

Terrorism in Canada

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September 11th 2011 will mark the tenth anniversary of the terrorist attacks which toppled the World Trade Center buildings in New York City and killed approximately three thousand people. These attacks marked the beginning of an escalation of global Islamic terrorism which shows no signs of fading in the near future. The purpose of this paper is to examine whether Islamic terrorism has seen a marked increase in Canada since 9/11 and further identify what this might mean for Canadians and policymakers moving forward. Investigating the terrorist incidents which have unfolded in Canada over the past ten years not only provides valuable information about the threats and challenges Canada has experienced since 9/11, it also provides clues about what we might expect moving forward. This paper argues that an analysis of terrorist incidents in Canada from 9/11 until today reveals a disturbing trend. However, it also provides a clear indication of several areas which need to be investigated and addressed in order to mitigate this threat moving forward.

This paper begins by summarizing six high profile terrorist incidents which have unfolded in Canada over the past ten years. These include plots linked to the "Toronto 18," as well as Misbahuddin Ahmed, Khurram Sher and Hiva Alizadeh, collectively referred to as the "Ottawa 3." It also examines individuals accused of planning or supporting terrorist activities such as Said Namouh, Mohammad Khawaja, Mohamed Harkat and Sayfildin Tahir-Sharif. These case studies are presented to show the reader that Canada has faced significant threats in the ten years since 9/11, and further, that these incidents appear to be increasing. I argue that these incidents also demonstrate a

disturbing trend: they all appear to be examples of what appears to be a “domestic home-grown” variation of the global Salafist Islamic terrorism. While this label currently has no definition, it can be loosely understood as individuals who are either born in or have lived in Canada for an extended period of time who have become radicalized and intend on perpetrating terrorism against Canada or its allies. Examining the past ten years in Canada reveals several incidents which meet this description.

Having established this trend, this paper will then comment on what this means for Canadians and policymakers. I identify four areas which need to be investigated. First and second, we need to remain focused on legislative initiatives and increased cooperation with our allies, especially the United States which were government priorities in the weeks and months following 9/11. However, two additional areas also need to be examined, especially in light of the recent trend that this paper will argue has emerged in the ten years since 9/11. The majority of terror incidents in Canada in the past ten years are domestic and home-grown. This suggests that it might be time to re-examine and re-evaluate other Canadian policies such as those pertaining to immigration and multiculturalism to ensure that they are not vulnerabilities or contributing factors to the threat over the next few years.

Terrorist Incidents in Canada

Similar to other countries, Canada has historically faced the challenges of terrorism. Some of the more prominent examples include the Freedomites, a radical splinter group of orthodox Doukhobors which orchestrated a terrorist campaign in British Columbia in the early 1900s to protest against government intervention in their lives. In the late 1960s, the Front de Liberation du Quebec (FLQ), a separatist movement provoked the October Crisis in which two individuals, Pierre Laporte and James Cross were kidnapped and Laporte ultimately killed. The kidnappings represented the culmination of a terrorist campaign against English targets in Montreal which unfolded over several years. Of course, the most notorious act of terrorism perpetrated was the 1985 Air India bombing by Sikh separatists which killed approximately 320 Canadians.

The terrorism we have seen in Canada since 9/11 is different. The fact that all of the major incidents involve threats to the West from Islamist ideology is only the tip of the iceberg. The more disturbing trend is that all of incidents were planned or executed by Muslim Canadians, individuals who were either born and raised in Canada or have been living in this country for an extended period of time. This revelation lends credence to the possibility that domestic home-grown terrorism is an increasing phenomenon and poses a real threat to Canada and other Western states.¹ Six publically documented cases in the past ten years since 9/11 all share this characteristic.

Project Summum: Said Namouh

The case of Said Namouh, 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 was involved with the Global Islamic Media Front, a group linked to al-Qaida and responsible for uploading and maintaining propaganda videos, and literature as well tools for recruitment.² He was also linked to bomb plots against targets in Germany and Austria as punishment for their government's involvement in Afghanistan³, and was sentenced to life in prison. He will be eligible for parole in 2017.

Project Awaken: Mohammad Momin Khawaja

Mohammad Momin Khawaja represents one of the more high profile Canadian terrorist incidents in the post 9/11 era and was the first case to be sentenced using the anti-terror legislation passed in 2001.⁴ Further underscoring the gravity of this incident

¹ Michael Zekulin, 2011 Conceptualizing terrorism, PhD Dissertation University of Calgary

² CBCNews. Quebecer in bomb plot gets life sentence, (February 17th, 2010). Accessed 03/14/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/story/2010/02/17>; Also see Zoe McKnight, Factbox: Key Terror cases in Canada, (August 25th, 2010). Accessed 03/14/2011 from <http://www.nationalpost.com/related/topics/Factbox+terror+cases+Canada.ca>.

