

Terrorism in Canada

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Abbreviations:

CSIS = Canadian Security Intelligence Service
DFAIT = Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
CBRN = chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear
WMD = Weapons of Mass Destruction
WTC = World Trade Center

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Abstract

This paper reviews terrorism in Canada, assessing the incidence and nature of terrorist activity, the potential targets of terrorist attacks, risk factors to Canadian nationals and institutions, and the responses of the Canadian government in dealing with the threat and the effectiveness of those responses.

Despite the fact that there have been no recent high-profile terrorist events in Canada, this country has a serious terrorism problem, the key manifestation of which is the multitude of terrorist organizations that have designated Canada as a base of operations. In addition, Canadians have been attacked overseas and Canadian organizations, both local and abroad, are potential targets of terrorist activity. Canadian attempts to deal with terrorism through foreign and domestic policy have been ineffective, primarily because the policies have been poorly enforced. Until recently, terrorist organizations legally could raise funds in Canada, in direct contravention of international treaties signed by Canada. It is possible that the ineffectiveness in enforcing the anti-terrorism legislation stems from hope that placating terrorist organizations, and the countries that support them, will prevent Canada from becoming a target. Unfortunately evidence from other countries has shown this strategy to be ineffective.

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Introduction

Terrorism as a political tool, is not new to western democracies. What has changed in recent years is the potential that terrorists will cause mass casualties, the degree of state sponsored terrorism, the increasing diversity of western populations (allowing terrorists a safe haven amongst like-minded compatriots), and the eagerness of terrorists to die as part of their attack. The attacks on the United States in September 2001 exemplified all of these components of modern terrorism, and prompted many nations to review their safety measures in the event that they become a target.

This paper reviews terrorism in Canada, assessing the incidence and nature of terrorist activity, the potential targets of terrorist attacks, risk

factors to Canadian nationals and institutions, the responses of the Canadian government in dealing with the threat, and the effectiveness of these responses.

Modern terrorism transcends medical and national boundaries to function in a global political context. Any analysis of terrorism in Canada cannot be complete without reviewing the political environment from an international approach. This paper refers to data from, amongst others, the United States, Germany, and the Middle East, to put the Canadian experience into context.

Methods

There are two methodological constraints to take into account when considering terrorism in Canada.

These are the definition of terrorism and the identification of valid sources of information.

Definition

There are multiple definitions of terrorism with no universally accepted standard. A search was made of Canadian policy statements and laws with an attempt to define terrorism from a Canadian perspective.

Sources

No organized body of peer-reviewed literature dedicated to terrorism exists in Canada (or elsewhere). This may stem from the covert nature of terrorism and counter-terrorism activities or the political aspects of many terrorist organizations. Terrorism, in many ways, does fit the disease model and, similarly to dedicated journals dealing with other illnesses, a "Journal of International Terror" may well be in our future. In the interim, this paper relies on so-called "open source" intelligence such as reports from: (1) international, non-governmental organizations; (2) Canadian and other governmental reports; (3) previous research on this topic; (4) published legal arguments; and (5) mass media.

Canadian Definition of Terrorism

There have been multiple attempts to define a Canadian standard for terrorism. Recognizing this, the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy and Development (under the aegis of Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade) convened a round-table in October 2001 on the topic of "The New Face of Terrorism". It stated "a neutral definition of terrorism is required in order to establish a taxonomy". The definition was based on five concepts:

1. *Repetition*—terrorism is the repeated, systematic exploitation of fear rather than an isolated act of violence;
2. *Motivation*—the overriding purpose of all international terrorism is political. Religion, ethnicity, economic conditions, and other frequently stated reason for terrorism are instruments for the political objectives;
3. *Intent*—terrorists use fear to provoke responses;
4. *Actors*—international terrorism occurs at all levels of organizations. From a definitional perspective, the term of "non-state actor" seems to be the most effective in capturing the majority of those groups or individuals who perpetrate terrorist acts; and
5. *Effect*—in order to merit a label of international terrorism, the activity of terrorists must affect more than one state.¹

From a purely legal standpoint, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) Act requires the CSIS to investigate activities "directed toward or in support of the threat or use of acts of serious violence against persons or property for the purpose of achieving a political objective within Canada or a foreign state".² The CSIS classifies terrorist events into four major categories: (1) religious extremism; (2) state-sponsored terrorism; (3) secessionist violence; and (4) domestic extremism.³

It is notable that these definitions of terrorism are totally unrelated to the motives or backgrounds of the perpetrators.

