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Islamic-Inspired Home-Grown  
Terrorism (IIHGT): What We  
Know and What It Means Moving  
Forward

*Michael G. Zekulin*



## CENTRE FOR MILITARY AND STRATEGIC STUDIES

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**ABSTRACT:** Since 9/11, Western democracies are increasingly targeted by what has been termed Islamic-inspired Home-grown terrorism (IIHGT). This paper investigates what we really know about this more recent phenomenon and reveals several interesting, potentially troubling, findings. Canadian, American and Australian cases demonstrate that IIHGT actually takes many different forms, depending on endgame, size, organization, and scale and sophistication. It also identifies that despite consistent changes and shifts in form, IIHGT does not follow a clearly identifiable or linear trajectory, making the identification of trends moving forward very difficult. The paper concludes that while IIHGT generally seems to be devolving, this might be portrayed instead as an evolution because the transformation, more likely inadvertent than intentional, will make these types of plots more difficult to identify, monitor and prevent, thus improving the likelihood they will become increasingly successful in the future.

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# *Islamic-Inspired Home-Grown Terrorism (IIHGT): What We Know and What It Means Moving Forward*

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After September 11, 2001, governments, policymakers and academics became increasingly interested in al-Qaida and Islamic-inspired international terrorism. However, almost immediately, a different type of Islamic-inspired terrorist threat began to simmer beneath the surface: homegrown terrorism. The first such incident to receive attention was that of Jose Padilla, an American born Muslim convert who planned to detonate a dirty bomb in downtown Chicago. While this development raised eyebrows, very few anticipated that it would become the threat it has today. In the years since Islamic-inspired Homegrown Terrorism (IIHGT) first emerged, it has become an increasingly common but understudied and poorly explained phenomenon. Many questions remain about IIHGT, none more important than what it actually looks like and how it should be defined.

This paper contributes to our understanding of these matters through the compilation and analysis of Canadian IIHGT cases, something absent from the literature, unlike other Western democratic countries.<sup>1</sup> In order to tie this work to the wider literature, the findings from Canada are briefly compared to those from Australia and the United States. This comparison aims to examine whether Canada's experience with IIHGT is like that of other states and whether it demonstrates patterns or trends which illuminate this broader phenomenon. It also investigates whether any obvious progression or trajectory can be identified indicating what we might expect from IIHGT moving forward.

The comparison with Australia is appropriate due to factors such as its comparable place in the world as a secondary power, and like Canada, its lesser strategic or symbolic importance. Both have pursued a limited but supportive role in the Global War on Terror and both have been named by al-Qaida as a target.<sup>2</sup> Like Canada, Australia has, to date, experienced several plots without a successful attack. Comparison with the United States is logical, due to its proximity to Canada and the shared security environment.

The U.S. also represents the epicenter or primary target for Islamist extremists and has experienced many more incidents.

The paper begins with a discussion of IIHGT. To date, the literature provides a generic and broad description of the phenomenon; as a result, IIHGT is defined in many different forms. Following an assessment of Australia and the U.S., the three states' experiences with IIHGT are briefly compared. The paper concludes that, despite some clear similarities among the IIHGT incidents in the three states, no observable pattern or trend exists, and in this way IIHGT is much like international Islamic-inspired terrorism. Further, beneath the superficial similarities of each state's IIHGT incidents, unique state-to-state characteristics also appear. Another interesting observation which emerges from an examination of the cases in the U.S., and, to a lesser degree, Canada, reveals that those plotting the attacks are smaller groups, pursuing smaller plots with varying degrees of ambition and sophistication. Although this devolution appears inadvertent, without indication of a purposeful shift or strategy, it could nonetheless be viewed as a form of evolution, and, in any case, is alarming. Terrorism, including IIHGT, is clandestine by nature. Those who pursue it attempt to avoid detection in order to successfully conduct their attack. The larger the group and the more ambitious and sophisticated the attack, the greater the likelihood that a group will be identified before its preparations have been completed. As groups become smaller and their plots less ambitious and sophisticated, they become more difficult to detect and disrupt. This phenomenon poses a myriad of challenges for those working to prevent such attacks. This devolution also suggests the likelihood of an increase in successful IIHGT attacks in the future. The paper concludes with some suggestions about refining our understanding of IIHGT and how this might provide better results and research approaches.

### *Defining IIHGT and the Literature*

IIHGT, also known as homegrown jihadist terrorism, exacerbates an existing problem in the field of terrorism studies. Defining terrorism remains a contentious issue, and efforts to include a definition for IIHGT muddies the waters even further. The number of definitions of IIHGT in the literature continues to grow with the increasing number of incidents. Included below are several definitions from many individuals and agencies. A common thread links the different definitions, but there has been a growing divergence around the edges and a slow expansion of the term.

The Department of Homeland Security defines a homegrown violent extremist as "a person of any citizenship who has lived and/or operated pri-

marily in the United States or its territories who advocates, is engaged in, or is preparing to engage in ideologically motivated terrorist activities (including providing support for terrorism) in furtherance of political or social objectives promoted by a foreign terrorist organization, but is acting independently of direction by a foreign terrorist organization.”<sup>3</sup> For scholars such as Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Laura Grossman, “home-grown” individuals are those who “either spent a significant portion of their formative years in the West, or else their radicalization bears a significant connection to the West.”<sup>4</sup> For Tomas Precht, home-grown terrorism involves “acts of violence against targets primarily, but not always, in Western countries in which the terrorists themselves have been born or raised.”<sup>5</sup> Jerome Bjelopera argues that “home-grown is a term that describes terrorist activity or plots perpetrated within the United States or abroad by American citizens, legal permanent residents or visitors largely radicalized within the United States.”<sup>6</sup> While this clearly focuses on an American definition, any nationality can be inserted into this equation and it applies.

Governments also struggle to define this phenomenon. The European Union has yet to create a definition for IIHGT, although its annual terrorism reports from 2009 through 2013 show gradual movement in this direction. Earlier reports simply identified a general threat posed by Islamist terrorism, defined as “terrorism perpetrated by individuals, groups, networks or organizations which evoke a certain interpretation of Islam to justify their action.”<sup>7</sup> Later ones acknowledge a distinction between international Islamist terrorism and terrorist groups, and “something else”, by suggesting that the threat was “increasingly likely to originate from self-radicalized individuals who may not necessarily be linked to al-Qaida senior leadership.”<sup>8</sup> The 2012 report is the first to use language indicating IIHGT.<sup>9</sup> In 2013, it mentions the term “homegrown terrorist groups” for the first time, but does not define it.<sup>10</sup>

The Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) employs the term home-grown extremism, defined as “the indoctrination and radicalization of individuals into the ideology espoused and propagated by al-Qaida.”<sup>11</sup> CSIS further acknowledges that one of the main catalysts is “the adoption of significant grievances against Western governments, their societies and way of life, as well as the conviction that the Muslim world is under attack and needs defending through the use of violence.”<sup>12</sup> This is not really a definition of IIHGT per se, instead focusing on indoctrination by al-Qaida rather than on actual outcomes. Similarly, Australia has yet to define IIGHT, instead relying on its definition of terrorism with the note that “a number of Australians are

known to subscribe to violent jihadist messages,” while some are radicalized enough to be willing to advance their political aims through violence.<sup>13</sup>

This exercise highlights the first major pitfall facing those who study IIHGT. Many of the incidents the literature considers to be homegrown do not fit neatly into our traditional framework of either domestic or international terrorism. This problem complicates our efforts to understand IIHGT, and how it should be studied. Consider some definitions for domestic terrorism. In a recent report, Jerome Bjelopera defines domestic terrorists in the United States as “people who commit crimes within the homeland and draw inspiration from US based extremist ideologies and movements.”<sup>14</sup> This follows closely the FBI’s basic definition of domestic terrorism, which at its simplest is “Americans attacking Americans based on U.S.-based extremist ideologies.”<sup>15</sup> Wilkinson suggests that domestic, or what he termed “internal” terrorism, was characterized as terrorist attacks occurring within one state or province, used specifically to differentiate it from international terrorism.<sup>16</sup> Conversely, terrorism is considered to be international when: more than one country is involved in the attack, if the nationality of the perpetrator differs from that of the victims; if the terrorists are operating outside their national boundaries, or if terrorists of different nationalities act together.<sup>17</sup> Until approximately 2005, the term homegrown terrorism in the U.S. was reserved for domestic organizations, including anti-government militias, white supremacists and eco-terrorists purposefully so to distinguish them from jihadist terrorist networks, which were perceived to be foreign.<sup>18</sup> IIHGT on the other hand implies that individuals of a country carry out attacks in that country *with* an international agenda. In other variations, individuals cross borders, or assist foreign groups across borders.

