

Academic Capture

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'Embedded Experts', Commercialisation, Militarisation and Securitisation of the UK Academy

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The attack on academic freedom, at several levels, has not yet brought about an adequate defense of the public interest in the autonomy of university research. However, by bringing together numerous accounts of the unfolding battles which are taking place, Desmond Fernandes provides a powerful account of the way the commercialisation, militarisation and securitisation of the UK academy has developed into a state discourse, not only in the UK but also internationally. 'Embedded experts' play a key role in facilitating such discourse and its impact is an issue in need of more critical research, because, with a few distinguished exceptions¹, it is often untouched or ignored by academics. Maybe Foucault's idea of power can help us to understand the way in which 'power relations' function and creates its own regime of truth:

"Truth is not outside of power or lacking in power ... Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the type of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanism and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true."²

It is in this sense, of how academies are used and have become institutions whose key purposes have been to serve an illiberal political and economic system, that Fernandes' study explores a range of concerns. He disturbingly details the way in which "the academy has been used by US governing elites, the military industrial complex and other corporations to push through a number of questionable 'securitisation' agendas both 'at home' – in the name of 'homeland security', for instance – and 'abroad', under the cover of the 'fraudulent' War on Terror [recently renamed the Long/Permanent War]". He draws attention to Maximilian Forte's finding that what "we are dealing with" at the present time in the US are "universities, or units within them, making themselves into willing servants of the national security state, actively seeking contracts for terror research, selling their expertise to make war against those who resist unprovoked aggression and occupation by the US state".³ Apart from overt means, "the state itself", indeed, can and does "seek out research ... in even more innocuous and surreptitious ways" (Forte).⁴ So, one could argue here that the role of academia and academics has been extended in the sense that they are not the only ones that supply knowledge and information, but also a set of discourses which serve to frame and explicate the conflicts and troubles that we witness around us. The current emphasis of many universities is on how to earn contracts from states or corporations and to profit from them.

The 'relations' between the London School of Economics (LSE) and the Libyan government that have recently been revealed outline the extent of these types of relationships, as Fernandes shows. Citing a number of sources, he highlights the manner in which, "the [LSE] has asked Lord Woolf, the former Lord Chief Justice, to [now] carry out an inquiry into the circumstances in which Saif Gaddafi [the son of the Libyan leader] was awarded a doctorate in 2008, only to make a £1.5m donation to the university the following year. The inquiry followed the resignation of the LSE's director, Howard Davies, after revelations that, as well as the £1.5m donation from the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation (GICDF), the LSE had also benefited from a £2.2m contract with Libya to train its civil servants. Robert Halfon, the

Tory MP for Harlow, called for the LSE's entire governing council to resign ... Among the people who will feature in the inquiry is Professor David Held, the co-director of the Centre for the Study of Global Governance⁵ and one of Saif Gaddafi's mentors. He had argued in favour of the grant for his centre being accepted and was appointed a trustee of GICDF in June 2009, but was forced to quit several months later by the LSE's council over concerns of a potential conflict of interests. He denies any impropriety. But questions about Professor Held were raised over claims that he pressured an admissions tutor to accept the niece of former Clinton aide Sydney Blumenthal on a master's course ... as it would be a wonderful opportunity 'to continue to deepen LSE's trans-Atlantic ties.'⁶

Ungoed-Thomas and Kerbjaj are quoted as clarifying that, "the chairman of the LSE's ruling council – which approved the Gaddafi donation – is Peter Sutherland, who was then non-executive chairman of BP. He had visited Libya with Blair in May 2007, when the oil company signed a £450 million exploration deal ... The LSE now faces renewed scrutiny over its fundraising. One of its largest donors is Victor Dahdaleh, a London-based metals magnate who is also president of the advisory board of the LSE's global governance centre. Dahdaleh ... has given at least £1.1 million to the university. But he is embroiled in a US-investigation over allegations that he channeled bribes to officials in Bahrain."⁷

Citing a range of sources, Fernandes draws our attention to the following:

- A Nobel prize-winning British scientist has resigned from the charity run by Muammar Gaddafi's son that gave a £1.5m donation to the London School of Economics, and disclosed that the funding was awarded without the approval of board members. The elite British university has been in turmoil over the donation, which led to the resignation of its director, Sir Howard Davies, and the launch of an independent inquiry into its links with Libya. Sir Richard Roberts, who was on the board of the Gaddafi International Charity and Development Foundation, said the funding was given to the LSE without 'any form of transparency or approval.'⁸

- Revelations about the London School of Economics' Libyan connections have highlighted the pressure that universities are under to accept money from businessmen and foreign governments, leading many commentators to give their recommendations about the length of spoon required for supping with the devil. But there is a wider point here that needs exploring: the fetishising in contemporary British universities of 'external funding'. This category embraces not only the kinds of deal at issue in the LSE case, but all forms of income that are 'external' to the institutions' own recurrent budget.

