

American Foreign Policy Council

CANADA

QUICK FACTS

Population: 35,362,905 (July 2016 est.)

Area: 9,984,670 sq km

Ethnic Groups: Canadian 32.2%, English 19.8%, French 15.5%, Scottish 14.4%, Irish 13.8%, German 9.8%, Italian 4.5%, Chinese 4.5%, North American Indian 4.2%, other 50.9%

Religions: Catholic 39% (includes Roman Catholic 38.8%, other Catholic .2%), Protestant 20.3% (includes United Church 6.1%, Anglican 5%, Baptist 1.9%, Lutheran 1.5%, Pentecostal 1.5%, Presbyterian 1.4%, other Protestant 2.9%), Orthodox 1.6%, other Christian 6.3%, Muslim 3.2%, Hindu 1.5%, Sikh 1.4%, Buddhist 1.1%, Jewish 1%, other 0.6%, none 23.9%

Government Type: Federal parliamentary democracy (Parliament of Canada) under a constitutional monarchy; a Commonwealth realm

GDP (official exchange rate): \$1.532 trillion (2015 est.)

Map and Quick Facts courtesy of the CIA World Factbook (January 12, 2017)

OVERVIEW

Canada is a free and peaceful society, with a large and generally successful immigration program. Newcomers to Canada tend to learn the local language (English or French), integrate into the economy, adopt Canadian values, and develop a positive Canadian identity. Muslims are no exception, and most Muslim communities in Canada are better integrated than their European counterparts. That said, Canada has also earned the unsavory reputation of being a terrorist haven, thanks to decades of political inaction and a weak legal framework to stop terrorist activities. A succession of terrorist groups flocked to Canada in the decades prior to 9/11. Following the 2001 attacks, Canada finally enacted stricter anti-terrorism laws. Islamist, jihadist and other terrorist groups have, nevertheless, been able to hide amid Canada's immigrant

communities – including its Muslim population of just over 1 million.¹ Persistent and subversive Islamist groups have penetrated this community and established terrorist cells, fundraising operations, communal organizations, mosques, and schools across Canada. The Canadian government once again strengthened its response to these developments through legislation (including the 2015 Anti-Terrorism Act, known as Bill C51) which has provided new tools for the Canadian government to fight terrorism and the ideology responsible for it.

ISLAMIST ACTIVITY

Exploiting the lack of anti-terrorism legislation that existed prior 2001, terrorist groups traditionally used Canada's immigrant communities as safe havens and, occasionally, as bases of operations. These groups included, among others, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA),² Sri Lanka's Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE),³ and Sikh extremists.⁴ More recently, these organizations and groups have been joined and outpaced by radical Islamist elements of various political and ideological stripes.

Canada's Islamist terrorists fall into three broad camps: (1) *Salafist*, including the new and enthusiastic supporters of the Islamic State, (2) Shi'ite, and (3) Palestinian. *Salafists* in Canada belong primarily to al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and Armed Islamic Group (GIA) – an Algerian group striving to turn Algeria into a theocratic Islamic state.

According to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), there are three primary ways in which terrorism threatens Canadian safety and security:⁵ 1) terrorists continue to plot direct attacks against Canada and its allies, at home and abroad, with the intent of causing death, disruption and fear; 2) terrorists conduct activities in Canada to support terrorist activity globally, namely fundraising to support attacks and military groups; and 3) terrorists use social media to reach and radicalize individual Canadians, who are then convinced to travel abroad to join a terrorist army and commit attacks, or to receive training on terrorist methods.

Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda has a persistent presence in Canada, and al-Qaeda extremists continue to pose a threat to Canada's national security. While Al-Qaeda has experienced international decline over the past five years, it continues to command the loyalty, and, according to CSIS, continues to constitute a serious threat to Canada's security.⁶

Al-Qaeda has a history of organizing and raising funds in Canada. One of the most prominent ties linking Canada to al-Qaeda has been the Khadr family. Ahmed Said Khadr, the patriarch of the family, moved to Montreal in 1975, and began raising extensive funds for al-Qaeda. At one point, he was the highest-ranking member

of the group in Canada. He died in a 2003 confrontation with the Pakistani military,⁷ but his Islamist legacy lives on through his children. Two sons, Omar and Abdul Rahman, fought for the Taliban and were sent to Guantanamo. Omar infamously killed an American medic, Spt. 1st Class Christopher J. Speer, during a gun battle in Afghanistan in July 2002. He was then arrested and sent to Guantanamo Bay. Abdul Rahman was released in 2002, and returned back to Canada.⁸

