

Motivations for Terrorism in Canada and Possible Implications for Policy

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Abstract

Terrorists are not a monolithic group and are therefore not all motivated to act for the same reasons or because of the same factors. This research paper aims to discover what motivates current Islamist terrorism from a Canadian perspective, using case studies of three Canadian based terrorists: John Maguire, Damian Clairmont, and Michael Zehaf-Bibeau. These individuals were radicalized into an extremist way of thinking and either left to join terrorist organizations overseas as foreign fighters, or committed acts of terror at home in Canada. Previous research has outlined several typologies associated with different characteristics and motivators of individuals who engage in terrorism. The case studies in this paper will be assessed based on these typologies as well as other possible motivations for terrorist action, namely the foreign occupation of a state or territory, religious aspects associated with extremism, and the psychological and personal factors that may interplay with an individual being predisposed to joining such a group. Lastly policy recommendations and points of consideration for the Canadian government will be assessed based on the findings obtained through the case studies.

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Introduction

Although there has been significant research into the rising phenomenon of transnational Islamist terrorism, most research has focused on determining what responses targeted countries should take in terms of their foreign policy and of striking back at the enemy. This paper will look at this problem from another perspective by focusing on what individual terrorists hoped to achieve with their actions and what motivated them. Motivations of terrorist groups as a whole will be discussed, as well as individual motivators that vary based on social and life experiences. Very recent research has looked at the subtypes of individuals involved with terrorist groups, and these subtypes may very well hold the key to determining what factors can motivate individuals to commit acts of terror. In this paper these motivators and factors discovered by other researchers will be applied to the Canadian context. Case studies will be conducted, focusing on Canadian terrorists who have either acted in Canada itself or travelled abroad as foreign fighters to join terrorist organizations.

The paper will produce policy recommendations in order to better deal with the terrorist threat at its source instead of simply responding to its symptoms by undertaking military actions against terrorist strongholds and factions overseas. If the Canadian government were better equipped to deal with terrorism at home, it might be able to act preventatively by getting people at risk the help they need to turn away from terrorist organizations instead of turning towards them. Another important domestic policy aspect that this paper will address is what to do with terrorists and suspected terrorists once they return to Canada from overseas. Their identification is important in the protection of civil society; however, they also must be rehabilitated so that they may be reintegrated and

become functioning members of society. The challenges seen in this respect are similar to those seen with the general criminal population, in that they cannot be locked up forever, and that the most effective way of ensuring that they do not recidivate is to work on reintegration policies and procedures. Therefore this paper will look at what motivates groups and individuals to engage in terrorism, what Canadian terrorists hoped to achieve with their actions, and what policy implications this has for the Canadian government.

Chapter 1: What is Terrorism?

Terrorism

Terrorism and terrorist activities have been going on for centuries, and are usually defined and understood as a group phenomenon, with organizational and group dynamics being seen as important conditions for violent radicalization and as features distinguishing political terrorists from lunatic killers.¹ Terrorism is a complicated issue and there is no single definition used by everyone researching in the field. According to one definition, “terrorism involves the use of violence by an organization other than a national government to intimidate or frighten a target audience.”² Another author has defined it as “both an ‘act-based’ event (targeting of civilians) as well as an ‘actor-based’ phenomenon in which non-state actors engage in political violence in order to affect desired political outcomes.”³ Yet another author has argued that terrorism can be said to have two broad purposes, which are to gain supporters and to coerce opponents.

Often, groups who use terror aim to change a target state or states’ policies while simultaneously mobilizing support and recruits for their cause.⁴ Terrorism can also be seen as a premeditated act designed to create a climate of extreme fear, which is directed at a wider target than the immediate victims, and inherently involves attacks on random or symbolic targets, including civilians.⁵ Moreover “it is considered by the society in which it occurs as ‘extra normal,’ in the literal sense that it violates the norms regulating disputes, protests and dissent” and “it is used primarily, though not exclusively, to

¹ Nesser, 2012, p. 61.

² Pape, 2005, p. 9.

³ Bloom, 2005, p. 3.

⁴ Pape, 2005, p. 9.

⁵ Wilkinson, 2006, p. 4.

influence the political behaviour of governments, communities or specific social groups.”⁶

According to the Canadian Criminal Code, Section 83.01 (1)(b), terrorism is broadly defined as differing from other violent attacks in that terrorism is:

“An act or omission, in or outside Canada, that is committed (A) in whole or in part for a political, religious or ideological purpose, objective or cause, and (B) in whole or in part with the intention of intimidating the public, or a segment of the public, with regard to its security, including its economic security, or compelling a person, a government or a domestic or an international organization to do or to refrain from doing any act, whether the public or the person, government or organization is inside or outside Canada.”⁷

There has been significant debate as to the appropriateness of using such a broad definition in that it could potentially lead to individuals who are not “terrorists” being labeled as such. A vague definition does not help the Canadian Government to be better able to create laws and implement policies aimed at the prevention of terrorism or the identification of those who plan on committing terrorist acts. However it is important to take note of the definition currently used by the Canadian government given that this has an effect on the scope and type of policies that will be put forward. When comparing the definitions of terrorism used by researchers and that used by the Canadian government, we can see that the version put forward by the Canadian government is much broader and makes it harder to pinpoint what would constitute an act of terror. Moreover, discrepancies within the field itself render it difficult to consolidate the research results

⁶ Wilkinson, 2006, p. 4.

⁷ Anti-terrorism Act (2001, c.41).

obtained and study it accurately. Therefore, in the following sections I will breakdown what this paper will be referring to when discussing terrorism.

Islamist / Jihadi Terrorism

The terms “jihadi terrorism” and “jihad” are often used to describe the current terrorism situation. However these words are contentious given that for millions of modern Muslims “jihad is a personal struggle to fulfill themselves spiritually through actions that cause no harm to others.”⁸ Furthermore, jihad can refer to an inner state or struggle to “transcend the appeal of our baser instincts.”⁹ Another author says that there are two aspects to jihad; moral striving and armed struggle.¹⁰ Therefore there is a big debate within Islam about “whether jihad mainly connotes the internal struggle within a believer or is chiefly about externally directed violence.”¹¹ The interpretation of jihad endorsed by terrorist organizations is closer aligned with it being viewed as the need for an armed struggle. Thus, Islamist terrorists are able to justify their actions as religiously necessary. According to Islamic law there are four types of enemies against whom it is legitimate to wage war: infidels, apostates, rebels, and bandits. However, only the first two are considered jihad, thereby showing that it can be considered a religious obligation.¹²

The Canadian Government lists 54 organizations as terrorist entities.¹³ Under the Anti-Terrorism Act, it is an offence to knowingly participate in or contribute to, directly

⁸ Bourrie, 2016, p. xii.

⁹ Khosrokhavar, 2005, p. 19.

¹⁰ Lewis, 2003, p. 30.

¹¹ Pal, 2011, p. 7.

¹² Lewis, 2003, p. 31.

¹³ Public Safety Canada. (2014). Currently Listed Entities.

or indirectly, any activity of a terrorist group.¹⁴ Currently the most well known Islamic terrorist groups are Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (ISIS), and Boko Haram. Brief descriptions will now be given of these three groups in order to better facilitate an understanding of their differences and the level of threat which they pose to Canada.

Al-Qaeda was founded in 1988 by Osama Bin Laden and serves as the strategic hub and driver for the global Islamist terrorist movement. The group's goals include "uniting Muslims to fight the United States and its allies, overthrowing regimes it deems 'non-Islamic' and expelling Westerners and non-Muslims from Muslim countries. Al-Qaeda activities include, but are not limited to, suicide attacks, simultaneous bombings, kidnappings, and hijackings."¹⁵ Al-Qaeda has been directly or indirectly associated with a large number of transnational terrorism plots, including its direct involvement with the attacks of September 11th, 2001 on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is a Sunni jihadist group that seeks to establish a single, transnational Islamic state based on Sharia law, replacing the Iraqi and Syrian governments. It goes by several names including the "Islamic State", the "Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham" and the "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant". For the purposes of this paper it will be referred to as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria given that this is its geographical location. The group associated with Al-Qaeda's senior leadership in 1999 and fought alongside Al-Qaeda and the Taliban during the US strikes in Afghanistan in late 2001. The Islamic State's most prominent attacks have involved suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, improvised explosive devices, armed

¹⁴ Anti-terrorism Act (2001).

¹⁵ Public Safety Canada. (2014). Currently Listed Entities.

attacks, hostage takings, and beheadings.¹⁶ Furthermore ISIS has been successful at recruiting foreign born, particularly “Western” born, individuals, to travel overseas and join them in the fighting or to plan attacks in their home countries.

Boko Haram is a Salafist jihadist group operating in northern Nigeria whose goal is to overthrow the Nigerian government and implement Sharia law. The group's operations include assassinations of political and religious officials, small arms attacks, improvised explosive devices, and suicide bombings.¹⁷ This group was also responsible for the abduction of several hundred Nigerian schoolgirls.

For the purposes of this paper the group that will be looked at and whose Canadian followers will be analyzed will be ISIS, because ISIS has been very successful at using social media to recruit and radicalize individuals, particularly those who live in Western countries. Its success is not well understood, but its use of propaganda videos and of social media and networks to reach out to individuals who are susceptible to their influences is significant.

Transnational Terrorism

Transnational terrorism refers to terrorist attacks that cross national borders. This aspect of terrorism is significant because of the ways in which groups recruit foreign-born individuals and convince them to leave their homes and join them in war torn areas. There has been an increase in Western individuals travelling to join such groups. Particularly in European nations, there has been a fairly substantial amount of people leaving to join ISIS. In western Europe, France has the highest number of foreign fighters

¹⁶ Public Safety Canada. (2014). Currently Listed Entities.

¹⁷ Ibid.

leaving to join ISIS in Iraq and Syria.¹⁸ This is a matter of concern both in terms of the fate of the individuals themselves, who are very likely to die in battle, and of the possibility that they may return to their country of origin and commit violence after having been indoctrinated into an extremist mindset. This poses many potential problems not previously thought about, namely the ability of the government or social groups to discourage individuals from wanting to travel abroad to join terrorist groups, and also governments' ability to prevent attacks on their home territories. Moreover the problem of reintegration of disenchanted foreign fighters once they return to their country of origin is significant. Current laws in Canada would suggest that these individuals be incarcerated. However this may not be the most effective way of dealing with such individuals in order to ensure that they are able to reintegrate and become functioning members of society once again.

