From Rehabilitation to Recruitment:
Canadian Prison Radicalization and Islamist Terrorism[1]

Alex Wilner, PhD
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH)
wilner@sipo.gess.ethz.ch

Convicted terrorists are heading to Canadian prisons. Lessons from the United States and Europe, where levels of terrorist-related incarcerations are significantly higher, suggest there are concomitant problems with imprisoning Islamist extremists: the radicalization and recruitment of members of the general prison population. Prisons are filled with young and often dangerous individuals who have a predisposition for violent antisocial behaviour. Some inmates consider themselves victims of society and may be especially susceptible to ideologies that espouse retaliation and retribution. And the prison system itself incubates gang identification. This paper traces the emerging phenomena of prison radicalization, terrorist recruitment, and homegrown terrorism in Canada. It does so by offering a comparative assessment of international trends and applying existing theories of Islamist radicalization to the prison context. A multifaceted strategy for impeding prison radicalization in Canada is then offered, combining *structural*, *religious*, and *grievance-based* policy prescriptions.

In October 2009, Ali Mohamed Dirie was sentenced to a seven-year prison term for facilitating terrorism. Dirie was the fifth member of the "Toronto 18", a homegrown terrorist group arrested in 2006 for planning indiscriminate attacks against Canadians, to be handed a prison term.[2] In his ruling, Justice Bruce Durno noted that "terrorism offences strike at the heart of Canadian values and society." Dirie's intention, the Judge continued, was to "effect change in Canada's foreign policy, to resort to violence to protest violence, [and] to use guns and not ballots" to address his grievances.[3] Dirie's sentencing was the end result of an exceptionally successful multi-year counterterrorism process conducted in tandem by the RCMP, CSIS, local police departments, various branches of government, and the judiciary. With Dirie and his cohorts sitting in jail, Canadians are safer. At least ... this is the conventional thinking.

The problem with incarcerating terrorists, would-be terrorists, and their ideological sympathizers is the concomitant risk of prison radicalization and terrorist recruitment behind bars.[4] Far from being the last phase of a successful counterterrorism operation, incarcerating

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[1] Presented to the *Canadian Political Science Association* annual conference; Concordia University (Montreal, Canada), June 1-4, 2010.
[2] A sixth man, Fahim Ahmad, plead guilty in May 2010 and awaits sentencing.
[3] Isabel Teotonio, "Toronto 18 Gun Supplier Gets 7 Years", *Toronto Star*, October 3, 2009.
[4] Terrorism, for the purpose of this paper, is the use of indiscriminate violence against non-combatants by non-state actors with the purpose of generating fear in order to "signal", communicate, and advance particular socio-political objectives. As Bruce Hoffman notes, this definition implies that terrorism creates "psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim." Non-state terrorist organizations act independently from states and lack sovereign territorial control. Homegrown terrorism is autonomously organized by radicalized Westerners with little direct input from existing transnational networks. See Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia, 2006), p. 40; Bruce Hoffman and Gordon McCormick, "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 27 (2004), pp.248-251; Aiden Kirby, "The London Bombers as "Self-Starters": A Case Study in Indigenous Radicalization and the Emergence of Autonomous Cliques", *Studies in Conflict &*

individuals for planning, orchestrating, supporting, and facilitating terrorism often represents the beginning of a second series of related threats. Islamist prison radicalization occurs when members of the general prison population are actively and/or passively introduced to and convert to militant interpretations of radical Islamism that condone and support terrorism.[5] Dirie, for instance, has been as big a threat inside prison as he was outside prison. He was originally arrested in 2005 for attempting to cross into Canada from the United States with two handguns taped to his thighs which he acquired for use in terrorism. While serving time on that offence, he remained an enthusiastic member of the terrorist group. Crown prosecutors noted that even while in jail, Dirie "actively took steps to make connections with persons to facilitate the acquisition of guns … [and] false travel documents. He took an active role in recruiting other inmates to adopt extreme jihadi beliefs and to become members of … the terrorist group." In sum, throughout his time behind bars, Dirie provided "encouragement, advice, and direction" to the Toronto 18. [67] If Dirie is able to convince even one other inmate to adopt his violent political views, would his incarceration and terrorism conviction still be gauged as a resounding success?

The threat of Islamist prison radicalization is an important yet relatively under-explored feature of modern counterterrorism. Prisons have historically incubated radical ideologies – from neo-Nazism, to violent Marxism, and national liberationism – and have facilitated violence and terrorism.[8] John King and Russel Brewer, for instance, were both petty criminals with no known ideological grievances when they were imprisoned in the US during the 1990s. They left prison as radical white supremacists and were later convicted (and ultimately put to death) for the brutal lynching of African-American James Byrd Jr. in 1998. At his trial, King's attorney noted the importance of his client's time in prison: "What I do know, is [King] wasn't a racist when he went in. He was when he came out."[9] Islamist prison radicalization shares some similarities with other forms of radicalization, but it represents a more complicated and potentially greater threat. Over the past decade, hundreds if not thousands of individuals have been incarcerated on Islamist-related terrorism charges in Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Many of these individuals are Westerners, second- and third-generation citizens, nationalized immigrants, and long-term residents of the countries in which they are jailed.[10] The fact that Islamists also base their belief systems on the tenets of a major world religion further complicates how prison officials and decision-makers in the West can respond to security threats while simultaneously safeguarding

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Terrorism, 30 (2007), 415-419; and Marc Sageman. *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century*, (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), esp. Chapters 4 and 7.

[5] Replacing Islam*ic* terrorism with Islam*ist* terrorism properly credits the political nature informing the violence while avoiding bestowing it religious legitimacy. Today, *Islamist* and *Islamism* are widely used by terrorism experts and decision-makers alike. Islamism is a modern socio-political ideology that adopts the political tenets of Islam to advance particular goals and seeks to replace secular state law with Sharia law. Islamists who advocate the use of violence to achieve these goals are *jihadists*. Ghaffar Hussain, "A Brief History of Islamism", *Concept Series I*, (London: Quillium, 2010); Canadian Security Intelligence Service, *Radicalization and Jihad in the West*, (Intelligence Brief for the Prime Minister), June 7, 2006.

[6] Stewart Bell, "No Remorse from Terrorist, Court Told", *National Post*, September 24, 2009; Stewart Bell, "'Toronto 18' Defendant Gets 7 years for Terrorist Plot", *National Post*, October 2, 2009.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Greg Hannah, Lindsay Clutterbuck, and Jennifer Rubin, *Radicalization or Rehabilitation: Understanding the Challenge of Extremist and Radicalized Prisoners*, (Santa Monica: RAND, 2008), 17-28.

[9] Anti-Defamation League, *Dangerous Convictions: An Introduction to Extremist Activities in Prisons*, (New York: ADL, 2002), 1-5, 33-38 .

[10] RAND suggests that "nationalist groups deliberately avoided [prison] recruitment, while … jihadists appear to regard recruitment in their prisons as a prime objective." Hannah *et al*., *Radicalization or Rehabilitation*, ix, 45-46.

democratic laws, norms, and ideals. In sum, imprisoning terrorists poses a latent security and policy challenge that is not always properly understood nor easily addressed.

Examining the phenomenon of Islamist prison radicalization is important for three principle reasons. First, the increasing prevalence of terrorist incarceration in the West suggests an investigation of prison radicalization is long overdue. To date, few academic studies have rigorously addressed the phenomenon in general and almost no research has investigated the threat in Canada specifically. This research gap must be amended. Second, while a robust and cumulative literature on the theoretical processes involved in Islamist radicalization exists, the prison version of the phenomenon occurs under different rate-limiting variables that alter the explanatory power of these theories. In general, there is greater variation on the expected causal pathways of radicalization when it occurs behind bars. For instance, unlike open society, prisons are both highly controlled and closed environments and are populated with dangerous individuals who may have a predisposition for violent antisocial behaviour. These factors influence the scope, nature, and characteristic of radicalization in ways that do not exist in society, suggesting that a comparative analysis between radicalization processes, writ large, and prison radicalization in particular, is necessary. Third, prison radicalization is a policy issue that demands a research agenda that can help provide relevant findings for addressing and combating the threat in practice. With continued support for al Qaeda within pockets of Western society and a bourgeoning number of homegrown radicals actively seeking foreign terrorist training, it seems self-evident that more Islamist terrorists will be heading to jail in the coming decade. This will have an effect on rates of Islamist radicalization in prison. Canada is not immune to these trends: al Qaeda, Somalia's al Shabaab, Hezbollah, and other groups actively recruit in Canada; Canadians have travelled overseas to fight (and die) alongside foreign terrorist organizations; and homegrown radicalization continues to occur within Canadian borders. As more Canadian terrorists are imprisoned, the phenomenon of radicalization and recruitment will have to be more precisely understood and the counter-tactics and strategies properly identified and put into practice.