Omar Khadr pleaded guilty to murder in violation of the laws of war, attempted murder in violation of the laws of war, conspiracy, two counts of providing material support for terrorism, and spying in the United States.⁹ In exchange for his guilty plea, the military tribunal sentenced him to eight years in prison and promised to repatriate him to Canada after he had served the first year of his sentence at Guantanamo. The U.S. finally repatriated Omar Khadr to Canada on September 29, 2012.¹⁰ He was then released on bail from an Edmonton prison and put on “house arrest” in May 2015. Since this time, Khadr has had his bail conditions relaxed to include visiting his still-radicalized family members in Toronto, he become engaged to a Palestinian activist, and he filed a \$20 million lawsuit against the Canadian government.¹¹

The Khadr’s may be Canada’s most infamous al-Qaeda-linked operatives, but they are certainly not alone in Canada. Fateh Kamel headed another al-Qaeda-GIA cell in Canada. Kamel fought with *mujahideen* in Afghanistan in the 1980s¹² and Bosnia in the 1990s. In 1996, he became a liaison between al-Qaeda and the GIA.¹³ He applied for a Canadian passport in 2005, and while his request was denied, citing national security threats, in response, Kamel sued.¹⁴ The Canadian federal judge initially declared the restriction unconstitutional, that decision was overturned upon appeal and Kamel was denied citizenship.¹⁵

Two Canadians also participated in the In Amenas hostage crisis in January 2013. An al-Qaeda-linked terrorist group took over 800 hostages at a gas facility in In Amenas, Algeria, and, ultimately, at least 38 civilians and 29 terrorists died during the siege.¹⁶ Two of the terrorists, Ali Medlej and Xristos Katsiroubas, were Canadian men and high school classmates from London South Collegiate Institute in London, Ontario. Both of these men were killed in the attack.¹⁷ Mauritanian authorities had previously arrested a third classmate, Aaron Yoon, who was convicted in July 2012 of having ties to al-Qaeda and of posing a danger to national security. He was sentenced to two years in prison,¹⁸ following which, Yoon was transferred back to London, Canada in July 2013.¹⁹

In recent years, al-Qaeda cells in Canada have graduated from planning attacks in Canada, to be carried out overseas, to planning attacks against Canada. In 2006, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) arrested eighteen men plotting to bomb the Toronto Stock Exchange, the Toronto offices of CSIS, and a nearby military base.²⁰ They also intended to storm the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

(CBC) and Canadian Parliament, take hostages, and decapitate the leaders of each party, including the Prime Minister. They planned to demand that Canada withdraw her troops from Afghanistan.²¹

These terrorists' efforts were thwarted thanks to an undercover effort by the RCMP. Of the 18 men arrested, eleven have been convicted of terrorism offences and two have been sentenced to life in prison.²² The ring-leader, Zakaria Amara pled guilty, received a life sentence and was stripped of his Canadian citizenship under a new law brought in by the government of Canada's former Prime Minister Stephen Harper. Harper's successor, current Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, has pledged to reverse this law and overhaul the government's ability to strip citizenship from foreign-born dual citizens convicted on terrorism charges.

Another al-Qaeda connected plot was thwarted on April 22, 2013, after an eight-month investigation. The RCMP arrested Tunisian-born Chiheb Esseghaier and Raed Jaser, a Palestinian from the United Arab Emirates, for plotting to derail a VIA Rail passenger train near Toronto. Police claim that the pair received guidance from members of al-Qaeda living in Iran.²³

A final example of an al-Qaeda connected terrorist cell was that headed up by Hiva Mohammad Alizadeh in Ottawa. The Iranian-born Kurdish refugee to Canada, considered the ringleader of an Ottawa al-Qaeda cell, pled guilty to a terror plot in 2014 and was sentenced to 24 years in a federal prison.²⁴ Alizadeh admitted that he spent two months in an al-Qaeda terrorist training camp in Afghanistan in 2009, where he received training on using firearms and assembling improvised explosive devices, and smuggled 56 circuit boards, capable of triggering remote bombs, back to Canada.²⁵

The Islamic State

The Islamic State has garnered appeal in Canada since its emergence in 2014. Dozens of Canadians have left their homes to fight in the Islamic State's *caliphate* in Iraq and Syria, and there have been at least two attacks, using lone wolf tactics, carried out by Canadian men who had sworn allegiance to the Islamic State.