These definitions of IIHGT predominantly focus on the geographical location of the individual when they were radicalized, with less attention to what follows from this radicalization. For example, according to this literature a terrorist act is homegrown if:

- an individual or group plots to attack within the country they were radicalized;
- an individual provides logistical, financial or propaganda support to a terrorist group operating outside his own country;
- a previously radicalized individual travels abroad to join a terrorist group and assist in planning attacks against foreign interests or;
- an individual travels abroad to join a group and participate in jihad.



While some who study radicalization may be interested solely in the location where the radicalization occurred, students of terrorism might additionally wish to consider other aspects of the attacks or actions, including location, target, nationality of victims and other indicators.

Compounding the definitional issues, as cases from the Canadian experience show, the reality is that this phenomenon takes many forms. IIHGT in Canada has been perpetrated by large groups, smaller groups and lone individuals. There have been ambitious and large plots designed to kill hundreds of people, and smaller scale efforts designed to emphasize chaos and disorder. They demonstrate either sophistication or amateurism, efforts to join with like-minded individuals or complete autonomy. They also show the radicalization of a wide range of individuals, from those raised Muslim to individuals who have converted from other religions.

The scale and sophistication of incidents are also important as individuals raised in Western democratic societies do not readily have access to certain skill sets prevalent where Islamic terrorism is more frequent. Terms such as scale or sophistication are arbitrary and subjective and are not discussed in the literature in any meaningful way. Without agreement on what constitutes a small or large scale attack, it has been characterized as a sliding scale based on an estimate of the potential scale and ambitious nature of the plot as well as and the number of individuals affected. An attack to topple a large building, targeting mass transit or the deployment of larger or multiple explosive devices would fall higher on such a scale. The literature does equate group size to potential for lethality, in part because a larger group is thought to have the ability to secure greater resources.<sup>19</sup>

Whether it is relevant to examine the sophistication or complexity of an attack and how one might do so is more controversial. This measure remains significantly underdeveloped in the literature. Traditionally, sophistication has been linked to —anything that increases the success or efficiency of the attack, such as knowledge, expertise or training.<sup>20</sup> More recently, this idea has included the role of the Internet, focusing on the dissemination of propaganda and information<sup>21</sup> and means to transfer tactical expertise or training individuals.<sup>22</sup> The most recent effort to understand complexity is Teun van Dongen's framework, the Terrorist Attack Complexity Index.<sup>23</sup> This framework, examines indicators such as the presence of training or expertise and type of weapon used. This paper will incorporate a similar idea. A simple measure of sophistication distinguishes between modes of carrying out the plot. For example, firearms, grenades, and simple or prefabricated explosives are considered less sophisticated

devices or delivery systems and more amateurish than larger explosives, involving the combining of a variety of chemicals, car bombs, suicide vests, etc. A matrix for each state's IIHGT plots can be found in the appendix. They have been categorized based on whether they were large scale or small scale and their degree of sophistication. As this exercise is very subjective, it is possible that some of the incidents, especially those in the United States, might not fit neatly into one category. A plot may be a low end large scale attack but similarly it might be a high end low scale attack yet, for the sake of analysis, it must be placed in one of the categories. It is entirely possible that some scholars may disagree with the categorization of some attacks within the matrix.

This paper will work with a broad understanding of IIHGT raised in the literature, considering it as: "individuals who are born and raised or have spent considerable time living in a Western democratic states who attack, or plan to attack that state; or provide support to other individuals; or travel abroad to fight with another terrorist group where the motivation is not a domestic one but rather part of the global jihadist ideology."

### *Canadian IIHGT Cases since 9/11*

The following section outlines IIHGT incidents in Canada since 9/11 made public by law enforcement and intelligence agencies. As a caveat, these cases should be taken as accurate up to August 2013. Information on these incidents was obtained from public sources and it is, therefore, possible that some may be incomplete, especially if information has been purposefully withheld from the public record. Information on these incidents may take years to be released as those arrested are brought to trial. Several details surrounding the 2006 "Toronto 18" plots did not emerge until the final court case concluded nearly five years later.

#### *Project Awaken: Mohammad Momin Khawaja*

Mohammad Momin Khawaja was one of the first Canadian terrorists to emerge in the post 9/11 era, and was the first to be sentenced using anti-terror legislation passed in 2001.<sup>24</sup> Khawaja, although born in Ottawa, spent considerable time during his youth in various Middle Eastern states including Libya, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. In the mid-1990s, he returned to Ottawa where he completed his education as a computer programmer. He was arrested there on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2004, and charged with financing and facilitating terrorism in connection with the activities of several British men in London between November 2003 and March 2004.<sup>25</sup>

The case against Khawaja, outlined in an Ontario Superior Court of Justice Brief,<sup>26</sup> reveals that he had visited a terrorist training camp in Pakistan in July 2003, where he met several like-minded British Muslims. His activities were brought to the attention of Canadian security agencies by British intelligence who had uncovered a plot to attack British targets. Surveillance during *Operation Crevice* revealed that he was involved in a plot to set off bombs at a London nightclub, a construction firm, and gas, water and power utilities.<sup>27</sup> Correspondence between Khawaja and the British men also revealed that he had provided travel assistance to various individuals en route to terrorist camps in Afghanistan. When the RCMP searched his residence, they found email links between him and his British co-conspirators, ten thousand dollars in cash, computer hard drives, terrorist literature and invoices for electronics used to build a remote detonator. Khawaja had managed to build a functioning prototype for a highly sophisticated remote detonator, dubbed the “hifidigimonster,” completely from scratch, and authorities believe he was contracted to develop an additional thirty detonators.<sup>28</sup> Initially sentenced to ten and a half years in prison, the Ontario Court of Appeal increased Khawaja’s term to life in 2010.<sup>29</sup>

*Project Osage: The “Toronto 18” Groups*

The highest profile terrorist threat to Canada to date emerged in the summer of 2006 when authorities revealed that they had infiltrated and disrupted an imminent and large-scale domestic terrorist plot. Eighteen individuals were arrested and accused of planning a concerted bombing campaign against targets including the Toronto Stock Exchange, Toronto headquarters of CSIS, CFB Trenton and the Parliament buildings to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the September 11 attacks.<sup>30</sup> However, the descriptive moniker “Toronto 18” may be a misrepresentation as the 18 arrested actually represented two separate groups. At one point a group of individuals led by Fahim Ahmad and his lieutenant, Zakaria Amara, discussed the commission of a terrorist attack. However, the two had a falling out which led to Amara leaving the group, recruiting two additional members and planning his own terrorist attack. It was the Amara group that acquired three metric tonnes of ammonium nitrate, enough to make several large and destructive bombs.<sup>31</sup> Conversely the Ahmad group continued to discuss unspecified plots and conduct training camps in Toronto area parks with no imminent plot under consideration.<sup>32</sup>

In total, fourteen adults and four youths were charged. While information on the youths remains unavailable, of the fourteen adults, four were

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Canadians, and ten were immigrants to Canada. All of the accused had resided in Canada for at least 13 years.<sup>33</sup> The Toronto 18 incidents took close to five years to resolve and the last individual was tried in late 2010. In the end, two individuals received life sentences, three received less than seven years, and the rest were credited with time served and released or had their charges stayed or dismissed.