This article provides an overview of Islamist prison radicalization and, drawing on trends emerging overseas, highlights how the phenomenon might develop here in Canada. The argument is presented in three sections. The first lays out global trends in prison radicalization and compares them to the Canadian context. The second section describes the processes involved in radicalization, both outside and inside prison. The third section concludes by building on these trends and theories to offer a series of policy recommendations that can help staunch prison radicalization in Canada's prison system.

PRISON RADICALIZATION: A PRIMER

Islamist radicalization in prison is an old phenomenon. Sayyid Qutb, an early Islamist ideologue and founder of the *Muslim Brotherhood*, wrote his treaties, *Milestones*, while jailed in Egypt between 1954 and 1966. *Milestones* is today the "core theo-political ideology for many jihadist movements."[11] In prison, Qutb formulated and solidified his views, explaining how Muslims could recoup their power vis-à-vis the non-Muslim world by following Islam's guiding political principles and establishing an Islamic state (or Caliphate). This idea is at the center of modern Islamism and *jihadism*. Other ideologues have used prison to issue *jihadist* decrees. Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, the leader of Egypt's *Gamaat Islamiya* (the Islamic Group) was convicted in the United States for facilitating the 1993 World Trade Center bombing and for conspiring to attack other New York City landmarks. While in prison,

[11] James Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda: Islamist Extremism in British Prisons*, (London: Quilliam, 2009), 11

Rahman wrote and smuggled out a *fatwa* (an Islamic religious decree) urging Muslims to wage *jihad* against Americans. It states: "tear them apart, ruin their economy … sink their ships … shoot down their planes, kill them on land, at sea, and in the air. Kill them wherever you find them."[12] Following 9/11, Osama bin Laden justified al Qaeda's attack with direct reference to Rahman's *fatwa* claiming it gave him the religious authority to kill American indiscriminately.[13] Besides these ideologues, other inmates have used prison to attract and build *jihadi* support. The most notorious is Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the brutal leader of al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) who very nearly managed to topple American reconstruction efforts in the country before he was targeted and killed in 2006. Zarqawi's Islamist radicalization began in a Jordanian prison in the 1980s after he was convicted for dealing drugs and thieving. In prison he converted to a strict interpretation of Islam, and upon release, travelled to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets. He was again jailed in 1993 for a foiled attack on Western targets in Jordan, but used his imprisonment to link up with Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi (aka Essam Barqawi), a leading Islamist ideologue. Together they formed a prison gang with the intent of spreading al-Maqdisi's ideology throughout the prison system. Following his 1999 release, Zarqawi again traveled to Afghanistan and then to Iraq in 2003 where he used his prison connections and contacts to mount a devastating terrorism campaign.[14]

More recent Western prison converts to violent Islamism include Brits Richard Reid, Muktar Said Ibrahim, Mohammad al-Figari, and Martin Mubanga.[15] Reid converted to Islam while serving time for petty crimes during the 1990s and went on to become the failed 2001 Shoe Bomber. Ibrahim, a British immigrant from Eritrea, was jailed for gang-related violence in 1996 and was introduced to radical Islamism. Upon release he travelled to Pakistan and Sudan for terrorism training. In 2005, he organized and led the failed July 12 bombings in London. Al-Figari, born in Trinidad as Roger Figari, converted to Islam shortly before serving a drug-related prison sentence in the late 1990s. In prison he adopted radical beliefs and received UK-based terrorism training upon his release, an offense for which he was re-imprisoned in 2008. And Mubanga, a second-generation Zambian immigrant, converted to Islam while serving time for theft in 1992. He was later accused by the US of having received terrorism training in Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan and – though never formally charged – spent time in Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

Similar cases of Islamist prison radicalization have occurred outside the UK.[16] Some of the high profile cases include Jamal Ahmidan, one of the terrorist leaders behind the March 2004 Madrid bombings. He is suspected of having radicalized while serving time for petty crime in Morocco in 2000. Returning to Spain in 2003, he acquired the explosive materials for the train bombs from Emilio Suarez Trashorras, a Spaniard who converted to Islam while serving time in 2001 on drug offenses.[17] Mohamed Achraf, while serving time for credit card fraud in Spain, established the *Martyrs for Morocco* behind bars, and ended up recruiting nearly 20 inmates for attacks on Spain's National Court. Safe Bourada, imprisoned in France in 1995

[12] Frank Cilluffo, "Prison Radicalization: Are Terrorist Cells Forming in U.S. Cell Blocks?", Testimony, US Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, (September 19, 2006), 3-4.
[13] Hannah *et al*., *Radicalization or Rehabilitation*, 31.
[14] Mark Hamm, "Prison Islam in the Age of Sacred Terror", *The British Journal of Criminology* 49:5 (2009), 668. See also, Hannah, *Radicalization or Rehabilitation*, 29-30, 67-68.
[15] Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 14-18.
[16] For an overview of *jihadi* violence in the West, see Peter Nesser, "Chronology of Jihadism in Western Europe 1994-2007: Planned, Prepared, and Executed Terrorist Attacks" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 31 (2008); New York Police Department (Intelligence Division), *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat*, 2007, 19-66; and Lorenzo Vidino, 'Homegrown Jihadist Terrorism in the United States: A New and Occasional Phenomenon', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 32 (2009).
[17] NYPD, *Radicalization in the West*, 39; Hannah, *Radicalization or Rehabilitation*, 35.

for his role in a string of metro bombings that rocked Paris in the 1990s, also spent his time behind bars recruiting inmates. Upon his release in 2003, Bourada used his prison contacts to establish a terrorist cell, *Ansar Al Fath* (the Partisans of Victory), and planned further attacks in Paris. He was re-arrested in 2005.[18] Similar trends have taken place in the United States. Jose Padilla, currently serving a 17-year terrorism conviction, Michael Finton, arrested in September 2009 while attempting to detonate a truck bomb in Illinois, and several men arrested in 2009 for plotting attacks on New York City synagogues were all introduced to radical Islam while serving time on non-terrorism related charges. Kevin James founded *Jam'iyyat Ul-Islam Is-Saheed* (JIS) in California's New Folsom Prison while serving a 10-year sentence for robbery. He recruited other inmates and parolees for attacks in Los Angeles.[19] And Ruben Shumpert (aka Amir Abdul Muhaimeen) is thought to have converted to Islam while imprisoned in the US. He was eventually arrested on terrorism charges but managed to flee to Somalia only days before his 2006 sentencing. In 2008, he was reportedly killed in a US missile strike targeting al Shabaab fighters.[20]

Besides these individual cases, overall prison figures and terrorism incarceration rates are also revealing. In his 2006 study of *jihadi* terrorism in Europe, Edwin Bakker compiled data on over 200 European *jihadists*. He found that over 90 percent were residents of a European country and that almost 60 percent retained European citizenship.[21] He also found that at least 58 individuals had a criminal record while they were involved in terrorism, of which only "half a dozen persons" had been previously charged with terrorism-related offenses.[22] That means that roughly one-quarter of Bakker's sample had spent time in jail on non-terrorism offenses. While his study does not focus on radicalization, we might assume that some of these criminals may have been introduced to Islamism and *jihadism* behind bar.

Country-specific data, where and when it exists, complement Bakker's findings.