There are many groups worldwide who claim affiliation with Islamic beliefs and justify their actions through this. Many smaller regional groups claim affiliation with the larger groups, but often this is only a ploy used to further their goals and make them appear like more legitimate actors. This phenomenon has fueled a belief that terror groups are growing and spreading all over the globe; however this may not necessarily be the case. Small regional groups may have grievances that are tied to local problems and are not reflected in the goals of better-known terrorist organizations. However, by affiliating themselves with larger groups these regional actors are able to further their cause by playing on the fears of the population. Transnational or global jihadism displays a significant amount of coherence between groups, although it cannot be described as

¹⁸ Kirk, A. (2016, March 24).

monolithic. To date the main proponents of individual terrorist attacks or ‘leaderless jihad’ have had fairly clear organizational affiliations with either ISIS or Al-Qaeda.¹⁹

Thus, it is likely that global Islamist terrorism has a centralized core. This core is used by smaller peripheral groups of actors to bolster their legitimacy, which in turn makes the central group appear more legitimate and threatening than they may actually be.

Radicalization

According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), radicalization refers to “the process by which individuals are introduced to an overtly ideological message and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream beliefs toward extreme views.”²⁰ However, they specify that radical thinking by itself is not problematic; it only becomes a risk to society when it leads to violence. Radicalization is a term that is often used in the media and in political discourse, but many researchers do not endorse it. The term first appeared with reference to terrorism in a May 2004 European Union document listing possible root causes conducive to the recruitment of individuals by foreign extremists.²¹ How people are radicalized, what effects this radicalization will have on whether or not they act, and what their actions will entail are not well understood. Therefore the term can be seen as problematic since it is shrouded in such uncertainty.

Modern Islamist groups use many means to recruit and radicalize followers and gain legitimacy for their causes. Social media is a big player in the ability of ISIS to recruit and radicalize individuals, because it allows direct access to individuals who may

¹⁹ Ramsay and Marsden, 2015, p. 582.

²⁰ Royal Canadian Mounted Police (2011). *Radicalization to Violence*.

²¹ Harris-Hogan and Barrelle, 2015, p. 1.

be more susceptible to these influences. Extremist groups have been portrayed as cult-like by some authors, pointing to the tactics used by recruiters to alienate individuals from their families and societies, and to effectively brainwash them.²²

Several authors have tried to break down the causes and effects of radicalization. Jones states that “redefining the morality of killing is only one of the links in the chain of radicalization by which ordinary people turn into terrorists. Another is the adoption of a euphemistic language that hides the horror of certain deeds, such as calling the killing of innocent civilians “collateral damage” or referring to soldiers tragically killed by mistake as victims of “friendly fire.”²³

The group dynamics seen in extremist groups further allow for the radicalization of individuals in that they provide a diffusion of agency. No one person in the group feels the burden of responsibility for the terrible act. This is further exacerbated by the ability of such groups to dehumanize their victims, making them an evil other that must be eradicated. This dehumanization is “another crucial mechanism by which terrorism and genocide become normalized.”²⁴

²² Bourrie, 2016, p. 103.

²³ Jones, 2008, p. 16.

²⁴ Jones, 2008, p. 17.

Chapter 2: What Motivates Terrorist Groups and Individuals?

Some have argued that looking for causes of terrorism is unproductive, and that countries should instead respond to it through force. Dershowitz denies the usefulness of attempting to find explanations for individuals engaging in terrorism and believes that trying to understand and eliminate the roots causes of terrorism is the wrong approach. He says “our message must be this: even if you have legitimate grievances, if you resort to terrorism as a means toward eliminating them we will simply not listen to you, we will not try to understand you, and we will certainly never change any of our policies toward you.”²⁵ Therefore the only way to eliminate terrorism is through tough action on the part of world governments. Dershowitz states that “the ‘root cause’ of terrorism that must be eliminated is its *success*.”²⁶ However, even though the world has been responding with military force since the attacks of September 11th 2001 there is still a problem of Islamic terrorism. Therefore I believe that understanding how and why people are recruited to join terrorist organizations may be key in stopping this recruitment process and de-radicalizing individuals. Moreover, it may provide an alternative to simply responding forcefully.

There has been significant debate about what could motivate groups and individuals to resort to violent extremism. Some researchers have pointed to religion or societal problems as potential factors, while others have looked at foreign political and military aspects, and still others at the psychological situations of the individuals involved. However all of these have fallen short of being able to explain this phenomenon. Most recent research has attempted to break down terrorist group

²⁵ Dershowitz, 2002, p. 25.

²⁶ Dershowitz, 2002, p. 26.

motivations by determining possible subtypes of actors. By outlining subtypes of people involved in violent extremism these researchers have been able to identify different motivators depending on characteristics of the subtypes. This allows for a better clarification of the factors that are correlated with terrorism than the more general approach that has been unsuccessful in capturing the whole picture. However, the categorization of offenders into groups based on their characteristics and stated motivations can still be problematic given that “the offender, publically, may only make testament to a “cause” or principle [...] in reality, actual motivations and stated motivations may or may not correspond to each other.”²⁷ Motivations for terrorism are highly subjective. In order to understand terrorist acts and suicide bombings, it is necessary to consider individual motivations, organizational goals and strategies, and cultural catalysts.²⁸ These three aspects work together to form the basis upon which an individual willingly joins a terrorist organization and commits acts of terror without question. This chapter will look at potential factors that could impact the spread of terrorism: foreign occupation, religion, and psychological aspects of the individual. Subsequently it will discuss the various subtypes of individuals engaged in terror activities discovered by other researchers.

Foreign Occupation

A possible motivator for terrorism is foreign occupation of territory related to the base of the terrorist group, or related to an area that has a significant population representative of a religious or ethnic group that the terrorist group relates to or feels that it represents. Pape writes that suicide terrorism is “primarily an extreme national

²⁷ Borum et al., 2012, p. 395.

²⁸ Hafez, 2006, p. 175.

liberation strategy used against foreign occupiers with a democratic political system.”²⁹ Here, suicide terrorism is understood as the most aggressive form of terrorism in which the attacker does not expect to survive the mission. It is often employed as a method of attack, such as a car bomb or a suicide vest that requires the death of the terrorist in order to succeed. Terrorism as an extreme national liberation strategy is significant because it shows terrorism as a response to democratic nations imposing their own foreign policy in other countries. However when foreign and domestic occupations are treated separately, “foreign occupations are associated with a higher risk of suicide attacks, while there is no consistent evidence of association between domestic occupations and the occurrence of suicide attacks.”³⁰

Terrorist groups justify actions against foreign actors because foreign occupiers are viewed as controlling territory that is not theirs to control, and implementing values that do not represent the population of that state. Pal says that “the major impetus for the violence in the Middle East against Western troops is resentment at what is seen to be an occupation.”³¹ It is significant that the foreign occupiers targeted by such groups come from democratic nations. This is because democratic nations in the "Western world" are seen by some in other areas of the world as trying to impose democracy and liberal values on countries, territories and people who do not believe in such values and who are in some respects opposed to these values.

The perception that Western countries have occupied Middle Eastern countries illegally and without justifiable cause can lead to terrorist groups assigning blame for

²⁹ Pape, 2005, p. 58.

³⁰ Collard-Wexler et al., 2014, p. 650-651.

³¹ Pal, 2011, p. 227.

their own actions to the foreign policies of Western countries. Fuller writes that “most youth are radicalized by the situation on the ground; foreign occupation; killing of large numbers of civilians by American, Western, or Israeli military forces; a sense of humiliation and defeat; a thirst for revenge.”³² Moreover, the fact that many of the statements released by Al-Qaeda and ISIS refer to the foreign policy of the country in which they have conducted an attack as justification for the attack only adds to the sense of blame. This justification often makes reference either to the occupation of territory in Iraq and Syria or to the military responses to terrorism in these regions. A letter intercepted from Abu Masab al Zarqawi, a leading figure in the Iraq insurgency and an Islamist jihadist,³³ contributed to the debate as to whether foreign occupation played a role in the insurgency in Iraq. In this letter, Zarqawi states that he was involved in the planning and preparing for martyrdom operations against the Americans and coalition forces. Bloom says that “since then, suicide attacks against American targets have escalated sharply.”³⁴ Thus, one can conclude that foreign occupation can indeed encourage existing social movements to evolve into violent social movements that use terrorist acts as a tool to further their cause.

Statements and propaganda videos made by terrorist groups or individuals justifying their attacks often refer to foreign occupation. For example in the cell phone video shot by Michael Zehaf-Bibeau before he killed Corporal Nathan Cirillo and stormed parliament on October 22, 2014 he states that the motivator for his actions is Canada’s foreign policy, stating that his attack was in “retaliation for Afghanistan and

³² Fuller, 2010, p. 283.

³³ Weaver, 2006.

³⁴ Bloom, 2005, p. 171.

because [Canadian Prime Minister, Stephen] Harper wants to send his troops to Iraq.”³⁵

This sentiment is further demonstrated in the ISIS propaganda video of John Maguire who states that the two attacks on Canadian soldiers in October 2014 were in direct response to Canada’s participation in the coalition of nations “waging war against the Muslim people”, referring to Canada’s military involvement in Iraq and Syria.³⁶

Although the foreign occupation thesis can be convincing, some commentators have raised objections to it. According to Bloom, Pape’s model of foreign occupation “correctly identifies the motivations of nationalist-inspired suicide terrorists; however it does not fully explain why religious groups (with goals beyond territorial demands) might use it.”³⁷ Atran argues that “suicide terrorists today are not motivated exclusively or primarily by foreign occupation [and] they are not directed by a central organization.”³⁸ There clearly are some shortcomings with the foreign occupation model. It cannot fully represent the spectrum of possible motivators for the use of terror tactics and does not provide a clear solution. As Irogbe writes, “Ending occupation alone is not sufficient to bring about peace and stability in the Middle East,”³⁹ however the prospects of peace in the long term do hinge on the United States completely withdrawing from the area. Although ending interventions in the affairs of other states could prove to be an effective long term solution, “in the short term, however, the link between ceasing military intervention and terminating suicide terrorism is less compelling.”⁴⁰ There is, therefore, a correlation between foreign occupation and terrorism, but it is not as

³⁵ Full transcript of Michael Zehaf-Bibeau video released. (2015, May 29).

³⁶ Bourrie, 2016, p. 1.

³⁷ Bloom, 2005, p. 84.

³⁸ Atran, 2006, p. 139.

³⁹ Irogbe, 2011, p. 25.

⁴⁰ Atran, 2006, p. 140.

significant as some believe.

Some of the countries experiencing significant problems with Islamic terrorism are not very noticeably involved in foreign occupation. Belgium, for instance, has a significant problem with Islamic terrorism but very little presence in the affairs of the Middle East. “Belgium produces more jihadis, relative to its population, than any other country in western Europe.”⁴¹ This points to the foreign occupation thesis’ inability to fully explain Islamist terrorism, as well as its inability to be applicable to all situations of Islamist terrorism. Instead of foreign occupation, poor integration and political instability within Belgium itself are the more likely links with terrorism.⁴² Because of these counter arguments to foreign occupation as a cause for terrorism, it is evident that it can be a factor but is not generalizable to all situations.