### *Project Summum: Said Namouh*

The case of Said Namouh (34) who was arrested by the RCMP in 2007, received very little media attention. Born in Morocco, Namouh became a permanent Canadian resident in 2002. It was alleged that he became involved with the Global Islamic Media Front, a group linked to al-Qaida and was responsible for uploading and maintaining propaganda videos, and literature as well tools for recruitment.<sup>34</sup> He was also linked to bomb plots against targets in Germany and Austria in retribution for their involvement in Afghanistan,<sup>35</sup> and was sentenced to life in prison. He will be eligible for parole in 2017.

### *Tahawwur Rana*

Tahawwur Rana (52) moved to Canada from Pakistan in 1997 and received Canadian citizenship in 2001. A physician/businessman, Rana later moved to Chicago but retained a residence in Ottawa. In 2009, he was arrested alongside U.S. citizen David Headley, also known as Daood Gialni (49), a childhood acquaintance from Pakistan and accused of providing material support to the Pakistani terrorist group *Lashkar-e-taiba*. In 2013, Rana was found guilty of contributing resources towards a plot to bomb Jyllands-Postens in Denmark in retaliation for their publishing cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad and sentenced to 14 years in prison. He was, however, acquitted of any role in assisting the 2008 Mumbai hotel attack.<sup>36</sup>

### *Project Samosa: The "Ottawa 3"-- Misbahuddin Ahmed, Hiva Alizadeh and Khurram Sher*

In August 2010, Misbahuddin Ahmed (26), Hiva Alizadeh (30), and Khurram Sher (28) were arrested in Ottawa and accused of planning a domestic terrorist attack. During a search of an Ottawa residence, police seized more than 50 electronic circuit boards which were to be used to develop remote detonators as well as terrorist literature, videos and manuals and plans, materials and a list of potential targets.<sup>37</sup> The target list is alleged to have included the Parliament buildings and Montreal subway system. Of the three individuals charged, Sher was born and raised in Montreal, Ahmed was a Canadian

citizen raised in Canada but born in Pakistan and Alizadeh was born in Iraq but immigrated to Canada in 2000.<sup>38</sup>

Authorities alleged that Alizadeh had connections to international terrorist groups and that he attended training camps in both Pakistan and Afghanistan where he was trained to construct electronic devices.<sup>39</sup> This revelation led authorities to issue warrants for three non-Canadian citizens living abroad who have yet to be captured.<sup>40</sup>

### *Sayfildin Tahir Sharif*

In January 2011, Edmontonian Sayfildin Tahir Sharif (38), also known as Faruq Khalil Muhammad Isa, was arrested. An ethnic Kurd born in Iraq, he arrived in Canada as a refugee in 1993 and became a Canadian citizen in 1997.<sup>41</sup> U.S. authorities monitored Sharif because they believed he was facilitating terrorism against American soldiers in Iraq. They alleged that Sharif supported “a multinational terrorist network that conducted multiple suicide bombings in Iraq and is responsible for the death of 5 American soldiers in Mosul.”<sup>42</sup> A U.S. District Court delivered a twenty-five page complaint to Canadian authorities asking for his extradition. U.S. authorities provided a detailed account of conversations and emails between Sharif and several people in Iraq documenting his anger at US forces and his fascination with martyrdom. They included details of his correspondence with several Tunisians in Iraq, linked to the suicide bombing which killed US soldiers in April 2009,<sup>43</sup> and another against an Iraqi police station in March 2009.<sup>44</sup> As of July 2013, Canadian officials had agreed to extradite him to the United States where he faces life in prison.<sup>45</sup>

### *Algeria Gas Plant Attack: Ali Medlej and Xrstos Katsiroubas*

In January 2013, the *Al-Mulathameen* brigade, also known as “Those Who Sign with Blood” attacked the Tigantouine Gas Plant in Amenas, Algeria. This group, an offshoot of *al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula* (AQAP) led by Mokhtar Belmokhtar, seized the plant for four days and held over 800 workers hostage. Algerian Special Forces stormed the plant and two Canadians were identified among the eighty dead. These individuals were not foreign nationals working at the plant but were part of the militant group who had launched the terrorist attack.<sup>46</sup>

Ali Medlej (24) and Xrstos Katsiroubas (22) were both born and raised in Canada and grew up in London Ontario. Medlej was a practicing Muslim and Katsiroubas, initially a Greek Orthodox Christian converted to Islam sometime between 2004 and 2006. Following confirmation that Medlej and

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Katsiroubas had been part of the attack, Canadian officials announced their interest in two additional individuals known to be traveling with them. Aaron Yoon (24) had traveled with Medlej and Katsiroubas to the region but had been arrested in Mauritania and sentenced to prison for having links to a terrorist group prior to the Gas Plant attack. Yoon, who converted to Islam sometime in 2008, maintains his innocence and asserts he traveled to Mauritania to study the Koran and lost contact with Medlej and Katsiroubas, only learning of their death at a later time. He claims that his prison sentence was based on a confession he gave while being tortured and has since been released and returned to Canada in July 2013.<sup>47</sup> A fourth man, Ryan Enderi (19) was located living in Tripoli, Libya. While he acknowledged his friendship with Medlej, Katsiroubas and Yoon, he maintains that he had not been in contact with them since the 2011 and denies any ties to terrorism.<sup>48</sup>

Authorities pieced together a timeline that suggests that Medlej, Katsiroubas and Yoon traveled to Mauritania in summer 2011 and were detained by law enforcement. It is alleged that, when freed, Medlej and Katsiroubas attended a training camp in northern Mali in fall 2012 before going to work at the gas plant as “scouts,” prior to their participation in the attack months later. However, it is unknown who radicalized the men and who might have assisted them once they were in Northern Africa.<sup>49</sup>

### *VIA Train Plot*

On April 21st, 2013, Canadian officials announced the arrest of Chiheb Essigheir (30) a Tunisian national who had been in Canada since 2008 pursuing doctoral studies, and Raed Jaser (35) a Palestinian-Canadian who had been in Canada since 1993, for plotting to bomb VIA trains in the Toronto-New York corridor. Authorities suggested that the plot had links to al-Qaida elements in Iran.<sup>50</sup> A third man, Ahmed Abassi (26), was later identified as having a role in the plot and had been arrested in the U.S. Little is known about the Tunisian national, Abassi, a graduate student in Canada since 2009 who had recently relocated to the U.S.<sup>51</sup> More information will no doubt become available as this incident moves through the legal system.

### *Project Souvenir: John Stewart Nuttal and Amanda Korody*

The most recent Islamic inspired terror plot in Canada came to light on July 1st, 2013. John Stewart Nuttall (38) and Amanda Korody (28) were both arrested by the RCMP for plotting to bomb the BC legislature in Victoria on Canada Day using pressure cooker bombs similar to those deployed by the bombers at the Boston Marathon on April 15<sup>th</sup> 2013.<sup>52</sup> Under surveillance

since February 2013, these Canadians are portrayed as former petty criminals and drug users who had previously belonged to various anti-social ideologies before converting to Islam. The plot was described by authorities as “inspired by al-Qaida” although to date no further clarification has been provided.<sup>53</sup> They are described as self-radicalized.