³ CTV Globemedia. Convicted terrorist Said Namouh gets life sentence, (February 17th, 2010). Accessed 03/15/2011 from http://montreal.ctv.ca/servlet/an/plocal/CTVNews/20100217/mtl_nahmouh

⁴ CBCNews. Khawaja sentenced to 10.5 years in prison, (March 12th, 2009). Accessed 03/10/2011 from http://www.cbc.ca/news/Canada/story/2009/03/12/khawaja_terror_sentence.html

was the fact that at the time of his arrest Khawaja had been working as a computer programmer at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAIT). It was later revealed that this had been a low level position and that Khawaja had had no access to classified or sensitive information.⁵

Khawaja was born in Ottawa but spent considerable time in various Middle Eastern states including Libya, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan during his youth. In the mid 1990s he returned to Ottawa where he completed his education as a computer programmer. He was arrested in Ottawa March 29th 2004 and charged with financing and facilitating terrorism in connection with the activities of several British men in London between November 2003 and March 2004.⁶

The case against Khawaja, outlined in an Ontario Superior Court of Justice Brief⁷ reveals that he had visited a terrorist training camp in Pakistan in July 2003, where he met several like minded British Muslims. Khawaja's 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 Khawaja was involved in a plot to set off bombs at a London nightclub, a construction firm, and gas, water and power utilities.⁸ Correspondence between Khawaja and the British men also revealed that Khawaja had provided travel assistance to various individuals enroute 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 cash, computer hard drives and terrorist literature as well as invoices for electronics used to build a remote detonator. Khawaja had managed to build a functioning prototype remote detonator which he had dubbed the "hifidigimonster."

⁵ CBCNews. Mohammad Momin Khawaja, (May 22nd, 2009). Accessed 03/10/2011 from http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/cdnsecurity/khawaja_mohammad.html.

⁶ CBCNews. Mohammad Momin Khawaja, (May 22nd, 2009). Accessed 03/10/2011 from http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/cdnsecurity/khawaja_mohammad.html.

⁷ Ontario Supreme Court of Justice, Khawaja Judgement, (Released October 29th 2008). Accessed 03/11/2011 from <http://images.theglobeandmail.com/v5/content/features/PDFs/KhawajaReasonsforJudgment.pdf>.

⁸ Joanna Smith. Khawaja guilty of terrorism, (October 30th 2008). Accessed 03/09/2011 from <http://thestar.com/news/canada/article/527222>; Also see CBCNews. Khawaja appeals terrorism conviction, (May 18th, 2010). Accessed 03/08/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2010/05/18/ott-khawaja.html>

Authorities believe he was contracted to develop an additional thirty detonators, which experts declared were built “completely from scratch,” and were highly sophisticated.⁹

Mohamed Harkat

Mohamed Harkat came to Canada as a refugee in 1995. Originally from Algeria, Harkat fled the country in the early 1990s as the government cracked down on the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS), a political group he belonged to. He spent several years in other Middle Eastern countries before arriving in Canada in 1995 on a forged Saudi passport. He was detained in December 2002 and placed on a national security certificate¹⁰ and was accused of moving money and people for al-Qaida and operating a safehouse for al-Qaida in Pakistan in the early 1990s.¹¹ The Courts have upheld the security certificate arguing that there are “reasonable grounds to believe Harkat engaged in terrorism, is a danger to the security of Canada and is a member of the bin Laden network,” further suggesting Harkat’s testimony was “incoherent, implausible, if not contradictory.”¹² CSIS claims Harkat also attended an Afghan training camp run by bin Laden network, and has admitted to meeting with Ahmed Said Khadr, late patriarch of the notorious Khadr clan and is a sleeper agent, “lying low and waiting for instructions.”¹³ Harkat has been served with a deportation order from Canada, but the case remains under appeal.

⁹ Zoe McKnight, Factbox: Key Terror cases in Canada, (August 25th, 2010). Accessed 03/14/2011 from <http://www.nationalpost.com/related/topics/Factbox+terror+cases+Canada.ca>

¹⁰ Canada.com. Mohamed Harkat deemed terrorist, faces deportation, (December 9th, 2010). Accessed 03/08/2011 from

<http://www.canada.com/news/mohamed+harkat+deemed+terrorist+faces+deportation/3951744/story.html>

¹¹ Justin Sadler. Harkat deemed a terrorist threat, (December 10th, 2010). Accessed 03/08/2011 from <http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Canada/2010/12/10pf-16499351.html>

¹² Ibid

¹³ CBCNews. The CSIS case against Mohamed Harkat, (July 17th, 2006). Accessed 03/08/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/cdnsecurity/harkat.html>

Sayfildin Tahir Sharif (Edmonton)