Canadian Epidemiology of Terrorism

Terrorist events involving Canadians can be grouped into four categories:

1. Attacks on Canadian soil;
2. Attacks against Canadians outside our borders;
3. Attacks against Canadian institutions outside Canada; or
4. Attacks against third parties outside Canada that have been planned and or staged within Canada.

Canada has been considered a country that does not have a terrorism problem. Of the Canadians surveyed in June 2002, 77% said they did not believe a terrorist attack could happen in Canada. Only 14% thought an attack is likely.^{4,5} This view, while incorrect, hardly is surprising: the last high profile terrorist events in Canada were the bombings, kidnappings (and subsequent murder of Quebec cabinet minister Pierre Laporte) by the Front de Liberation du Quebec in the late 1960s and early 1970s. A domestic, left-wing, extremist group called Direct Action was implicated in a number of bombings in the early 1980s, but the perpetrators were arrested and sentenced to lengthy jail sentences effectively ending that group's existence. Excluding some actions by anti-abortion, animal rights, anti-globalization, and environmental groups, there have been only a few terrorist incidents on Canadian soil since 1990.

However, terrorism has affected Canadians overseas. The Algerian Armed Islamic Group has killed Canadians in Paris (by bombing) and Algeria (by gunfire). In 1996, the Canadian Ambassador to Peru was held hostage by the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, and, in 1987, Ottawa journalist Christoph Halens was executed by Libyans in Tripoli while writing a story that would link Muammar Kadaffi to terrorist organizations in North America.^{6,7}

Canadian businesses, primarily businesses dealing in natural resources, have been involved in areas of conflict, and, in some situations, have been accused of intervening in local politics to maintain the stability of their investment. Calgary-based Talisman Energy Inc. has been criticized for its involvement in Sudan, where it was accused of supporting the Sudanese dictatorship. In China, a number of Canadian companies, including SNC Lavalin and Hydro Quebec and Agra Monenco, have been accused of human rights abuses in their construction projects across the Yangtze River. Some companies already have been targets of terrorist activities. Vancouver-based Manhattan Minerals Corporation has been a target of both protests and arson in Peru; another Vancouver corporation, Meridian Gold Inc., has been a source of protests in Patagonia. In Greece, local activists have interfered with the operations of the Toronto-based Kinross Gold Corporation.

In the Philippines, unknown ambushers attacked a convoy of Calgary-based TVI Pacific Inc., which had been accused of environmental damage in their gold, copper, zinc and silver mining. These companies, as well as many more involved in the extraction of resources globally, are significant potential targets for terrorist attacks.⁸

Canada also continues to be affected by the spillover of violence or conflicts abroad. The Canadian Security

- Hizballah and other Shiite Islamic Terrorist organizations
- Hamas
- Egyptian Al Jihad
- Provisional Irish Republican Army
- Tamil Tigers
- The Mujahedine-Khalq
- Kurdistan Worker Party
- All the world's major Sikh terrorist groups
- Supporters of International Islamic Jihad
- Possible links to Al-Qaeda

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Table 1—Major terrorist organizations operating in Canada.^{3,6}

Service and Intelligence has recognized that terrorist groups are “bent on using Canada as a base from which to support terrorist activities”. The highest profile terrorist event that originated on Canadian soil was the bombing by Sikh terrorists, of an Air India flight from Toronto in 1985 that resulted in 329 deaths; most of the victims were Canadian.⁹

Another recent case is that of Ahmad Ressam, who, in 1999, attempted to smuggle bomb components prepared in Canada, into the United States for use in a terrorist event there. As an example of how one case can match both the internal and “exported” terror categories, Mr. Ressam also was planning to bomb a local Jewish neighborhood while he was living in Montreal.¹⁰