### *Canadians Fighting Abroad*

Many Canadians also have left Canada to participate in jihads abroad. In the first few months of 2011, two separate instances were made public when arrest warrants were issued for two former Winnipeggers, Ferid Ahmed Imam (30), and Maiwand Yar (27), linked to a failed 2009 plot to blow up the New York City subway system. These two individuals have not been seen since 2007 when they left to fight in Afghanistan. Their whereabouts remain unknown today.<sup>54</sup> Meanwhile, Mohamed Hersi (25) was arrested at Pearson International Airport in March 2011 on his way to join *al-Shabaab*, a Somali terrorist group linked to al-Qaida. Allegedly, he also was attempting to convince others to join the group as well.<sup>55</sup> This incident led top Canadian security officials in conjunction with members of the Toronto Somali community to reveal that at least twenty other Toronto area youths have been recruited by the group as well.<sup>56</sup>

### *Summary of Canadian Cases*

This paper has identified ten cases in Canada over the past ten years which fall within the literature’s description of IIHGT. However, the inclusion of some of these cases could be challenged for several reasons. First, this paper considers the Toronto 18 incidents, as the original group fractured and created two separate groups, after which additional members joined the second group.<sup>57</sup> Second, one cannot accurately determine every incident where young Canadians departed to join jihadist groups abroad. Many are not reported or, like the case of Aaron Yoon, families are unaware of their relatives real travel plans. Third, the case of Tahawwhur Rana is subject to interpretation. It is unclear whether he was radicalized in Pakistan before his arrival in Canada, or at a later date in Canada. Fourth, the RCMP alleges that the 2013 VIA train plot had direction from al-Qaida in Iran, which suggests that it could be considered to be an international incident. While a reasonable argument can be made that perhaps Chiheb Essigheir, who was only in Canada for five years, arrived in Canada pre-radicalized, his alleged co-conspirator Raed Jaser, though not a Canadian citizen, had lived in Canada for over twenty years, and was most likely radicalized here. Finally, this

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paper has not included the case of Hassan El Hajj Hassan, accused of playing a prominent role in the July 2012 Bulgarian bus bombing, because though he held Canadian citizenship, he has reportedly not been in Canada in any real capacity since 2000.<sup>58</sup>

The ten cases involve thirty-four individuals (including Aaron Yoon but excluding Essigheir and Abassi from the VIA Plot and Ryan Enderi from the Algerian Gas Plant attack). In terms of nationality, eleven were born in Canada, fourteen were born elsewhere but had obtained Canadian citizenship, and four individuals did not have Canadian citizenship but had been in Canada for several years. The citizenship of one individual, “Toronto 18” member Ibrahim Aboud could not be confirmed.

**Table 1**  
**Nationality of Individuals Involved in IIHGT (Canada)**

| Canadian Born        |                     | Canadian Citizen, but born elsewhere |                      | No Citizenship<br>(# years in Canada) |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Steven Chand (T18S)  | Ali Medlej          | Shareef Abdelhaleem (T18M)           | Ferid Imam           | Hiva Alizadeh (OTT3) (10)             |
| Saad Gaya (T18M)     | John Stewart Nuttal | Fahim Ahmad (T18S)                   | Abdul Jamal (T18S)   | Asad Ansary (T18S) (10)               |
| Ahmad Ghany (T18M)   | Khurram Sher (OTT3) | Misbahuddin Ahmed (OTT3)             | Saad Khalid (T18M)   | Raed Jaser (20)                       |
| Jahmaal James (T18S) | Aaron Yoon          | Zakaria Amara (T18M)                 | Yasin Mohamed (T18S) | Said Namouth (6)                      |
| Xristos Katsiroubas  |                     | Ali Dirie (T18S)                     | Tahawwur Rana        |                                       |
| Momin Khawaja        |                     | Amin Durrani (T18S)                  | Sayfildin Tahir      |                                       |
| Amanda Korody        |                     | Mohamed Hersi                        | Mailwand Yar         |                                       |
| <b>11</b>            |                     | <b>14</b>                            |                      | <b>4</b>                              |

(T18S): Toronto 18 Scarborough

(T18M): Toronto 18 Mississauga

(OTT3): Ottawa 3

Twenty-four individuals plotted to attack domestic targets within Canada. Six individuals joined or planned to join jihadist groups abroad.<sup>59</sup> Three individuals pursued logistical and support roles although Momin Khawaja, who provided detonators to a group abroad, might also fit within this category.

Looking at the incidents from an organizational perspective, the Scarborough faction of the Toronto 18 was a large group of at least twelve members. The Mississauga component had six members. The Ottawa 3 and the Canada Day 2 groups represent smaller units. Medlej, Katsiroubas and Yoon probably fall within this category as a cluster of three as well. Finally four incidents involved individuals acting alone.



**Table 2**  
**“Endgame” of IIHGT Incidents (Canada)**

| Domestic Attack                            | Fight Abroad                  | Provided Support        |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Raed Jasser (2013)                         | Ali Medlej (2012)             | Sayfilidin Tahir (2011) |
| John Stewart Nuttal & Amanda Korody (2013) | Xristos Katsiroubas (2012)    | Tahawwur Rana (2009)    |
| (3) Ottawa 3 (2010)                        | Aaron Yoon (suspected) (2012) | Said Namouth (2007)     |
| (6) Toronto 18 Mississauga (2006)          | Mohamed Hersi (2011)          |                         |
| (12) Toronto 18 Scarborough (2006)         | Ferid Imam (2007)             |                         |
|  | Maiwand Yar (2007)            |                         |
| <b>6</b>                                   | <b>6</b>                      | <b>3</b>                |

**Table 3**  
**Size of Group Plotting Attack (Canada)**

| Large (5+ members)            | Mid-Size (2-4 members)                 | Lone Individuals |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Toronto 18 Scarborough (2006) | Ottawa 3 (2010)                        |                  |
| Toronto 18 Mississauga (2006) | Raed Jaser (+ Chiheb Essigheir) (2013) |                  |
|                               | Nuttal and Korody (2013)               |                  |
| <b>2</b>                      | <b>3</b>                               | <b>0</b>         |

While these individuals may have had some correspondence or connection to others, nothing suggests that this occurred within Canada. Finally, seven of the thirty-four individuals were non-Muslims who converted to Islam, including Zakaria Amara, Jahmaal James, Steven Chand, Xristos Katsiroubas, Aaron Yoon, John Stewart Nuttal and Amanda Korody.

Looking specifically at the plots to attack Canadian targets, the Mississauga group of the Toronto 18, and the Ottawa 3 were large scale ambitious plots designed to kill and injure a large number of Canadians, and were relatively sophisticated, involving multiple large explosive devices and, remote detonations. The Scarborough component of the Toronto 18 is more difficult to categorize due to the constantly shifting plots and plans<sup>60</sup> but will be classified as large and amateurish. The VIA train plot might also fall within this category although there is little information currently available about the number or types of explosives or whether it was one or multiple trains or compartments. The Canada Day plot was a smaller scale attack, lacking any real sophistication.

The Canadian experience shows an increase in non-Muslim conversions and individuals opting to travel abroad to join foreign groups. The plots also seem to be becoming smaller in scale, less ambitious and sophisticated, and the plotters smaller than the earlier groups of the Toronto 18. An analysis of the Canadian experience reveals that IIHGT has appeared in many forms, without a clear evolution from one form or method to another.