One of the more recent terrorist incidents involving Canada is the case of Edmontonian Sayfildin Tahir Sharif, also known as Faruq Khalil Muhammad Isa. An ethnic Kurd born in Iraq, he arrived in Canada as a refugee in 1993 and became a Canadian citizen in 1997.¹⁴ Canadian officials were contacted by US authorities who had been monitoring Sharif as a person they believed to be playing a role in facilitating terrorism against American soldiers in Iraq. They allege 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.”¹⁵ US 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. A US District Court then delivered a 25 page complaint to Canadian authorities asking for the extradition of Sharif. It includes details of the correspondence between Sharif and several Tunisians in Iraq including and an FBI investigation linking them to a suicide bombing which killed US soldiers in April 2009,¹⁶ and a second suicide bombing against an Iraqi police station in March 2009.¹⁷

This case is also unique because it publically demonstrates the increased cooperation between American and Canadian officials on domestic terrorist incidents. The Federal Department of Justice says there is an ongoing Canadian investigation as well but that moving evidence to the US is legal under Mutual Legal Assistance in

¹⁴ Canadian Press. Judge to look at RCMP search of terror suspects home, (March 4th 2011). Accessed 03/08/2011 from <http://www.edmonton.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVnews/20110304/terror-search-judge.html>

¹⁵ CBCNews. The United States versus Sayfildin Tahir Sharif, (January 23rd 2011). Accessed 03/07/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2011/01/20/timeline-terror-suspect-sharif.html>; See also Josh Wingrove, Defence contests search of Alberta man facing US terror charges. Globe and Mail (March 3rd, 2011)

¹⁶ United States District Court Eastern District of New York M11-039. United States of America against Faruq Khalil Muhammad Isa, (January 2011). Accessed 03/07/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/pdf/faruq-complaint.pdf>

¹⁷ Tony Blais, (January 20th, 2011). Accused Edmonton terrorist surprised by charges. Accessed 03/08/2011 from <http://www.edmontonsun/news/edmonton/2011/01/20>

Criminal Matters Act.¹⁸ Currently, this case is being appealed on the grounds that it is illegal to extradite Sharif to the US for these allegations.

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 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.¹⁹ 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 is a Canadian citizen raised in Canada but born in Pakistan and Alizadeh was born in Iraq but immigrated to Canada in 2000.²⁰

Authorities allege that Alizadeh also had international connections to other terrorist groups and that he attended training camps in both Pakistan and Afghanistan where he was trained to construct electronic devices.²¹ This revelation led authorities to issue warrants for three non Canadian citizens living abroad who have yet to be captured.²²

¹⁸ Ryan Cormier. Lawyers for Tahrir-Sharif want search warrants reviewed, (March 3rd, 2011). Accessed 03/09/2011 from <http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/lawyers+tahrir+sharif/4378647/story.html>

¹⁹ CBCNews, (August 27th, 2010). Alleged terrorism plot targeted Canada. Accessed 03/06/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2010/08/26>

²⁰ CBCNews, (September 15th, 2010). Profile of Ottawa bomb plot. Accessed 03/06/2011 from <http://cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2010/08/27/profile-ahmed-terrorist.html>

²¹ Stewart Bell, (August 25th, 2010). RCMP dismantles alleged terror cell in Ottawa. Accessed 03/06/2011 from <http://www.nationalpost.com/RCMP+dismantle+alleged+terrorist+cell.html>

²² CTVNews, August 28th, 2010). Terror plot reaches to Afghanistan, Middle East. Accessed 03/06/2011 from <http://www.ottawa.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20100828/terror-arrests-ottawa.html>

Project Osage: The “Toronto 18”

The most high profile terrorist threat to Canada 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.²³ Sources close to the investigation revealed that the group had sought to acquire three metric tonnes of ammonium nitrate, enough to make several large and destructive bombs.²⁴ Fourteen adults and four youths were charged. Four were born and raised in Canada, and ten were born elsewhere and immigrated to Canada. All of the accused had been in Canada for at least 13 years²⁵, but information on the citizenship of the four youths remains unavailable. The Toronto 18 incident took close to five years to resolve and the last individual was tried in late 2010. The final tally: one individual received a life sentence, two received less than seven years, two are still awaiting sentencing and the rest were credited with time served and released or had their charges stayed or dismissed.²⁶

More Recently: Another New and Disturbing Trend?