The Canadian public has felt another impact of terrorism: the heightening of awareness of differences between ethnic groups, on some occasions resulting in direct attacks on Sikhs, Muslims, or Jews. A survey of 296 Muslims across Canada conducted by the Council on American Islamic relations (Canada Branch), indicated that 56% of Muslims believed the media had grown more biased against Islam and Muslims, 82% of respondents said they knew a fellow Muslim who had experienced discrimination, 33% said their lives had changed for the worse, and within that group, they stated that they felt disliked by their fellow Canadians, were subjected to rude and hostile behavior, and were concerned about their safety and that of their families.¹¹

Canadian statistics must be viewed within the context of the global epidemiology of terrorism. During 2001, 531 facilities were attacked by terrorist organizations, the vast majority were businesses (397), and the least common were military targets;⁴ this evidence indicates that terrorism does not aim at military facilities as a rule, but primarily targets civilian populations. The most common terrorist event during 2001 was bombing (253 incidents) followed quite distantly by armed attack (41 incidents), kidnapping (36 incidents), and a variety of other events. The total number of casualties mirror the type of facilities attacked. During 2001, the vast majority were civilians (4,348, including an estimated 3,000 from the World Trade Center (WTC) attack), as opposed to a combined 307 casualties from businesses, military, and government during the same time period. Even if the 3,000 estimated casualties of the WTC were eliminated from this equation, it still is abundantly clear that terrorist organizations primarily are killing civilians, and that the distribution of these fatalities primarily is

in North America. Asia has the next highest terrorism-related morbidity and mortality (180 fatalities and 471 wounded) followed closely by the Middle East (62 fatalities and 451 wounded). The statistics from Africa (90 fatalities and 60 wounded) do not include death deemed due to warfare, and thus, may be underestimated.⁴

Foreign Terrorist Organizations in Canada

With the possible exception of the United States, there are more international terrorist organizations active in Canada than anywhere else in the world. This situation can be attributed to Canada's proximity to the United States, which currently is the principal target of terrorist groups operating internationally, and to the fact that Canada (a country built on immigration) represents a microcosm of the world with multiple expatriate communities that can absorb, support, and provide ideological underpinnings to terrorist elements from their countries of origin.³

Multiple terrorist or front groups are acting openly in Canada or have supporters in Canada (Table 1). The CSIS has identified approximately 50 organizational targets and 350 individual targets as part of their counter-terrorism program.⁶ Even prior to the events of 11 September 2001, Sunni-Islamic extremism was identified as the key international terrorism threat in Canada, and as such, it already was the lead investigation within the CSIS Counter-Terrorist Program.³ While this does not negate the importance of other terrorist groups, a comparison of activity, capability, and lethality of the various terrorist organizations makes it clear that Islamic Fundamentalist organizations presently pose the highest risk to Canadians, if only by the sheer number of organizations presently bent on terrorism events.

Activities of Terrorist Organizations in Canada

Canada has been used as a planning ground for terrorist acts in Canada and abroad through the activities listed in Table 2. There has been a disturbing trend in Canada during the past 15 years, as terrorists move from significant support roles such as fund-raising and procurement, to actually planning and preparing terrorist acts from Canadian territory.⁶

A specific and worrisome aspect of terrorism, is the increasing ease with which terrorist organizations can gain access to “unconventional” weapons, namely Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) equipment. Not only has the technology become simpler, but also a variety of nations that are sponsors of terrorist activities, have been developing these technologies.

It is very difficult to provide an empirical basis for assessing the threat of unconventional terrorism in Canada. There is no specific Canadian database accessible, so the best available data the author could locate was through the Chemical and Biological Weapons Non-Proliferation Program at the Monterey Institute's Centre for Non-Proliferation Studies. The Centre has monitored the news media and other open source information for reports of terrorist or criminal incidents involving the acquisition or use of CBRN materials. Unfortunately, the United States and Canadian data are combined; however, the data are relevant to the Canadian situation.

