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# From the 'Old' to the 'New' Suspect Community: Examining the Impacts of Recent UK Counter-Terrorist Legislation

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## Abstract

The 'war on terror' has emerged as the principal conflict of our time, where 'Islamic fanaticism' is identified as the greatest threat to Western liberal democracies. Within the United Kingdom, and beyond, this political discourse has designated Muslims as the new 'enemy within' — justifying the introduction of counter-terrorist legislation and facilitating the construction of Muslims as a 'suspect community'. In this paper, we develop [Hillyard's \(1993\)](#) notion of the 'suspect community' and evidence how Muslims have replaced the Irish as the main focus of the government's security agenda whilst also recognizing that some groups have been specifically targeted for state surveillance. We conclude that the categorization of Muslims as suspect may be serving to undermine national security rather than enhance it.

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