**Table 4**  
**Scale and Sophistication of IIHGT Plots (Canada)**

|                    | <b>Sophisticated</b>                             | <b>Amateurish</b>             |
|--------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| <b>Large Scale</b> | Ottawa 3 (2010)<br>Toronto 18 Mississauga (2006) | Toronto 18 Scarborough (2006) |
| <b>Small Scale</b> | Via Rail Plot (2013)                             | Nuttal + Korody (2013)        |

### *IIHGT in Australia and the US*

The limited sample of Canadian cases makes it difficult to identify any meaningful patterns or trends. Thus, to understand IIHGT as a phenomenon and to contextualize the Canadian cases in a larger framework, and see whether any broader patterns or trends come to light, it is important to understand how IIHGT has unfolded in other Western democratic states. . This exercise is by no means exhaustive, rather it is intended to serve as a starting point for a larger project designed to integrate numerous reports across many states. This analysis will be less in-depth than the Canadian cases, and will focus on less subjective factors for which there is public information. The American case studies were compiled and analyzed by reputable authors and organizations using a similar methodology employed here. The authors were forthcoming about the limitations of their own work and recognized that some of their assessments were open to interpretation. In order to avoid methodological pitfalls, the analysis will focus on select areas including whether incidents can be categorized as supporting groups abroad, traveling overseas to fight with a foreign group or, intent to attack a domestic target within a particular state. Group size, the scale of their plans and their sophistication will also be examined. Additional factors such as the citizenship of perpetrators, the duration of time in the country and whether individuals were converts, will not be included in the American analysis due to the difficulties in obtaining robust and reliable information. I intend to research each of the U.S. cases (and eventually European cases) independently, in order to conduct a more rigorous comparison.

*Australia*

Australian analysts, noting an increase in Islamic terrorism, recognize that, in 2004, a clear shift occurred towards IIHGT<sup>61</sup>. A chronological account of all Islamist terrorism in Australia created by Sam Mullins makes it possible to examine terrorism attacks to identify those meeting the literature's description of IIHGT. The main differences between his efforts and this paper are that Mullins included all Islamic incidents in Australia and did not distinguish between international or domestic events, nor did he identify or categorize different endgames. Further, he focuses only on Australia, without making any comparisons to other countries' experiences. Using open sources including media accounts, court transcripts and government reports, each IIHGT incident was analyzed in detail. This resulted in the inclusion of cases where individuals, either born or resident in Australia for an extended period where radicalization is likely to have occurred, either plotted a domestic attack in Australia, travelled to join groups abroad or provided support for the global jihadist movement.<sup>62</sup>

There were six highly publicized incidents as well as an undetermined number of individuals suspected to have gone abroad to fight. The first incident was that of dual Pakistani-Australian citizen Faheem Lodhi (34). In 2003, he was arrested alongside a French national named Willie Brigitte for plotting a terrorist attack in Australia. Lodhi downloaded photos of military sites and blueprints of Australian electrical grids and made enquiries about purchasing multiple chemicals using a false company. Lodhi, who had arrived in Australia in the late 1990s, had no previous relationship with Brigitte. They had only been introduced by a Pakistani intermediary prior to Brigitte's arrival in Australia.<sup>63</sup>

In 2003, Joseph Thomas (30) an Australian born convert known famously as "Jihad Jack," was arrested for providing material support to al-Qaida. The charges were later quashed but Thomas was placed on a very strict control order that monitored and prevented certain movement.<sup>64</sup> In 2004, Australian officials arrested Belal Khazaad (37), a dual Lebanese-Australian who obtained his Australian citizenship in 1986, charging him with inciting others to commit jihad and publishing and posting a "do-it-yourself" terrorist manual. He had previously been convicted in 2003 by a court in Beirut in absentia for his role in helping fund a bombing campaign in Lebanon.<sup>65</sup>

In 2005, officials disrupted two separate yet interconnected plots culminating in the largest investigation in Australian history. Dubbed the Pendennis plot, a group of fifteen individuals were detained for planning several large-scale terrorist attacks against targets including the Melbourne

Cricket Grounds during the 2005 Australian Football League Grand Final and the Melbourne Crown Casino during Grand Prix weekend.<sup>66</sup> At trial, only nine were convicted, including Abdul Nacer Benbrika (48), an Algerian who arrived in Australia in 1989; Aimen Joud (24), born in Australia; Fadl Sayadi (28), a Lebanese who arrived in Australia in 1983; Abdullah Merhi (23), born in Australia; Ahmed Raad (25) and Ezzit Raad (26), both born in Australia; Amer Haddara (29), born in Australia, Izzydeen Attik, age and nationality unknown and Shane Kent (31) an Australian-born convert. The men had been training and conducting surveillance in 2004, but had allegedly not reached attack capability.<sup>67</sup>

A second group of men in Sydney were also planning a terrorist attack at roughly the same time. It is unclear how the two groups initially made contact but there was limited correspondence between Benbrika and Mohamed Elomar (44), who arrived in Australia from Lebanon in 1977. Additional individuals arrested and charged included Khaled Cheikho (36) from Lebanon, who arrived in Australia in 1976, and his brother Moustafa Chiekho (32), born in Australia; Abdul Rakim Hasan (40), a Bangladeshi who arrived in Australia in 1989; and Mohammad Omar Jamal (21), born in Australia. Four other men—Omar Umar Sarif Baladjam, Mazen Touma, Khaled Sharrouf and Mirsda Mulahalilovic—pled guilty to lesser charges. This group was much more advanced and close to an attack against the Lucas Heights nuclear facility, having purchased weapons and chemicals.<sup>68</sup> At trial, most of the Pendennis members spoke openly about attacking Australia in revenge for its support of U.S. Middle East policies.<sup>69</sup>

In 2007, the international media reported that five Australians had been detained in Lebanon and accused of funneling weapons and plotting terrorist attacks. Two men, Omar El Hadba (44) and Irahim Sabouh (33), both Lebanese-Australian citizens, were charged.<sup>70</sup> A third man Bassem al-Sayyed, a dual Lebanese-Australian citizen, was acquitted but died several months later in a gun battle with the Lebanese military.<sup>71</sup>

In 2009, *Operation Neath* led to the arrest of five individuals planning an attack on the Holsworthy military base in Sydney. All five men were Australian citizens, of which three—Saney Edow Aweys (26) from Somalia, in Australia since 1998; Nayef El Sayed (25), born in Australia and Wissam Mahmoud Fattal (35), who arrived in Australia in 2003 from Lebanon—were charged.<sup>72</sup> Yacqub Khayre and Abdirahman Ahmed were acquitted of all charges. The men became radicalized in Australia but officials report the men had attempted to make contact with members of *al-Shabaab* seeking a *fatwa* to sanction their attack.<sup>73</sup>

In addition to these cases, there are numerous examples of Australians traveling abroad to join foreign terrorist groups. Some of the more high profile incidents include the cases of Izhar Ul-Haque<sup>74</sup> (21), and Ahmed Ali (25), killed fighting in Somalia in 2006.<sup>75</sup> Somewhithin the Australian-Somali community, however, suggest that this is underreported. Community leaders estimate anywhere from ten to forty young Somali-Australians left to fight with al-Shabaab.<sup>8</sup> As of April 2013, the Australian Security Intelligence Organization believes that there may be up to 200 individuals with Australian passports fighting in Syria, some with *Jabhat-al-Nusra*, and that this figure has probably doubled since the early months of the war.<sup>8</sup>

Two Australian cases were omitted from this analysis. The first is the 2002 Mantiqi 4 plot attributed to Jack Roche, an Australian citizen, as the plot was orchestrated and supported by *Jemaah Islamiya*.<sup>8</sup> The case of Zaky Mallah was also omitted. In 2003, he was charged with threatening to attack the Australian Security Intelligence Organization or the Department of Foreign Affairs but his threats seem to have arisen out of Australia's refusal to renew his passport so he could travel to Lebanon and was not necessarily global jihadist inspired.<sup>8</sup>

The Australian experiences do not appear to be out of line with the Canadian cases, albeit with subtle differences. First, three of the four planned attacks within Australia were orchestrated by large groups and were ambitious and sophisticated with no indication of devolution. Second, a greater number of Australians travelled to join Islamic groups abroad. While *al-Shabaab* remains part of the equation, it appears many Lebanese-Australians travel back to the Middle East and, more recently, Syria to fight. There also appear to be fewer cases where individuals in Australia provided material or logistical support to other individuals or groups. One possible explanation might be the geographical proximity to South East Asia and other Islamist groups, particularly *Jemaah-Islamiya*, which is known to be very organized in the region including operating in Australia itself.

