevance* these fellow citizens are to them – and *no* means of gaining *access* to them or extending the hand of friendship.

We must do more to promote an integrated society....

So we can see some of the *dangers* of a Society that is not so coherent, and that is not such an integrated community; – we have *failed* to build sufficient bridges required to develop the value of a rich, diversity of people. David Cameron stated: "Creating a more *cohesive* society enables *meritocratic* values to be embraced, and for *aspirations* to therefore be met, resulting in a much more inclusive (& productive) society."

The value to Britain of an *integrated* society is huge, drawn from such a *rich* vein of blood – Roman, Saxon, Gaul, Viking, Norman – later added to by Huguenot, Jewish, Afro-Caribbean, Indian & Pakistani peoples – and this is what

makes up this *great* land of the British Isles and our indigenous population. That we have been slow to embrace the Indians & Pakistanis, is something to address with vigour.

[We must all play our part in achieving better integration...](#)

Solutions rest on both sides; for the *indigenous* British, it is to understand the issues on the minds of their new neighbours,, to appreciate that this *really* matters, it is *relevant* to them too; – and extend the hand of friendship at any level that can be generated.

I asked Lord Tebbit for a message to you and he states: “It is over twenty years since I suggested that a possible test of how well immigrants and their descendants had integrated into British society might be found in observing which side they cheered for in cricket matches. There has been quite a change since then. Not only have many of those descended from immigrants made good in business, medicine and politics but even on the cricket field itself. That really is integration.”

For the *new* citizens, we must encourage them to break out of the tight knit communities; *learn* and use the English language in their *homes*, understand British history, and adopt our mainstream values.

One of the most *enchanting* and practical aspects of *Pakistani* culture is, indeed, to *respect* their elders, and a strong sense of ‘family’ – *not least*, embracing grandparents within the family unit. Consider that impact, on *mainstream* Britain, in so many areas if adopted by UK society as a whole ? Housing provision, care of the elderly, child care – Britain have much to learn too.

[Benefits to the UK...](#)

Sayeeda Warsi, in her Report, An integration nation: breaking down the barriers, estimates that our *Economy* is missing out by £9 billion a year in failing *fully* to empower, and therefore integrate, people from *ethnic* minorities. Effective integration is also about **delivering a growing Economy**.

A sense of *British identity* can be embraced by *all* from ethnic minorities so that we **move away from cultural separatism**.

Integration **nullifies the threat of extremism**; – through *education* and a stronger sense of *collective identity* being promoted that everyone in society is encouraged to sign up to.

People will feel a greater sense of *social responsibility* towards their whole communities, and therefore be more willing to engage with the principles of **the Big Society**.

[Practical examples...](#)

Might I mention the Reading Programme as a part of the **Lloyd's Community Programme**, which I founded in 1989, focused upon the Bengali immigrants in East London; it was a simple proposition – that the so called 'educated, white, middle class' workers in the City would give some of their time to school children whose parent's first language was not English. This remains one of the most valuable Programmes even today – nearly 25 years later.

Those who immigrate to the UK, will stand a *much* better chance of integration into society, with a developed **understanding of the English language**, and British life in general. We should consider reducing the *translation* of official documentation from English to encourage learning.

National Citizen Service is an already successful programme that brings together young people from a diverse range of backgrounds and aims to assist in their integration into society. Through developing their skills, and working together, these young people will benefit from a *clearer* understanding of collective identity.

The **Enterprise Challenge** promotes entrepreneurship in schools and in disadvantaged communities. The project brings together *young people* from different backgrounds to compete nationally through an online business game forum. And the **Start-Up Loan scheme** led by James Caan.

Womens groups; the importance of equality and impact upon a broader integration in the *employment* markets – and which I expect Theresa May will touch upon.

National Inter Faith Week (held every November) promotes projects which bring people, from different faiths, together to serve their communities – such as engaging with others on social action projects.

The Big Lunch which encourages people to interact by having lunch with their *neighbours* and develop local resources – and brought 2.4m people together in 2011 and carried on in 2012.

Of course, the agenda is limitless. And the Conservative Party is deeply committed to these programmes.

How will we measure success ?

Ironically, success will have been achieved, when we *no longer* notice the issues ! In *other* areas of ‘integration’ – such as equality between men & women or sexual orientation – society *generally* now looks through to the *individual* without prejudice. This is *increasingly* the case in regard to the *origin* or *colour* of our citizens – the only barrier, and measure, being the extent to which an individual has integrated within British society; here is both our challenge and opportunity where everyone has a role to play.