All academics in British universities will immediately recognise that nothing they do as scholars and teachers wins anywhere near as much commendation and support from their university's 'senior management team' as the securing of some kind of external funding. Such funding may range from a project grant from a research council or charity to the sponsorship of a post or studentship by a local business, and then on to the murkier regions of whole courses and centers being paid for by some overseas government or large corporation.⁹

Criteria, then, is not so much having good grades and being a successful student. Rather, as long as one has money to donate and there is someone to write a PhD thesis, this is pretty much what matters for this all-pervasive culture of university management. This is clearly visible in the case of the LSE and the way Saif Gaddafi's application is dealt with. Fernandes, quoting Collini, also illustrates the ways in which academics are forced into the role of generating income for the university, whereby generating or finding money becomes part of a conditional job description:

"At first sight, it may seem absurd to bracket

all these disparate types of [external] funding together. The first and second kinds are not only innocent of any taint of corruption: they are the bread-and-butter of most working scientists and an increasing number of scholars in the humanities and social sciences as well. But that is precisely what is so insidious and why the LSE case raises systemic rather than merely local questions. Let me illustrate in two ways.

First, it is now axiomatic in British universities that a piece of research that was financed by any of these forms of external funding is ipso facto superior to one that is financed indirectly out of the university's recurrent income. Such external funding is, in principle, supposed to cover the 'extra' costs of doing a piece of research, but this means that, in practice, academics are now under instructions to incur more expense.

If a book or paper could be written either during the research time that universities still, just about, make available or during a period in which the scholar or scientist in question receives external funding for the notionally additional costs, academics are now obliged by their universities to opt for the latter. Indeed, being able to raise such outside money, from whatever source, is now being written into job advertisements as a requirement of the post. Second, the internal accounting procedures of universities reward twice over those departments and research units that succeed in attracting such outside income. They are rewarded not just by having the grant or donation to dispose of, but their allocation from central university funds will often be in proportion to success in attracting money from elsewhere.

So, if you are the head of a department and you want to try to ensure that your university continues to support teaching and research in that discipline, you are strongly advised to find some kind of outside deal, such as a 'partnership' with institutions in another country keen to have a guaranteed number of student places made available, or a 'contract' with some commercial company that is keen to have some of their research done for them, cheaply, by academics.

If you succeed in generating such income, your internal university funding will in turn be assured and your university managers will smile upon your individual and collective efforts to expand your activities, gain promotion, and so on. Now, obviously these structural conditions within British universities do not entail all money from 'outside' being in any way tainted, and they do not absolve institutions from exercising due diligence in scrutinising all arrangements very carefully. That, of course, is where the tricky questions about the origin of the money and the degree of outside control over it and so on come in. But these conditions certainly make it more likely that those within universities will be overwhelmingly eager to court any form of outside funding and be willing to take risks about the legitimacy or cleanness of any source."¹⁰

Therefore, what one has here is a business-like run university and academics employed on the basis of competing with each other to generate money for the university. While highlighting the ways some universities are run and have become commercialised, Fernandes also touches upon another important aspect of the relationship between corporations, universities and states in relation to 'militarisation' and 'securitisation'. For example, he draws our attention to Andrew Simms' findings that:

"Britain is home to the headquarters of BP and Shell, two of the world's three largest fossil fuel companies. These companies, along with many others in the industry, have succeeded in 'capturing' the allegiance of some of Britain's leading universities, through sponsoring new buildings, equipment, professorships and research posts. Many universities, meanwhile, operating in a climate of ever-tighter public funding,

are only too eager to please big business. In return for corporate sponsorship and contracts, universities are encouraging oil companies to steer the research agenda, tailoring courses to meet corporate personnel demands and awarding high profile positions to oil executives. In May 2001, for example, BP established the BP Institute at Cambridge University with a £25 million endowment. The Institute's full-time director is one of the company's senior managers.