In the UK, for instance, as of March 2008, 125 individuals were imprisoned in England and Wales on terrorist-related offenses and another 17 persons were classified as "domestic extremists/terrorists" (i.e. Irish nationalists). The majority of the former group, 62 percent, were UK nationals and a vast majority, 91 percent, self-identified as Muslims. In terms of terrorism arrests and conviction rates, UK statistics show that between 2001 and 2008, nearly 1500 terrorism arrests were made. Of those, 521individuals (35 percent) were eventually charged – comparable to the percentage of charges derived from other criminal arrests – of which 340 were considered terrorism related. Of this latter group, 196 convictions were handed down. With an annual rate of terrorism-related arrests in the UK hovering around 225 and an annual terrorism conviction rate of 58 percent, an average of 30 terrorists have been imprisoned in the UK every year since 2001.[23] Consider further that the number of self-identified Muslim prisoners in England and Wales (as of June 2005) was 7,250 (roughly 9.5

[18] Pierre-Antoine Souchard, "9 Convicted in Paris Terror Trial", *Associated Press*, October 23, 2008.
[19] Bert Useem and Obie Clayton, "Radicalization of U.S. Prisoners", *Criminology & Public Policy* 8:3 (2009), 580-582.
[20] Sara Carter, "Somalis in US Draw FBI Attention", *Washington Times*, (December 29, 2008); Jeanne Meserve and Mike Ahlers, "Seattle Case Raises questions about War on Terror", CNN, (December 18, 2006).
[21] Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Laura Grossman have found otherwise. In their analysis of 117 terrorists, they found that only a small fraction, seven individual, were radicalized in prison. They conclude that "prison radicalization should not be seen as a top national security priority" in the US. Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman, *Homegrown terrorists in the US and UK*, (Washington: FDD Press, 2009),15, 58-59.
[22] Edwin Bakker, *Jihadi Terrorists in Europe: Their Characteristics and the Circumstances in which they Joined the Jihad* (Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2006), 36-7, 40-41.
[23] These figures were derived from: Home Office Statistical Bulletin, *Statistics on Terrorism Arrests and Outcomes Great Britain*, (London: Home Office, 2009), 1-28.

percent of the total prison population), an increase of 2.5 percent from 2001.[24] Cumulatively, these trends cast a worrying projection.

In Spain, similar figures are evident. Over 175 inmates are imprisoned on *jihadi*-related charges. However, unlike the British sample, a vast majority of these inmates are not Spaniards. In their study of Islamist radicalization in Spanish prisons, Humberto Trujillo and colleagues found, for instance, that almost 90 percent of Spain's Islamist terrorism convicts were foreign nationals (notably Moroccans and Algerians). Only 16 Spaniards were included in that group.[25] However, the authors' data (good up to March 2007) does not include the many terrorism convictions handed down following the Madrid bombing trials (October 2007) and associated Supreme Court ruling (July 2008). In total, another 18 individuals were imprisoned for *jihadi* terrorism, including four Spaniards, in connection to the Madrid attacks.[26] In general, Spain's *jihadi* prison population reflects overall Spanish prison trends. The foreign population of all inmates in Spain has doubled from 18 percent in 2000 (representing roughly 8,000 individuals) to almost 33 percent by the end of 2007 (nearly 19,000 individuals of a total prison population of 58,000). That nearly 200 terrorists are incarcerated in Spain and that roughly 6,000 prisoners retain nationality in a Muslim majority country, suggests Spain's prison system may be especially susceptible to Islamist radicalization and recruitment.[27] The high percentage of foreign inmates further suggests that Spanish prison radicalization will likely have an international implication.

In France, the figures are even more dramatic: data on incarceration rates range widely, but according to former Minister of the Interior Michele Alliot-Marie, as many as 100 French prisoners are considered "hard core" extremists and another 200 to 300 inmates "could be tempted" to participate in *jihadism*.[28] *Le Figaro*, a leading national paper, offers an even darker picture. Citing confidential prison documents, the paper reports that as many as 442 Islamists are imprisoned in France and that 147 of these actively proselytize Islamism behind bars.[29] Combine these figures with Tomas Precht's findings that roughly half of the country's 60,000 prisoners identify as Muslims, and it seems that the French prison system may also be ripe for radicalization.[30]

When comparing these international trends to Canadian trends, it is important to note that Canada does not face nearly the same level of international and homegrown Islamist terrorism as our allies do. CSIS Director Richard Fadden made public recently that as of May 2010 CSIS was "investigating over 200 individuals ... whose activities meet the (official) definition of terrorism," including many "second or third generation Canadians."[31] While it is true, then, that al Qaeda and others continue to threaten Canadians directly, that Canadians are active both militarily and diplomatically in regional conflicts with terrorist organizations, that

[24] Hannah *et al*., *Radicalization or Rehabilitation*, 11-13.
[25] Humbert Trujillo, *et al*., "Radicalization in Prisons? Field Research in 25 Spanish Prisons", *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21 (2009), 558-560.
[26] See Paul Hamilos and Mark Tran, "21 Guilty, Seven Cleared over Madrid Train Bombings", *Guardian*, 31 October 2007; Dale Fuchs, "4 Cleared in Madrid Train Bombing", *New York Times*, July 18, 2008; *BBC News*, "Madrid Bombings: Defendants", July 17, 2008.
[27] Trujillo, *et al*., "Radicalization in Prisons", 558-560, 573-578.
[28] "Manual outlines Muslim Radicalization in European Prisons", *Associated Press*, October 2, 2008.
[29] Christophe Cornevin and Jean-Marc Leclerc, "400 islamistes font du prosélytisme en prison", *Le Figaro*, September 23, 2008.
[30] Tomas Precht, *Home Grown Terrorism and Islamist Radicalization in Europe* (Copenhagen: Danish Ministry of Justice, 2008); 62; Pascale C. Siegel, "Radical Islam and the French Muslim Prison Population", *Terrorism Monitor* 4:15 (2006).
[31] David Ljunggren, "Canada Spies say Tracking over 200 Terror Suspects", *Reuters*, May 11, 2010.

dozens of Canadians have died in attacks since 2000, and that some Canadians themselves are attracted to *jihadi* violence, overall Canadian figures reveal that the threat remains a serious but modest one.[32] This is a good thing. The fact that prison radicalization has progressed far further overseas than it has in Canada gives Canadian officials an opportunity to learn from foreign experiences and develop proper responses early on.

According to a Statistics Canada data request, terrorism-related incidents between 2002 and 2008 breakdown as follows:

Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations

Annual	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	
Number of Incidents								**Total**
Property or service for terrorist activity	1	n/a	0	0	6	14	40	**61**
Participation in terrorist activity	1	2	2	0	17	21	41	**84**
Facilitation of terrorist activity			0	1	8	5	12	**26**
Commission or instructing to carry out terrorism		0	n/a	n/a	7	3	14	**24**
Harbouring/concealing a terrorist						0	1	**1**
Total Persons Charged								
Property or service for terrorist activity	0	n/a	0	0	0	6	1	**7**
Participation in terrorist activity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Facilitation of terrorist activity			0	0	0	6	0	**6**
Commission or instructing to carry out terrorism		0	n/a	n/a	1	1	0	**2**
Harbouring/concealing a terrorist						2	1	**3**

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM (April 2010)

In sum, nearly 200 incidents were recorded between 2002 and 2008, resulting in 18 separate terrorism charges.[33] Some of the more high profile events incorporated here include the 2006 arrest of the Toronto 18 (and subsequent investigation, charges, and trial), Said Namouh's 2007 arrest for aiding an al Qaeda affiliated plot in Germany and Austria, firebombings and other attacks against Montreal Jewish centers in 2004, 2006, and 2007, the 2006 seizure of the World Tamil Movement's offices and bank accounts in Montreal and Toronto, Prapaharan Thambithurai's 2008 charge of supporting and financing the Liberation Tigers of Tamil

[32] See Alex Wilner, "Counter-capability and Counter-motivation: Combating Terrorism in Canada", in David McDonough (ed.), *A National Security Strategy for Canada*, (Toronto: University Press, Forthcoming 2010).

[33] The data is a little misleading. For instance, one individual can be charged multiple times and may be represented more than once in the incidents report, though the data presented here does not account for double counting. Likewise, available data ends in 2008, though terrorism charges for the incidents identified that year may not appear until 2009 and are therefore missing from the total tally. Furthermore, this data does not differentiate between Islamist terrorist activity and other typologies of terrorism. And finally, the data does not account for charges that were handed down as a result of terrorism investigations but nonetheless fall beyond the scope of terrorism offenses (i.e. gun smuggling).

Eelam (LTTE), and a series of blasts near Dawson Creek, British Columbia between 2008 and 2009 targeting EnCana oil and gas infrastructure.

