

IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



SECRET

WHY IT MATTERS TO CANADA

IMVE narratives are rooted in a borderless online space. Adherents, similarly, readily share inspiration and broad grievances which are then interpreted within a local context.

US THREAT ENVIRONMENT

Dozens of car-ramming attacks — some related to hate groups — have been reported at demonstrations across the US. FBI background checks associated with the sale, transfer or permitting of firearms reached record of 3.9 million in June 2020.

MOST LIKELY SCENARIO

WORST-CASE SCENARIO

IMPACT IN CANADA

XENOPHOBIC, ACCELERATIONIST AND VIGILANTE VIOLENCE

A body of open-source reporting indicates that individuals within encrypted neo-Nazi chat groups have characterized the US Presidential Election as a prelude to the "collapse of society". The messaging has encouraged members to arm themselves in preparation for civil war.

Open sources note that, on September 29, 2020, an administrator with an accelerationist Telegram channel with over 4,000 subscribers encouraged followers to harass voters and to take a "combative" stance against electoral politics. The channel further stated that "violent terror is an effective political weapon" and spurred followers to "engage at will".

On October 8, 2020, US FBI stated that they had thwarted a plot by six Michigan-based militia members to attack/kidnap the State Governor.

CONSPIRACY THEORIES AND QANON

Conspiracy theories — particularly QAnon — are increasingly being referenced in mainstream political discourse. Several US political candidates have either endorsed or given credence to QAnon content and a female QAnon-supporting congressional candidate is favoured to win the seat in the US House of Representatives. Several experts have argued that QAnon's penetration of mainstream American culture and politics is unprecedented in the modern political era.

For example, a key QAnon figure asked Trump to arrest high-profile Democrats before the election because "the patriots are fed up" and will soon act unilaterally. Another key QAnon figure recommended supporters familiarize themselves with the US *Insurrection Act* because "what you learn will be helpful when Trump wins and the Left refuses to accept the outcome". Such declarations highlight the impatient and polarized narratives that are increasingly normalized within QAnon online discourse.

KEY EVENT: PRESIDENT'S COVID-19 DIAGNOSIS "PART OF THE PLAN"

QAnon adherents stated that President Trump's diagnosis with COVID-19 was part of "The Plan" and that Trump was feigning quarantine to protect himself during the planned mass arrests of alleged members of the "Deep State".

The title of the 1990 war film "The Hunt for Red October" was co-opted to describe "the hunt" for Trump's opponents before the elections; the hashtags #RedOctober had 1.4 million views.

KEY EVENT: PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE RESONATES WITH IMV EXTREMISTS

In the first Presidential debate, President Trump did not clearly condemn racially motivated extremism and said that the American-based Proud Boys, a xenophobic group known for its participation in violent protests, should "stand down and stand by".

During the debate, President Trump also urged his supporters to "go into the polls and watch very carefully".

ANTI-AUTHORITY VIOLENCE (ANARCHIST)

According to OSINT research, anti-authoritarian anarchist violent extremism has grown online during the summer 2020 social justice protests in the United States. US law enforcement has also observed numerous tactics — reflecting varying degrees of complexity — involving anarchist movements targeting government infrastructure as well as doxing and threatening law enforcement personnel and their families.

Antifa has been falsely accused by various IMVE actors for starting the wildfires that ravaged the State of Oregon and rallies organized by the Proud Boys have been called to end “Antifa terrorism”.

FOREIGN INFLUENCE

On October 1, 2020, Twitter, acting on information provided by the FBI, removed nearly 130 accounts linked to Iran that spread divisive content during the US first Presidential debate. One of these accounts spread QAnon rhetoric.

KEY TERMS:

Accelerationism is the belief that Western governments are irreparably corrupt and that multiculturalism and democracy will fail. As a result, there will eventually be an outbreak of violence across ethnic and racial lines — often referred to as “the coming race war”. Accelerationists often encourage violence to escalate the pace of societal collapse.

QAnon is a mega-conspiracy theory. At its core, the narrative alleges that US President Donald J. Trump is engaged in a battle against a global elite, “The Deep State”, which aims to keep the people of the world poor, ignorant and enslaved. Adherents believe world governments are being controlled by a shadowy cabal of pedophiles. In this narrative, political opponents are enemies of humanity.

Incel (Involuntary Celibate) is a growing subculture that exists primarily online. It is not an organized group and has no centralized structure or planning. The majority of Incels are not violent; however, a small fringe advocates for the use of violence and/or demonstrates a willingness to use violence targeting women and the public as a solution to their perceived grievances.

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THREAT ASSESSMENT
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TA 20/63-E // 2020-10-28

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US Presidential Election 2020 (S//CEO)

INTRODUCTION

The US presidential election will be held on 3 November 2020. President Donald Trump is seeking a second term, along with Vice President (VP) Michael R. Pence. Joseph Biden, Jr., is the Democratic Party's presidential nominee, and is running with Senator Kamala Harris, for VP.

US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2020



Source: www.bbc.com/news/election-us-2020

BACKGROUND

US Election Events and Related Statements

The main US election events included two presidential debates, which took place on 29 September and 22 October 2020, a single vice-presidential debate on 7 October 2020, and simultaneous presidential town halls on 15 October. That all debates and town halls occurred without incident,

ASSESSMENT NOTE

DEFINITIONS and HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS are located at the last page.

Canada

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A body of reporting from 30 September 2020, the day after the first Presidential Debate, pointed to controversial statements by the President, in which he questioned the legitimacy of the November election, refused to state whether he would concede in the event of a loss, and was perceived to support white supremacists when he called for the Proud Boys to "stand by".