- Fraudulent use of travel documentation by the providing of Canadian passports to terrorists (Source: CSIS Report on International Terrorism)
- Procuring weapons and material including such high profile items as Stinger Anti-Aircraft missiles and grenade launchers
- Procurement of nuclear, biologic, or chemical terrorist agents and related equipment, including the seizure of 130 grams of ricin at the Alaska-Yukon border and personal protective equipment in British Columbia
- Recruiting members and supporters for a variety of terrorist organizations
- Manipulating members of the emigre communities including harassment through letters and phone calls and physical assault
- Lobbying through front organizations
- Providing safe havens for known terrorists or terrorist collaborators including members of Hizballah who were directly involved in the killing of United States soldiers in 1996, and then sought to hide within the Arab community in Canada
- Fundraising in support of terrorist activities
- Assisting with illegal entry into Canada and claiming refugee statute
- Providing logistical support for terrorist operations including the attack on the Iranian Embassy in Ottawa in 1992
- Facilitating transit to and from the United States and other countries and other illegal activities
- Engaging in terrorist acts in Canada and abroad such as Ahmed Ressay crossing the US border with explosives in December 1999 which CSIS linked to Al-Qaeda

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Table 2—Activities of terrorist organizations in Canada⁶

The data show that, prior to the attack by Arab terrorists on the United States in 2001, there already had been a significant increase in global incidents using CBRN materials from 60 incidents in 1995 (of which 11 were hoaxes), to 178 incidents in 2000 (of which 58 were hoaxes). The largest number of these incidents were in the United States and Canada, almost five-fold more than in any other country. The increase in the number of casualties was even more impressive, rising in 1999 from 366 casualties (of which four were fatalities), to at least 608 casualties (43 fatalities) in 2000, once again with the United States and Canada having the highest incidence.

The motivation for the incidents has been changing. While the majority of incidents in 1999 were criminally motivated, from 2000, most of the CBRN events were politically or ideologically motivated. This differs by region, with criminal motivation still fractionally more frequent than political motivation in the United States, Canada, and Europe, and political motivation significantly more frequent in the Middle East, North Africa, Russia, and Sub-Saharan Africa.^{12,13}

A breakdown of incidents by agent type shows that, after eliminating the hoaxes from the statistics, the most common CBRN agent used is chemical followed by radiological. This is in keeping with the self-assessment responses of Canadian Emergency Departments when questioned on their most likely CBRN risk.¹⁴ The most common chemical agent used was tear gas followed by a variety of acids and monazite (a material containing thorium, a radioactive isotope).

Recognizing the CBRN risk, the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy and Development convened a round-table that discussed, among other topics, future trends in CBRN preparedness against terrorism and the potential for terrorist organizations to acquire Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The round-table summary stated, "while terrorists are increasingly interested in mass casualty attacks for which WMD could be well-suited, they continue using conventional weaponry in their attacks." The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) analysis suggested that the reasons include lack of technical ability, unpredictability, and uncontrollable

nature of the weapons, and concern about public opinion.¹⁵

Root Causes of Terrorism—The Canadian World View

In attempting to address terror events, it often is stated, "If we can determine what drives people to commit such heinous crimes, it is suggested, perhaps, we can change their behavior. Or, if their grievances really are just, perhaps we can change ours."¹⁶

This assumption has been the underpinning of Canadian foreign and domestic policy on terrorism as outlined in the next section of this paper. The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), in a series of retreats, concluded that, "Canada should make efforts to better understand the root causes of terrorism and alienation," and that "to do this, Canada must deepen its engagement with the Arab and Islamic worlds both bilaterally and multi-laterally..."^{17,18}

The four issues most often cited as root causes of terrorism are: (1) lack of resolution of the crisis in the Middle East (this applies almost exclusively to Islamic fundamentalist terrorism); (2) poverty and inequity between West and East; (3) "failed" or collapsed states that, through inability or unwillingness, cannot or will not deal with terrorists within their borders, and, as such, are breeding grounds for terrorist organizations and safe havens; and (4) the "clash of civilizations" theory that implies an inherent cultural difference between civilizations with a hatred of the West, and more specifically, a hatred of Americans because they are "Western", Christian, wealthy, and have liberal values. There also is the possibility of overlap between these, such as a hatred of Americans linked to perceptions of American policy in the Middle East, and so on.