While the past ten years have produced several domestic home-grown scenarios, a second troubling trend also appears to be unfolding, especially among particular ethnic communities across Canada. There is an increase in incidents of Canadians leaving Canada to go and fight or participate in jihad abroad. In the first few months of 2011 two separate instances have come to light. Arrest warrants were issued for two former

²³ Chris So and Isabel Teotonio, Special Report: The Toronto 18. Accessed 02/23/2011 from <http://www3.thestar.com/static/toronto18/index.3.html>

²⁴ *CBC News*, InDepth: Toronto bomb plot: Ammonium nitrate, June 5, 2006

²⁵ Chris So and Isabel Teotonio, Special Report: The Toronto 18. Accessed 02/23/2011 from <http://www3.thestar.com/static/toronto18/index.3.html>

²⁶ Megan O’Toole, Final Two Toronto 18 Terror Accused Found Guilty, June 23rd 2010, National Post Online, available at <http://news.nationalpost.com/2010/06/23/final-two-toronto-18-terror-accused-found-guilty> (August 23 2010)

Winnipeggers, Ferid Ahmed Imam, 30, and Maiwand Yar, 27, who were linked to a failed 2009 plot to blow up New York City subway system. These two individuals have not been seen since they departed Canada to fight in Afghanistan in 2007 and their whereabouts remain unknown today.²⁷ There is also the case of Mohamed Hersi, 25, who was arrested at Pearson International Airport in March 2011 on his way to join al-Shabaab, a Somali terrorist group with links to al-Qaida. Other charges levied against him include allegations he was attempting to convince others to join the group as well.²⁸ 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.²⁹ Aside from the fact that these individuals are committing terrorism or fighting abroad, the real concern should be that these individuals may eventually return to Canada with explicit terrorist knowledge and motivations which will pose a threat to Canada

What can we learn from this overview of terrorist incidents seen in Canada over the past 10 years? It is clear that they all share a common theme or element which we had not previously seen. All of the incidents are being perpetrated by Canadian citizens or longstanding residents who have been inspired by the global Salafist movement, have become radicalized and become a terrorist threat. This type of threat, the increased radicalization of Canadian citizens, has long been a concern for law and intelligence agencies. Canada's intelligence agency, CSIS, has made it very clear that "countering the threat of terrorist radicalization at home" is now its "chief pre-occupation"³⁰, and the RCMP has publically stated that it "is monitoring several hundred national security related subjects of interest."³¹ CSIS director Richard Fadden in a report made to a House of Commons Committee earlier this year suggested that the

²⁷ CBCNews, (March 15th, 2011). Terror charges laid against former Winnipeggers. Accessed 03/15/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/story/2011/03/15/mb-terrorism.html>

²⁸ CTVNews, (March 31st, 2011). RCMP allege Toronto man was joining Somali terrorist group. Accessed 03/31/2011 from <http://www.ctv.ca/CTVNews/Canada/20110330/terrorist-pearson-arrest-110330>.

²⁹ CBCNews, (February 25th, 2011). Federal security officials meet local Somali-Canadians. Accessed 03/27/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2011/02/25/ottawa-somali-security.html>.

³⁰ Ottawa Citizen. (March 14th, 2008). CSIS focuses on home-grown terrorist threat. Accessed 10/23/2010 from <http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/story.html?id=09fe30f3-84ad-458e-b8e7-8add2a9fc8c7>

³¹ Royal Canadian Mounted Police, (June 2009). *Radicalization: A Guide For The Perplexed*. Accessed 04/23/2010 from <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/nsci-eocrn/radical-eng.htm>

agency was investigating more than 200 individuals in Canada for terrorism related activities and that many were second or third generation Canadians.³² It is important to highlight that this trend is not unique to Canada. This phenomenon is a growing concern for other countries around the world as well. Between September 2001 and the end of 2009, the United States reported that there have been 46 publically reported cases of this phenomenon.³³ A classified MI5 intelligence document acquired by the media in 2008 reported that based on several in-depth case studies they were following "several hundred individuals known to be involved in, or closely associated with, violent extremist activity," who were British citizens or long-standing legal residents.³⁴ Similar concerns are being raised in other countries. This idea is reiterated by RAND analyst Peter Chalk who states that "home-grown terrorism" is now routinely emphasized by security officials in countries such as the UK, France, Germany and Australia and others as "the greatest threat they face."³⁵

If Canadians accept this reality, Canadian policymakers must take several steps to address it. This section will argue that we need to remain committed to establishing new legislative initiatives to assist us in combating terrorism and that we need to continue increasing cooperation and coordination with our allies, especially the United States. It will then identify two new avenues that need to be investigated which reflect the revelation that the terrorism facing Canada and Canadians appears to be domestic or home-grown. These two areas—immigration and multiculturalism, are often very divisive but need to be investigated if it turns out that current policies might be directly contributing to challenges Canada might face moving forward. Part of this exercise involves determining what might be behind the increase in domestic home-grown incidents. It is important to identify if the threats are arising due to recruitment of Canadians by outside forces, or if it is being driven by self-radicalization. The former

³² Douglas Quan, (August 27th 2010). *No simple, single reason for turning to terrorism*. Calgary Herald, A4