The first attack was carried out by Canadian-born Martin Couture-Rouleau, who, on October 20, 2014, intentionally rammed his car into a pair of Canadian Forces soldiers in a shopping mall parking lot in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec, killing one of them. Couture-Rouleau converted from Christianity to Islam in 2013, and began regularly posting pro-Islamic State and anti-Semitic messages on his Facebook page.²⁶ Just two days later, a second Islamist attack took place on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Islamist terrorist Michael Zehaf-Bibeau shot and killed Corporal Nathan Cirillo, who was standing ceremonially on guard at the Canadian War Memorial. After the shooting, Zehaf-Bibeau reportedly raises his gun in the air and shouted

“For Iraq.” He then stormed the Centre Block building of the Canadian Parliament, shot a security guard and made his way towards the Library of Parliament before being fatally shot by parliamentary security guards. Both Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Leader of Her Majesty’s Royal Opposition Thomas Mulcair were in adjacent rooms when the terrorist was killed.²⁷

On top of these attacks at home, a sizeable number of young Canadians have taken up arms to fight alongside Islamic State militants in Iraq, Syria and beyond. A 2016 report from the Canadian department of public safety highlighted that at least 180 individuals with a connection to Canada are currently overseas fighting alongside Islamist terrorist organizations, primarily the Islamic State.²⁸ There are also at least 60 known returned foreign fighters in Canada, most of them living freely.²⁹ According to Larry Brooks, a former CSIS counter-terrorism official, it’s nearly impossible to prove to a Canadian judge, in a Canadian court, that an individual has participated in terrorist activities overseas.³⁰

Hezbollah

Canada remains an important source of financing and operational organizing for Hezbollah, and despite being banned in 2002 as a terrorist entity,³¹ the Iranian-backed Lebanese Shi’ite militia continues to raise funds, procure equipment, and hide wanted terrorists in Canada.³²

The case of Mohammad Hussein al Hussein, a Hezbollah operative deported from Canada in 1994, helped shine light on the organizations strong position in Canada. During interviews with CSIS, al Hussein provided insight into the network of members, supporters, and operatives and their activities in cities across Canada.

Years later, Mohammad Hassan Dbouk began to run the Canadian portion of Hezbollah’s funding and procurement network, under the command of Haj Hassan Hilu Laqis, then Hezbollah’s chief military procurement officer.³³ After seeking refugee status in Canada in 1998, Dbouk raised cash through credit card and banking scams, as well as cigarette smuggling, and used the proceeds to purchase high-tech military supplies used in Lebanon. Dbouk became an important asset for Hezbollah, and he was rejected five times for suicide missions because he was too valuable in Canada.³⁴ CSIS agents began monitoring his activities, and Dbouk was indicted by a U.S. federal court in 2001.³⁵

In June 2002, Israeli authorities arrested Fawzi Ayoub, a 39-year-old Lebanese-born Canadian, who used a fake American passport to enter Israel. Israel accused him of being a Hezbollah fighter and of training Palestinian militants in the West Bank in Hezbollah bomb-making techniques.³⁶

Hezbollah was also known to hide terrorists wanted by other countries in Canada. Hani Abd al-Rahim al-Sayegh, a leader of Saudi Hezbollah involved in the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing that killed nineteen American Air Force personnel, made a refugee claim in Canada using a false name and settled in Ottawa, where he was arrested a year later.³⁷