### *United States*

Information on American cases studies was gathered primarily from two compilations: Jerome Bjelopera's January 2013 report from the Congressional Research Service<sup>80</sup> and an April 2012 Backgrounder on disrupted terror plots since 9/11, by James Carafano, Steve Bucci and Jessica Zuckerman.<sup>81</sup> Bjelopera's work is a chronological description of IIHGT incidents in the United States since 2001. His analysis distinguishes among the outcomes of

the action but does not attempt to compare and contrast it to other countries or examine it as a unique variant of Islamic terrorism.<sup>82</sup>

He identifies and provides accounts of sixty-three incidents of home-grown terrorist plots in the US between 9/11 and the publication of his report, focusing on the outcome of the action. His analysis does not include the April 2013 Boston Marathon bombing where Tamerlan (26) and his brother Dzhokhar Tsarnaev (19) detonated two pressure cooker bombs, killing three and injuring over 260 people.<sup>83</sup> It includes those who planned a domestic attack within the U.S., those who travelled, or attempted to travel abroad to become foreign fighters, and those individuals who provided or planned to provide material support to terrorist groups abroad.<sup>84</sup> His analysis revealed thirty-eight plots to attack internal U.S. targets, twenty plots to travel abroad and six incidents of individuals supporting terrorism.<sup>85</sup> Further breaking down the plots to attack the U.S., twenty-five of the incidents were plotted by lone individuals, nine incidents were plotted by two, three or four individuals, and four incidents involved larger groups.<sup>86</sup>

An overall assessment of these plots reveals several interesting results. First, of the twenty-two incidents plotting to attack the domestic U.S. recorded since 2009, eighteen were attempted by lone individuals and the additional four by pairs. While one or two individuals conducted attacks prior to this point, there are a steady number of larger groups perpetrating plots between 2002 and 2009.<sup>87</sup> Further, the number of individuals seeking to travel abroad to participate in foreign jihad also increased, with more than half occurring after 2010. The destination of choice for foreign fighters from the U.S. appears to be Somalia and *al-Shabaab*.

Attempts to measure the scale and sophistication of these plots is more difficult given the sample consists of only five successful incidents since 9/11.<sup>88</sup> In Bjelopera's account, most of the thirty-eight plots targeting the domestic United States are small in both scale and ambition relying on amateur knowledge and techniques. More ambitious and sophisticated plots would include:

- Adel Daoud's 2012 attempt to detonate a car bomb in downtown Chicago;
- Amine Khalifi's 2012 plot to detonate a suicide vest at the US Capitol building;
- Rezwana Ferdhaus's 2011 efforts to fly remote controlled planes loaded with explosives at the U.S. Capitol;
- Khalid Aldawsari's 2011 plot to plant multiple IEDs on unspecified targets;

- Antonio Martinez's 2010 efforts to detonate a car bomb in Maryland;
- Mohamed Mohamud's 2010 plot to detonate a car bomb at the Christmas tree lighting in Portland;
- Farooque Ahmed's 2010 plot to bomb DC subway system;
- Faisal Shahzad car bomb in Times Square;
- Hosam Smadi's 2009 plot to bomb Dallas skyscraper;
- Michael Finton's 2009 plot to set off a car bomb at the Springfield Illinois Federal Building;
- Najibullah Zazi's 2009 plot to bomb the NY Subway;
- The Boyd Group's 2009 plot to attack Quantico; The Newburgh Four's 2009 plot to target aircrafts and set off multiple car bombs in NY;
- The 2007 Fort Dix plot;
- The Liberty Seven's 2006 plot to bomb the Sears Tower in Chicago;
- Lyman Farris's 2003 plot to topple the Brooklyn Bridge; and
- Jose Padilla's efforts to detonate a dirty bomb in Chicago in 2002.<sup>89</sup>

Further trends observed from the United States stem from the obvious, including a greater number of overall incidents of all types, to the more subtle such, as the increase in the number of plots pursued by lone individuals. Many recent incidents also appear to be ambitious and sophisticated. Coincidentally, this trend has increased at approximately the same time as the launch of *Inspire*, the online *jihadi* magazine launched in July 2010 by AQAP. The resource, now on its tenth edition is described by analysts as something which "should not be overblown but needs to be taken seriously," and is much more advanced from earlier editions.<sup>90</sup> Coinciding with the increase in the number of lone individuals and pairs is the absence of any larger groups over the past few years, something which occurred with some regularity between 2002 and 2008.

### *An Assessment of IIHGT: The Canadian, Australian and American Cases*

An analysis of the case studies demonstrates that various forms of IIHGT exist in all three states. Beyond that, however, few patterns cross these national boundaries, suggesting that there are no real observable trends or patterns. Additionally, it does not appear that the phenomenon is following a general trajectory. In addition to differing "endgames," it is also clear that

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those groups planning domestic attacks against their respective states vary in size, scale and sophistication. There is no evidence of an overlap in technique or strategies, with the exception of the 2003–2007 period, where each state examined experienced large groups planning large scale sophisticated attacks. The analysis reveals that U.S. plots are devolving in size and scope, Canada, at least currently, appears to be following a similar pattern, while Australia is an outlier, with few smaller efforts and most plots the work of larger groups.

**Table 5**  
**Comparison “Endgame” of IIHGT Incidents (Canada, Australia, and the United States)**

|               | Domestic Attack     | Fight Abroad | Provided Support   |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Canada        | 6 (24 individuals)  | 6            | 3                  |
| Australia     | 4 (20 individuals)  | 5            | 2                  |
| Unites States | 37 (76 individuals) | 20           | 6 (24 individuals) |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>47</b>           | <b>31</b>    | <b>11</b>          |

**Table 6**  
**Comparison Size of Group Plotting Attack (Canada, Australia, and the United States)**

|               | Large (5+ members) | Mid-Size (2-4 members) | Lone Individuals |
|---------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Canada        | 2                  | 3                      | 0                |
| Australia     | 3                  | 1                      | 0                |
| Unites States | 4                  | 9                      | 24               |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>9</b>           | <b>13</b>              | <b>24</b>        |

**Table 7**  
**Comparison Scale and Sophistication of IIHGT Plots (Canada, Australia, and the United States)**

| Large Scale   |  | Sophisticated | Amateurish |
|---------------|--|---------------|------------|
| Canada        |  | 2             | 1          |
| Australia     |  | 3             | 1          |
| Unites States |  | 16            | 9          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>21</b>     | <b>11</b>  |
| Small Scale   |  | Sophisticated | Amateurish |
| Canada        |  | 1             | 1          |
| Australia     |  | 0             | 0          |
| Unites States |  | 5             | 8          |
| <b>Total</b>  |  | <b>6</b>      | <b>9</b>   |



The recruitment of citizens or dual citizens appears to be increasing, especially in the last two years, while *al-Shabaab* appears to have been very active in all three states. However, one major difference between the U.S., Canada and Australia is that American officials have identified and neutralized many of those responsible for indoctrinating and radicalizing Americans. In the years right after 9/11, four radical imams lecturing in various cities around the U.S. were identified, including Ali-Al Timini in Virginia; Fawaz Damrah in Cleveland; Mohammed El-Mezain in Los Angeles; and Adnan Bayazid in Kansas City.<sup>91</sup> Recently, other homegrown terrorist incidents have been tied to intermediaries directly in contact with individuals who became radicalized. The Fort Hood shooter was connected to Anwar al-Awalaki, individuals from the Minnesota Somali community traveling to join *al-Shabaab* were recruited by Cabdulaahi Ahmed Farrax, and the Northern Virginia group was indoctrinated through a Taliban contact named "Saifullah," who used personal email correspondence with each individual.<sup>92</sup> Even the British government has identified sources of radicalization in the Finsbury Park and Brixton Mosques in London. Canada and Australia have been less successful in identifying networks and or recruiters in their countries. Those responsible for radicalizing Medlej, Katsiroubas and Yoon and to a lesser degree the Ottawa 3, remain unknown. In Australia, while it is believed Benbrika radicalized the Melbourne Pendennis members. He was not responsible for radicalizing the Sydney group and those who plotted Operation Neath.