With the exception of hatred of the West, there is no evidence to support any of these assumptions as a root cause of terrorism though the "failed state" condition is an abetting factor. As mentioned earlier, weak and collapsed states have within them, an inherent instability and insecurity that can be exploited by religious fundamentalists. In situations in which the religious organizations are more organized than the state itself, the control of governmental affairs can be transferred, unwillingly and perhaps unwittingly, to radical religious fundamentalist organizations.

- To help ensure that Canada is not a place where people are killed or injured by terrorists
- To help safeguard against acts of terrorism being planned in Canada
- To help prevent Canada being a source of funds or material for terrorist activity
- To help ensure that Canada does not provide a base for terrorists
- To help protect Canadian institutions
- To help protect Canadians traveling or working abroad

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Table 3—Objectives of CSIS counter-terrorism programs.³

In recognition of this, the DFAIT concluded that, "Canada should assist countries that cannot afford to implement security measures...an improved, independent, analytical capacity is important to formulating national decisions on courses of action. More broadly, intelligence must be seen as a basis for a sound foreign policy." The DFAIT also stated that, "There's an enormous diversity within the Muslim world," and that, "It may be necessary to clearly identify the enemy in any attempt to win a war." They concluded that, while many may agree with Canadian Prime Minister Chretien's comments regarding poverty being a root cause of global terrorism,¹⁹ it may be that the key cause of militant Islam (and the terrorism stemming from it) is not poverty or political conditions, but frustration over perceived decline of Islam vis-a-vis the West.¹⁸ The DFAIT also stated that, "There are difficult policy choices as a consequence of choosing between rooting out 'militant Islam' and/or supporting modern Muslims," and that, "Education is an important tool that ultimately can build greater cross-cultural understanding."

Canadian Responses to Terrorism

The Canadian response to the threat of terrorism can be categorised into: (1) new legislative efforts; (2) implementation (or the lack thereof) of existing and new legislation; and (3) foreign policy.

Legislation and Its Enforcement

In December 2001, the Canadian Parliament passed the Anti-Terrorism Act, which made perpetrating, financing, or contributing to terrorist activity a crime. The Act increased the federal government's investigative powers, and empowered Canada to sign the last two of the United Nations 12 anti-terrorism conventions. Public concern over civil liberties and the potential backlash against Arab and Muslim Canadians led Parliament to amend the proposed bill and strengthen the laws against hate crimes and hate propaganda.

The Canadian Anti-Terrorism Act makes it a crime to:

1. Knowingly collect or provide funds either directly or indirectly, in order to carry out terrorist crimes;
2. Knowingly participate in, contribute to, or facilitate the activities of a terrorist group;
3. Instruct anyone to carry out terrorist activities or act on behalf of a terrorist group; or
4. Knowingly harbor or conceal a terrorist.

In addition, any indictable offense under any act of parliament that is done for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association with a terrorist group carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

Since the terrorist attacks of 2001, there have been substantial changes in the internal division of funds at CSIS, shifting more funds towards the counter-terrorism programs. The purposes of the programs are outlined in Table 3. They are aimed at preventing the killing and injury, planning, financing, and basing of terrorism activities in Canada or against Canadians or Canadian interests, and preventing the injuries and killings which could result from these activities.