Hezbollah was listed as a banned terrorist entity in Canada in 2002, following a federal court case brought forward by Jewish organization B'nai Brith.³⁸ Although officially banned, Hezbollah continues its subversive reach into Canada. In 2011, the US Treasury Department identified the Lebanese Canadian Bank SAL, along with its subsidiaries, as a “financial institution of primary money laundering concern under Section 311 of the USA PATRIOT Act for the bank’s role in facilitating the money laundering activities of an international narcotics trafficking and money laundering network.”³⁹ This bank’s network facilitated the movement of illegal narcotics from Latin America to Europe and the Middle East, and laundered hundreds of millions monthly. This was done through bank accounts and other assets, including U.S. used car dealerships, according to the U.S. Treasury.⁴⁰ The U.S. government found that Hezbollah derived direct “financial support from the criminal activities of [this] network.”⁴¹

The Lebanese Canadian Bank (LCB) was headquartered in Beirut, and had a representative office in Montreal, Quebec. Originally established in 1960, LCB operated as a subsidiary of the Royal Bank of Canada in the Middle East from 1968 to 1988, before becoming a privately-owned bank. In 2009, LCB’s total assets were worth more than \$5 billion.⁴²

The Iranian embassy in Ottawa also had a history of funding and aiding a controversial cultural center with ties to Hezbollah, and was increasingly considered an outpost for espionage and subversion by the Iranian regime. The Iran embassy regularly hosted and funded conferences for Iranian Canadians and invited guests only. These events sought to reach sympathetic members of the Muslim community – to recruit, persuade, and intimidate them to join the Islamic Republic’s network.⁴³ In 2012, the Canadian government posted a notice on the Iranian embassy door ordering all Iranian officials to leave the country within five days. The government also closed Canada’s embassy in Tehran, recalling all Canadian diplomats, cutting diplomatic ties with Iran, and officially listing Iran as a state sponsor of terrorism.

Canada went further by amending the *State Immunity Act* and adopting the *Justice for the Victims of Terrorism Act*, both of which allowed the families and victims of terrorism to take legal action and seek damages from the perpetrators of terrorism and those who support them, including the government of Iran. This effectively eliminated the legal distinction between terrorist groups and the states that bankroll them, extinguishing the sovereign immunity protection typically granted to govern-

ments. To assist victims in identifying and locating Iran's state assets, the government released a list of known Iranian state-owned property in Canada. In 2014, an Ontario judge ordered the seizure of more than \$7 million in bank accounts and property belonging to Iran. The historic ruling validated the Harper government's legal changes. Currently over 90 Canadian victims of terrorism have launched claims in Ontario's Superior Court seeking compensation from Iran for its role in training, arming, and financing Islamic terror networks.⁴⁴

Palestinian Islamists

Hamas, the most influential Palestinian Islamist group, has a history of using Canada as a fundraising base, even after the government designated it a terrorist organization in November 2002.⁴⁵ A May 2000 Privy Council Office memo to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien identified the Jerusalem Fund for Human Services (Jerusalem Fund) as a fundraising entity for Hamas.⁴⁶

The Canadian Coalition for Democracies alleges that the Jerusalem Fund responded to the flagging by merely changing its name to the International Relief Fund for the Afflicted and Needy (IRFAN) in 2001-2002. The Canadian Jewish News discovered that the Jerusalem Fund and IRFAN shared a mailing address in Mississauga, as well as a fax number.⁴⁷

In 2004, IFRAN came under scrutiny from the Canada Revenue Agency and its auditors over fundraising links to Hamas, but was able to keep its charitable status by signing an agreement stating it would not fund any organization linked to Hamas.⁴⁸ A later audit found that, between 2004 and 2009, IFRAN had "openly supported and provided funding to Hamas" while also engaging in "deceptive and misleading fundraising."⁴⁹ A Charities Branch document highlights how IFRAN sent almost \$15 million to Hamas and related agencies during this period, leading to the government's decision to strip IFRAN of its charity status in 2011, and, in 2014, to add IFRAN to Canada's official list of terrorist groups.⁵⁰

Hamas also has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in Canada through the Texas-headquartered Holy Land Foundation (HLF).⁵¹ The U.S., which designated Hamas a terrorist organization in 1995, shut down HLF in 2008 and, in 2009, sentenced five of its leaders to prison terms ranging from 15 to 65 years.⁵²