Effect of Religion

There is much debate around religion as a possible cause of terrorism. Some authors argue that the Islamic religion and Islamic culture are inherently violent as compared to other religions and cultures, saying that the violent acts of radical Islamists cannot be divorced from the religious ideals that inspire them.⁴³ The concept of jihad has been present from the beginning of Islamic history, and has been “proclaimed throughout history as a holy war for the true faith against an infidel or enemy”⁴⁴ Some believe that Islamic culture and religion are historically violent, and this violence is theologically justified. Hirsi Ali says that “Islam is not just a belief; it is a way of life, a violent way of life. Islam is imbued with violence, and it encourages violence. Muslim children all over

⁴¹ Burke, March 22, 2016.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Hirsi Ali, 2015, p. 2.

⁴⁴ Lewis, 2003, p. 37.

the world are taught [...] with violence, taught to perpetrate violence, taught to wish for violence against the infidel, the Jew, the American Satan.”⁴⁵ According to this argument, Islam is not a religion of peace in that there are specific teachings dictating the explicit use of violence. One author contends that “violence is understood as something implicit to the faith that is reflected in other realms; including the cultural. Violence is like a thread that runs through the faith and it ties its adherents to particular types of behaviours.”⁴⁶

Many have argued the opposite, that there is nothing inherent in the Islamic faith that predisposes it towards terrorism or violence more than any other religion. In fact, many religious and secular groups throughout history have used terrorism as a tool to further a political or social goal by instilling fear in the general population. Moreover, groups have been increasingly emulating each other’s tactics. This has led to terrorism, and more specifically suicide terrorism, being mistakenly associated with Islam.⁴⁷ By looking at the historical record of religious warfare, Muslims more frequently made war against the followers of other faiths in order to convert them, but Christians were more prone to fight internal religious wars against those deemed as heretics of the faith.⁴⁸ Therefore, it cannot be said that Islam is inherently and historically more violent than other religions, just that Islamic violence differed from that of other religions. Extreme and indiscriminate violence is not even condoned during warfare. Satha-Anand says that

⁴⁵ Hirsi Ali, 2011, p. 201.

⁴⁶ Milton-Edwards, 2006, p. 86.

⁴⁷ Bloom, 2005, p. 3.

⁴⁸ Lewis, 2003, p. 142.

“the Muslim conduct of war must be as humane as possible. A Muslim soldier does not fight for self-glory or plunder, and he is ordered not to kill indiscriminately.”⁴⁹

There is debate about whether or not Muslims historically used force to convert people and spread Islam. Pal believes that reality was more complicated than this, saying that the Arabs never had a military class and instead the message of Islam was often extended by the Sufis, who are known as a peaceful and pacifist Muslim sect.⁵⁰ Given the variety of ethnic and religious groups that have used or are still using terrorism, it is evident that terrorism and suicide terrorism do not stem from the Islamic faith itself. Many passages in the *Qur'an* expressly forbid aggression and instead stress “values such as compassion, benevolence, wisdom, and justice, which are compatible with the practice of nonviolence.”⁵¹ Therefore the argument that Islam is a violent religion because the *Qur'an* promotes violence is invalid, as it clearly also promotes peace. Thus, “Islam itself is fertile soil for nonviolence because of its potential for disobedience, strong discipline, sharing and social responsibility, perseverance and self-sacrifice, and the belief in the unity of the Muslim community and the oneness of mankind.”⁵² Although the religion itself is generally peaceful, it is still important to note that modern Islamic terrorist groups do have roots in Muslim civilization even if “many of their statements and their actions directly contradict basic Islamic principles and teachings.”⁵³ This must be kept in mind in order to craft appropriate solutions to the problem of Islamist terrorism.

⁴⁹ Satha-Anand, 2001, p. 8.

⁵⁰ Pal, 2011, p. 5.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Satha-Anand, 2001, p. 21.

⁵³ Lewis, 2003, p. 137.

Religious and cultural differences may influence and impact the extent to which there are conflicts and tensions in a given society. These differences and conflicts may lead to groups resorting to terrorism and therefore make religion a motivator or a factor in the terrorism. However, these conflicts may be indicative of social problems that go deeper than simply religious differences, and therefore religion in and of itself cannot be a sole motivator for violent action. As Jones says, “To demonize religiously motivated terrorists as simply evil doers or demonic agents makes them easy to dismiss. Exhibiting certain psychological motivations or committing heinous acts does not mean that religiously motivated terrorists lack legitimate political grievances. While the terrorists are almost always marginal in relation to the larger religious communities and traditions from which they come, they also frequently articulate widespread grievances and feelings present within these communities. But terrorists act on these grievances in ways never justifiable, especially within the religious traditions they claim to represent.”⁵⁴

Religion is used by terrorist groups as a tool in order to recruit and propagandize their followers. These groups use religion as a way of legitimizing their causes and social movements. One author argues that “organizational strategizing requires a religious reframing of such actions and the creation of a cult of martyrdom through ritual. Without these religious motivations, far fewer people could be recruited as human bombs; without organizational planning, inspired individuals could not carry out these acts.”⁵⁵ Religion also aids terrorists in creating an “us versus them” mentality and identifying a community which the extremist groups say they represent. “Religious leaders and institutions are particularly adept at playing on and manipulating these inherited inclinations toward

⁵⁴ Jones, 2008, p. xviii.

⁵⁵ Jones, 2008, p. 8.

ethnocentrism and us-versus-them thinking. This is clearly one of the ways that religion can contribute to terrorism and genocide.”⁵⁶ Some members of terrorist groups may be religious fundamentalists, but not all are. Those who are not may use religion as a tool instead of a true motivator.

Religion and cultural teachings can be used to shape human nature, and this can impact an individual’s likelihood of acting in a violent way. “Among the significant cultural belief systems are religious beliefs about the role of authority, which may generate an external locus of control, as well as about the dichotomy between the in-group and out-group and the demonizing of those considered outside the true fold.”⁵⁷ Therefore, religious beliefs can be used to justify the actions of terrorists and the killing of innocent civilians. “By reinforcing ethnocentrism and scapegoating outsiders, these cultural and ideological forces, religious and secular, can facilitate a moral disengagement through which we cease to see a horrific deed as immoral and may redefine and re-label otherwise abhorrent actions (such as killing innocent noncombatants) into something justified and even meritorious.”⁵⁸ In addition to religious teachings that can be used as justification, secular cultural teachings, traditions, and societal and familial institutions can shape behaviour.

Psychological and Personal Aspects

There is a tendency to believe, both in the media and public opinion, that individuals who engage in terrorist activities are either mentally ill or extremely morally degenerated. This notion permeates public discourse so much so that the Royal Ottawa

⁵⁶ Jones, 2008, p. 13.

⁵⁷ Jones, 2008, p. 14.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

mental hospital held a conference on whether terrorists were "Mad, Bad, or Both?" on March 25th 2015.⁵⁹ The findings presented by the speakers in this presentation, Dr. Pius Adesanmi and Dr. Wagdy Loza, were that terrorists are neither. They are normal individuals who have decided consciously to engage in these actions. Although some may have mental disorders most do not, particularly those acting in groups. The majority of the people attending this presentation were from the general population and were not educated in the fields of terrorism or psychology. This was evident in the fact that they became enraged by the findings of the presenters, even going so far as to personally attack the presenters' ethnicities and religious beliefs during the discussion for not saying that terrorists were evil and mentally ill. Although this is anecdotal it shows a tendency in the general population to assume that there is something significantly different between themselves and an individual who would commit a terrorist act. However Horgan says that "the quality and rigour of the research pointing to abnormality is such that its propositions are built on very shaky empirical, theoretical and conceptual foundations."⁶⁰ This is further dealt with by another author who says that "no serious contemporary study has found any evidence for diagnosable psychopathology in those who commit acts of terror and genocide".⁶¹ Therefore the belief that terrorists are inherently psychologically different than the general population is false.

Social psychological work done on obedience theory is relevant to violent extremism seen today, in that the leaders of extremist movements seem very able to recruit and radicalize their followers. Stanley Milgram developed obedience theory in

⁵⁹ Royal Ottawa Hospital. (2015).

⁶⁰ Horgan, 2005, p. 65.

⁶¹ Jones, 2008, p. 10.

response to the Nazi regime being able to gain so much following among soldiers and the general population regardless of the horrific acts of genocide that they were committing. The findings from Milgram's experiments suggest that when a person is committing an act against another person they are more likely to ignore their own moral inhibitions if there is a perceived authority figure telling them to continue. Individuals are better able to justify their actions if they are able to project the responsibility for their actions onto someone else. The findings of this research about power and the affiliation of oneself with a group that is thought to be more powerful are relevant to Islamist terrorism. In his extensive research of suicide terrorism, Pape states that "what stands out is that, to a striking degree, the most deadly suicide terrorists have been almost ordinary people."⁶²

Some researchers have suggested that innate human nature is a factor that should be considered. "To the evolutionary psychologist, human nature is not a blank slate. Rather, among our inherited traits as *Homo sapiens* are tendencies toward ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and the drive for social dominance. Under the right circumstances, these traits can make us susceptible to committing vicious deeds."⁶³ Therefore humans are predisposed to violence and an "us versus them" mentality that allows for social movements to use these feelings in order to encourage the individuals involved and to justify their actions.

So far, research has not been able to identify a common profile for terrorists who operate alone. Some researchers have found that there is a stronger association between mental illness and lone-actor terrorists than mental illness and group-based terrorists.⁶⁴

⁶² Pape, 2005, p. 220.

⁶³ Jones, 2008, p. 13.

⁶⁴ Corner and Gill, 2015, p. 30.

Moreover, "characteristics such as social problems, loneliness and mental illness are more common among lone wolves than other terrorists. The latter do not systematically differ, socially and psychologically, from non-terrorists."⁶⁵ Therefore the differences exhibited between lone wolf terrorists and those who act or are affiliated with a group are significant in that they show that affiliation to a terrorist organization is not symptomatic of an underlying mental illness. Instead "regular" terrorists do not differ from the general population with respect to their mental health. A further dimension that distinguishes lone wolves is that "whereas solo-terrorism is supposed to fill some strategic game for organized groups (in this case upholding a threat level from the global jihadis), lone wolves tend to be driven by more elusive motives, mixing political grievances with personal ones".⁶⁶

Although lone wolves may exhibit signs of mental illness, this does not mean that the mentally ill are more susceptible to terrorist activities in general or that this is a true indicator. There are significant difficulties associated with the diagnosis of mental illness among terrorists given the difficulty of interacting with them. Instead terrorists are more likely to have no psychological problems and to be fully able to function in regular society. Although psychological explanations at both the individual and the social level seem like plausible motivations for violent extremism they are only one part of a larger puzzle.