For its part, the government is encouraging the link between academic research and corporate profit ... The publicly funded Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council [also now] determines academic grants through a peer review college containing 12 oil or gas executives and just two renewable energy members ... This capture of the academic agenda by the oil industry aided and abetted by public research bodies is not only undermining the competitiveness of non-fossil fuels, it also runs counter to the government's policy on renewable energy and calls into question the role of universities as impartial centres of critical, intellectual enquiry and guarantors of the public good."¹¹

"The orientation of universities towards the needs of the state and capital" are not a new phenomenon, as Stavrianakis observes in Fernandes' study, nor are critiques of the move away from the public interest. But the growing commercialisation of research is part of a wider process of the neoliberalisation of academia that signals a step-change. Universities are becoming increasingly business led in their internal organisation and behaviour, one effect of which is to make them directly functional for capitalism. "Universities have played an important task in modern industrial society, selecting personnel for particular social roles, integrating young people into the capitalist system, and legitimising a stratified social system; the neoliberalisation of academia requires that they do this and also function in the immediate interests of capital. Direct industrial funding of research is both a cause and symptom of the wider processes of 'marketisation, commodification, rationalisation, managerialism, flexibilisation, ... casualisation and proletarianisation of academics' currently underway in British academia and elsewhere, and associated with falling levels of state funding."¹²

In this context, Fernandes provides a useful and precise chronology of the ways in which universities have become factories that produce information and knowledge about certain areas to assist not only states but also big corporations and businesses. This is done in light of particular aims and discourses. As Phillipson has observed, as cited in Fernandes' study, in the post-war period: "American English-language dominance in Europe was unthinkable before 1945. Creating a global empire was given concrete form in academia through funding by US corporate world 'philanthropic' foundations. They invested heavily and strategically in research and higher education in Europe from 1919, and worldwide after 1945. This has decisively influenced the way research paradigms and university training in the social sciences (sociology, anthropology, political science etc.), language pedagogy (applied linguistics, TESOL) and such applied natural sciences as medicine are understood and organised. The significance of English for US empire (eagerly abetted by the British – Phillipson 1992 – like in military affairs) can be traced throughout the 20th century."¹³

Moreover, particular perspectives and sets of aims led by academics underpin historical and contemporary Imperialisms:

"Four Arrows also writes about 'a long overdue scholarly challenge to the educational and ideological hegemony that constitutes what might be thought of as a "fourth wave of killing the Indigenous."' The first wave was the genocidal physical attacks by European invaders, 'based in greed and rationalized by Christian fundamentalism'; the second one by 'politicians, courts, lawyers, the military and corporations ... intended to control Indigenous land, water, language, culture, identity, and sovereignty. Academics have led the third wave of the attack with "scholarly" publications that erroneously attack the philosophies, worldviews, and histories of Indigenous peoples' (Jacobs/Four Arrows 2006,

cited by Skutnabb-Kangas 2010, reproduced in Fernandes)."¹⁴

Fernandes, indeed, notices the way in which geography has been 'used' as a discipline. He cites the findings of Nick Spedding: "By the end of the nineteenth century, France, Germany, Great Britain and the USA were firmly established as powerful, modern nation-states. The fact that Geography was established as a major academic force in all four countries was not a coincidence. I think we can identify three separate – but inter-related – themes which gave Geography the chance to make important contributions to the practice of imperialism, and so help to establish its academic prominence. These are:

How to 'do' Empire?

How to justify Empire?

How to picture Empire?

Theme 1) involves the idea that detailed and orderly knowledge of foreign parts was essential for the efficient management/exploitation* (* delete as you wish) of overseas places: Geography as the practical science of Empire. This was what the novelist Joseph Conrad meant by 'Geography Triumphant': by late Victorian times the process of global exploration was largely complete, ... so Geography switched its purpose to further the development of the West's expanding empires."¹⁵

'Empire', Spedding clarifies:

"was often a nasty business: the idea requires inequality to be cultivated if it is to work! Here, Geography was able to make its second contribution (theme 2); if it held the key to the practice of Empire, it was able to support this also with a theory of Empire. The paradigm of environmental determinism – with a (supposedly) respectable intellectual heritage traceable to Darwin amongst others – provided 'natural' laws which justified imperial aggression and exploitation."¹⁶