A significant aspect of counter-terrorism activity is the cutting of funds to terrorist organizations. In recognition of this, Canada has signed United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373 that requires the United Nation members take action in two broad categories: (1) preventing and suppressing the financing of and other material support for terrorist acts; and (2) denying support and safe haven to those who finance, plan, facilitate, and/or commit terrorist acts.²⁰

In an attempt to control criminal financing (both terrorist and otherwise) in Canada, the Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) and Terrorist Financing Act 200, c.17 was passed. It has as an objective to "...detect and deter money laundering and the financing of terrorist activities". With the exception of transactions covered under attorney-client privilege,²¹ Canadians are obliged to report any "suspicious transactions" to the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada, The legislation specifically requires record-keeping, client identification, and the reporting of large cash transactions and international electronic fund transfers.²² An example of this legislation in action is the requirement that Hawalas (informal money transfer agencies that transfer money between Canada, the United States, and countries in the Middle East or Africa) keep records of all their money transfers.²³

While the Canadian government has passed legislation and signed international treaties, the enforcement of anti-terrorism legislation in Canada has been slow and inconsistent. Despite the signing of treaties restricting the potential for terrorists to raise funds in Canada, the actual freezing of financial assets of terrorist groups did not occur until significantly later, and then, only after large public pressure. Hamas had its assets frozen in December 2001, after it publicly claimed responsibility for suicide bombings in Israel that killed 25 people and wounded 200. Until that point, and despite the fact that by its own admission, it was involved in suicide bombings, the Canadian government declined to restrict the organizations that had been fundraising for it (Al Aqsa Islamic Bank, Beit El-Mal Holdings, and the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development).²⁴ Until July 2002, the Canadian government refused to list Hizbollah in its list of terrorist organizations, despite its own admission of involvement in bombings targeted against civilians.²⁵⁻²⁷ Subsequent to significant public pressure and embarrassment suffered by members of the government, Hamas was added to the terrorist list in November 2002²⁸ and Hizbollah was

added in December 2002.²⁹ It also took until 11 December 2002 for Solicitor-General Wayne Easter to announce that the Kurdistan Workers Party and Aum Shinrikyo were listed as terrorist organizations under the criminal code Anti-Terrorism Act.³⁰

In view of the lack of control over fund-raising for terrorist organizations in Canada, prior to and to some degree since 11 September 2001, it is not surprising that both individuals and organizations have pointed an accusing finger at Canadian institutions. An example of this is a lawsuit launched against a Canadian charity, Benevolent International Foundation Canada—a charity that claims to be an aid agency for Muslims, and three other Muslim organizations (Muslim World League and International Islamic Relief, as well as the SAAR Foundation) on behalf of those killed during the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. In total, there are 100 defendants in this suit brought on by 600 separate plaintiffs.³¹

Foreign Policy

The Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy and Development has specified that the success of the struggle against terrorism will depend on the identification and handling of new issues including the definition of terrorism, supporting the United States, strengthening international counter-terrorist cooperation, and providing humanitarian aid.³² Similarly, the Special Senate Committee on Security and Intelligence (the “Kelly Committee”) found that, “To be effective, the fight against terrorism must be through a united international front.”³³

Prior to this, Prime Minister Jean Chretien, in 1996, had said that all like-minded nations must take “Whatever measures are necessary to ensure that no country anywhere in the world can get away with giving support” to terrorists.³⁴ While there have been multiple statements from DFAIT officials and the Prime Minister condemning terrorism,³⁷ Canada has appeared to be reluctant to follow these statements with action. For example, Canada is a signatory to multiple international agreements regarding terrorism, yet, while the United Nations’ Assembly adopted the convention for the suppression of terrorism financing on 09 December 1999, Canada did not ratify it until after the events of 11 September 2001.³⁵

This is consistent with Canada delaying the ratification of other United Nations Terrorist Conventions, such as the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings that was again adopted by the United Nations Assembly in 1999, but only ratified by the Canadian government three years later.³⁶

Another aspect of the Canadian foreign response to the terrorist threat, has been its stated neutrality, with the belief that this protects Canada from being a terrorist target. This policy is unsupported on three accounts. Firstly, as mentioned earlier, Canadian business interests worldwide provide sufficient motivation for a terrorist attack on Canadians either at home or abroad. Secondly, a politically neutral stance has not been shown to provide any protection against terrorist events. In *hating the West*, Islamic fundamentalists have not shown any evidence that they differentiate between Canada and other Western targets. Thirdly, even

if neutrality conferred protection, Canada’s position on the global stage, has been far from neutral. For example, the Canadian voting record at the United Nations frequently has been anti-American and supportive of the Arab bloc.³⁹⁻⁴⁰

Effectiveness of Canadian Anti-Terrorism Efforts

The best yardstick to use to assess the effectiveness of Canada’s anti-terrorism response is to review the goals defined by the CSIS in its attempt to prevent terrorism in Canada (Table 3).