In terms of convictions, as of March 2009, nine would-be Canadian terrorists have been jailed and/or are awaiting sentencing. Mohammad Momin Khawaja was the first Canadian imprisoned under the country's *Anti-Terrorism Act*, guilty of financing terrorism in the UK and of having designed and constructed a remote-controlled transmitting device capable of setting off home-made explosives.[34] Namouh was found guilty of conspiracy, participating in and facilitating the activities of a terrorist group, and extortion in October 2009 and was given a life sentence in February 2010.[35] In May 2010, Thambithurai plead guilty to knowingly providing financial services to the benefit of a terrorist group. He became the first Canadian convicted of a terrorism offence based solely on fundraising and the first Canadian convicted of financing the LTTE since the group's blacklisting in 2006.[36] And of the Toronto 18 suspects, six have been found or have pled guilty to terrorism offenses and another handful of related trials are ongoing. Overall trends reveal, then, a slow but deliberate increase in the number of terrorism-related incidences and incarcerations in Canada over the past half-decade.

To understand how incarcerated terrorists might influence patterns of radicalization in Canadian prisons it is important to understand that the correctional system in Canada is administered by both the Federal and Provincial governments. Serious criminal offenders receiving a sentence of two or more years – which is usual in criminal cases involving terrorism – fall under federal jurisdiction and serve time in one of Canada's 54 federal penitentiaries. Overall, though, relatively few crimes result in sentences to federal facilities. In 2005/6, for instance, of a total of 2.7 million crimes reported to the Canadian police, roughly 245,000 convictions (in adult courts) were handed down. Of that, one-third (roughly 78,000) served time in prison at the Provincial/Territorial level and an even smaller group (under 5,000) ended up in federal jurisdiction.[37] Because most terrorist convictions result in federal custody, however, it is the federally administered prison population that is at greatest risk of Islamist radicalization.

Between 1998 and 2008, Canada's federal prison population hovered between 12,400 and 13,500 individuals. Another several thousand federal offenders are "actively supervised" and/or are on some form of "conditional release" or parole but are not physically incarcerated.[38] Demographically, the 2007/8 federal prison population broke down accordingly: the majority (67 percent) were Caucasian; Aboriginal individuals made up the second largest group (17 percent); and only 874 individuals (3.8 percent) identified as Muslim.[39] It is worth noting too, that the expansive 2008 Department of Public Safety statistical report on Canada's prison population makes *not one mention* of terrorism or terrorist convictions. Quite simply, the threat of terrorism, though growing, has been a minor one in Canada and emerging trends are not yet reflected in open-sourced data.

Nonetheless, as more terrorists are incarcerated in this country, the related threat of prison radicalization may rise. As Dirie's case highlights, some individuals will actively try to

[34] "Device Capable of Remotely Triggering Bomb, Khawaja Trial Hears", *CBC*, July 9, 2008.
[35] Irwin Block, "Said Namouh Sentenced to Life in Prison in Terrorism Case", *Montreal Gazette*, February 17, 2010.
[36] Stewart Bell, "Toronto-area Man Pleads Guilty to Funding Tamil Tigers", *National Post*, May 11, 2001.
[37] Department of Public Safety Canada, *Corrections and Conditional Release Statistical Overview* (2008), 17-18.
[38] Another 20,000 individuals are incarcerated in Provincial/Territorial facilities. Ibid., 37-39.
[39] Ibid., 51-54.

promote Islamist causes and the prison environment itself will always retain some elements that are passively conducive to radicalization and recruitment. Likewise, while Dirie's message may carry the greatest weight amongst other Muslim inmates, it is just as often a non-Muslim prisoner – as numerous cases from Europe and the US highlight – who may find radical Islamist ideology attractive.

RADICALIZATION: OUTSIDE AND INSIDE PRISON

Individuals who set out to kill their fellow citizens in campaigns of political violence do so because they come to believe that murder is feasible and just.[40] Radicalization is a personal process in which individuals adopt extreme political, social, and/or religious ideals and aspirations, and where the attainment of particular goals justifies the use of indiscriminate violence. It is both a mental and emotional process that prepares and motivates an individual to pursue violent behavior. According to Brian Michael Jenkins, radicalization is the internalization of a "set of beliefs, a militant mindset that embraces violent *jihad* as the paramount test of one's conviction."[41] Understanding what drives radicalization is exceptionally challenging; few rules seem to apply. As CSIS notes, "there does not appear to be a single process that leads to extremism: the transformation is highly individual."[42] Individuals radicalize for different reasons and in different ways. As John Horgan reiterates, "there is neither one route to terrorism, one route through terrorism, nor one route away from terrorism."[43] Nonetheless, there is a burgeoning literature on the precursors of radicalization that identifies and explores the socio-political and environmental factors that may lead to radicalization. Three precursors stand out: socio-political alienation, deepening religious identity, and anger over a state's foreign policy.

Societal-based Precursors of Radicalization

Socio-political Alienation

First, the most commonly cited precursor of radicalization is the lack of socio-political integration particular Western Muslim communities have with their broader society, and, relatedly, their individual experiences of discrimination and victimization.[44] The assumption is that individuals and groups who fail to properly associate with their host or native country eventually seek other like-minded individuals to associate with. In so doing they construct a narrow social network that is distinct from the broader societal one and establish identities that reflect the "clique" rather than the nation.[45] As David Wright-Neville and Debra Smith suggest, "alienation is replaced by identification with the group, powerlessness is replaced by potency derived from being involved in group operations, while humiliation is mitigated by

[40] These arguments were originally developed in Alex Wilner and Claire-Jehanne Dubouloz, "Homegrown Terrorism and Transformative Learning: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Understanding Radicalization", *Global Change, Peace & Security* 22:1 (2010), 37-45.
[41] Brian Jenkins, "Building an Army of Believers: Jihadist Radicalization and Recruitment", Testimony, US House of Representatives (April 2007).
[42] Quoted in Stewart Bell, "Jihadists Born Here pose New Threat", *National Post*, November 19, 2005.
[43] John Horgan, *Walking Away From Terrorism*, (London: Routledge, 2009), 145.
[44] Sam Mullins, "Home-grown Terrorism: Issues and Implications", *Perspectives on Terrorism* 1:3 (2007): 1-3; Jocelyne Cesari, "Terrorism and Diasporas in the United States", in *The Radicalization of Diasporas and Terrorism*, Bruce Hoffman *et al.*, (eds.), (Washington: RAND 2007): 33; Tarik Fraihi, "(De-)Escalating Radicalisation: The Debate within Muslim and Immigrant Communities", in *Jihadi Terrorism and the Radicalisation Challenge in Europe*, Rik Coolsaet (ed.) (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2008).
[45] Social networking and bonding in terrorist formation is discussed by Sageman in *Understanding Terror Networks*, 137–73.

participation in actions."[46] As a result, some radicalization individuals distance themselves politically, socially, and ideologically from the broader community, eventually rejecting the national identity shared by other citizens, along with the collective's underlying political ideology, historical narrative, and related value-systems. Anti-democratic action and violence is a potential outcome.

Religious Identification

Second, *jihadism*, whether pursued in North America or North Africa, is intrinsically associated with Islam. Though it is extremely doubtful that Islamic tenets condone the sort of indiscriminate and brutal violence being committed in its name, adherents of militant *jihadism* nonetheless self-identify as "good Muslims" and evoke Islam to justify their actions. Just as Osama bin Laden perceives his Holy War as one pitting a "vanguard" of pious believers against non-believers in the West (the "far enemy") and apostates in the East (the "near enemy"), so too do the young radicalized Westerners who carry out attacks.[47] At his trial for the brutal 2004 murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam, Mohammed Bouyeri put it bluntly: "what moved me to do what I did was purely my faith. I was motivated by the law that commands me to cut off the head of anyone who insults Allah."[48] However poorly Bouyeri and his ideological cohort have interpreted Islam and misappropriated its religious labels, globalization allows like-minded individuals to come together. Olivier Roy explains that the forces of globalization (modernization, urbanization, secularism, displacement, hi-tech communications, and so on) create tension for young Western Muslims who find themselves caught adhering to traditional socio-religious beliefs in a non-religious environment. One possible outcome is insecurity and confusion over identity, whereby radicalization becomes a way for disenfranchised Muslim youths to reassert their religious identity within a non-Muslim socio-political environment. "In radical Islam," writes Roy, individuals find "a way to recast and rationalise their sense of exclusion", replacing missing interpersonal ties and re-establishing a sense of belonging.[49] The Internet is a critical component of that remedy, allowing individuals to create an abstract and "virtual community" of believers that rests outside the confines of a specific city, country, or region.

