
FOREWORD

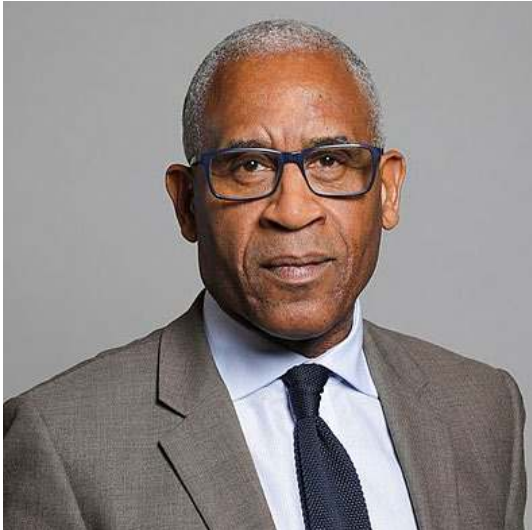
It is honest, and both deeply informative and moving. At its core it seeks to bring a greater understanding, empathy, and connectedness to the wider society from a kaleidoscope of African and Caribbean Muslims communities living here in the UK. It is a moving tribute to the resilience of these communities who too often face discrimination from non-Muslims and from even within the Muslim community.

In this report there are stories of everyday experiences; hopes, fears, and challenges that beautifully speak for themselves. They are juxtaposed with copious amounts of data that help paint the picture of a people that are too often ignored. A people that fall between the political cracks when it comes to Black communities who are mainly seen through the prism of a Christian background, and a similar occurrence with Islam which is seen mainly through an Arab and South Asian lens.

This report however, could not have come at a more timely moment. Our societies are coming to terms with three monumental challenges: Covid-19, Black Lives Matters, and Brexit. One of these challenges on their own would be enough to send societal shock waves that would last for decades but we are subject to three. Moreover, they all have to varying degrees elements that impact our connectedness, and about who we are, and how we adjust to these shifting tectonic societal plates.

And let's be clear as we are forced to adjust to this ever changing world; there is no given that 'it'll be alright on the night.' On the contrary the warning signs are already there: 'divide and rule,' 'blame Muslims, Black people,' and 'them and us' are all narratives that are easily sold, because society wants simple answers. Who better to blame than a community that has the least resources to defend itself?

What I love most about this report is its optimism. It tells its readers, 'here we have a dynamic Black British Muslim community; creative and resourceful.' Imagine how we'd all be if these communities were served with greater equality and afford greater opportunity. But it also states unequivocally through its Black Lives Matters lens: being afforded better equality, opportunity and dignity are non-negotiable. They are our right, and we demand them.' The upside is when that occurs everyone wins.



LORD SIMON WOOLLEY
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Lord Simon Woolley is the director of Operation Black Vote. He has been a crossbench member of the House of Lords since October 2019 and was Chair of the Government's Race Disparity Unit Advisory Group until July 2020. In 2021, he was appointed as Principal of Homerton College, Cambridge, the first Black man to head an Oxbridge college.