

Joe Adam George: Muslim Brotherhood has its sights set on Canada

Ottawa must take the threat seriously

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The Muslim Brotherhood flag is seen at a rally in Jordan in 2019. PHOTO BY KHALIL MAZRAAWI/AFP

Some time ago, I attended a closed-door meeting with foreign intelligence officials to discuss the growing influence in Canada of the Muslim Brotherhood, the powerful transnational Islamist movement that is the ideological root of all modern Islamic terrorism.

The Brotherhood's objective, I was told, is two-fold: to achieve a paralyzing effect on the ability of Canadian policymakers to act against it; and to steadily expand its influence in Canada. Indeed, the Gaza war has mobilized and emboldened the Islamist group's "white-collar jihadists" in the country to advance its strategy of "civilizational jihad" — gradual institutional transformation, rather than violent overthrow.

The officials also revealed that their analysis of internal Hamas documents — the Palestinian offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood — showed that the terrorist group views Canada as vital to its plans. "They love you guys," one of them quipped. Last year, a Global News investigation revealed that roughly 450 individuals with various roles inside Hamas have ties to Canada.

In another private briefing in Washington, D.C., a senior U.S. national security official made it clear that the Americans are also acutely aware of Canada's growing Muslim Brotherhood problem.

The message was unambiguous: the United States government views the Muslim Brotherhood as a transnational threat, and it is deeply concerned that Canada's immigration policies are severely undermining broader North American counter-terrorism priorities (a recent C.D. Howe Institute report, which found that 24,599 asylum claimants were accepted by Canada without being asked a single question between January 2019 and February 2023, was cited).

Referencing the terror designations imposed on Muslim Brotherhood chapters in Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Sudan, the official also categorically stated that Brotherhood-aligned entities and individuals in Canada should not assume they are beyond the reach of sanctions or terrorist designations — an assertion that was ratified by the Trump administration in its recently released "Counterterrorism Strategy."

"Given the Muslim Brotherhood's key role in promoting modern terrorism, we will continue to designate its branches across the Middle East and beyond as (foreign terrorist organizations) to crush the organization everywhere it operates," reads the strategy.

Across Europe, governments are increasingly recognizing the Brotherhood as a serious political and security challenge. France released a government report describing the

group as a “threat to the nation,” with lawmakers urging the European Union to classify the Brotherhood as a terrorist organization.

Dutch legislators have called for a ban on the group. Sweden has launched an investigation into alleged Islamist infiltration, while Belgian officials are raising alarms about the alleged Brotherhood-linked capture of some municipalities.

Like Europe, the U.S. sees Canada as both a terror target and an incubator of terrorist threats. It considers it unacceptable that its northern neighbour serves as a logistical, financial and recruitment hub for Islamist groups. However, Canada, unlike Europe, appears determined to avoid the conversation altogether, despite CSIS warning in its latest public report that the threat is “particularly concerning.”

That reluctance is becoming harder to justify. Recent reporting on the annual convention of the Muslim Association of Canada (MAC), an organization that openly praises the Muslim Brotherhood’s philosophy, raises troubling questions.

According to Melanie Bennet of Juno News, a youth workshop at the convention displayed the phrase “Jew free” in a word cloud under the prompt: “What kind of community/Ummah/world do you want to help build?” At another session, an audience member reportedly asked how young Muslims could enter politics to “infiltrate the western wolves.”

During the same session, Anas Altikriti, an alleged Muslim Brotherhood associate who was effectively denied entry into Canada but attended virtually, seemingly rejected the very idea of Muslim integration into western society, describing it as “a tool to beat the Muslim community with,” and insisting that Muslims only need to “abide by the law.”

Despite the controversy surrounding the event, there has been effectively no political condemnation from Ottawa. That silence matters because MAC benefits from taxpayer-supported charitable status and, according to Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) records, received over \$38 million in public funding between 2020 and 2024.

Canadians are entitled to ask whether organizations that annually platform Islamist ideologues — including individuals denied entry into the country — and promote deeply divisive rhetoric should continue receiving taxpayer funds.

The question becomes even more pressing when contrasted with the CRA’s decision to revoke the charitable status of eight Jewish non-profits over the past three years. The double standard is hard to ignore.

None of this means Canadian Muslims should be viewed with suspicion, nor should legitimate religious expression ever be targeted. But democratic societies must also be capable of distinguishing between freedom of religion and ideological movements that seek to leverage democratic freedoms in order to advance illiberal political projects.

The problem in Canada is not simply political Islam itself. It is the persistent unwillingness of political leaders, media institutions and public officials to discuss the issue honestly. Fear of accusations of racism or Islamophobia has created a climate in which legitimate national security concerns are too often dismissed before they can even be debated.

A healthy democratic society cannot afford political taboos around questions of extremism, foreign ideological influence or institutional infiltration. Canadians deserve transparency about Islamist networks operating in the country, including their sources of funding, political relationships and their degree of influence within public institutions.

The Carney government has a responsibility to confront this threat with decisiveness rather than denial. The longer Canada avoids acknowledging the dangers posed by the Muslim Brotherhood, the more entrenched its networks become — and the harder the consequences will be to reverse.

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