Foreign Policy

Third, Western *jihadi* radicalization is considered a reaction to, and violent rejection of, a host or native state's foreign and/or defense policy. Western militant *jihadists*, the argument suggests, are motivated by perceived injustices taking place against Muslims around the globe. Bin Laden states: "The truth is the whole Muslim world is the victim of international terrorism. We are a nation whose sacred symbols have been looted and whose wealth and resources have been plundered. It is normal for us to react against the forces that invade our land."[50] For reasons to do with transnational religious solidarity, the alleged victimization of Muslims in Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Palestinian Territories, Somalia, Chechnya and elsewhere by the US, the EU, their allies, and other international organizations (like NATO, the World Bank, the UN) compels Western Muslims to act. "Perceived provocation," explains Akil Awan, "serve[s] as a *casus belli* that sanctions the recourse to jihadism."[51] There are at least three categories of perceived grievances: insults against Islam, Western complacency in

[46] David Wright-Neville and Debra Smith, "Political Rage: Terrorism and the Politics of Emotion", *Global Change, Peace, & Security* 21:1 (2009), 95.
[47] Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge: University Press, 2005), ch. 3.
[48] Quoted in Philippe Naughton, "Van Gogh Killer Jailed for Life", *Times*, July 26, 2005.
[49] Olivier Roy, *Globalised Islam: The Search for a New Umma*, (London: Hurst, 2004), 324.
[50] Osama bin Laden, interview by John Miller, *ABC News* (reprint *PBS Frontline*), May 28, 1998.
[51] Akil Awan, "Antecedents of Islamic Political Radicalism among Muslim Communities in Europe", *PS: Political Science & Politics* 41:1 (2008), 16.

the face of Muslim suffering, and overt Western military aggression against Muslims. The assumption is that some geo-political developments humiliate and anger a tiny portion of Western Muslims to the point that they feel justified to take revenge against the citizens and states that condone and participate in these perceived injustices. In his quantitative study of British radicalization, Brendan O'Duffy finds that "British foreign policy [is] a significant source of alienation among younger British Muslims" and that "attitudes towards British foreign policy interact with … domestic social, cultural, and economic sources of discontent."[52] The point has very little to do with whether or not some form of organized persecution, xenophobia, or dishonor against Muslims is actually taking place or whether Western policies concerning the Arab and Muslim world are in fact biased. What matters is that pockets of the Western Muslim community accept that these grievances exist and think in terms of victimhood. Radicalization is a reaction to these prejudices and violence is, on this view, a legitimate response.

These precursors to radicalization offer insight concerning the structural conditions that help ferment homegrown terrorism, but they remain imperfect. None singularly explains how Westerners come to accept and participate in *jihadi* violence, for instance, and while a vast number of people may share these common characteristics, only a fraction actually radicalizes. While these precursors constitute an important piece of the terrorism puzzle, they do not reveal the processes of personal transformation that are necessarily involved.[53] As Horgan explains, properly understanding terrorism requires a shift in research focus from "the pursuit of *profiles* to the mapping of *pathways*" and from a search of "*root causes* to the identification of *route qualities*."[54] These theoretical approaches and precursors to radicalization do, however, allow us to identify a starting point for studying prison radicalization. We can distinguish the active and passive forces that help drive radicalization behind bars. It is evident that the social and environmental forces that exist in prison differ markedly from those that take place within open society. As noted, prison is a highly restrictive environment populated with potentially violent individuals. And yet, the precursors of radicalization that are evident in society are present within prison as well. Three precursors to prison radicalization are identified below.

Prison-based Precursors of Radicalization

Social Alienation & Prison Gangs

First, socialization and alienation occurs in prison just as it does in society though it is reflective of prison dynamics, not societal ones. Inmates experience social pressure and a "deprivation of autonomy" that often results in feelings of isolation, insecurity, anxiety, and anger.[55] Many prison facilities are filled with individuals who have a penchant for antisocial behavior. Social interaction within these communities is likely to be fraught with suspicion

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[52] Brendan O'Duffy, "Radical Atmosphere: Explaining Jihadist Radicalization in the UK", *PS: Political Science & Politics* 41:1 (2008), 37.

[53] Understanding these internal processes requires theoretical approaches that address the characteristics of personal change, learning, and behavior. See, Wilner and Dubouloz, "Homegrown Terrorism and Transformative Learning", 45-51.

[54] Horgan, *Walking Away From Terrorism* 1, 145.

[55] Hannah *et al*., *Radicalization or Rehabilitation*, 7. There is debate within prison studies, however, as to the manner in which prison culture is created. Useem and Clayton explain that "deprivation theory" (i.e. the harsh environment of prison shapes a "self-protective culture") is pitted against "importation theory" (i.e. new inmates base their prison behavior on pre-existing (imported) norms, values, and behaviours). They argue that both processes likely take place, suggesting that Muslim inmates who arrive from a community where radicalism is accepted will "be more disposed to radicalize" in prison. Useem and Clayton, "Radicalization of U.S. Prisoners", 575-578.

and potential violence. There is little wonder in the fact that close and enduring proximity to other criminals may force some individual inmates into protective groups. Inmates seeking ways to alleviate their social insecurities might turn to others with whom they share common cultural, religious, or existential characteristics. Prison gang culture, which is inherent to all prison systems, fills the individual's need for security. Gang association can be driven by the "prisonization process" in which new inmates choose to accept certain identities and associated group membership in order to assimilate into the prison system and "survive" their prison terms.[56] A recent study of US prison gangs and prison-based security threat groups (STG) conducted on behalf of Correctional Service Canada (CSC), found that one-half of all prison gang members were not affiliated with a gang prior to being incarcerated but were rather recruited once they had entered the prison system. The reasons inmates joined gangs was out of "fear of other inmates", because they had "a sense of not belonging [or had] no other friends or relationships" in prison, or because they sought to "increase their social status" amongst prisoners.[57] Gang membership comes with a price; it usually requires an oath and proof of group loyalty. By accepting to identify with a given prison gang or STG an inmate gains protection from other threatening individuals and acquires a sense of corporate identity and common purpose.

While gang membership might offer at-risk inmates protection in a volatile environment, one probable outcome of gang affiliation is in-group and out-group differentiation. That is, members of the gang outwardly and socially disassociate themselves from the general prison population. When gang membership is based on a particular ideology, religion, or cultural characteristic, differentiation can lead to radicalization and social polarization. "Racist prison gangs", a report published by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) suggests, can "capitalize on, and sharpen, existing prejudices and hatreds held by incoming prisoners," further driving a wedge between racially divided prison sub-groups.[58] The sum result is that Muslim-defined groups and prison gangs offer all the necessities needed for in-group socialization that can help foster ideological radicalization and, potentially, support for violence and terrorism. James Brandon, in his expansive study of British prison radicalization writes that "while Muslim-centric prison gangs may evolve for protection against other prisoners, Islamist prison gangs often additionally promote an exclusive, separatist ideology that glorifies violence and intolerance."[59] The social interactions within the latter groups actively promote a particular outlook regarding political violence and terrorism. Likewise, incarcerated Islamist extremists bent on advancing *jihadism* in any and all social environments might also purposefully assume leadership roles in Muslim and/or Islamist groupings in order to purposefully radicalize other inmates. From there, selective gang recruitment can ensure that susceptible inmates are first identified, then properly approached, and later persuaded to join the group's protective fold where they can be indoctrinated. According to this socialization pattern, faith-based gang membership acts as an incubator for violent ideologies. The development of Islamist prison gangs and informal brotherhoods becomes a national security threat if and when they solidify an us-versus-them social divide within prison that spills over into society once inmates are released.[60]

Religious & Ideological Conversions

[56] Correctional Service of Canada, "Prison Gangs: A Review and Survey of Strategies", (August 2009), 13; Hannah *et al*., *Radicalization or Rehabilitation*, 9-10.
[57] CSC, "Prison Gangs", 13, 21-22.
[58] ADL, "Dangerous Convictions", 5.
[59] Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 35.
[60] Ibid., 40.