Subtypes of Terrorist Groups

In order to attempt to understand and further elaborate on the individual motivations for engaging in terrorist activities, some researchers have rightly begun to

⁶⁵ Nesser, 2015, p. 254.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

distinguish between subtypes of individuals engaged with such groups. This research has delved into the topics previously discussed with respect to motivations but has further outlined potential differences in the backgrounds and ideological beliefs of individuals. Although typologies can be a useful tool in the analysis of terrorism, it is important to consider that some researchers do not agree with their use. “Typologies may help us think about multiple dimensions of a problem and how those dimensions might interact, but they may or may not be accurate or useful.”⁶⁷ That being said, typologies were formed by looking at what individual terrorists said and did before, during, and sometimes after their involvement in terrorism, or by looking at how others have depicted them. Thus, even if they may not be wholly accurate, they can still create a better picture than previous research has of the types of individuals most susceptible to engaging in terrorism.

Although the focus of Nesser's typologies are European based, the four types of jihadi terrorists outlined in his research are applicable to the Canadian context. Nesser focuses on the core members of terrorist cells involved in plotting attacks. These include "the Entrepreneur", "the Protégé", "the Misfit" and "the Drifter."⁶⁸ Other researchers have also differentiated other characteristics and categories of terrorist individuals in order to break down motivations and find out how such groups are formed. For instance, Bjørgo identifies four categories: the “ideological activists”, the “fellow travellers”, the “socially frustrated”, and the “adventurers”.⁶⁹ Both researchers’ categories overlap and are essentially the same or very similar typologies with different names.

Entrepreneurs are characterized by their ability to proactively connect to extremist

⁶⁷ Borum et al., (2012), p. 395.

⁶⁸ Nesser, 2015, p. 12.

⁶⁹ Bjørgo, 2016, p. 30.

networks and militant groups, and are religious-political activists who have a strong sense of justice and believe they are fighting for something greater than themselves, whether it be a religious duty or the greater good.⁷⁰ This group is the smallest, having the least amount of individuals who fit the description. However, they are the most influential in their groups given their strong ideological nature and their ability to lead others.

According to Nesser, “in the context of a terrorist cell, they recruit, socialize and train other cell members.” This group is the most likely to account for the foreign fighter phenomenon.⁷¹ This category is similar to the “ideological activists” who are typically resourceful and idealistic, and driven by political and ideological motives.⁷²

The next category defined by Nesser is the Protégé. Although similar to the Entrepreneur, the Protégé is always junior and inferior and serves the function of second in command.⁷³ The dominant driving forces or motivations in a Protégé’s radicalization are “political grievances related to the persecution of, and the injustices suffered by, Muslims.”⁷⁴ Protégés are generally young with limited life experience, are impressionable, intelligent, well educated and well mannered, and excel in their professional, academic and social lives. This subtype serves the terrorist group well because they provide it with resources and expertise, including bomb-making skills, IT-skills, or the provision of finances. “In trials and rare press interviews, captured terrorists who have played the part of an Entrepreneur or Protégé rarely show signs of remorse and

⁷⁰ Nesser, 2015, p. 13.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Bjørge, 2016, p. 30.

⁷³ Nesser, 2015, p. 14.

⁷⁴ Nesser, 2015, p. 15.

remain consistent in their belief that they pursued a legitimate course of action.”⁷⁵

Therefore, Protégés and Entrepreneurs do not show regret for their actions and are not likely to be turned into informants. The Protégé typology closely mimics the “fellow traveller” in that they are driven by a need for belonging and acceptance, and therefore are impressionable. This impressionability leads to their gradual radicalization as a consequence of their participation in the group.⁷⁶

The third category is the Misfit. Members of this group do not perform well socially, tend to have a troubled background as well as a criminal record, and are far less ideologically informed and committed to the cause.⁷⁷ Moreover, their personalities differ from the two subtypes previously discussed in that they are more hesitant and show more personal vulnerabilities, and they primarily become part of an extremist group as a means to cope with personal problems, or out of loyalty to friends or family members. These individuals operate at lower levels in the group being used for more practical tasks at the operational level. It is impossible to generalize about their motivations for joining the group, as their motivations are normally personal ones. They typically justify their actions by referring to social grievances and other injustices including underemployment, drug abuse, or racism.⁷⁸ This category reflects the “socially frustrated” type, given their problematic family backgrounds, personal experience of discrimination and marginalization, and past criminal behavior.⁷⁹

The fourth and final subtype is the Drifter. This category is likely to represent the

⁷⁵ Nesser, 2015, p. 15.

⁷⁶ Bjørgo, 2016, p. 30.

⁷⁷ Nesser, 2015, p. 15.

⁷⁸ Nesser, 2015, p. 16.

⁷⁹ Bjørgo, 2016, p. 30.

majority of individuals who become involved in terrorist plotting. Moreover, the Drifter typology is consistent with current theories of radicalization “which emphasize the importance of social connections and group processes in radicalization and recruitment for terrorist networks.”⁸⁰ The most significant thing that differentiates Drifters from the previous three typologies is that it can be argued that they could have gone in a completely different direction if they had not been socially connected with people engaged in terrorism. This is because their motivations for joining an extremist group lie in their friendships and social connections with those already in the group, and not with the personal or political grievances seen with the other typologies. The “adventurer” is similar to this category in that adventurers are involved for the excitement and action, and not for ideological reasons.⁸¹

Mainstream media has begun to pick up on the subtypes associated with motivations for joining terrorist organizations. A CTV news interview with a volunteer outreach worker at a youth empowerment program through a not-for-profit organization called North American Spiritual Revival outlined four types of youth who turn to religious extremism. The first category includes people with mental health or addiction issues who become obsessed with religion. The second category is composed of people who are drawn to extremism of any form, who are often former anarchists, neo-Nazis, or environmentalist extremists, and are concerned with combatting anything they see as a repressive social power. Typically, these youth lose interest in Islam after a little while and move on quickly. The third type is the religious zealot who believes that jihadism is required by their faith, and that they may need to die for their cause. These people are

⁸⁰ Nesser, 2015, p. 17.

⁸¹ Bjørgo, 2016, p. 30.

said to have been more or less brainwashed and have adopted an “us vs. them” mentality. The fourth type outlined in the article is the most commonly dealt with by the non-profit organization, and this group is composed of youth who are frustrated with society and have an axe to grind. This type is said to become focused on injustices in the world in places such as Syria or Israel and to begin to believe that violence is the best response.⁸²

Other researchers have identified different types of actors within extremist groups. If an extremist group is viewed as a social movement, two types of actors can be identified, the mobilizers and the mobilized.⁸³ Similar to “the entrepreneur” subtype previously discussed, the “mobilizers encompass a small number of religious, political, and/or militant entrepreneurs who seek to mobilize the masses through dissemination of propaganda and other related activities”.⁸⁴ With respect to Islamist extremist groups’ use of suicide terror tactics, the mobilizers can be seen to be constructing “an image of suicide bombers as martyrs rather than suicide victims and thereby overcome Islamic tenets against the act of suicide. Through marketing martyrdom, mobilizers hope to also elicit support for future actions.”⁸⁵ Moreover “by portraying suicide bombing as martyrdom, it illustrates the movement's deep belief in the cause, and aims to portray the terrorist organization as a legitimate agent acting on behalf of a wider community.”⁸⁶

The “mobilized” group encompasses those who follow the mobilizers and leaders into action and includes individuals who simply passively support the cause or agree with a sentiment behind it. Accordingly, the “behaviors and depths of affiliation that occur

⁸² Mulholland, A. (2015, January 16).

⁸³ Gill, 2012, p. 568.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

within a mobilized social movement can be depicted as a continuum ranging from those who passively support the movement, to those who actively support the movement to those who will later engage in facilitating violence and then finally to those who engage in violent activities. Passive supporters can be depicted as those individuals who may show attitudinal affinity to a cause but who fail to actively engage with the movement. Active supporters on the other hand combine their attitudinal affiliation with facilitative yet non-violent behaviors.”⁸⁷ This is significant with respect to determining how to respond to terrorist groups and mitigate the recruitment process, because although someone may passively support a cause it does not mean that he or she will engage in action. Therefore it is important for decision makers to be able to figure out which individuals are at risk of becoming radicalized and acting upon these intentions as opposed to those who may believe in the rightness of a cause but have no drive or intention to commit terrorist acts.

Conclusion

It is difficult to know what motivates an individual to commit acts of terror. Possible motivations discussed in this chapter are not the full spectrum of what may have led to the radicalization of specific individuals. “By themselves, these processes are not enough to even facilitate individuals to engage in violence, but instead provide a broad legitimating ideology, and context from which a small number may eventually become violently mobilized due to a confluence of a number of other facilitative and causal factors.”⁸⁸ The foreign occupation thesis is relevant given the direct references made by terrorist organizations and individuals to the involvement of Western nations in Middle

⁸⁷ Gill, 2012, p. 569.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Eastern affairs. The Islamic religion, although not a direct cause of this violence, is also relevant given the fact that Islamist terrorist groups use Islamic scriptures to justify their actions and call others to arms. Individuals involved in terrorism are often portrayed as being psychologically different or predisposed to violence. However, this chapter was able to prove that this is not the case, and that most who engage in terrorism are of sound mind. Groups as a whole are more likely to use propaganda to explain their motivations, and point to current or past acts against marginalized peoples in the world or to acts committed by world powers against certain peoples or states. However, individuals may not subscribe to the same beliefs that they appear to, and because of this the subtypes of actors and psychological factors discussed are important considerations.

Chapter 3 – Case Studies in the Canadian Context

Although much research has already been done into terrorism and what causes it, it is important to look at Canadian cases in order to determine a specific course of action to mitigate this phenomenon within our own country. What contributes to individuals engaging in terrorism may not necessarily be the same between countries, and therefore efforts must be made to put things in perspective in the Canadian context. Furthermore, although motivations are likely quite similar within Western countries, there may be small differences that can impact the type of response that the government and other organizations should implement. The International Centre for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence has estimated that as many as 100 Canadians have travelled to Syria to fight with the Islamic State. Other estimates suggest that the number of Canadian foreign fighters in ISIS's army is anywhere between 60 and 150 people.⁸⁹ Approximately half of ISIS's army is comprised of foreign fighters. Therefore the foreign fighter phenomenon is a significant threat to countries around the world and it is important that nations are able both to deter their citizens and residents from leaving to join terrorist organizations, and also to be properly able to deal with these individuals if and when they return back to their country of origin.