³³ Brian Jenkins, *Would-Be Warriors: Incidents of Jihadist Terrorist Radicalization in the United States Since September 11 2001*. (RAND Corporation: Santa Monica, 2010)

³⁴ Alan Travis, (August 20 2008). *MI5 Report Challenges Views on Terrorism in Britain*. London Guardian.com. Accessed 05/11/2010 from

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2008/aug/20/uksecurity.terrorism1>

³⁵ Peter Chalk, (March 18 2010). *Commentary: Below The Radar*. Accessed 05/10/2010 from <http://www.rand.org/commentary/2010/03/18/NYT.html>

suggests our emphasis might focus on immigration, the latter suggests multiculturalism or some parts thereof might need to be re-examined.

Legislative Initiatives

Following 9/11, one of the first steps taken by Canadian policymakers was to create a legislative framework to combat terrorism. Passed in December 2001, Bill C-36 The Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) became the main tool to disrupt, detect and detain suspected terrorists. It was however met with resounding criticisms from many who felt that the scope of the legislation reached beyond what was required to effectively counter the threat posed by terrorism in a post 9/11 environment.³⁶ To date government continues to justify it as a necessary tool designed to protect Canadians from terrorism,³⁷ but needs to continue investigating new legislative initiatives which might be useful as we learn more about the terrorist threats Canada faces.

We have seen several recent examples of policymakers recognizing deficiencies or loopholes which need to be addressed and moving to remedy them. The first example sought to improve upon the security certificate process. Security certificates are employed as a tool to detain non Canadian citizens who are deemed by security officials to be a potential threat to Canada. In the years following 9/11, the security certificate was being used with increased frequency as evidenced by the cases of Harkat and Khawaja (discussed above) as well as two other cases Adil Charkaoui and Hassan Almrei. In 2007, the government responded to a criticism that the national security certificate system was overly secretive and a violation of the detainee's constitutional rights,³⁸ and introduced Bill C-3: An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. This amendment revamped the security certificate process and increased the detainee's access to secretive evidence against them so they could provide

³⁶ Patrick Macklem et al. *The Security of Freedom: Essays on Canada's Anti Terrorism Bill*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002)

³⁷ The Department of Justice Canada, (2008). "The Anti-Terrorism Act." Accessed 23/03/2008 from <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/antiter/index.html>

³⁸ Public Safety Canada, (November 10th, 2007). Bill C-3: An act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Accessed 10/04/2011 from <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/media/nr/2007/nr20071022-1-eng.aspx>

an adequate defense. The security certificates of Charkauoi and Almrei were quashed under the new system and they have arguably become more efficient and effective

A second legislative initiative introduced by policymakers affects the rights and protections of refugees arriving in Canada. In 2009 and 2010, two freighters arrived on Canada's Western coast carrying Tamil migrants fleeing the civil war in Sri Lanka. Some were concerned that hidden among the legitimate refugees were members of the Tamil Tigers terrorist organization.³⁹ In an effort to prevent the Canadian system from being abused the government in November 2010 proposed Bill C-49 to close loopholes on asylum seekers to Canada. It was designed to create a new category of designated foreign national, deemed "an irregular arrival." In contrast to regular asylum seekers, this new category would be subject to enhanced measures giving officials the ability to increase the time these individual are detained, restrictions on their movement and contact with others and a more in-depth investigation into their identity and background.⁴⁰

It is important to recognize that designing legislation for terrorism is always challenging because it inevitably involves trade-offs about rights and freedoms versus security and safety. We have seen this challenge starting with Bill C-36, and continuing through any new proposed initiatives. This paper is not weighing in on this debate but merely pointing out that policymakers need to remain focused on identifying potential problems and creating legislation in response to challenges which will continue to emerge.

Cooperation

Cooperation and coordination between governments and law enforcement and security agencies is an important part of combating terrorism in the post 9/11 era. Advances in technology and communication now allow individuals to make

³⁹ CBC News, (August 10th, 2010). Tamil Migrants to be investigated. Accessed 04/01/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2010/08/13/bc-tamil-ship-migrants-esquimalt.html>

⁴⁰ Canada Library of Parliament, (November 8th, 2010). Bill C-49: An act to amend the Immigration and refugee Protection Act, the Balanced Refugee Reform Act and the Marine Transportation Security Act. Accessed 23/04/2011 from <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/LegislativeSummaries/40/3/40-3-c49-e.pdf>

connections and assist others across great distances. We have seen evidence in the Canadian context where individuals have directed, facilitated and even plotted with other individuals scattered around the world. In response to this we also observe cases where there is a high level of cooperation between Canadian officials and American and British officials regarding shared threats. This practice needs to continue and information about individuals, groups and threats need to be shared. According to the Department of Justice, Canada has become part of numerous international treaties and fulfills all UN obligations pertaining to terrorism. Further, they highlight that they assist international efforts to detect and suppress terrorism through participating in international extradition and mutual legal assistance agreements; Canada is currently party to approximately 140 such agreements.⁴¹