Second, like in open society, increasing religiosity and religious identity can play a factor in Islamist radicalization in prison. Finding reliable figures on the number of inmates converting to or re-awakening to Islam is hard to come by; changes in religious affiliation are difficult to track, rarely systematically recorded, and prisons do not readily publicize the information they do collect. Nonetheless, recent trends from the US are informative. Among prisoners who seek faith behind bars, 80 percent turn towards Islam, which translates into a yearly conversion rate (at all levels of American correctional facilities) of roughly 30,000. These figures suggest that nearly a quarter million American inmates have converted to Islam since 2001.[61] There are a number of "broad social forces" informing Islam's popularity in American prisons, but generally prisoner conversion rates are attributed to kinship and social interventions, the "impact of race" in American society, the role of religion among African-Americans (who are disproportionately represented in the US prison system), and the "volatility" of prison social interactions. Similar environmental forces are at play in Europe and potentially, in Canada, too.

However, it is *critically important* to note that increasing religiosity, Muslim conversions and re-awakenings, and newfound identification with Islam among prisoners can be a positive development. Islam – like other religious practices – can have a calming effect on prisoner behavior by imposing strict guidelines on individual actions. Mark Hamm is a leading proponent of this theory. In his review of the literature on prison conversions and based on his own prison interviews, he has found that for the majority of American inmates who convert to Islam "the experience increases self-discipline and helps them to interact in a positive manner with other inmates and staff … making a meaningful contribution to their rehabilitation."[62] According to Hamm and others, Islam gives inmates a sense of self-worth and meaningful purpose, and helps them direct and control their urges.[63] Many prisoners use conversion as a spiritual and social "new start" and as a way to get past unwanted behavior, like drug addiction, delinquency, criminal activity, and other bad habits.[64]

Of course, the risk associated with prison conversion is that new religious adherents may be susceptible to and adopt hard-line and/or radical interpretations of their new belief structures that facilitates violence down the road. So while Hamm is careful to press the good that comes with prison conversions, he is quick to add that "from the crucible of good behavior comes the potential for radicalization". Herein the process of Muslim conversion becomes intertwined with gang association, producing a worrisome offshoot of the Muslim faith: "prison Islam" or "Jailhouse Islam".[65] This is Muslim practice mixed in with gang dynamics, Islamist predation, intimidation, and violence, providing a potent and dangerous brew of religious faith and socio-political ideology. One inmate, for instance, told a British prison inspector that "yes, there is a gang culture here which is becoming an issue. A lot of people are becoming Muslim just because it [is] a bigger group … If you are not in a gang, you're in trouble. People are

[61] Hamm, "Prison Islam", 670; Michael Waller, "Terrorist Recruitment and Infiltration in the United States: Prisons and Military as an Operational Base", Testimony, US Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism, Technology and Homeland Security, (October 14, 2003), 12

[62] Hamm, "Prison Islam", 673 (see also, 669-670, 681); Hamm, *Terrorist Recruitment in American Correctional Institutions: An Exploratory Study of Non-Traditional Faith Groups* (National Institute of Justice, 2007); Hamm, "Prisoner Radicalization: Assessing the Threat in U.S. Correctional Institutions", *National Institute of Justice Journal*, No. 261 (2008), 14-19.

[63] See Basia Spalek and Salah El-hassan, "Religion in Prison: Conversion to Islam", *Prison Service Journal*, No. 162 (2006), 1-6.

[64] Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 35, 41-42.

[65] Hamm, "Prison Islam" 673, and Homeland Security Policy Institute/Critical Incident Analysis Group, *Out of the Shadows*, (Washington 2006), ii.

converting to Islam for protection."[66] This is a conversion process based less on sincere religious practice and belief than on social interaction, coercion, and intimidation. Under certain conditions Islamist radicalization and terrorism recruitment can result. When institutions are overcrowded and plagued with outdated rehabilitation programming, unchecked gang interaction, active agitation by foreign extremists,[67] and improper religious leadership (radicalized staff Imams and/or a general lack of prison chaplains), conversions to radical Islam area a likely result.[68]

Prison Policy & Grievances

Third, deep-seated anger and resentment of authority is as potent a precursor to radicalization in prison as it is in society. The main difference, however, is that under prison conditions, antipathy is directed against the incarceration system and the faults inherent to it rather than a national government, a military/police force, or foreign policy position. This makes obvious sense, in that prisoners who must live under stifling conditions may naturally come to reject the authority managing their incarceration. But when it comes to prison radicalization, there is another factor in play: the active manipulation of real or perceived Muslim grievances by Islamist inmates in order to amplify radicalization processes.

Brandon is a leading authority on the role grievance manipulation and other related "push factors" (like racism, systematic maltreatment, institutional discrimination, and social exclusion) have on prison radicalization.[69] British Muslim prisoners, he explains, "frequently perceive themselves as being targeted for violence" and other forms of discrimination by non-Muslim prisoners and prison guards alike. In certain cases, racism, hostility, and violence are acute.[70] Citing various prison surveys, Brandon finds that Muslim prisoners in the UK consistently feel higher levels of victimization perpetrated by prison guards and the general prison institution than do non-Muslim prisoners. Combine that with Muslim mistrust concerning the prison system's (mis)handling of religious obligations and sensitivities – like the authenticity of halal food, the use of security tactics that some Muslims find religiously degrading (i.e. strip searches (which contradict codes of modesty) and sniffer dogs (considered by some as unclean animals)), and perceived discrimination when it comes to participating in weekly communal prayer services – and it is clear that there are several points of contention. The result is that a "perception of discriminatory treatment can lead inmates to adopt and repeat the Islamist view that the British government … [is] systematically opposed to Muslims."[71] This strengthens the potency of the radical inmate's message. Brandon concludes that Islamists are able to make "political capital" out of almost any issue which concerns or distresses ordinary Muslim prisoners, making it imperative for prison services to

[66] Richard Ford, "Muslim Prison Gangs on the Rise as Inmates Seek Safety in Numbers", *Times Online*, January 13, 2009.
[67] Waller, "Terrorist Recruitment", 4-8, 10-15.
[68] See, Janice Fedarcyk, "Islamic Radicalization", Testimony, Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment, (April 5, 2007), 2-3;
[69] He defines "push factors" as "aspects of prison life that 'push' individuals away from mainstream society and towards extremist individuals". Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 25. Others, however, posit that feelings of discrimination alone do not explain radicalization. Useem and Clayton cite Kevin James' radicalization in California. The JIS leader was a prolific writer, offering scholarly justification for his support of terrorism. "If bad prison conditions or the humiliation of the prison experience had moved James towards radicalization," they argue, "then … he would have said so in [his] document." Useem and Clayton, "Radicalization of U.S. Prisoners", 581-582.
[70] See the case studies and timeline, Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 56-60.
[71] Ibid., 66

"minimize the number of issues and grievances which Islamists can exploit" to garner wider acceptance within the prison population.[72]

COMBATING PRISON RADICALIZATION

In light of emerging global trends and from the above theoretical discussion, it is feasible to derive the tactics and policies that Canada might investigate, develop, and apply to thwart the threat of Islamist radicalization and terrorism recruitment in its prison system. Safeguarding Canadian prisons from Islamist radicalization will require proactively impeding the prosthelytizing and recruitment of inmates by incarcerated Islamists and actively improving the factors inherent to prisons that incentivize Islamist identification and gang membership. What follows is a summation of the issues that Canada may need to address along with a list of associated policy prescriptions.

Structural Policy Recommendations

First, the Canadian government must gain a better appreciation for the radicalization process. What factors drive Canadians to accept Islamism? Priority rests on first identifying how extremist ideologies spread within society and prison and second, on distinguishing what subset of both are most at risk. Doing so will require that we:

- Establish a national taskforce on radicalization that brings academics, policymakers, and community experts together.
- Establish an "extremism unit" within the CSC whose task is to continuously monitor trends in radicalization (in all its forms) and inform policy.
- Consult our allies and cull lessons from their collective experiences combating prison radicalization.
- Produce a prison guide for internal use that describes the indicators and processes of radicalization.
- Allow academics and researchers greater access to inmates.