Additionally, Hamas is known to have recruited Canadians to commit attacks within Canada. In 2003, for instance, Israel arrested a Canadian man in Gaza who pled guilty to conspiracy and illegal military training for planning attacks against Jews in Canada and the U.S.⁵³ Hamas denied recruiting him, claiming that they limit their attacks to Middle Eastern targets.⁵⁴

The smaller Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) has also tried to penetrate Canada – albeit on a much more modest scale. The group is known to have long collected and laundered money in Canada, and even attempted to acquire a fraudulent visa so that its treasurer, Muhammed Tasir Hassan Al-Khatib, could visit Canada.⁵⁵ Additional details of PIJ activity inside Canada remain spotty, but the country’s intelligence service has warned that the group could expand its current, minimal activity in the years ahead; a confidential 2003 CSIS report notes that the discovery of a PIJ fundraising network in Florida “raises the possibility of PIJ elements crossing the border to develop a similar infrastructure in Canada.”⁵⁶ To date, however, there is no evidence that the PIJ has done so. Like Hamas, PIJ was designated a foreign terrorist organization by the Canadian government in November 2002, and its activities seem to have waned in Canada since this designation.⁵⁷

Islamist community organizations

Though it is not the norm for the Canadian Muslim community, a number of Islamic community organizations that have been infiltrated with radical extremists. The most prominent example was the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC), which called itself “Canada’s largest national non-profit and wholly independent Islamic organization.”⁵⁸ After a number of controversies, the CIC finally closed its doors in 2014, and is now defunct. The CIC had a history of demonizing Israel, fabricating lies about opponents, and apologizing for hardline Islamist groups,⁵⁹ including by inciting anti-Semitism and justifying violence committed by Islamist groups against Israel. The CIC’s leadership has further validated terrorism by denouncing the Canadian government’s decision to designate Hamas and Hezbollah as terrorist groups, calling it an “unconscionable act of hypocrisy and a mockery of justice.”⁶⁰

The Islamist Muslim Students’ Association (MSA) has chapters at many Canadian universities. Muslim Brotherhood activists founded the MSA in 1963 at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign⁶¹ to help Muslims “practice Islam as a complete way of life.”⁶² Chapters of the MSA have raised funds for the Hamas-linked Holy Land Foundation,⁶³ as well as the Benevolence International Foundation and the Global Relief Foundation (both of which were later outlawed by the U.S. government for their links to al-Qaeda).⁶⁴

Radicalism can be found in Canadian places of worship as well, with some mosques and Islamic schools indoctrinating their parishioners and students. The Salaheddin Islamic Center and the Al-Rahman Islamic Centre, both in Toronto, are examples of this trend. The Khadr family frequented the former, and six of the terrorists in the cell that planned to storm parliament and decapitate the Prime Minister prayed at the latter.⁶⁵ The Salaheddin Islamic Center’s imam, Aly Hindy, refused to join 120 other Canadian imams in condemning the London Tube Bombings in

2004, and he later defended members of the Toronto 18 terror cell.⁶⁶ He also directs his parishioners not to cooperate with Canadian authorities, and officiates at illegal polygamous weddings.⁶⁷

ISLAMISM AND SOCIETY

Canada's 2011 census, the most recent data available from the Government of Canada, recorded 1.05 million Muslims in the country, equaling 3.2 percent of the total population.⁶⁸ Sixty-eight percent of Canada's Muslims are immigrants, and more than 387,000 Muslims have entered Canada since 2001. A majority of Canada's Muslims live in the province of Ontario (581,950) and most of those are located in the city of Toronto (424,930). The province of Quebec hosts the second largest Muslim community (243,430), 221,040 of whom live in Montreal, and it is home to many immigrants from the former French colonies of Algeria and Lebanon. Sizeable Muslim populations also reside in the provinces of Alberta (113,445) and British Columbia (79,310).

