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Root Causes of Canadian Terrorist Threats

With the recent terror arrests in Toronto, it is time for Canada to discuss some real root causes for Islamist terrorism. It's time to have a national debate which European nations have already had, which America does not need to have, and which Canada badly needs but is avoiding out of queasiness.

As Muslim organizations and our politicians never tire of telling us, terrorists are a minority of the Islamic population. This is correct. Regrettably, however, a certain percentage of the Islamic population in every nation seems to subscribe to radical beliefs and as such represents a threat.

The unfortunate implication is that nations with disproportionately large Islamic populations are more vulnerable to terrorism. In most of Europe, the media and mainstream political parties openly discuss this.

In America, few discuss this openly, but the Islamic population is relatively small compared to Europe and Canada and hence the need is not so overwhelming. Estimates vary, but the total Islamic US population ranges from 3 million to 5 million, which accounts for a bit over one percent of the population. These numbers include African American converts. In contrast, France alone has five million Muslims.

Also, the US has already taken steps to reduce the threat after 9/11. Immigration from Islamic nations, including tourist and student visas, has been sharply curtailed. From 2002 onwards, thousands of Muslims illegally residing in the US were deported; the largest number of deportees hailed from Pakistan. Of these, 2600 applied for refugee status in Canada.

Interestingly, American engagement with India, including student visas and immigration, has skyrocketed in the same period. The highest number of post-secondary foreign students, at 90,000 per year, comes from India. Half the technology/professional work visas every year are granted to Indians. The Department of Homeland Security reports that since 2003, the second highest number of naturalizing US citizens hail from India, next to Mexico.

This immigration policy reflects hard reality. Indians in America have the highest education levels and per capita income of any ethnic group, approximately double the national average. In Britain, the National Statistics Office in 2001 found that Hindus had higher incomes, rates of home ownership, and lower criminal conviction rates than the average. By contrast, Muslim Pakistanis and Bangladeshis had the lowest incomes, highest welfare dependency, and highest criminal conviction rates of any group.

We ignore these numbers at our own peril. Canada under the Liberals has implemented a counter-intuitive and self-destructive immigration policy. During the 1990s, the Canadian Islamic population doubled and was heavily favored over many other immigrant groups. For instance, statistics from 2001 indicate that the number of Pakistani immigrants (13,000) versus Indians (25,000) was five times higher per capita (considering that India's population is about ten times higher than Pakistan).

Recently, a memo from David Mulroney, in Bilateral Relations, revealed that under the Liberals, Foreign Affairs set up a Muslim Communities Working Group. No other ethnic group has such a lobby. This group provides affirmation of the obvious: Muslims have achieved the ability to receive disproportionately preferential treatment to the detriment of all other groups.

This explains our irrational immigration policy, our soft and ineffectual security measures, and public policy initiatives.

Americans believe in a concept which is considered radical here: they believe that national security and economic prosperity trumps political correctness and left wing orthodoxy. They disapprove of self-destructive immigration policies which elevate the danger of terrorist attacks, and they preferentially target immigrant groups who have a higher probability of contributing positively to economic prosperity.

It's unfortunate that Canada does not follow these principles. Ron Banerjee is a Director with the non profit Hindu Conference of Canada