By ensuring that Canada is not a place in which people are killed or injured by terrorists, and in the protection of Canadians traveling or working abroad, the very small incidence of these events makes assessment of effectiveness difficult. By ensuring this country is not a base for terrorists or a source of funds or material for terrorist activity, open source intelligence quoted earlier would suggest that Canada has been singularly ineffective. This may be because of foreign policy bias or an unwillingness to confront terrorist organizations and their national sponsors.

Finally, in protecting Canadian institutions, the effectiveness of the CSIS is questionable. For example, Canadian universities are far from the safe academic haven they would purport to be, and are becoming increasingly politicized around lines of conflict that, in a global environment, have involved terrorist events. The most striking example of this was the coordinated pro-Arab riot at Concordia University in Montreal that resulted in damage, injury, and the limiting of freedom of speech. It is possible that the events at Concordia were linked to international organizations promoting a specific political agenda.

There are some significant deficiencies in the Canadian approach to terrorism that may be putting Canadians at risk. First, in its risk analysis, the DFAIT seems to be dismissive of the risk of CBRN terrorism because of technical difficulty and public opinion. Their conclusions ignore the existing history of biological terror events, such as the selective poisoning of salad bars with salmonella⁴¹ or the use of shigella to poison laboratory workers in the United States,⁴² or the use by Hamas of Hepatitis-B carriers as suicide bombers.⁴³ All of these examples of biological terror events show that there are simple, predictable, and controllable methods to spread disease, and that tools are available to those who want them. Similarly, the malicious release of Sarin in the Tokyo subway in 1995, was an example of how easy chemo-terrorism can be. The DFAIT would be well-served to heed this lesson.

In addition, as mentioned earlier, there is very little evidence to support the assumptions of the Canadian government regarding root causes of terrorism, raising the question of how efficient a Canadian response based on these assumptions can be. This error in judgment gradually is being addressed. The DFAIT statements since 11 September 2001, are a turnaround in Canadian thinking about terrorism, and are in keeping with increasing research that challenges the “common wisdom” of poverty as a motivator for terrorism. The leader and 19 hijackers who committed the atrocities of 11 September 2001 were neither poor nor uneducated. A large percentage of

Egyptians belonging to one of the groups affiliated with Al-Qaeda, came from stable, middle-class homes and were university educated. If poverty really is the root cause of terrorism, more terrorists would come from the poorest part of the world, sub-Saharan Africa; and this, so far, has not been the case. Further reviews point out that terrorists not only consistently enjoy living standards above the poverty line, but also usually have reached a secondary level of education or higher. A review of unemployed Palestinians showed they were less likely to support violent attacks than were the terrorist element within their population.¹⁶ Thus, poverty and unemployment, if anything, are factors against involvement in terrorist events, and Canadian foreign policy gradually is shifting to recognize this fact.

The lax Canadian attitude towards terrorist organizations operating in Canadian sovereign territory, puts both Canadians and other nationals at risk of terrorist events. A parallel to the Canadian experience can be found in Germany, a country with similar responses to terrorism.⁴⁴

Canada shares post-World War II Germany's ideological foundation of a commitment to tolerance towards others. It may have been precisely this tolerance that has put Canada at risk just as the German's post-11 September 2001 investigations indicated it had put their country at risk. Four of the 11 terrorists involved in the attacks on the United States lived, worked, and studied in Germany for years. From a situation of having no concerns about terrorism, the Federal Bureau for Criminal Investigation in Germany established a special commission for counter-terrorism after the attacks. The 600 officials assigned to this committee followed up 24,000 leads and prosecuted 72 cases that never would have been detected without this special effort. Ongoing investigations in Germany revealed a plot to attack the United States Consulate in Hamburg, a Christmas market in Strasbourg, and so on.