Continued immigration and a high birth rate are rapidly increasing those numbers, making Islam Canada's fastest growing religion. Between 2001 and 2011, for example, Muslims grew from 2% of the population to 3.2%.⁶⁹ The community is very ethnically diverse. It was recorded in 2001 that 36.7 percent were South Asian, 21.1 percent were Arab, 14.0 percent were West Asian, and 14.2 percent belonged to other groups.⁷⁰ This Muslim population tends to underperform compared to the larger Canadian public on a number of measures. As of 2001, for example, the Muslim community suffered a 14.4 percent unemployment rate, almost double the national rate of 7.4 percent.⁷¹ An updated analysis based on the 2011 Statistics Canada National Household Survey similarly found that 13.9 percent of Muslims in Canada were unemployed, as compared to a 7.8 percent national unemployment rate in Canada.⁷²

However, despite the disproportionately high unemployment rate, according to a 2007 Environics poll, 81 percent of Canadian Muslims "felt satisfied with the way things were going in their country."⁷³ Unfortunately, the same Environics poll highlighted a troubling propensity for radicalism among respondents, with about 12 percent of Canadian Muslims polled saying that the terrorist plot to storm Parliament and behead the Prime Minister was justified.⁷⁴

Perhaps that often-vocal minority explains why a 2010 Leger Marketing poll found that 55 percent of Canadians disagreed when asked whether "Muslims share our values."⁷⁵ A subsequent 2009 Angus Reid Strategies poll uncovered similar opinions, with only 28 percent of Canadians polled viewing Islam favorably, compared with 72 percent approval for Christianity and 53 percent approval for Judaism.⁷⁶

The updated 2016 Environics report on Muslims in Canada found similarly mixed results. On the one hand, it found that 83 percent of Muslims polled were "very

proud to be Canadian,” compared to 73 percent of non-Muslims in Canada. However, when it comes to social views, on issues such as acceptance of homosexuals in society, and the dominance of men in the household, for instance, Muslims and non-Muslims have very diverging opinions. While 80 percent of Canadians believe that homosexuality should be accepted by society, only 36 percent of Muslims agree with that statement.⁷⁷

Nevertheless, Islamic law has made at least a limited mark in certain locales and sectors of Canadian society. When first passed, Ontario’s *Arbitration Act of 1991* permitted people to submit civil disputes to arbitration panels whose decisions, if the parties consented, could deviate from Canadian civil law as long as they did not breach the criminal code.⁷⁸ Controversy erupted in 2003 when the Islamic Institute for Civil Justice broadcast its intention to establish panels that would use *sharia*. The fierceness of the debate prompted Ontario’s government to ask Marion Boyd, a former attorney general of Ontario, to study the proposal for sharia-influenced arbitration panels. Although Boyd concluded that the *Arbitration Act* should remain in force so long as several new safeguards were added,⁷⁹ Ontario’s Premier, Dalton McGuinty, ultimately decided to scrap the arbitration panels altogether. In 2006, Ontario’s legislature amended the *Arbitration Act* to require that arbitration be “conducted exclusively in accordance with the law of Ontario or another Canadian jurisdiction.”⁸⁰

This precedent-setting decision to prevent Sharia law in Canada was reached, in part, thanks to protests and coordinated efforts led by prominent moderate Muslim figures in Canada, including Tarek Fatah, founder of the Muslim Canadian Congress who called it “a Saudi-funded cancer spreading across the world,” and Raheel Raza, a leading liberal Muslim activist, author and documentary filmmaker who created the film “Honor Diaries.”⁸¹

ISLAMISM AND THE STATE

Canada passed its first anti-terrorism legislation, the *Canadian Anti-Terrorism Act* (Bill C-36), in the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States. Before the *Anti-Terrorism Act* received the Royal Assent on December 18, 2001, the Canadian criminal code did not formally define “terrorist activity.” The *Anti-Terrorism Act* rectified this deficiency, providing a definition of both “terrorist activity” and “terrorist group,”⁸² and authorizing the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Solicitor General, to designate an entity as a terrorist group.⁸³

The *Anti-Terrorism Act*’s prohibition of providing financial services to terrorist groups represented Canada’s first measure aimed at curbing terrorist financing. Before the *Act*, people could legally raise money for terrorist groups in Canada and the government could only prosecute people for directly funding a terrorist attack. However, as

a practical matter, because of the opaque manner in which terrorist groups use banks and financial markets, it had proven to be almost impossible to connect donors to attacks.⁸⁴