Halford Mackinder's imperial vision of geography, which paved the way for the establishment of geography as a distinct academic discipline in the UK, according to David Livingstone (who Fernandes cites):

"was specifically designed 'to attract minds of an amplitude fitting them to be rulers of men'. The teaching of geography was thus itself an imperial task and the encouragement of what Mackinder called 'thinking geographically' part of a strategy to secure the 'maintenance and progress of our Empire.'¹⁷

Fernandes draws our attention to the manner and ways in which such founding academic and intellectual relationships have been influential in terms of foreign policy making and decisions, with Mackinder's theories running through both Nazi strategy and US strategic policy of the Cold War. Through Fernandes' work, a contemporary picture of this influence becomes clearer in the evolution of the university business model: corporations finance a particular department – for example, new departments established, purposefully built to meet the demands of corporations¹⁸. This is often presented as a way of generating income for universities and for some academics. Successive UK governments since Thatcher have promoted precisely this kind of corporate-linked 'research', through which a revolving-door of corporate interests can leverage strategic influence over organisational change; seeking to affect transformation at the level of both institutional practice and state policy.

One of the most important aspects of these types of 'relationships' is the way in which the concept of 'terrorism' has come to be defined and then used in political contexts and discourses. After the events of 9/11 (but even before, during the Reagan-Thatcher era), one can observe the phenomena of 'terrorology' departments and academic 'terrorism experts' emerging to dispense their alleged 'impartial', 'independent' and 'in-depth' knowledge, both as expert witnesses in the media and at the behest of state prosecutions. Consequently, "the West has produced an industry of institutes and experts who formulate and channel analysis and information on terrorism in accordance with Western demands. We have also seen how this industry is closely linked to Western governments, intelligence agencies, and corporate/conservative foundations and funders. It functions as a closed system, in which government officials and accredited and well-funded experts attend

one another's conferences, cite one another's conferences, cite one another as authorities and reinforce their mutual status as experts" (Herman and O'Sullivan, 1989: 229-230).¹⁹

Furthermore, Fernandes clearly shows (citing numerous examples) the ways in which 'embedded institutions' and 'embedded experts' – well integrated into state and corporate ideological management processes – have played key and highly controversial roles in promoting and legitimating repressive proscription regimes we now live under. The findings of Campaign Against Criminalising Communities (CAMPACC) are highlighted:

"Many of these experts are able to conceal their partisan roles behind the façade and legitimacy of academic status. As policy analysts and commentators, they lend credence to scares about terrorist threats ... They reinforce US neoconservative propaganda ... Such exaggerations create a climate of fear, whereby the public mind links the terrorist 'Other' with vulnerable and oppressed communities resident in Britain, who then appear to threaten the very fabric of civil society. Moreover, any radical resistance within Britain is portrayed as a contagion."²⁰

Because the definition of 'terrorism' is left in the hands of the 'embedded academics' in the field of securitisation, states are able to pass any amount of legislation and policies in the name of 'security'. Accordingly, even non-violent protests and civil-disobedience can be portrayed and interpreted by academic institutions, which have a substantial influence on state and security forces' reasoning, as aspects of 'terrorist' activity. Johnny Burnett and Dave Whyte's findings (cited in Fernandes' study) highlight the manner in which non-violent protest by diasporic – for example, Kurdish – communities are often questionably transformed into 'terrorist activity': "It is possible to find non-violent activities and protests against state violence recorded in the [RAND-St Andrews] database as 'terrorism'. Thus, for example, we find rather bizarrely two Kurdish protests involving unarmed demonstrators [from refugee/diasporic communities] included in the Chronology [of International Terrorist Incidents]. An occupation of the German consulate in Athens in protest of the killing of a Kurdish youth in police custody, and secondly a protest outside the Turkish National Airline office in Athens ... The RAND-St Andrews Chronology of International Terrorist Incidents [a database of international 'terrorist' incidents, developed by Bruce Hoffman whilst at University of St. Andrews, and later maintained by students at the university] demonstrates clearly that the terrorism that the nexus is interested in is highly selective. The Chronology is driven by a highly inconsistent conception of the categories of political violence that are worthy of analysis. As such it mirrors the conceptual flaws in the application of definitions of terrorism that has been the norm in Western terrorology."²¹