This practice needs to keep pace with terrorists efforts to coordinate but needs to be done responsibly. In Canada, we are often reminded of the case of Maher Arar, who was detained by US intelligence and extradited back to Syria based on information provided by Canadian officials. There are also privacy concerns which need to be addressed. How much information should the Canadian government be able to share with others and how does it ensure the information is guarded and not abused? We also need to recognize that Canada may need to address the fact that it might be over-reliable on information and intelligence from other countries. The size and resources of Canadian intelligence agencies is much smaller than other countries and as such we are disproportionately dependent on shared information. One solution has been suggestions that Canada needs to create its own foreign intelligence gathering capabilities.⁴² However many point out that with no experience in this area, it would be costly and a lengthy option to pursue.⁴³

⁴¹ Department of Justice Canada, (July 31st, 2009). Public Safety and Anti Terrorism Initiative: Summative Evaluation. Accessed 09/04/2011 from <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/eval/rep-rap/07/psat-spat/sum-som/p525.html>

⁴² Barry Cooper. CFIS: A Canadian Foreign Intelligence Service. (Canadian Defense and Foreign Affairs Institute, November 2007). Accessed 08/04/2011 from <http://www.cdfai.org/PDF/CFIS.pdf>

⁴³ Daniel Livermore. Does Canada Need A Foreign Intelligence Agency? (Center for International Policy Studies, Policy Brief # 3, February 2009). Accessed 12/04/2011 from http://www.sciencesociales.uottawa.ca/cepi-cips/eng/documents/CIPS_PolicyBrief_Livermore_Feb2009.pdf

Immigration

Canada's immigration policies have always been a popular target for individuals who argue that it too lenient and easy to take advantage of and suggest that it has increased Canada's risk of terrorist attacks.⁴⁴ Others are unsure but believe it is a link worth further investigating.⁴⁵ The reality is that evidence does exist suggesting some criticism of Canadian immigration policy may be warranted but only in a specific context

While it is clear that the Canadian immigration system may have some faults, this argument has less to do with domestic home-grown terrorism than one might expect. The immigration argument cannot be applied to those of the accused who are second or third generation Canadians and only applies superficially to those who arrived more recently but are still Canadian citizens. In the context of domestic home-grown terrorism it does not appear to be an issue of who is arriving in Canada and their intentions, but rather what happens after they arrive. This shifts the focus to questions about Canadian identity, or the lack thereof and multiculturalism and to a lesser extent policies which assist those who arrive in this country adapting and acclimatizing to Canada and facets of Canadian society. These issues as well as some suggestions will be discussed in the next section of this paper.

Arguments pertaining to our immigration policies do become relevant if people are arriving in this country with the sole intention of finding susceptible individuals

⁴⁴ Stewart Bell, (2009). The Spillover Effect: The Canadian Diasporas and Terrorism, in Doron Zimmerman and William Rosenau (eds.) *The Radicalization of Diasporas and Terrorism*. Center for Security Studies: ETH Zurich, 2009, pp. 41-62; Also see Martin Collacott, (2003). Canada's Immigration Policy: The Need for Major Reform. *Public Policy Sources* 64, Fraser Institute; Robert Fife, (1999). "Terrorists, Spies Using Canada's Immigrant Communities, CSIS Says." *National Post* (June 11); David Harris, (August 31st, 2010) *Grim Vision of Canada's Future*. The Calgary Herald Online. Accessed 31/09/2010 from <http://www.calgaryherald.com/opinion/index.html>

⁴⁵ Erin Krueger et al., (2004). Canada After 11 September: Security Measures and "Preferred Immigrants." *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 15: 4; Peter Rekaï, (2002). *US and Canadian Immigration Policies: Marching Together to Different Tunes*. CD Howe Institute. Accessed 30/09/2010 from <http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf.Rekai.pdf>; Kent Roach, (2006). Ten Ways to Improve Canadian Anti-Terrorism Law. *Criminal Law Quarterly* 51; Martin Rudner, (September 2002). The Globalization of Terrorism: Canada's Intelligence Response to the Post 9/11 Threat Environment. *Canadian Issues*: Montreal, p.24

that can be recruited for terrorist purposes. If this is the case we need to improve our screening process to determine the background of people coming here, especially those coming for very short term visits. Ideally this should be done before people arrive in Canada. One of the challenges facing immigration reforms is that refugee applications have to remain a viable process for those who truly need it. Again how do we ensure refugees can arrive in Canada while preventing individuals who have ulterior motives hiding among them? This point has been continuously raised in relation to the recent arrival of freighters carrying Tamil refugees and suggestions that some of the refugees may in fact be members of the Tamil Tigers terrorist organization looking to re-establish a base for the group in Canada.⁴⁶