The *Anti-Terrorism Act* equipped authorities with several new tools to fight terrorism, including investigative hearings, preventive arrests, and new rules concerning information disclosure and rescinding a group's charity status. The *Act* amended the *Proceeds of Crime (Money Laundering) Act* to provide authorities with a scheme for monitoring suspicious financial transactions that could be tied to terrorism. The *Act* also established a mechanism for rescinding organizations' charitable status if there are reasonable grounds to believe that it has or will fund a terrorist group.⁸⁵

However, in the wake of the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing, Liberals and Conservatives united to pass the *Combating Terrorism Act*. The bill revives the investigative hearing and preventive detention practices discontinued in 2007. Authorities may compel someone to submit to interrogation if he or she is suspected of having knowledge of a terrorist act, and they may imprison anyone who refuse to cooperate for up to twelve months. Authorities may also detain someone for up to three days and impose probationary conditions for up to a year on anyone suspected of engaging in terrorist activity.⁸⁶

In the wake of the two Islamist terrorist attacks that resulted in the death of two members of the Canadian Forces in October, 2014 the Harper government introduced updates to the *Anti-Terrorism Act* in January 2015, through Bill C-51. The bill—an Act to enact the *Security of Canada Information Sharing Act* and the *Secure Air Travel Act*, to amend the *Criminal Code*, the *Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act* and the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and to make related and consequential amendments to other Acts—sought to broaden the mandate of CSIS and to allow various Canadian government agencies to share information more easily, with the goal of proactively thwarting attacks before they happen.⁸⁷ While Bill C-51 sparked some controversy, it was passed and received royal assent in June 2015. During the 2015 Canadian election campaign, current Prime Minister Justin Trudeau pledged to amend the bill in order to strike a greater balance between promoting security and respecting civil liberties. Despite this pledge, the Trudeau government has not taken steps to amend the *Act* since forming government in late 2015.⁸⁸

Prime Minister Trudeau, much like former U.S. President Barack Obama, is reluctant to discuss the threat posed by Islamists in Canada, and avoids using the term Islamist terrorism. In September 2016, Trudeau visited a gender-segregated mosque, the Ottawa Muslim Association, whose *imam* is a member of a group considered by some to be a terrorist organization. Trudeau met with Samy Metwally, who is a member of the International Union for Muslim Scholars (IUMS), which was founded by Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the Muslim Brotherhood's leading ideological figure. In 2014, the United Arab Emirates listed IUMS on its list of designated terrorist organizations.⁸⁹

Trudeau's candidate selection and subsequent members of the Liberal caucus also raise concerns about his apparent lack of concern toward individuals with connections with Islamists in Canada and abroad. Two members of his Liberal caucus, MPs Ali Ehasi and Majid Jowhari, are also Iranian nationals, and have been lobbying to re-open diplomatic ties with Iran. The two men hosted an invitation-only roundtable event in Toronto in November 2016 to discuss Canadian-Iranian relations. The event was criticized for being stacked with pro-regime voices and not discussing Iran's human rights violations.⁹⁰

Possibly even more concerning is Mississauga Liberal MP Omar Alghabra, who Trudeau appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Saudi-born Syrian Alghabra is the former president of the Canadian Arab Federation, an organization that was defunded by the Canadian government in 2009 over its participating in a conference with Hamas and Hezbollah delegates and for comparing Israelis to Nazis. In 2014, a Federal Court ruling upheld the decision, citing evidence that included a sign threatening to murder a Jewish child, and because of a CAF-sponsored essay contest on the topic of "ethnic cleansing" in Israel. Alghabra once wrote an open letter calling Israel "a country that is conducting a brutal and the longest contemporary occupation in the world."⁹¹

While Canada has the unfortunate reputation, particularly in the United States, for not taking national security and terrorism seriously, this stereotype is not accurate. Canada has made significant stride and marked legal progress in investigating and combating terrorism, and the silent majority of Canadians support measures to boost immigration security and protect the safety of Canadians. While terrorism and the broader threat of Islamist infiltration remains a threat to Canada, Canadians and Canadian security officials remain vigilant against the various threats of Islamist organizations and terrorist groups.

ENDNOTES

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