This form of 'securitisation' and 'militarisation' of academics is simultaneously taking place internationally, not least in oppressive countries to cover and justify their anti-democratic and genocidal policies. The Turkish state has precisely grounded its legitimacy on the basis of the denial of 'others' where stepping out of state ideology for academics has meant imprisonment, exile and even being killed.²² As elsewhere, the events of 9/11 have been cynically used by the Turkish state to more easily justify imposing its ideological warfare and ongoing genocidal policies and practices against Kurds²³, with a number of 'academics' producing papers and appearing in the media arguing that the 'terrorism' of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) is the only problem facing 'democratic' Turkey, a key US-UK NATO 'ally' in the 'War on Terror/Long War'.

David Miller, professor of sociology at Strathclyde University, who with colleagues is compiling a Spinwatch database of 'terrorologists', has "shown how what has been called an 'invisible college' of experts operates as a nexus of interests connecting academia with military, intelligence and government agencies, with the security industry and the media."²⁴ In this 'expert nexus', some are acting covertly with intelligence and other agencies; others working on highly secretive projects for corporations and governments,

where public information about the nature of the funding and research 'relationships' that have been forged remains restricted due to 'commercial confidentiality' or 'national security' reasons/agendas.

Fernandes demonstrates clearly the validity of Herman and Peterson's (2001) conclusions that "the role of power intellectuals [of this 'terrorologist' kind] fits nicely into the propaganda model, where the threat of independent experts as sources conflicting with official and corporate perspectives is shown to be alleviated by pushing forward dependent and friendly experts ... who preempt space that otherwise might be taken by genuinely independent analysts, i.e., public intellectuals. Nurturing and giving credentials to these power intellectuals, who will serve as front-line fighters against the public interest, is a main function of corporate think-tanks."²⁵

An example of the manner in which alternative perspectives have been sidelined in the 'Turkish' Kurdish context is worth providing here. RAND employees, as Fernandes reveals, have provided 'expert opinion' and assessments to states prosecuting people in PKK-linked 'terrorism' trials in the UK: "The reports they have submitted to courts concerning the nature of the 'PKK threat' have again presented very selective – and hardly balanced – interpretations that fail to present vitally significant alternative interpretations. In one such case, RAND employee Kevin O'Brien, in presenting a British court with background information to the circumstances and conditions for the proscription of the PKK, failed to importantly note that there are contested legal and political interpretations concerning the very nature of 'proscription' of the PKK as a 'terrorist' organisation that need to at least be reflected upon by those sitting in judgement ... Important arguments and perspectives that contested and directly challenged many of the psyops laden perspectives of the US-UK-Turkish governments and NATO and their 'embedded experts' concerning the 'Kurdish threat in Turkey' were simply never acknowledged or even presented by him for reflection: There is a right, in international law", for example, "to resist genocide by armed means",²⁶ and the PKK has repeatedly described its actions as being defensive against a genocidal Turkish state.²⁷

Certainly, in the Turkish context, as Fernandes demonstrates, "many 'expert'/academic 'terrorologists' have sought to promote and bolster the UK government's 'PKK = terrorist', 'Turkey = War on Terror democratic NATO ally' stance, which is used to not only militarily but also diplomatically buttress the Turkish state's genocidal actions even as it is used to criminalise and target many Kurdish asylum seekers and sections of the Kurdish refugee/diasporic 'Turkish' community in the UK". By relying on the recommendations and findings of embedded academics, "it has become easier for government policy makers to casually disregard critical perspectives from even its 'leftist' UK Parliamentary Human Rights Group that has expressed caution at the simplistic interpretations that are being made about the 'terrorist PKK'. According to the UK Parliamentary Human Rights Group's own report based upon its 1993 visit (and as cited by Fernandes): "The question of Turkish Kurdistan [i.e. the Kurdish south-east] ... in Britain and elsewhere ... is often presented as one of a reasonably democratic Government seeking to cope with an intractable problem of terrorism. We believe that the reality is one of military [state] terrorists aiming to extinguish the identity of a people, and we were much alarmed by the parallel drawn with the Armenian holocaust of 1915-1916. The PKK, like some Armenians during the First World War, took to arms because they could see no prospect of gaining their legitimate political objectives by peaceful means."