Second, extremists must be denied access to Canada's prison population. The active recruitment of inmates by radical Islamists must be monitored, obstructed, and deterred. Success will require that Canada:

- Track incarcerated terrorists as they move around the prison system and throughout their prison sentence and monitor their social interactions with other inmates.
- Familiarize prison staff with Islamism and radicalization and train them to identify and pinpoint troublesome developments.
    - One solution, explains Brandon, might be to hire more Muslims to work in corrections. "They can more easily interact with Muslim prisoners and will have a better appreciation for the nuance of religious practice, identifying and differentiating between prayer and radicalization."[73]

[72] Ibid., 78.
[73] Personal interview with James Brandon (Zurich-London telephone conversation), May 14, 2010.

- Develop a two-pronged strategy that both contains and disperses radical prisoners: keep them separate from susceptible prison populations and, if need be, displace them repeatedly to stifle their ability to socialize with and recruit others.[74]
- Crack down on "friendship circles" and debate clubs involving Islamists in which radical ideas may be more easily disseminated.
- Impede any and all attempts by incarcerated terrorists to become leaders and/or representatives of Muslim prison groups.
- Ensure prison staff fully control the prison environment; keeping prisons safe decreases the odds of successful radicalization and recruitment.[75]
    - Prison control can be augmented by: enforcing "prison-issued uniforms" for all inmates; requiring inmates to obtain passes in order to move around the prison; placing metal detectors and security cameras at strategic locations; filing criminal charges against inmates for initiating in-prison offenses; implementing an anonymous "hotline" through the public phone service allowing inmates to inform staff of developments without risk of exposure.
- Lay charges and prosecute prisoners who disseminate pro-*jihadist* ideas, incite religious hatred, or advocate terrorist attacks while in prison. [76]
- Evaluate whether "disciplinary segregation" is an effective punitive disincentive against active recruitment and radicalization.[77]

Third, incarcerated terrorists can be used to collect intelligence on potential security risks developing beyond prison walls. As the Dirie case highlights, prisoners who continue to facilitate acts of violence and terrorism outside prison can help officials uncover and foil would-be plots. Doing so will require that officials:

- Collect intelligence on potential plots by systematically surveying radical inmates, both electronically and personally (i.e. using Human Intelligence).
- Share intelligence on radical inmates between different prisons by establishing inter-prison liaisons to ensure critical information reaches those that need it.
- Build cooperative agencies and/or "fusion centers" (like California's Joint Regional Intelligence Center) to allow CSC to better coordinate and share intelligence with police, the RCMP, CSIS, and others.[78]

Fourth, while incarceration is meant to rehabilitate individuals, the post-release environment and re-socialization process can play a critical role on rates of recidivism. Some inmates need

[74] In the UK, radical leaders are identified and segregated from other Muslim prisoners by being placed in prison wings with fewer Muslims. Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 46-47.
[75] According to Useem and Clayton, "as prisons lose their capacity to govern, inmates are more likely to turn to violence … and radicalized inmate can blend more easily into the day-to-day disorder of the situation." Useem and Clayton, "Radicalization of U.S. Prisoners", 568-571.
[76] Brandon writes: "Just because individuals are in prison it does not mean that they are somehow immune from laws designed to prevent terrorism."Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 114.
[77] Shauna Bottos, "Profile of Offenders in Administrative Segregation: A Review of the Literature", *Correctional Service Canada Research Brief*, No. B-39 (2007).
[78] HSPI/CIAG, *Out of the Shadows*, 11-12. To a certain degree, Canada has already done so, by linking CSC to the Integrated Threat Assessment Center (ITAC), a 2004 initiative to coordinate Canadian counterterrorism efforts.

assistance in reintegrating into society after release. In the case of Islamists and former terrorists, reintegration may be especially difficult given the social and religious stigma radicalism may have within certain mainstream Muslim communities.[79] When faced with a lack of social and religious support, former inmates may be especially vulnerable to the advances of terrorist groups recruiting outside prison. Helping former inmates find a place in society will keep them out of trouble. To do so, Canada should:

- Establish and administer a "pre-release program" that helps individuals build constructive relationships outside prison and locate and secure employment.[80]
- Keep track of former terrorists and establish a parole-based system of periodically monitoring their progress.
- Fund NGOs and societal groups that put former convicts in contact with moderate Mosques and communities.[81] Reintegration and resettlement is especially important with inmates who convert to Islam behind bars, many of whom will have no contact with Muslims outside prison.[82]
- Allow the National Parole Board of Canada to take into account whether or not convicted terrorists (and other prisoners suspected of having adopted extremist views) have rejected extremism when reviewing their cases.[83]
- Bolster deradicalization programs, like Toronto's Specialized De-Radicalization Intervention program, and enrol former terrorists into these institutions upon release.
- Encourage prisoners who renounce terrorism, *jihadism*, and violence to share their stories with other prisoners and at-risk community members.

Religious Policy Recommendations

Dealing with Islamism in prison poses a challenge not usually encountered when addressing other forms of prison radicalization and prison gang activity. Incarcerated Islamist radicals and terrorists are usually pious Muslims. Like all Canadians in and out of prison, they have a lawful right to practice their faith, openly and unhindered. In Canada, CSC is bound by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Corrections and Conditional Release Act* and the *Corrections and Conditional Release Regulations* to offer "religious and spiritual accommodation" to all prisoners no matter their criminal offense. That means that CSC must provide "access to an adequate level of resources" including religious leadership, opportunities to worship individually and in groups, Holy Day observances, educational resources, religious articles (like prayer books or shawls), and dietary requirements (like kosher or halal meals).[84] Finding ways to uphold a prisoner's constitutional right to practice his/her faith while ensuring the prison system does not inadvertently facilitate radicalization is tricky. Brandon describes the dilemma as such:

> The religious angle creates complications: prisons need to respect religious beliefs in ways that do not exist for other prison groups. This is difficult to do consistently when

[79] Gabriele Marranci "Faith Ideology and Fear: The Case of Current and Former Muslim Prisoners", IQRA Annual Lecture (June 26, 2007).
[80] Hannah *et al*., *Radicalization or Rehabilitation*, xi.
[81] For example, Quilliam, a UK-based, Muslim-run counter-extremism think tank, was recently approached by an incarcerated member of the Toronto 18 asking for religious and personal assistance in his rehabilitation. Interview with Brandon, May 2010.
[82] Spalek and El-Hassan, "Religion in Prison: Conversion to Islam", 5-6.
[83] Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 115.
[84] See CSC, "Religious and Spiritual Accommodation in CSC Institutions", (November 6, 2006), 4-5.

> prison authorities tackle the religion-gang nexus. The [Muslim] Friday prayer service is a good example and continuous flashpoint. To the prison, it may look like gang activity (group members getting together, discussing issues, *etcetera*) when it may have nothing to do with gang activity at all and is rather religiously influenced. Dealing with these issues can be difficult.

Nonetheless, there are ways in which religious rights and legitimate security concerns can be properly balanced. Doing so will require that we:

- Ensure the CSC does not inadvertently employ radical religious leaders.[85] A review board should be established to vet all members of the prison chaplaincy, part-time contractors, and volunteers to certify that none retain undesirable ideological beliefs.[86]
- Ensure that there are enough qualified Imams working for the CSC and that communal Friday services (a religious obligation) are lead by prison Imams. Doing so will help eliminate the risk that radical inmates will use a dearth of leadership to captivate a susceptible audience, spread violent views, and recruit.
- Insist prison Imams appoint and train specific inmates as volunteer religious leaders to take their place if and when they cannot be present themselves. Doing so will keep radicals out of leadership roles.
    - Under some conditions, it may be advisable that prison officers who understand the Muslim faith be present during inmate-led religious services.[87]
- Offer lectures and courses by trained religious figures on religious beliefs and practices.[88]
- Offer at-risk prisoners secular education, work programs, vocational training, and substance abuse treatment, all of which might inoculate them against radicalization.
- Train inmates with liberal leanings and tolerant understandings of Islam to act as "prison listeners" (or inmate councilors) so that they can assist new inmates and help steer Muslim prison attitudes.[89]
- Ensure Muslim converts have proper religious guidance and receive a full, rather than selective, reading of their new faith. It is also important to keep track of converts to ensure they receive the attention they may require in the future.[90]

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[85] The CSC, with help from the Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy (IFC), has begun doing so, relying on faith communities outside prison to assist them in providing religious services for inmates. The IFC identifies and recruits appropriate religious leaders and volunteers in communities living nearby CSC facilities. Though spiritual leaders need to obtain an official security clearance, the IFC nonetheless relies on the religious communities themselves to accredit individual leaders. See ibid., 22; and CSC "Memorandum of Understanding Between the IFC and the CSC", (January 11, 2007), provisions V.b and V.e.