Incidents of providing material or logistical support also vary from state to state. As a proportion of the number of IIHGT incidents, Canada appears to have many more individuals who actively pursued this contribution/avenue of action. This fact should not be a surprise. Canada has a history, deserving or not, as a haven for such activity for other groups. In the late 1980s and 1990s, groups including the Tamil Tigers, Hezbollah and Hamas all operated within Canada.<sup>93</sup>

These findings parallel what we know about international Islamic terrorism more generally. As with international Islamic terrorism, there appears to be no standard trajectory or progression with IIHGT. Any numbers of forms exist and often overlap. The literature simultaneously categorizes *al-Qaida* as taking many different forms, each with different capabilities and characteristics, including characterizations of "core," "affiliates," "local," "network," "associated movements," "brand," independent operations," and "middle managers."<sup>94</sup> Part of a larger debate among scholars is what to make of the multiple organizational mutations *al-Qaida* has undergone. Even those who argue that *al-Qaida* chooses to consciously evolve, acknowledge that this

process was easier to identify pre-9/11 as the organization grew and during the early days of the war on terror as it sought to survive.<sup>95</sup> Different authors tend to put varying emphasis on the strength, capabilities and threat posed by these different forms of al-Qaida.<sup>96</sup> Recent Embassy closings in the Middle East lend credence to the supposition that AQAP is the greatest threat.

One final piece of evidence about the progression of international Islamic terrorism comes from Osama bin Laden himself. Letters seized from bin Laden's compound during the Abbotabad raids reveal mixed messages on this topic. At times, his letters appear to endorse empowering regional groups, but at other times he wants them to be controlled. The letters also portray bin Laden's skepticism that these groups were the best way forward for the global jihadist movement. He further chastised many of those inspired by al-Qaeda's ideology and, in reference to Faisal Shazad's failed Times Square car bombing of, suggested their efforts make jihad "look bad."<sup>97</sup> Far from a clear strategy moving forward, the letters seem to indicate that bin Laden and al-Qaida were not evolving purposefully but were victims of mutations outside their control. Depending on how one chooses to view the relationship between al-Qaida and these various incarnations a case can be made that international Islamic terrorism itself is now many different things as well.

### *Conclusion*

Surveying the literature, there is no real definition of what constitutes IIHGT. Rather, a description of how it unfolds, based on where an individual was radicalized, seems to be the focal point. Therefore, IIHGT consists of domestic attacks, providing material or logistical support, or traveling abroad to pursue jihad. Further, different characterizations of domestic attacks have been identified, depending on the number of individuals plotting, the scale or ambition of the plot and its sophistication. With so many potential variables it is no wonder there is a lack of agreement about what IIHGT is and how it should be understood. This also makes the identification of any trends or patterns almost impossible.

In order to better understand IIHGT, I offer the following suggestions. First, examining IIHGT from the Canadian perspective revealed that while Canada's experiences were generally fairly similar to those of other states, something else was occurring beneath the surface. The comparison seemingly revealed greater divergence among the three states than commonalities. Thus, it is possible that IIHGT should not be viewed as one overarching phenomenon, but rather as unique to the environment in which it occurs.<sup>98</sup> This

theory holds that, despite the international jihadist inspiration, domestic factors play a determining role in how IIHGT manifests itself in each state. For example, why are there a greater proportion of incidents in the United States which manifest as actual plots whereas, in both Canada and Australia, more individuals offer support and/or travel abroad? Why are Australians seemingly more willing to travel abroad than Canadians or Americans? Future research is required to determine domestic, social or cultural conditions that might explain this divergence. For example, might a state's integration or multiculturalism policy play a role? Is there a potential disconnect between the perception certain ethnic communities might have and the reality they experience? Is there anger towards the state's foreign policy? How much might be a reflection of the individual and their sense of isolation, a lack of self worth or simply adventurism and excitement?

Second, to better understand and address IIHGT, we need to refine and break it down into disparate endgames. At the moment, IIHGT is a vacuous term which risks becoming an empty concept. All three endgames must be investigated separately. Why does one individual choose to pursue to commit an actual attack, to join a group abroad, or simply raise money and spread propaganda? How do we account for the near enemy versus far enemy distinction<sup>8</sup>? Does attacking or plotting to attack one's own society and fellow citizens require a greater degree of radicalization than providing passive support or going abroad to fight?

IIHGT remains a very real and potent threat to most Western democratic states. Further analysis is required as intelligence agencies and academics play catch-up in an effort to understand and combat this phenomenon. A more nuanced approach is required taking into account that IIHGT is not one overarching phenomenon but rather several different ones based on unique experiences and circumstances.

*Appendix*

Tables 8–11 show a breakdown of the Australian cases based on citizenship, endgame, size of the groups and scale and sophistication.

**Table 8**  
**Nationality of Individuals Involved in IIHGT (Australia)**

| Australian Born       |                     | Australian Citizen, but born elsewhere | No Citizenship (# years in Australia) |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Joseph Thomas         | Mohammad Jamal (PS) | Faheem Lodhi                           | Abdul Benbrika (PM) (16)              |
| Aimen Joud (PM)       | Nayef El Sayed (ON) | Belal Khazaad                          | Mohamed Elomar (PS) (35)              |
| Abdullah Merhi (PM)   | Izhar Ul-Haque      | Fadl Sayadi (PM)                       | Abdul Hasan (PS) (16)                 |
| Ahmed Raad (PM)       | Ahmed Ali           | Khaled Cheikho (PS)                    | Wissam Fatal (ON) (6)                 |
| Ezzit Raad (PM)       |                     | Omar El-Hadba                          |                                       |
| Amer Haddara (PM)     |                     | Ibrahim Sabouh                         |                                       |
| Shane Kent (PM)       |                     | Bassem al-Sayyed                       |                                       |
| Moustafa Cheikho (PS) |                     | Saney Edow Aweys (ON)                  |                                       |
| <b>12</b>             |                     | <b>8</b>                               | <b>4</b>                              |

(PM): Pendennis Melbourne

(PS): Pendennis Sydney

(ON): Operation Neath

**Table 9**  
**“Endgame” of IIHGT Incidents (Australia)**

| Domestic Attack                 | Fight Abroad            | Provided Support     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| (5) Operation Neath (2009)      | Omar El Hadba (2007)    | Belal Khazaad (2004) |
| ( 9) Pendennis Sydney (2005)    | Ibrahim Sabouh (2007)   | Joseph Thoma (2003)  |
| (15) Pendennis Melbourne (2005) | Bassem al-Sayyed (2007) |                      |
| Faheem Lodhi (2003)             | Izhar Ul-Haque (2006)   |                      |
|                                 | Ahmed Ali (2006)        |                      |
| <b>4</b>                        | <b>5</b>                | <b>2</b>             |

**Table 10**  
**Size of Group Plotting Attack (Australia)**

| Large (5+ members)         | Mid-Size (2-4 members)                 | Lone Individuals |
|----------------------------|--|------------------|
| Pendennis Melbourne (2005) | Faheem Lodhi (+Willie Brigitte) (2003) |                  |
| Pendennis Sydney (2005)    |  |                  |
| Operation Neath (2009)     |  |                  |
| <b>3</b>                   | <b>1</b>                               | <b>0</b>         |

**Table 11**  
**Scale and Sophistication of IIHGT Plots (Australia)**

|                    | Sophisticated  | Amateurish             |
|--------------------|--|------------------------|
| <b>Large Scale</b> | Pendennis Melbourne (2005)<br>Pendennis Sydney (2005)<br>Faheem Lodhi (2003) | Operation Neath (2009) |
| <b>Small Scale</b> |  |                        |

Tables 12–14 show a breakdown of the United States cases based on endgame, size of the groups and scale and sophistication.