For these reasons, this chapter will focus on several Canadian case studies. These cases involve Canadian terrorists who either acted at home in Canada, such as Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, or left to join ISIS overseas, such as John Maguire and Damian Clairmont. These case studies will look at the backgrounds of the individuals involved, their paths to radicalization, and their stated or assumed motivations. They will then be evaluated

⁸⁹ Bourrie, 2016, p. 12.

against the motivations and subtypes discussed in Chapter 2 to determine if there is a consolidated course of action that should be followed in Canada to attempt to deal with this phenomenon.

John Maguire

Background

John Maguire grew up in Kemptville, Ontario, a town located about 50 kilometres south of Ottawa. He was one of two children, his father was a mechanic who used the family garage as his auto shop, and his mother worked in a nursing home. Growing up he played hockey, an experience he references in the propaganda video featuring him released by ISIS. He also played guitar in a punk band called the Shackles, which held concerts in church basements. However, even when playing with his band he stayed away from drugs and alcohol.⁹⁰ His family life was reportedly not great. His father was an avid believer of conspiracy theories and thought that 9/11 was an inside job, and after his parents divorced his father drove a wedge between John and his mother.⁹¹ However, when John was seventeen his father decided he was going to remarry and move to Russia, which led to John living briefly with his mother then moving to Ottawa to live with his grandmother. After graduating from Hillcrest High School in Ottawa in 2008, he got a scholarship to go to a university in Los Angeles in the fall of 2010 but returned to Ottawa to attend the University of Ottawa in the fall of 2011.⁹²

⁹⁰ Bourrie, 2016, p. 6.

⁹¹ Bourrie, 2016, p. 9.

⁹² Who is John Maguire? (2014, December 8).

Radicalization Process

It appears John Maguire's first encounter with Islam came while he was studying at Los Angeles City College.⁹³ However, it is not clear whether he was recruited by the people who converted him, or if he was recruited by the much larger group of ISIS propagandists who scour the internet looking for prospects.⁹⁴ According to some of his former friends, by the time he had returned from L.A. he had begun posting extreme viewpoints on Facebook. In previous online statements, he said he was going to have the "reward of jihad" and "the opportunity for martyrdom."⁹⁵ Moreover a student from the University of Ottawa who prayed with Maguire and was also an Islamic convert got the impression from speaking to Maguire about his conversion story that his identity had shifted dramatically in that he thought the end times were coming, and he had become quite isolated.

He is thought to have begun down a radical path by immersing himself in online speeches by U.S.-born Muslim cleric Anwar al-Awlaki. Al-Awlaki preached that jihad against the enemies of Islam, which included the United States and its allies, was a duty for every Muslim, and told his followers that U.S. action in places such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Israel proved that America was at war with Islam.⁹⁶ In December 2012 Maguire left Canada for Syria, and most likely got into the country through its porous border with Turkey. Police believe that Maguire was part of a cluster of Ottawa-based extremists, and

⁹³ Who is John Maguire? (2014, December 8).

⁹⁴ Bourrie, 2016, p. 10.

⁹⁵ Who is John Maguire? (2014, December 8).

⁹⁶ Duffy, A., and Hurley, M. (2015, February 7).

that his travel money was given to him by Awso Peshdary, an Algonquin College student and campus Muslim leader.⁹⁷

Motivation

In a propaganda video released by ISIS featuring John Maguire, he states that his motivations stemmed from his acceptance of the true calling of the prophets.⁹⁸

Furthermore in the same video he discusses the two attacks on Canadian soldiers which took place in October 2014, one of which involved Martin Couture-Rouleau who ran down Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent with his car in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec. The other involved Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, who shot Corporal Nathan Cirillo and stormed the parliament buildings in Ottawa. Maguire stated that these attacks were in direct response to Canada's participation in the coalition of nations "waging war against the Muslim people", referring to Canada's military involvement in Iraq and Syria.⁹⁹ This points to the first possible motivation explored in Chapter 2, which was foreign occupation. Although some motivation appears to be related to Canadian foreign policy, the majority of it seems to be ideological and religious based. Through several sources Maguire has referenced the religious duty he felt to join the Islamic State in order to defend what he calls attacks on Muslims by Western countries.

Furthermore a *National Post* reporter, Stewart Bell, communicated with Maguire in the summer of 2014, and reported that Maguire said that "Canada is a country Muslims should "hate for the sake of Allah." It has given "support for the enemies of Islam," specifically the United States and Israel, and waged "war against the Muslims of

⁹⁷ Bourrie, 2016, p. 13.

⁹⁸ Bourrie, 2016, p. 1.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Afghanistan.”¹⁰⁰ This shows the “us versus them” mentality seen often with Islamist terrorist religious propaganda, which is used to psychologically justify the actions of individuals committing acts of terror. Maguire uses religion as a justification and motivation for his actions in the note he left for his grandparents when he left Canada. He stated that jihad was obligatory, and in order to please God he had to sacrifice what he had in the West and make *hijrah*¹⁰¹ to the land of jihad.¹⁰²

In terms of the subtypes and motivational aspects elaborated upon in Chapter 2, Maguire fits within the Entrepreneur category. Those who leave their country of origin as foreign fighters often fit the character of ‘entrepreneurs’ because of the initiative and personal drive that is needed to reach out to an extremist organization and leave home. Moreover entrepreneurs “aspire to do the right thing by those they identify with, framed as the community of true believers, or the Muslim Nation.”¹⁰³

Maguire appears to have been drawn to extremism in many forms, having reportedly gone against the mainstream in high school, and been concerned with rebelling against perceived authority figures. However he also showed aspects of religious zealotry, by showing a belief that jihadism is required by the Islamic faith. This aspect can also be seen in the fact that he adopted an “us vs. them” mentality. However characteristics of the youth that are frustrated with society can also be seen with Maguire in that he appears to be focused on perceived worldly injustices and believes that violence is the best response.

¹⁰⁰ Bourrie, 2016, p. 14.

¹⁰¹ *Hijrah* refers to “a departure from territories ruled by infidels or a migration.” According to Khosrokhavar (2005), p. 18.

¹⁰² Bourrie, 2016, p. 14.

¹⁰³ Nesser, 2015, p. 14.

Damian Clairmont

Background

Another notable Canadian who left the country to join fighting in Syria is Damian Clairmont. However, unlike John Maguire, Damian Clairmont joined the extremist group Jabhat al-Nusra, which is affiliated with Al-Qaida. Clairmont was Acadian born in Nova Scotia, but was living with his mother and younger brother in Calgary. He converted to Islam following a two-year period of personal problems in his teens. During this time he dropped out of high school, was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, and attempted suicide at the age of 17.¹⁰⁴ However after his conversion to Islam he began to show signs of progress and was getting his life back on track. His mother noticed that Islam initially appeared to help and he became peaceful, calm and happy. But as time passed, he became more fundamentalist in his beliefs.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore during his conversion to the Islamic faith Clairmont changed his name to Mustafa al-Gharib,¹⁰⁶ Damian's mother, Christianne Boudreau, has since been very vocal in the fight against radicalization, and has been advocating for better laws and regulations so that others do not follow Damian's path.¹⁰⁷

Radicalization Process

Damian's radicalization appears to have followed a similar pattern to other foreign fighters from Western countries. According to another Canadian fighter, Clairmont rejected mainstream Islam and became consumed by the jihadist worldview, and was following online lectures by the now dead American-Yemeni preacher Anwar al-Awlaki, who played an instrumental role in recruiting for al-Qaeda, and who was also followed by

¹⁰⁴ Damian Clairmont killed fighting with al-Qaeda-linked rebels in Syria. (2014).

¹⁰⁵ Graveland, B. (2014, September 11).

¹⁰⁶ Damian Clairmont killed fighting with al-Qaeda-linked rebels in Syria. (2014).

¹⁰⁷ Perkel, C. (2016, March 21).

John Maguire.¹⁰⁸ Shortly before Clairmont's 20th birthday he moved into a boarding house and, according to his mother, became secretive, isolated and very angry, very political.¹⁰⁹ In November 2012 he told his mother that he was going to Egypt to study to become an imam but in reality he was leaving to join an extremist group, by going through Turkey to Syria. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) told his mother that it had been watching Clairmont before he left, but it was unable to stop him from leaving.¹¹⁰ Reports show that he was killed in Syria in January 2014.

Motivation

Although Damian Clairmont was diagnosed with bipolar depression, this was likely not a factor in his decision to leave Canada and join a terrorist organization. This is apparent because of the fact that he had been able to turn his life around and battle the depression several years before he left for Syria. However it is possible that because of his history with mental illness he was more susceptible to the influence of extremist fundamentalist views in that he may have internalized these into his identity after he had been helped out of his depression by the Islamic faith.

Clearly there was a religious component in Clairmont's reasoning for joining Al-Nusra, given the fact that he followed Anwar al-Awlaki's online lectures. In my opinion it is possible that he was indoctrinated by these lectures and by other extremists who he surrounded himself with into believing that it was religiously justified to commit acts of terror. This would point to the notion that religion can be used as a tool of terrorist organizations to recruit and radicalize its followers. With respect to foreign occupation

¹⁰⁸ Casciani, D. (2015, May 5).

¹⁰⁹ Damian Clairmont killed fighting with al-Qaeda-linked rebels in Syria. (2014).

¹¹⁰ Damian Clairmont killed fighting with al-Qaeda-linked rebels in Syria. (2014).

and Canadian foreign policy as a motivator for the joining of extremist groups, Clairmont's mother has stated that looking back she can see there were warning signs of his impending radicalization, as he was talking about conspiracy theories and believed that Western media was not portraying the truth of what was happening in Syria.

Clairmont was very proactive and aggressive with respect to his thoughts and opinions.¹¹¹

In terms of the various subtypes of individuals who engage in terrorist activities, although the fact that Clairmont was a foreign fighter would suggest that he belonged to the category of Entrepreneur, his apparent propensity to follow others and his history with mental illness makes it more likely that he would fit in the Protégé or Drifter categories. This is because with the Drifter there is an importance placed on social connections. Given that Clairmont had recently found a place in which he felt he belonged it is likely that he was more susceptible to influence from the people and peers he encountered. It is likely that he may simply have been in the wrong place at the wrong time and if he had not encountered people who held fundamental extremist Islamist beliefs he would not have gone to Syria. Clairmont also showed signs of being influenced by political and social grievances in Syria.