Multiculturalism

There are many questions and very few answers about domestic home-grown terrorism, but the foremost puzzle seems to be how Canadians ultimately come to a point where they want to harm Canada and other Canadians, and how can this be tied to multiculturalism? The first observation is that there are two separate yet interconnected elements which must be discussed. Some of the individuals accused of domestic home-grown terrorism have been in Canada for a long time but were not born here. This raises questions about their experiences adjusting, acclimatizing and integrating into Canadian society. Individuals arriving in this country with the best of intentions, who for all intents and purposes are positioning themselves to succeed by obtaining high levels of education are somehow becoming disillusioned. Might this be a question of identifying what obstacles are impeding them from achieving their goals, are their opportunities falling short of expectations? Are these obstacles tangible or is it the expectations which are unreal? In either instance, the inability to achieve ones goals is going to make some disappointed and even angry, and this is a gateway for becoming susceptible to “different ideas” or the excuse to blame someone else. Perhaps

⁴⁶ CBC News, (August 10th, 2010). Tamil Migrants to be investigated. Accessed 04/01/2011 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2010/08/13/bc-tamil-ship-migrants-esquimalt.html>; CBC News, (October 19th 2009). Migrant ship likely tied to Indonesian smugglers. Accessed 04/01/2009 from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2009/10/19/bc-migrant-ship-indonesia-captain-bram.html>

we need to examine how helpful, if at all, our integration policies truly are and how they might be improved.

The second observation is somewhat more controversial and sensitive. It involves questioning the identity of those domestic home-grown terrorists who are second or third generation Canadians. It returns to the debate about the value of establishing and emphasizing a Canadian identity in an effort to create pride, loyalty and to a certain degree “oneness.” Multiculturalism has been a Canadian policy since the 1970s and perhaps it is time to re-evaluate whether the multiculturalism articulated in that era, remains relevant today. Multiculturalism for years not only recognized the value of arriving Canadians retaining their cultural heritage, it encouraged it. The problem which can arise is that encouraging groups to retain their cultural diversity can at times have side effects and consequences. Known as groupism, it sets the stage for a phenomenon known as the ingroup-outgroup dichotomy from which several assumptions emerge. First, the more one identifies with those like them, the more they recognize their differences compared to other groups. Second, it is very difficult to not compare your group to others groups, and even more difficult to see your group as inferior. Third, when the group becomes closed to other groups, it also becomes closed to new perspectives, viewpoints and observations.⁴⁷ This situation can be manipulated or antagonized and can result in an “us versus them” mentality which makes it far more likely that anger, suspicion and resentment emerge.

The common denominator in this discussion is that individuals who for all accounts were at one time happily living in Canada are suddenly becoming convinced that Canada is their enemy. We need to further investigate why and how this is becoming increasingly common and a good place to start would be a re-examination of Canada’s integration and multiculturalism policies. Tying this to immigration, some have

⁴⁷ C. Sunstein, (2002). The Law of Group Polarization. *The Journal of Political Philosophy* (2); M. Pynchon and Randy Borum, (1999). Assessing Threats of Targeted Group Violence: Contributions from Social Psychology. *Behavioural Sciences and the Law* 17; D. Druckman, (1994). Nationalism, Patriotism, and Group Loyalty: A Social Psychological Perspective. *Mershon International Studies Review* 38 (1).

suggested ideas of a temporary moratorium on immigration in an effort to take some time to re-assess our policies and investigate and address some of these shortcomings.⁴⁸

Re-examining Canada's multiculturalism policies may however prove to be very difficult in part because the policies are entrenched. A very brief history of Canada's multiculturalism policy suggests it was, and still is, seen as a uniquely "made in Canada" solution. Many countries have some form of policies recognizing diverse cultures, but Canada's is unique because in Canada "our laws and institutions accommodate and promote diversity"⁴⁹. Others point out that our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms mentions multiculturalism and the Multiculturalism Act passed in 1988 provides multiculturalism with legislative status.⁵⁰ This is potentially a problem moving forward. Several other countries who imitated Canada's model have recently made an abrupt about face. Leaders in countries in Europe have derided their countries multicultural policies as problematic. In October 2010 German Chancellor Angela Merkel suggested that "attempts to build a multicultural society in Germany had "utterly failed".⁵¹ British PM David Cameron echoed that sentiment and went even further arguing that the UK needed to create a stronger national identity to "prevent people from turning to extremism".⁵² In a televised debate French PM Nicolas Sarkozy suggested that multiculturalism was a failure and the very concept fostered

⁴⁸ David Harris, (August 31st, 2010) *Grim Vision of Canada's Future*. The Calgary Herald Online. Accessed 31/09/2010 from <http://www.calgaryherald.com/opinion/index.html>

⁴⁹ Will Kymlicka, (2004). Canadian Multiculturalism in Historical and Comparative Perspective, in Matthew Zachariah et al. *Canadian Multiculturalism: Dreams, Realities and Expectations*. Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation: Edmonton, pp. 157.