**Table 12**  
**“Endgame” of IIHGT Incidents (United States)**

| Domestic Attack                             |  | Fight Abroad                               | Provided Support                          |
|---|--|--|---|
| (2) Qazi Brothers (2012)                    | Tarek Mahanna (2009)                       | (2) Mohamed Abukhair & Randy Wilson (2012) | Emerson Begolly (2011)                    |
| Adel Daoud (2012)                           | Abdulhakim Muhammad (2009)                 | Craig Baxam (2012)                         | Ulugbek Kodirov (2011)                    |
| Amine El Khalifi (2012)                     | (4) Newburgh Four (2009)                   | Sohiel Kabir (2012)                        | Omar Hammami (2010)                       |
| Sami Osmakac (2012)                         | Hosam Smadi (2009)                         | (4) California 4 (2012)                    | Colleen LaRose (2010)                     |
| Jose Pimental (2012)                        | Najibullah Zazi (2009)                     | Jamhid Muhtorov (2012)                     | Al-Shabaab Recruits (2007 - 11)           |
| Naser Abdo (2011)                           | (6) Fort Dix Plot (2007)                   | Agron Hasbajrami (2011)                    | (2) Yassin Aref & Mohammed Hossain (2004) |
| (2) Abu Abdul-Latif & Walli Mujahidh (2011) | (4) JFK Plot (2007)                        | Mohamed Alessa & Carlos Almonte (2010)     |   |
| Khalid Aldawsari (2011)                     | Bryant Neal Vinas (2008)                   | Zachery Chesser (2010)                     |   |
| (2) Ahmed Ferani & Mohamed Mamdouh (2011)   | (7) Liberty City 7 (2008)                  | Shaker Masri (2010)                        |   |
| Rezwan Ferdous (2011)                       | (2) Ehsanul Sadequee & Syed Ahmed (2008)   | Jehad Mostafa (2010)                       |   |
| Yonathan Melaku (2011)                      | Derrick Shareef (2008)                     | Abdel Shehadeh (2010)                      |   |
| Farooque Ahmed (2010)                       | Mohamed Taher-Aziz (2008)                  | (5) North Virginia 5 (2009)                |   |
| Antonio Martinez (2010)                     | (4) JIS Plot (2005)                        | Daood Gilani (2009)                        |   |
| Mohamed Mohamad (2010)                      | (2) Shahawar Siraj & James Elshafay (2004) | Betim Kaziu (2009)                         |   |
| (2) Paul & Nadia Rockwood (2010)            | Ahmed Abu Ali (2003)                       | David Maldonado (2007)                     |   |
| Faisal Shahzad (2010)                       | Hasan Akbar (2003)                         | (4) Houston Taliban Group (2006)           |   |
| (8) Boyd Group (2009)                       | lyman Faris (2003)                         | (3) Toledo Group (2006)                    |   |
| Michael Finton (2009)                       | (6) Lackawanna 6 (2002)                    | (2) Umer Hyat & Hamid Hayat (2005)         |   |
| Nidal Hasan (2009)                          | Jose Padilla (2002)                        | (11) Virginia Jihad Network (2003)         |   |
|   |  | (7) Portland 7 (2001)                      |   |
| 38  |  | 20   | 6   |

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**Table 13**  
**Size of Group Plotting Attack (United States)**

| Large (5+ members)    | Mid-Size (2-4 members)                  | Lone Individuals        |                             |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Boyd Group (2009)     | Qazi Brothers (2012)                    | Adel Daoud (2012)       | Nidal Hasan (2009)          |
| Fort Dix Plot (2007)  | Abu Abdul-Latif & Walli Mujahidh (2011) | Amine El Khalifi (2012) | Tarek Mehanna (2009)        |
| Liberty City 7 (2006) | Ahmed Ferrani & Mohamed Mamdouth (2011) | Sami Osmakac (2012)     | Hosam Smadi (2009)          |
| Lackawanna 6 (2002)   | The Rockwoods (2010)                    | Rezwan Ferdhaus (2011)  | Michael Finton (2009)       |
|                       | Newburgh 4 (2009)                       | Jose Pimental (2011)    | Najibullah Zazi (2009)      |
|                       | JFK Plot (2007)                         | Naser Abdo (2011)       | Abdulahkim Muhammad (2009)  |
|                       | Ehsanul Sadequee & Syed Ahmed (2006)    | Yonathan Melaku (2011)  | Bryant Neal Vinas (2008)    |
|                       | JIS Plot (2005)                         | Khalid Aldawsari (2011) | Derrick Shareef (2006)      |
|                       | Shahawar Siraj & James Elshafay (2004)  | Antonio Martinez (2010) | Mohammed Taheri-Azar (2006) |
|                       |   | Mohamed Mohamud (2010)  | lyman Faris (2003)          |
|                       |   | Farooque Ahmed (2010)   | Ahmed Abu Ali (2003)        |
|                       |   | Faisal Shahzad (2010)   | Hasan Akbar (2003)          |
|                       |   |                         | Jose Padilla (2002)         |
| <b>4</b>              | <b>9</b>                                | <b>25</b>               |                             |

**Table 14**  
**Scale and Sophistication of IIHGT Plots (United States)**

|                    | Sophisticated                          | Amateurish                              |
|--------------------|--|---|
| <b>Large Scale</b> | Adel Daoud (2012)                      | Michael Finton (2009)                   |
|                    | Amine El Khalifi (2012)                | Newburgh 4 (2009)                       |
|                    | Khalid Aldawsari (2011)                | Hosam Smadi (2009)                      |
|                    | Rezwan Ferdhaus (2011)                 | Najibullah Zazi (2009)                  |
|                    | Farooque Ahmed (2010)                  | Bryant Neal Vinas (2008)                |
|                    | Antonio Martinez (2010)                | Liberty City 7 (2006)                   |
|                    | Mohamed Mohamud (2010)                 | lyman Faris (2003)                      |
|                    | Faisal Shahzad (2010)                  | Jose Padilla (2002)                     |
|                    |  |   |
|                    |  |   |
| <b>Small Scale</b> | Qazi Brothers (2012)                   | Abu Abdul-Latif & Walli Mujahidh (2011) |
|                    | Naser Abdo (2011)                      | Yonathan Melaku (2011)                  |
|                    | Jose Pimental (2011)                   | Rockwoods (2010)                        |
|                    | Abdulahkim Muhammad (2009)             | Tarek Mehanna (2009)                    |
|                    | Shahawar Siraj & James Elshafay (2004) | Derrick Shareef (2006)                  |
|                    |  | Mohammed Taheri-Azar (2006)             |
|                    |  | Ahmed Abu Ali (2003)                    |
|                    |  | Hasan Akbar (2003)                      |
|                    |  |   |
|                    |  |   |

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