It took Germany one year after 11 September 2001, to realize that the country was part of the "Gefahrenraum" or danger zone. This came as a surprise to the German Interior Ministry, since it assumed that Germany was not in acute danger as a terrorist target. Until then, Islamic groups had preferred to use Germany as a preparation zone for their "sleepers". It only was after a direct warning to Germany from Osama bin Laden's deputy, Aiman Al-Zawahiri, on the television station Al-Jazeera on 08 October 2002, that the Germans recognized they were at immediate risk. The statement made at the time was "The Mujahedeen youth sent a message to Germany and one to France—should the doses not have been strong enough, we will—with the help of Allah—send a stronger one."⁴⁵

This situation parallels Canada's present environment in that, while we are presently a "potential preparation zone" for terrorist events, it only is a matter of time until we become a primary target. As was the case in Germany, no degree of rearranging of our domestic or foreign policy can change this.

Canadian attempts to control terrorism through legal means, where enforced, have not been without detractors. Western governments have been accused of using the anti-terrorism campaigns as cover for a "crusade" against Islamic organizations or against Muslims. A review of the

organizations deemed as terrorist by Canadian and United States authorities does not support this. These organizations include a variety of far-left and far-right groups of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, and atheist organizations. It is true that more resources are being directed toward dealing with Muslim groups, and this simply is because of their vast preponderance amongst terrorist organizations. Of the 33 organizations designated as foreign terrorist groups by the American State Department, 18 are directly and overtly affiliated with extremist Islamic organizations. The remaining 15 are a mix of ethnicities and nationalities reflecting other global conflicts.⁴

Another criticism of the Canadian legal activity against terrorism and its effect on the population at large, is the impact of legislation on civil liberties. A. Alan Borovoy, the General Counsel of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, stated that measures taken by government are an infringement of civil liberties and ineffective in their fight against terrorism. Specifically, he notes that the decision to list an organization as terrorist is on the recommendation of the Solicitor-General, and no hearings are required, nor is evidence required to be produced creating excessive powers in the hands of government with inadequate safeguards.⁴⁶

The most significant criticism of Canada's response to terrorism is the unwillingness to act. While Canada condemns terrorism, it has shown great reluctance to follow statements with action, be it to restrict fund-raising, outlaw terrorist organizations, or participate in international anti-terrorism activities. In its enforcement of policy and voting record, the Canadian Government has required significant public pressure for it to take any definitive anti-terrorism stance.

Regardless of whether the Canadian foreign policy bias is justified or not, it is impossible to argue that this country has adopted a neutral stance. It could be better argued that Canadian foreign policy under the present government, has been designed to profess neutrality while de-facto placating terrorist organizations and the states that support them in the hope that this will protect Canada from being a target of terrorist events.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that there have been no high-profile terrorist events in Canada, this country has a serious terrorism problem, the key manifestation of which is the multitude of terrorist organizations that have designated Canada as a base of operations. In addition, Canadians have been attacked overseas and Canadian organizations, both local and abroad, are potential targets of terrorist activity.

Most Canadian policy is based on a flawed understanding of the root causes of terrorism; however, this is changing towards a more evidence-based policy that recognizes hatred of the West as a key component of the majority of terror events. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has assessed the risk of a CBRN terrorism-related event as being small; however, this assessment is flawed in that it did not recognize the ease with which these events can be executed.

Canadian attempts to deal with terrorism through foreign and domestic policy have been ineffective, primarily

because the policies are only half-heartedly enforced. Until recently, terrorist organizations legally could raise funds in Canada, in direct contravention of international treaties signed by Canada.

It is possible that the ineffectiveness in enforcing the anti-terrorism legislation stems from a political bias at the upper echelons of government, hoping that placating terrorist organizations and the countries that support them, will protect Canada from being a target. Unfortunately,

evidence from other countries has shown that this does not work, and eventually, the Canadian government must face the terrorists in our midst. The only question is: "How many fatalities will it take until this is realized?"

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