Michael Zehaf-Bibeau

Background

On October 22nd, 2014 Michael Zehaf-Bibeau killed Corporal Nathan Cirillo, a Canadian soldier on ceremonial sentry duty at the National War Memorial. He then stormed the Parliament centre block. Zehaf-Bibeau was the son of a French Canadian woman and a Libyan man who had immigrated to Canada. His parents had split-up before

¹¹¹ Graveland, B. (2014, September 11).

he was born but subsequently reconciled and were married; however they divorced in 1999.¹¹² He lived in Montreal and Ottawa growing up, but had been living in British Columbia's Lower Mainland in 2011.¹¹³

Zehaf-Bibeau was a devout Muslim who had had several run-ins with the law during his life. He was a drug addict and had several convictions including robbery, fraud, theft, assault, and possession of a dangerous weapon.¹¹⁴ He had been homeless in Burnaby B.C and had been in and out of jail. According to the RCMP, before the attack on Parliament he had come to Ottawa to get his Canadian passport, but his application had been flagged because of his long criminal record, and national security investigators were conducting a background check.¹¹⁵ He was believed to be in Ottawa at least since October 2nd 2014, and was staying at the Ottawa Mission, a homeless shelter downtown.

Radicalization Process

It is unknown when or where Zehaf-Bibeau became radicalized. However he did have connections to jihadists in Canada who shared a radical Islamist ideology, including at least one who went overseas to fight in Syria. These connections appear to have taken place online in the form of social media connections and interactions on extremist Islamic websites.¹¹⁶ Because these interactions were not in person, there was no evidence that Zehaf-Bibeau had an operational link to other jihadists, meaning that he was not on the radar of the Canadian government when it comes to potential terrorist attacks. Another indicator of his radical and fundamentalist nature can be seen when he was still living in

¹¹² Woods, A., and Bruser, D. (2014, October 24).

¹¹³ Friscolanti, M. (2014, October 30).

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Woods, A., and Bruser, D. (2014, October 24).

¹¹⁶ Ahmed, S., and Botelho, G. (2014, October 23).

Burnaby, B.C. The mosque that he attended there, called Masjid Al-Salaam, had as a mission to enlighten “both Muslims and non-Muslims in an attempt to counter distortions and misconception about Islamic beliefs and practice.”¹¹⁷ The mosque also had an open-door policy, welcoming people of any background or faith in for events, such as the broadcasting of hockey games during the Olympics. Zehaf-Bibeau however complained to the administration about this open-door policy and wanted it stopped, as he did not want non-Muslims entering the mosque.¹¹⁸

Motivation

Zehaf-Bibeau’s mother believes that the attack he orchestrated on October 22nd, 2014 was not driven by a grand ideology but instead was “the last desperate act of a person not well in his mind.” In her opinion, “mental illness is at the centre of this tragedy.”¹¹⁹ Given Zehaf-Bibeau’s history of mental illness this may well have been a factor in his decision to act. Furthermore the fact that he was a loner, had a criminal past, and was homeless probably had an impact on his reasoning. This is significant given that those with mental illness may be more susceptible to ideological influences in their immediate social environment.¹²⁰

Foreign policy also seems to have been a motivator for Zehaf-Bibeau. This is apparent through the video he created minutes prior to shooting Corporal Cirillo and storming parliament. In this video Zehaf-Bibeau references his political and ideological motivations, stating that his actions were “in retaliation for Afghanistan and because [Canadian Prime Minister, Stephen] Harper wants to send his troops to Iraq [...]

¹¹⁷ Friscolanti, M. (2014, October 30).

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Corner and Gill, 2015, p. 31.

Canada's officially become one of our enemies by fighting and bombing us, and creating a lot of terror in our countries and killing us and killing our innocents.”¹²¹ Paul Jarjapka, who met Zehaf-Bibeau only six weeks prior to the attack, told reporters that Zehaf-Bibeau had said that he had to fight the injustices of foreign intervention in Muslim regions, and that Canadians had a decadent and immoral lifestyle and must be taught a lesson and punished.¹²²

With respect to the subtypes of individuals engaged in terrorism discussed in Chapter 2, Zehaf-Bibeau fits most within the “Misfit” type. This typology is the most likely fit because of Zehaf-Bibeau’s history of criminal behavior before his involvement in terrorism. Misfits are likely to have a history of drug abuse, and often see religious extremism and violence as a way to gain forgiveness for their past sins and redeem themselves.¹²³ However, Zehaf-Bibeau may differ from the typology presented by Nesser in that the Misfit category was created to explain actions of an individual within a terrorist cell, and Zehaf-Bibeau by all accounts acted alone. Therefore he may display characteristics such as social problems, loneliness and mental illness, which are more common among lone wolves than other terrorists.¹²⁴ It is likely that he was motivated similarly to other lone wolves in that lone wolves tend to be driven by more elusive motives, mixing political grievances with personal ones.¹²⁵

¹²¹ Full transcript of Michael Zehaf-Bibeau video released. (2015, May 29).

¹²² Friscolanti, M. (2014, October 30).

¹²³ Nesser, 2015, p. 16.

¹²⁴ Nesser, 2015, p. 254.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Implications of the Case Studies

These three case studies exemplify the problem of terrorism in the Canadian context because they deal with two main types of Canadian-based terrorists: foreign fighters and those who plan attacks at home. The important aspects to consider with respect to these individuals are the commonalities and differences seen in their backgrounds, radicalization processes and apparent motivations. These similarities may help determine what factors are consistent and common among Islamist extremist Canadians and in turn aid in our ability to mitigate this ongoing problem.

All three individuals were young men who had converted to Islam and seem to have rapidly embraced extremist ideologies over mainstream Islam. Khosrokhavar says that new converts often “resort to the modern ‘pick-and-mix’ method that allows individuals to reconstruct their relationship with the sacred by choosing their communities and giving them a meaning that is not predetermined.”¹²⁶ This may indicate that they were either radicalized by the people who helped them convert, or purposely associated with other extremists after their conversion because they were already predisposed to that way of thinking. In fact, both John Maguire and Damian Clairmont had personal links to other extremists and were involved in face to face contact with other suspected extremists. Therefore, their radicalization process was likely facilitated by their peers and this may have been a factor in the speed at which their radicalization took place. All three individuals studied had ties to local mosques. In the case of Zehaf-Bibeau, the mosque administration noticed his increasing extremist views and his opposition towards non-Muslim people. Had this mosque been better equipped to resolve

¹²⁶ Khosrokhavar, 2005, p. 207.

the situation rather than ban him entirely, Zehaf-Bibeau may have had the opportunity to take a less radical path.

Maguire, Clairmont, and Zehaf-Bibeau were all linked to other extremists through social media. The Internet played a key role in their radicalization process in that it allowed them to contact and speak with like-minded others. Both Maguire and Clairmont had watched video lectures by Anwar al-Awlaki, who held very fundamentalist and anti-western views. While Zehaf-Bibeau was not specifically linked to these same videos, he was shown to have had social media connections to extremists and interactions on Islamic websites. It would seem that if these individuals had not had access to Islamic extremist views on the internet their radicalization process would have been slowed down or may not have taken place. The internet allowed them to feel as though they were part of a cause greater than themselves and likely pushed them towards terrorism. Therefore the government may need to increase its ability to censor websites and online forums deemed to be promoting terrorist propaganda, or at least monitor such sites more effectively.

Canadian foreign policy was a motivator for all three individuals examined in the case studies. Maguire stated in an ISIS propaganda video that Canada's involvement overseas and support for countries considered "enemies of Islam" were factors in Canada becoming a target of ISIS. Furthermore Zehaf-Bibeau made reference to the same thing in the video he shot before his attack in Ottawa, and Clairmont was quoted as saying that western media was lying about what was going on in Syria. Therefore, in order for the Canadian government to fight the spread of terrorism within our own country it will be important for the implications and effects of foreign policy to be addressed.

Both Maguire and Clairmont were able to leave Canada easily to make their way to Syria without being stopped by authorities. This is troubling given that both were on government watch lists because of their increasingly extremist nature, but there was no way to stop them from leaving the country to join terrorist organizations. With the growing problem of foreign fighters, the Government of Canada may have to consider the imposition of travel bans or restrictions.

Chapter 4: Current Policies and Recommendations

So far I have examined several possible motivators for individuals to engage in terrorist activities and groups and discussed the various subtypes of terrorists. Given these findings it can be said that individuals differ in terms of their motivational and personal factors, as well as their backgrounds. This shows that individuals who engage in terrorism are not a monolithic group and cannot be dealt with in the same way. Instead, as seen through the case studies in Chapter 3, individuals in Canada who have engaged in terrorism have come from different backgrounds and were motivated by different factors. It is necessary to craft an appropriate policy response to deal with the various types of potential terrorists in order to be best prepared to fight this threat. It is important to look at different forms of policy responses in order to tackle the problem of violent extremism in Canada appropriately and constructively.

For these reasons this chapter will look at four key areas of Canadian policy, determine what the Canadian government's current stance and policies are, and recommend changes or improvements based on the findings of the first three chapters. In order to cover various aspects of this problem, I will be looking at domestic policies designed to prevent individuals joining terrorist groups or engaging in terrorism, and at the implications of reintegration of such individuals into mainstream society. The foreign policy implications of this research will also be discussed, specifically with respect to Canada's military involvement in the fight against international terrorism overseas. This area is of particular importance given the fact that all of the individuals discussed in the Chapter 3 case studies have pointed to Western governments' involvement in Syria and Iraq as a reason for their decision to turn to violent extremist. Lastly, the national security

policy implications of terrorism will be outlined, specifically with respect to the abilities of Canada's police and intelligence agencies, and the fine line that must be drawn between protection of civilians and civil liberties.

Current Policies of the Canadian Government

The Canadian government, as well as other governments around the world, has had difficulty dealing with the causes and effects of terrorism. Under the previous Conservative government, the *Anti-Terrorism Act*, otherwise known as Bill C-51, was put into effect. However this bill has been controversial since its inception, with some saying that it is too broad and ill defined and is not an appropriate solution. It has faced intense scrutiny for the expanded powers it gives to the police and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. Opponents argue that the bill's wording is too vague.¹²⁷ This bill will soon be under review by the newly appointed Liberal government, and public consultations will be done to ensure that the changes made are appropriate.¹²⁸

In its current form Bill C-51 authorizes Government of Canada institutions to disclose information to other governmental institutions that have jurisdiction or responsibilities dealing with the security of Canada. Furthermore the government enacted “the *Secure Air Travel Act* in order to provide a new legislative framework for identifying and responding to persons who may engage in an act that poses a threat to transportation security or who may travel by air for the purpose of committing a terrorism offence”.¹²⁹ This part of the Act essentially authorizes the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to establish a list of suspected people and to direct air carriers to take a

¹²⁷ Watters, H. (2015, June 18).

¹²⁸ Bronskill, J. (2016, January 9).

¹²⁹ Bill C-51: Anti-terrorism Act. (2015).

specific action to prevent the commission of such threats. It also established powers and prohibitions governing the collection, use and disclosure of information in support of its administration and enforcement.