⁵⁰ Yasmeen Abu-Laben & Daiva Stasiulis, (1992). Ethnic Pluralism under Siege: Popular and Partisan Opposition to Multiculturalism. *Canadian Public Policy*, XVIII: 4, p. 378;

⁵¹ BBC News, (October 17th 2010). Merkel says German multicultural society has failed. Accessed 02/04/2011 from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11559451>; Also see Reuters.com, (October 16th, 2010), accessed 02/04/2011 from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/10/16/us-germany-merkel-immigration-idUSTRE69F1K320101016>

⁵² BBC News, (February 5th, 2011). State Multiculturalism has failed says PM Cameron. Accessed 02/04/2011 from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-12371994>

extremism.”⁵³ Dutch Deputy PM Maxime Verhagan has said the same thing on Dutch television.⁵⁴

In Canada, many are beginning to agree with this attack on multiculturalism and most surprising is the source of criticism. Tarek Fatah who is the founder of the Canadian Muslim Congress argues that Canadian multicultural policies are like Britain’s and have been “too tolerant in allowing Muslim immigrants to settle into closed communities,” where they can preach extremism and hatred towards the West.⁵⁵ A May 2008 Report known as the Taylor-Bouchard Commission on accommodation in Quebec made several suggestion including an emphasis on intercultural practices and a concerted effort by government to “step up and increase francization and integration of immigrants” and to draft a White Paper on secularism in Quebec, explaining and ensuring the separation of church and state (for all religious denominations).⁵⁶

This paints a troubling scenario for Canada: other countries imitated, but arguably never went as far as Canadian policies are now sounding the alarm on their efforts to create a multicultural society. What does this mean for Canada? Can we argue there is something different about Canada’s “experiment” which will allow it to survive and thrive in the face of failures in other countries? Could Canada even pullback if it tried? There are no easy answers to these questions instead uncertainty compounded by the political sensitivity of the issue: no politician or political party will want to open this can of worms. If it turns out that multiculturalism is a contributing factor to the increase in domestic home-grown terrorism a very difficult introspection and debate may need to occur which might make the matter worse before better.

⁵³ CBN News, (February 11th, 2011). France’s Sarkozy: Multiculturalism has failed. Accessed 02/04/2011 from <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2011/February/Frances-Sarkozy-Multiculturalism-Has-Failed>

⁵⁴ Dutch News NL, (February 15th, 2011). Multiculturalism has failed: Verhagen. Accessed 12/04/2011 from http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2011/02/multiculturalism_has_failed_ve.php

⁵⁵ Terry Davidson, (February 7th, 2011). Multiculturalism will Fail: Tarek Fatah. Accessed 10/04/2011 from <http://www.torontosun.com/news/torontoandgta/2011/02/07/17188881.html>

⁵⁶ Gouvernement du Quebec, Commissions de Consultation sur les pratiques de l’accommodement reliees aux differences culturelles, (May 22nd, 2008). The 37 recommendations in the final report of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission. Accessed 10/04/2011 from <http://www.accommodements.qc.ca/communiqués/2008-05-22c-en.html>

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that in the ten years since 9/11 we have observed a growing number of terrorist incidents in Canada. Even more troubling is the fact that these incidents all appear to involve Canadian citizens or individuals who have lived in Canada for an extended period of time. This paper has discussed six cases which demonstrate that some variation of domestic home-grown terrorism is increasing in Canada. It then suggested four key areas which need to be examined as potentially helping to minimize future threats of this nature. First, policymakers need to remain focused on improving legislation as a tool for combating terrorism. Second, they need to ensure open channels of communication with other states to ensure cooperation and coordination can continue. Both of these approaches were strengthened in the weeks and months following September 11th and government continues to improve on these two fronts. However, due to the nature and origin of the terrorist threat to Canada in the past ten years, two additional policy areas must also be examined. Canada's immigration and multiculturalism policies are going to come under increased scrutiny if the current trend continues. Other countries have made stark admissions about the failures of their own multicultural efforts and Canada cannot ignore this. Both of these areas need to be examined in an effort to determine if and how they might be contributing to the increase in domestic home-grown radicalization and terrorism. At this point it is unclear what the results of such an analysis might reveal but policymakers owe it to Canadians to at least entertain the notion that some of these may be having an adverse effect on segments of our population.