Fernandes' study disturbingly details the numerous ways in which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, NATO, the Ministry of Defence, intelligence agencies, private military companies alongside other corporate groups and arms manufacturers operate and increasingly determine, shape and influence 'research' agendas within the UK academy – under the banner and guise of promoting 'anti/counter-terrorism', 'anti-

radicalisation', 'humanitarian intervention', 'the War on Terror', 'the Long War', 'innovation' and 'Homeland Security', etc. Yet, as he concludes, "it is important to appreciate that they fail to operate, in any meaningful sense, in any publicly accountable or ethically acceptable manner. Yet, these 'issues' and 'ethical concerns' (including issues of 'how' and for what ulterior 'purpose' these research results, sponsored projects and agendas will be used directly and/or indirectly by them) often appear to be dismissed or ignored by UK university research and funding councils (such as ESRC) and university managers and departmental heads, anxious to attract funding from the above".

Citing a number of reports, studies and articles, and providing numerous case studies, Fernandes also details the ways in which students and academic staff undertaking critical research have been targeted in the wake of commercialisation, securitisation and militarisation trends within the UK academy. The cases of Hicham Yezza and Rizwaan Sabir highlight key concerns:

- In May 2008 Hicham Yezza, an IT technician at the University of Nottingham, was arrested, together with student Rizwaan Sabir, in a well-publicised anti-terrorist swoop. They had downloaded al-Qaida material from the US Department of Defense website as part of Sabir's academic work on terrorism. Disgracefully, they were reported to the police by Nottingham University. The abandonment by British universities of any idea of academic independence is one of the unsung tragedies of our recent history ...

In the panic to be seen as helpful to the government, Nottingham University turned in these two Muslims, presumably on the basis that if you were planning to commit terrorist offences, then openly studying terrorism at university would be a good cover ... The ludicrous nature of the arrests quickly became apparent even to Nottinghamshire Police, and after an unpleasant six days in cells and the permanent shredding of their reputations, the men were released. Disgracefully, there has been no public apology from Nottingham University. Just as with the face saving alleged 'discovery' of child porn on the computer of the innocent 'terrorist suspect' the police shot in Leyton, lo and behold, Nottinghamshire Police discovered that Yezza was a criminal after all. He was an illegal immigrant! Yezza has now been jailed for nine months ... As he was working and studying at Nottingham University under his own name, the deception is not apparent ... It is very hard to believe the judge was not motivated by the original slur of terrorism. This must go down as yet another striking example of Islamophobia in this country.²⁸

- Nottingham University Students and Staff Express Serious Concerns about Recent Use of Terrorism Act on Campus and Demand Academic Freedom, 21 May 2008: Following six days in police custody under the Terrorism Act [by] two well-known and popular members of the University of Nottingham ... students and staff wish to express grave concerns about the operation on a number of grounds:

1. Academic freedom: ...The criminalisation of this kind of research is an extremely worrying sign for academic freedom, suggesting sharp limits to what may be researched at university.

2. Racism and Islamophobia: One of the officers who was involved in interviewing academic staff openly stated that: 'This would never have happened if the student had been white'. It seems that the over-zealous nature of the operation, causing great injury and distress to the students, their family, and friends, was spurred on by the ethnicity and religious background of the students involved. Police behaviour during the operation, including the targeting of ethnic minorities for questioning, also suggested institutional racism. When the arrest is put within the wider context of heightened 'security' measures, police harassment of Muslims, and widespread curtailments to civil liberties, a sinister picture of the political climate created by recent terrorism legislation emerges.

3. Use of Terrorism Act to target political activists: During questioning, the police regularly attempted to collate information about student activism and peaceful campaigning. They asked numerous questions about the student peace magazine Ceasefire, and other political student activities. The overt police presence on campus, combined with increased and intimidating police presence at peaceful demonstrations, has created a climate of fear amongst some students. Many saw the operation as a message from the police that they are likely to arrest those who have been engaged in

peaceful political activities. There is widespread concern in the community that the police are criminalising peaceful activists using terrorism legislation, such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005.

4. Behaviour of the university: Many of the university's statements during this time have concerned and angered students and academics. Amidst the great amount of rhetoric that the university put out during this period, supporting the police and assuming guilt of its own students, it also spoke of stopping groups or individuals who 'unsettle the harmony of the campus.' This appeared to be a direct reference to recent, peaceful student activism and protest, suggesting that the university is willing to clamp down on political protest using the Terrorism Act 2000 and the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005. One politics lecturer suggested that the university had called the police onto campus with the ultimate aim of creating a 'depoliticised' body of students and academics. Throughout this period, the university has continually ignored the fear caused by police presence and investigation into legitimate political activities, the concern of staff and students about the criminalisation of research, the racist and Islamophobic nature of the police action, and the worrying indication that the university provided intelligence on its own members, possibly racially profiling its staff and students.