Further amendments were made to the *Criminal Code of Canada* with respect to recognizances to keep the peace relating to a terrorist activity, extend their duration, provide for new thresholds, authorize a judge to impose sureties and require a judge to consider whether it is desirable to include in a recognizance conditions regarding passports and specified geographic areas. The *Criminal Code* was also amended to provide for an offence of knowingly advocating or promoting the commission of terrorism offences in general, while providing a judge with the power to order the seizure of terrorist propaganda or, if the propaganda is in electronic form, to order the deletion of the propaganda from a computer system.¹³⁰ This aspect of the Bill was said to be problematic given the potentially broad definition of terrorist propaganda, because free speech could be threatened and more people than necessary could be charged with this offense.¹³¹

Bill C-51 also makes amendments to the *Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act* in order to permit CSIS to take measures within and outside of Canada to reduce threats to the security of Canada. It authorizes the Federal Court to make an assistance order to give effect to a warrant issued under that Act.¹³² However this could be problematic given that warrants can be issued not only if law enforcement believes that a terrorist attack will be carried out but also if they believe that one may be carried out.

¹³⁰ Bill C-51: Anti-terrorism Act. (2015).

¹³¹ Watters, H. (2015, June 18).

¹³² Bill C-51: Anti-terrorism Act. (2015).

This has the potential to lead to the arrest of people who were not actually going to commit an attack. It also creates new reporting requirements for the Service and requires the Security Intelligence Review Committee to review the Service's performance in taking measures to reduce threats to the security of Canada.¹³³ The new roles of CSIS can also be seen as problematic given that CSIS was created to gather intelligence and its new powers would stretch beyond this mandate.¹³⁴

Policy Recommendations

Prevention

All three individuals described in the case studies presented in Chapter 3 were radicalized in Canada and showed signs of this radicalization both in their interactions with family and community members and through their social media presences. Therefore, it is important to shift the focus onto what more can be done at the local and community level in order to prevent individuals from resorting to violent extremism in the first place. It may also prove beneficial to monitor the flow of terrorist propaganda online, especially when it comes to individuals who are influenced into radicalization by online lectures by known extremists. Lastly, the consideration of the implementation of travel bans on individuals suspected of becoming terrorists will be discussed.

Social media played a significant role in the radicalization of John Maguire, Damian Clairmont, and Michael Zehaf-Bibeau. Each of these individuals had contact with other extremists online, and John Maguire in particular was an avid poster of extremist views on social media websites. Not only were they linked to known

¹³³ Bill C-51: Anti-terrorism Act. (2015).

¹³⁴ Watters, H. (2015, June 18).

extremists, they were actively watching online video lectures from a known fundamentalist. This highlights the problem faced by the Canadian government with respect to online monitoring and censorship. Historically, terrorist groups have generally not been very successful at disseminating their own propaganda, but “with the invention of the World Wide Web [...] terrorists have heightened their ability to engage in self-publicity.”¹³⁵ That said, “it is important to not just focus on the Internet as the root of radicalization but to view it as a means through which radical ideas can easily be spread to vulnerable people.”¹³⁶ Often forum and chat websites are used to spread propaganda messages anonymously, making it difficult for law enforcement to track and respond to such action. Moreover, the fact that larger videos are embedded into messages to allow instant viewing without downloading the file, and that extremist websites often link to information on other websites makes taking down terrorist propaganda difficult.

Even if the government was able to effectively censor all potential extremist content on the internet, it may cause more harm than good to our country as a whole. Weimann says “while we must thus better defend our societies against terrorism, we must not in the process erode the very qualities and values that make our societies worth defending. The Internet is in many ways an almost perfect embodiment of the democratic ideals of free speech and open communication; it is a marketplace of ideas unlike any that has existed before.”¹³⁷ The increased censorship of the internet by western governments

¹³⁵ Ramsay, 2008, p. 5.

¹³⁶ Royal Canadian Mounted Police (2011). Youth Online and at Risk: Radicalization Facilitated by the Internet.

¹³⁷ Weimann, 2004, p. 11.

is problematic given that it would take away freedoms from all people, not just terrorists, and in effect “hand the terrorists a victory and deal democracy a blow.”¹³⁸

All three individuals looked at in the case studies could have benefitted from help from their communities and families when the signs of radicalization became apparent. If their families and communities had known what behaviours and actions were indicative of Islamist extremist viewpoints the terrorists actions of John Maguire, Damian Clairmont, and Michael Zehaf-Bibeau could have potentially been prevented. Therefore, engagement with the community and public outreach initiatives that target individuals who may be vulnerable to the influences of terror groups could be an effective way of changing their point of view. Religious groups and mosques would be especially important in reaching such people as they are in an ideal position to identify individuals who are being radicalized. Particularly with respect to Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, the influence of mosque administrators could have changed his course of action. Zehaf-Bibeau was kicked out of a mosque in British Columbia for intolerance and hate speech. If the administrators of the mosque had been better equipped to identify and deal with his actions it is possible that it is possible that he would not have turned to terrorism.

The RCMP currently runs a national security and community outreach initiative to counter terrorist activity and radicalization leading to violence. This is a comprehensive effort to engage all of Canada’s ethnic, cultural and religious communities to ensure the effective protection of Canada’s national security. Through this program, the RCMP collaborates and promotes open dialogue with impacted communities and relevant government agencies. The goal of this initiative is to build mutual trust between law

¹³⁸ Weimann, 2004, p. 11.

enforcement and communities to promote a community that is tolerant and inclusive, and does not target specific ideologies or beliefs. Furthermore this facilitates the understanding of common objectives, the resolution of local concerns, and ensures that appropriate channels of communication exist on an ongoing basis by maintaining regular contact with community members through meetings and other community-based events.¹³⁹ Other countries are implementing similar policies for community engagement. For example, in November 2015 a new counter-extremism strategy was released in the U.K where specific measures involve tackling violent and non-violent ideology, addressing online messaging, and developing a community engagement forum where the government can hear directly from those involved in challenging extremism.¹⁴⁰

Spalek argues “that key characteristics of a community-focused approach appear to be there being existing partnerships between communities and state officials, community consent and participation in the actual governance of the various strategies and approaches that are applied, and trust existing between state officials and security practitioners and community members.”¹⁴¹ Furthermore Baker says that “they key factor in any potentially successful working partnership between community and police lies in the nature and terms of engagement.”¹⁴² The RCMP’s community outreach initiatives are in line with this, given that a focus of their program is to facilitate and encourage better dialogue with communities. However, it will be important for the RCMP and other government agencies working in this area to ensure that they are not seen as simply using the community to gather information on specific community members. “A common

¹³⁹ Royal Canadian Mounted Police, (2014).

¹⁴⁰ Cameron (2015).

¹⁴¹ Spalek, 2012, p. 45.

¹⁴² Baker, 2012, p. 79.

grassroots perception of police interaction with various communities – irrespective of religious affiliation – was that it was based primarily on informant relationships, using and/or coercing communities to provide intelligence on its members who were suspected of criminal activity.”¹⁴³ This perception may exist within Muslim communities in Canada and must be countered through meaningful communication and dialogue with these communities.

A third lesson learned from the case studies is the ability of the Government of Canada and its police services to stop individuals from travelling overseas to become foreign fighters. Travel bans on John Maguire and Damian Clairmont could have stopped them from going to Syria in the first place. Moreover, the sole reason why Michael Zehaf-Bibeau did not also travel to Syria was the trouble he had obtaining a passport. If he had been able to get his passport he would not have committed the attack in Ottawa, and would have instead become a foreign fighter like Maguire and Clairmont.

Although travel bans may seem like a solution to the foreign fighter phenomenon, they are also quite problematic because they infringe on the rights of individuals by assuming that they will commit an offense when there is no way to know for certain. In this respect, “the preventive nature of these kinds of constraints may disrespect the target’s autonomy by presuming that she will commit a terrorist act.”¹⁴⁴ Currently in Canada, the *Secure Air Travel Act* provides a “legislative framework for identifying and responding to persons who may engage in an act that poses a threat to transportation security or who may travel by air for the purpose of committing a terrorism offence”.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Baker, 2012, p. 76.

¹⁴⁴ Noorda, 2015, p. 522.

¹⁴⁵ Bill C-51: Anti-terrorism Act. (2015).

However, given that this act was modified during the implementation of Bill C-51 and that Bill C-51 will be under review shortly by the Liberal government, this aspect of it may be modified in the near future.

Reintegration

Another important domestic policy to consider is the reintegration of defectors from extremist groups into society as well as those who have not defected but are coming back to their countries of origin after fighting. If Damian Clairmont or John Maguire had not been killed overseas they may eventually have tried to come back into Canada. The same is true for the many other Canadian nationals who have left Canada to fight for terrorist organizations. Clearly the dangers associated with such people are significant, given that they may be coming back to commit acts of terror. It is important to consider what will happen to these people once law enforcement is done with them and they have served a sentence. How will such people be able to live in Canadian society peacefully again? How long must the government keep their eyes on them to ensure that they will not commit terrorist acts or recruit others? How will the public react to such individuals being in their communities again? These are all important questions that must be considered, and they can be looked at through a criminal justice approach, seeing these people as ordinary criminals that need to be vetted and equipped to re-enter society.

There is a strong likelihood that when ISIS and other terror groups begin to fail some members will become disillusioned with their cause and try to leave to go back to their country of origin. Therefore, we can expect that these individuals will come back, and governments must be prepared to deal with these returnees in a constructive manner in order to suppress further radicalization or violence. These individuals should not be

given amnesty since they have committed several offenses under the Criminal Code, and therefore should be charged with these offenses or face some kind of punishment for their actions. However, there is a need for the government and the justice system to address how best to rehabilitate these individuals.

Bjørgo proposes a holistic crime prevention approach to the threat of terrorism and outlines nine general prevention mechanisms that can be applied to all criminal behavior. These mechanisms are: the establishment and maintenance of normative barriers; the reduction of recruitment; deterrence; disruption; protection of vulnerable targets; the reduction of harm; the reduction of rewards; incapacitation; and desistance and rehabilitation.¹⁴⁶ These are important because they represent how the criminal justice system should deal with all types of crime, thereby serving as an appropriate model for how terrorism should be deal with. The Department of Justice proposed an amendment to the *Criminal Code* in 2015 that would criminalize the promotion of terrorism, including attacks on Canadians, and would fill a gap in Canadian criminal law by making it a crime for a person to knowingly promote or advocate others to carry out a terrorism offence.¹⁴⁷ The penalty for this offence would be a maximum of five years in prison, and is comparable to the maximum sentence for the most serious of the three hate propaganda offences, which is the offence of advocating or promoting genocide. This proposed offense is similar to one enacted in Australia that prohibits advocating a terrorist act or the commission of a terrorism offence.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Bjørgo, 2016, p. 26.