[86] Peer-reviewing religious service providers and weeding out radical Imams is the most oft-cited recommendation. Office of the Inspector General (US Department of Justice) "Analysis of the Response by the FBP to Recommendations in the OIG's April 2004 Report on the Selection of Muslim Religious Service Providers", (July 2004); CIA Directorate of Intelligence, "Terrorists: Recruiting and operating Behind Bars" (August 20, 2002); Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 26-30, 43-45; HSPI/CIAG, *Out of the Shadows*,12-14; Marranci "Faith Ideology and Fear", 5-6; 41-43; and Frank Cilluffo *et al*., "Radicalization: Behind Bars and Beyond Borders", *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 13:2 (2007), 117-118.

[87] Pennsylvania applied this tactic in the 1990s after self-appointed Muslim leaders instigating prison riots. See, Useem and Clayton, "Radicalization of U.S. Prisoners", 569-571.

[88] Hamm offers an interesting account of a charismatic Folsom Prison Muslim convert, "Akil", who decided on his own to establish the "Islamic Studies Program" behind jail and provide a "viable rehabilitation programme" and counteract the Islamists. Prisoners like Akil might be proactively approached and trained to provide an "in-house" alternative to radical inmates. Hamm, "Prison Islam", 676-678.

[89] Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 33-34.

- Scrutinize the prison literature to ensure extremist texts are not available to inmates. The prison library can likewise be stocked with Islamic theological literature produced by more mainstream and tolerant Muslim viewpoints.[91]
- Combat prison radicalization by fighting radicalization in society. As Bert Useem and Obie Clayton suggest, if the broader societal community from which inmates stem from condemn and/or reject radical positions, inmates are less likely to accept radical viewpoints while incarcerated.[92]
- Consider building a national deradicalization center that can proactively contradict radical ideologies, theologically question the legitimacy of *jihadism*, and reeducate radical prisoners.[93]

Grievance Policy Recommendations

Combating prison radicalization must go beyond simply providing inmates with proper religious guidance. Prisons must also proactively combat perceptions and/or actual cases of religious and ethnic discrimination that feed and sustain radical beliefs. Though dedicated Islamists will always find ways to twist prison policy to exacerbate perceived anti-Muslim injustices in order to attract recruits, making sure discrimination does not exist will protect the general prison population and ensure these views have limited appeal. The idea is to present the prison system as "tough but fair", to send a message that all prisoners are equal, and avoid sending signals in which one group is singled out for rougher (or preferential) treatment.[94] By most accounts, it seems as though the CSC appreciates the value of combating inequality in prison. In its 2005 *Manual on Religious and Spiritual Accommodation*, which describes in great detail the practices and belief structures of various religions, the CSC notes that "the tendency toward and the allegations of racial discrimination invariably surface" when members of minority groups and prison staff "deal with issues or conflicts … on a strictly racial basis." It is "imperative", the manual suggests, that "CSC policy and practice remain uniformly applied and implemented."[95] This is a good start. The CSC might further proactively combat perceptions of victimization by:

- Judiciously investigating cases of violence carried out against Muslims by other prisoners.
- Stamping out all cases of mistreatment and/or racism against Muslim inmates by prison staff.
- Training staff to recognize and respect minority religious practices.[96]
- Ensuring observant Muslims are treated in a manner that does not unduly contradict their beliefs (i.e. provide them with halal food, offer them religious washing stations and prayer halls, strip-search them using officers of the same sex, utilize sniffer dog carefully).[97]

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[90] The CSC has taken appropriate steps to do so. In consultation with Muslim groups, it produced an Islamic conversion document to be used by religious leaders in cases of conversions and instructs prison chaplains to inform the Offender Management System (OMS) of all changes in religious status. CSC, *Manual on Religious and Spiritual Accommodation* (March 21, 2005), 39-40;131.

[91] Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 50-51.

[92] Useem and Clayton, "Radicalization of U.S. Prisoners", 575-577. Fortunately, a 2006/7 Environics Research Group survey found that Canadian Muslims generally reject Islamism, violence, and terrorism. See Michael Adams, "Muslims in Canada: Findings from the 2007 Environics Survey", *Horizons* 10:2 (2009) 19-26.

[93] Brandon, *Unlocking al-Qaeda*, 116-123.

[94] Interview with Brandon, May 2010.

[95] CSC, *Manual on Religious and Spiritual Accommodation*, 111-112.

[96] The CSC manual does just that. Ibid., 107-133.

- Basing prison decisions that contradict religious obligations (i.e. restricting an inmate from attending communal Friday prayers) on clearly defined security measures.
- Allowing prison staff, especially "line staff", to interact more frequently (and personally) with Muslim inmates.
- Developing a process to address prisoner grievances expeditiously and diffuse feelings of religious disrespect.
- Relying on religious service providers to instruct prison staff on how particular religious events (fasts, Holy Days, and so on) should be practiced.
- Formalizing a system-wide approach for dealing with theological questions.

Applying these policy prescriptions to Canada's prison system will help alleviate the threat of Islamist prison radicalization. And yet, there remain unresolved paradoxes that need to be addressed further.

Firstly, there is the difficulty of distinguishing between religious rights and privileges. It may be nearly impossible to ensure that the granting of religious rights to particular prisoners does not unintentionally incentivize and/or favor their particular belief structures. This is especially evident in the case of halal diets and other religious obligations that maybe interpreted as "special treatment". As the CSC manual on religious accommodation rightly notes: "delivering religious diets in a completely separate way from regular diets cannot but constitute special treatment and … special status in the eyes of all concerned. [A]ny perception of special treatment simply invites conflict: either because the Muslim group wants religious accommodation to appear special … or because the method of providing religious accommodation sets them apart…"[98] In either case, prisoner inequality is accentuated out of the very act of providing equality to prisoners.

Secondly, affirming religious identities in prison intensifies religious separatism in prison. Brandon recounts, for instance, that before halal food became a real issue in UK prisons, "Muslims would eat vegetarian food. Then the prison system offered one halal dish alongside the others available. In doing so, the prisons eventually became 'oversensitive' to Muslim needs. Prison kitchens now separate between halal food and non-halal food and provide distinct dishes, cutting boards, cooks, and so on. All of this *amplified the cultural, identity, and religious divisions* within the prison population that did not originally exist."[99] The result is that prison differentiation may solidify a social view that is harmful to the multicultural demands of Western society.

Thirdly, by codifying prison policy on one set of religious beliefs, prisons unintentionally champion one interpretation of Islam over others.[100] The point is that Islam, like all religions, is a complex and multifaceted belief structure. By deciding what is and is not legitimate practice, prisons make decisions that enforce one interpretation of Islam while rejecting the diversity of opinions that exist.

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[97] CSC has taken steps to do so, as indicated in the aforementioned religious manual and by publishing a "Religious Diets" guideline (http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/text/prgrm/chap/aliment/diete-03-eng.shtml)
[98] CSC, *Manual*, 111-112, 116.
[99] Interview with Brandon, May 2010.
[100] Ibid.

Fourthly, tactically separating Islamists and terrorists from the general prison population might affect their mental health and ability to properly rehabilitate into society. While it may seem self-evident that protecting inmates from radical ideologies may be easily accomplished by simply restricting the radical's ability to interact with others, segregation does not facilitate rehabilitation.[101]

Finally, incarcerated terrorists may eventually become our strongest allies. If and when these individuals denounce Islamism and political violence, they represent our most potent weapon against Islamist radicalization and terrorism. As Brandon suggests: "We need to find a way to get [Islamist prisoners] back on track and to get them to turn their energies in a positive direction. This has been done previously in prisons in the Middle East [and Asia] and we now need to find a way to do it here in the West."[102] It is one thing for Canadians to denounce terrorism; it is quite another when former terrorists join in.

[101] Brandon, Unlocking al-Qaeda, 49; Bottos, "Profile of Offenders in Administrative Segregation, 17-19; Hannah et al., *Radicalization or Rehabilitation*, xi.
[102] Interview with Brandon, May 2010.