Academics and students from across the University of Nottingham, and members of the public from the wider community, are calling for:

- a. The guaranteed right to academic freedom.
- b. An end to the criminalisation of political research.
- c. An end to police and university racism and Islamophobia and the full assertion of civil rights and liberties on campus.²⁹

- *Lee Jones 27 June, 2008*: Sir Colin Campbell's claim that the arrests of the 'Nottingham Two' is not a matter of academic freedom (Letters, 19 June 2008) is not acceptable. Campbell essentially admits the charges laid at his door by three of his own academics – that Nottingham's 'risk assessment' mentality led to two innocent people being wrongfully arrested and detained without anyone bothering to ask the tutors of the student concerned whether the possession of an Al Qaeda training manual (freely available online and in many bookstores) was legitimate for someone studying terrorism. His tutors are, in fact, of the opinion that it was entirely legitimate, but according to a police notice issued to Rizwaan Sabir on his release on 20 May, 'The University authorities have now made clear that possession of this material is not required for the purpose of your course of study nor do they consider it legitimate for you to possess it for research purposes' ... The police note threatened the possibility of 'arrest and further detention' if Mr Sabir looked at such material again. If it stands, can one imagine a clearer blow against the academic freedom of Mr Sabir, his fellow students, and anyone who wishes to conduct research on controversial subjects free from harassment and intimidation? [...] Remarks by Lord Carlile, the government's reviewer of terrorism legislation, that he would seek to restrict the online availability of terror-related material, raise the spectre of further limitations on academic freedom.³⁰

Fernandes' research draws its strength from much academic testimony, which attests to the complexity of resistance within an embattled academic space, and for the need to continue to struggle for academic freedom against the intensification of corporate knowledge management. Fernandes gives ample evidence of the latter. He also provides an historical account of the roles played by academic sectors and academics, and the relationships that have existed with states, military sectors and large corporations, uncovering how academic research continues to be used and manipulated to justify hegemonic discourses.

Notes

- 1 For example, David Miller, professor of sociology at Strathclyde University, who with colleagues is compiling a Spinwatch database of "terrorologists": <http://www.powerbase.info/index.php/Terrorexpertise> Also, Johnny Burnett and Dave Whyte (Reader in sociology at the University of Liverpool) as academics forming part of the Consortium for Research on Terrorology and Political Violence (CRTPV): <http://www.publicinterest.ac.uk/working-groups/40-consortium-for-research-on-terrorology-and-political-violence-crtpv>
- 2 Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977*. Ed. C. Gordon. New York: Pantheon Books, p. 131.
- 3 Forte, M. (2010) 'Information Traffickers of the Imperial

- State: American Anthropologists and Other Academics', Zero Anthropology, 19 March (Accessed at: <http://zeroanthropology.net/2010/03/19/information-traffickers-of-the-imperial-state-american-anthropologists-and-other-academics/>).
- 4 Forte, M. (2010) 'Information Traffickers of the Imperial State: American Anthropologists and Other Academics', Zero Anthropology, 19 March (Accessed at: <http://zeroanthropology.net/2010/03/19/information-traffickers-of-the-imperial-state-american-anthropologists-and-other-academics/>).
 - 5 "The centre focuses on five areas of global public policy; the creation and enforcement of rules in international trade, the fight against global infectious diseases, the elimination of exploitive child labor, and the promotion of basic human rights", see: http://www.globalgovernancewatch.org/ngo_watch/key/centre-for-the-study-of-global-governance
 - 6 Owen, J. (2011) 'Gaddafi son's LSE thesis "written by Libyan academic": College sets up inquiry into Saif Gaddafi's PhD and the £1.5m donation he later made', Independent, 6 March (Accessed at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/gaddafi-sons-lse-thesis-written-by-libyan-academic-2233667.html>).
 - 7 Ungoed-Thomas, J. and Kerbaj, R. (2011) 'Gadaffi hired PR guru to con west', Sunday Times, 6 March, p. 4.
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