¹⁴⁷ Criminalizing the Advocacy or Promotion of Terrorism Offences in General, (2015).

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

Specific programs should be developed to aid in the de-radicalization of individuals while in prison. These programs could benefit from analysing offenders based on the subtypes of terrorist characteristics discussed in Chapter 2, so that programs could be better tailored to address motivations of specific individuals for engaging in violent extremism. In his analysis of the effect of prisons on terrorism radicalization and de-radicalization in 15 countries, Neumann outlines several key best practices to consider when creating a de-radicalization program for offenders. These key elements are: the mixing of different kinds of programming, typically combining ideological and/or religious re-education with vocational training; the use of credible interlocutors, who can relate to prisoners' personal and psychological needs; placing emphasis on prisoners' transition back into mainstream society, typically by providing them with the means for a new beginning and by establishing social networks away from extremism; and the creation of sophisticated methods for locking prisoners into multiple commitments and obligations towards family, community, and the country.¹⁴⁹ The Correctional Service of Canada's research branch started a three-year research initiative, *Mitigating the Threat Posed by Violent Extremist Offenders in Correctional Institutions and Communities*.¹⁵⁰ As part of this initiative, an international roundtable was conducted to examine international best practices in managing radicalized offenders in order to assist CSC in developing its policies and operations concerning radicalized offenders. Through this, it was discovered that the focus for interventions for radicalized offenders should be on disengagement from the violent behaviour rather than the changing of ideological thought

¹⁴⁹ Neumann, 2010, p. 3.

¹⁵⁰ Correctional Service Canada (2014).

patterns through de-radicalization. They also determined that effective disengagement requires an understanding of the factors that motivate radicals to violent action.¹⁵¹

Support is also needed in the community once the individual is released so that they do not fall back into their old ways of life. This type of initiative is being developed by community leaders in different areas of the country, including in Montreal and Calgary. The Canadian Council of Imams has proposed the opening of two to three ‘de-radicalization clinics’ in Toronto that would serve as community resource centres on radicalization issues. These clinics would take a “holistic” approach, and make use of mental-health experts, academics and theologians.¹⁵² The federal government’s recent budget included \$35 million over five years for a new Community Outreach and Counter-radicalization Coordinator’s office.¹⁵³ This should greatly help counteract radicalization and facilitate reintegration of radicals into Canadian society and these types of centres should be places in major cities throughout the country.

Foreign Policy

As is apparent through all three case studies looked at in Chapter 3, Canadian based extremists point to Canadian foreign military involvement as a motivation for their actions. At the very least, they want the public to believe that actions are a response to Canadian foreign policy. Although in the short term the use of military means is an important contributor to the fight against terrorism, it should not be the only avenue used. Over the long term it would benefit Canada and its allies to stop military involvement in the Middle East, given that “states that adopt more active foreign policies are likely to

¹⁵¹ Correctional Service Canada (2014).

¹⁵² Bell (2016, April 11).

¹⁵³ Ibid.

foment some sort of resentment among foreign groups, knowingly or unknowingly, and hence may be the target of terrorism by these aggrieved groups.”¹⁵⁴ States should be wary of the consequences of their actions and assess how their actions can cause frustration and discontent in other parts of the world.¹⁵⁵

Currently Canada's military contributions to the multinational Coalition dedicated to militarily defeating ISIS, include: up to 830 Canadian Armed Forces personnel, trainers in "advise and assist" role; Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) medical personnel to mentor Iraqi security forces and provide medical support to CAF personnel and Coalition partners; staff, liaison officers and other specialists, including intelligence capabilities; and aircraft to support surveillance and refueling efforts.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, Canada will allocate approximately \$305.9 million towards the extension and refocusing of the mission, including \$41.9 million to be allocated for redeployment of personnel and equipment in 2016-17.¹⁵⁷ Canada is also a member of the Global Coalition against Daesh,¹⁵⁸ a coalition of 66 members who are committed to tackling Daesh on all fronts. Apart from its focus on military issues in Iraq and Syria, the Coalition is “committed to: tackling Daesh’s financing and economic infrastructure; preventing the flow of foreign terrorist fighters across borders; supporting stabilisation and the restoration of essential public services to areas liberated from Daesh; and exposing Daesh’s delusional narrative

¹⁵⁴ Savun and Phillips, 2009, p. 888.

¹⁵⁵ Savun and Phillips, 2009, p. 897.

¹⁵⁶ National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces (2016).

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ Daesh is an Arabic acronym equivalent to ‘ISIS’ in English.

including its claims to statehood, military success and the group's false religious narrative."¹⁵⁹

A strong military campaign against Islamist terrorist groups can be an effective way to constrain the abilities and resources of these groups. Furthermore it can aid in essential aspects of counter-terrorism, namely the ability of terrorist groups to recruit and train new members.¹⁶⁰ Military action is also effective at facilitating the decapitation of high level operatives in terrorist organizations. Decapitation tactics "are designed to kill or capture the key leader or leaders of a terrorist group, feature prominently in the counterterrorism strategies of many states."¹⁶¹ Price argues that "terrorist groups are susceptible to decapitation because they have unique organizational characteristics (they are violent, clandestine, and values-based organizations) that amplify the importance of leaders and make leadership succession difficult."¹⁶² He further states that "religious terrorist groups were less resilient and easier to destroy than nationalist groups following leadership decapitation"¹⁶³ because of the important role leaders of religious terrorist groups play in framing and interpreting organizational goals and strategies. Therefore the current military strategy employed by Canada and its allies is effective on multiple levels in that it reduces the territory and resources of terrorist groups and can help destroy and destabilize their leadership.

¹⁵⁹ The Global Coalition (2016).

¹⁶⁰ Bjørge, 2016, p. 26.

¹⁶¹ Price, 2012, p. 10.

¹⁶² Price, 2012, p. 43.

¹⁶³ Price, 2012, p. 44.

National Security

Canada's national security has been threatened by many terrorists groups including ISIS, which has called for terrorism directed against Canada through propaganda and social media statements, an example of which was seen in the propaganda video featuring John Maguire.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, the fact that Michael Zehaf-Bibeau so easily made his way into the centre block of the Parliament buildings in 2014 highlights the gaps in Canada's national security apparatus. Canadian national security must adapt to better meet the challenges associated with the rising trend of terrorism through suicide attacks.¹⁶⁵ Although the Government of Canada has been improving its level of national security, particularly since the events of September 11th, 2001, there is still work to be done.

Reforming Canadian national security in the face of terrorism was of utmost importance and was the focus of the first counter-terrorism legislation put forward by the government after the attacks of September 11, 2001. The *Anti-Terrorism Act* created measures to take enforcement action against those responsible for terrorist activities, created a legislative framework for combating terrorist financing, and ensured that Canadian values of respect and fairness were preserved and that hatred was addressed through stronger laws against hate crimes and hate propaganda.¹⁶⁶ However it has been suggested that the restriction of radical or terrorism-related speech might not achieve the intended security benefits.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Bourrie, 2016, p. 1.

¹⁶⁵ Forcese, 2008, p. 184.

¹⁶⁶ Public Safety Canada. (2013).

¹⁶⁷ Dragu, 2011, p. 74.

Many protocols were put in place to ensure a proper response by the government in case of an attack, and also to further aid in the prevention of such attacks including giving greater roles and responsibilities to agencies such as CSIS, as seen with Bill C-51 discussed previously. Although Canadian national security has been greatly increased in the face of terrorism it is important for it to balance security with the rights and civil liberties of citizens. Many critics of Bill C-51 stated that the bill went too far and was too broad, therefore leading to the potential that even peaceful protestors could be charged for terrorism related events. However, in order to prevent terrorist attacks “government agencies must be able to detect the slightest traces of terrorist activity, and detection becomes more likely as their intelligence efforts increase.”¹⁶⁸ It is also important to consider the legal implications of increased surveillance as well as the issue of governmental transparency with regards to national security issues. Forcese says that “some observers have even argued that transparency enhances, rather than prejudices, national security by increasing a flow of information essential in the coordination of national security efforts.”¹⁶⁹ Therefore the fact that the *Anti-Terrorism Act* delivered many new powers to intelligence and other governmental agencies without sufficient oversight is problematic, and should be addressed when the newly appointed Liberal government reforms the bill.

¹⁶⁸ Dragu, 2011, p. 66.

¹⁶⁹ Forcese, 2008, p. 378.

Conclusion

Terrorists are not a monolithic group and are motivated by a variety of factors. In this paper I have outlined what could motivate modern day Islamist terrorists, including the effects of foreign occupation in a state or territory; religion as a justification used by such groups for their actions, and as a tool for recruitment; and the psychological aspects of an individual that may predispose them to engaging in such behaviour. Various subtypes put forward by other researchers have also been presented and compared with the perceived motivations of Canadian based terrorists: John Maguire, Damian Clairmont, and Michael Zehaf-Bibeau. Each of these cases showed aspects of different motivators and were distinct from each other in that some were more ideologically and socially motivated, and others had influences from their peers and their own mental illnesses. Although religion is used as a tool in order to recruit and radicalize individuals, for some it is a true motivator, meaning that the individuals appear to truly believe in the fundamentalist and extremist viewpoints endorsed by terrorist organizations. Foreign occupation or Canadian military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan was found as a motivation for all three cases studied. However, whether this was a legitimate motivator for their actions or is solely being used for propaganda purposes could not be determined.

The current policies of the Canadian government were looked at, paying particular attention to the *Anti-terrorism Act*, Bill C-51. Four areas of focus were outlined in terms of potential policy recommendations, the first two of which dealt with the domestic policies of prevention and reintegration into mainstream society. This is an important point which the Canadian government has not yet fully dealt with. Community groups and religious leaders should be at the forefront of this in order to aid in the

identification of potential terrorists and help them find another path, particularly before they have committed any crimes. Furthermore, reintegration of individuals who have gone overseas as foreign fighters and returned is a key point that should be more fully addressed by the government. Different aspects of this issue have been explored, particularly with respect to the types of programming that should be available in Canadian prisons and communities.

Terrorists often point to the Canadian foreign policy as a motive for their actions, posing a clear threat to Canadian national security. This issue was explored in this paper, and attempts were made to suggest alternate actions that may decrease Canada's risk of being targeted while simultaneously eradicating the terrorist threat abroad. Canada's role in countering terrorism abroad was shown to be necessary, and the further implications of this method were also outlined. The main conclusion of this discussion was that while military means are important in the short term in the fight against terrorism, in the long term they may prove counterproductive. With respect to national security policy, it is important to maintain civil liberties in the face of terrorism in order to avoid the marginalization of minority groups and the "us versus them" mentality that an increase in surveillance could uncover. Furthermore policies relating to national security issues, such as Bill C-51, must be reformed in order to increase clarity and transparency.

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