According to a Brennan Center for Justice report from 7 October 2020, President Trump has threatened to instigate voter intimidation by insinuating that he will deploy law enforcement officers or call up the National Guard to root out election-related crimes at the polls. The same report, in reference to the first presidential debate, points to the President's calling for his supporters to "go into the polls and watch very carefully", especially in Philadelphia. The report also indicates that the Republican National Committee claims to be gearing up for an aggressive "ballot security" operation involving 50,000 poll watchers, which many worry could include plans to intimidate voters.

According to media and SITE reporting from 14 and 16 October 2020, respectively, QAnon conspiracy theorists view President Trump as an ally, based, in part, on his refusal to disavow their conspiracy beliefs at a nationally televised town hall.

According to media reporting from 25 September 2020, President Trump refused to commit to a peaceful transition should he lose the November election. Further, he has sought to cast doubt on the election's legitimacy because of his concerns about mail-in voting. According to media reporting from 20 October 2020, he has indicated that mail-in voting has the "tremendous potential for voter fraud" and claimed it would spark "a free for all on cheating, forgery and the theft of ballots" and insisted it would create "the most corrupt election in [US] history". In his debate with Biden on 29 September 2020 he indicated that ballots were "being sold. They're being dumped in rivers." The same reporting indicates that, despite his statements, President Trump's campaign is now pushing Facebook ads encouraging his supporters to vote by mail.

On 18 October 2020, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer stated to NBC News that President Donald Trump's criticism of her support for COVID-19 restrictions at his 19 October 2020 rally in Michigan was "incredibly disturbing" after he called her "dishonest" and drew shouts of "lock her up" from the crowd. Whitmer, the target of an alleged kidnapping plot that was uncovered by the FBI and which resulted in charges brought against thirteen perpetrators on 8 October 2020, accused President Trump of inciting domestic terrorism with his rhetoric (see TH 20/99-E).

US Election Threat Environment and Threat Mitigation

According to a New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness assessment from 23 September 2020, foreign state threat actors will circulate propaganda to disparage the US response and interfere in the election by criticizing both candidates. Post-election unrest and political violence may occur in the wake of election results. Domestic extremists and foreign terrorist organizations will support protesters seeking to dismantle the electoral system by spreading theories about a rigged election, blame or attempt to recruit minorities, and inspire supporters to incite violence.

According to a Center for Strategic & International Studies report from June 2020, the outcome of the election will likely be a significant source of anger and polarization that increases the possibility of terrorism. IMV extremists have used violence against other protests, raising the possibility of escalating violence during the election period.

According to media reporting from 2 October 2020, in recent months, FBI-led federal law enforcement agencies have held discussions with sheriffs and local police who would be charged with keeping order in any protests that may surround disputed results. Among the concerns are armed extremists who may try to interfere with or halt vote-counting done by local canvassing boards. Banks, Fortune 500 companies and other businesses, meanwhile, are working with security consultants to identify steps they should take to minimize potential disruption to their business and protect their employees and assets.



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According to media reporting from 18 October 2020, the political climate, combined with the COVID-19 crisis and the national reckoning over police misconduct, increases the pressure on law enforcement ahead of the election. There is an unprecedented strain on law enforcement leadership who are responsible for maintaining order at the polls which is further compounded by the increasing threat of militia groups.

According to media reporting from 10 September 2020, in addition to government-led efforts, Twitter announced a new policy on this same date to remove or label tweets intended to undermine public confidence in US elections and civic processes, including the 2020 US election. This includes tweets claiming victory before election results have been verified or tweets inciting unlawful conduct to prevent a peaceful transfer of power. According to media reporting from 3 September 2020, Facebook announced new steps to help secure the US elections by encouraging voting, connecting people to authoritative information, and reducing the risks of post-election confusion.

Specific Threats against the US Election

The following are notable examples of US presidential election-related threats, including thwarted plots:

- According to media reporting from October 2020, Jeannine Lake, a Black woman running in Indiana for Congress against VP Pence's brother, Greg Pence, has been the target of racist phone messages, packages in the mail she finds threatening, and vandalism at her home. Lake has indicated to the media that "people are emboldened" by the President's statement to "the Proud Boys to 'stand back and stand by'". Lake and other witnesses reported hearing gunfire on 15 October 2020 when Lake was in her car with her name imprinted on the side. One of the witnesses said that several bullets may have flown over the candidate's car.
- According to media reporting from 21 October 2020, Maryland gun enthusiast James Dale Reed was arrested on 15 October and subsequently charged with threatening to kidnap, torture and assassinate Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. Reed also vowed to target his Democratic-backing neighbours, boasting that he was a heavily armed "boogeyman" about whom "your children have nightmares". Reed, who admitted being "upset at the political situation", added that the assassinations would show Democratic Party supporters "what the Second Amendment is all about". Reed faces up to five years in prison if convicted.
- According to SITE reporting from 13 October 2020, Neo-Nazi websites disseminated posts claiming Democrats would "steal" the election and urged followers to prepare for "civil war".
- According to media reporting from 8 October 2020 and US court records from 20 September 2020, 13 IMV extremists, alleged to be part of the anti-government Boogaloo movement and members of the Michigan-based militia group Wolverine Watchmen, were charged on 8 October 2020 in relation to a plot to overthrow the Michigan state government and kidnap Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer before the election. The plotters believed that the Michigan state government (among unnamed other US state governments) was violating the US Constitution by enforcing lockdown measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 (see TH 20/99-E).
- According to a body of SITE reporting from October 2020, IMV extremist groups and actors representing the Three Percenters militia movement, Proud Boys, and QAnon have called for violence in response to election-related activities. Reacting to a post predicting "left-wing" election-related violence, members of a private online group affiliated with the Three Percenters militia movement issued death threats against Black Lives Matter (BLM) protesters. The group claims that they have acquired posters showing that BLM protesters are planning on "burning down" San Jose, California, if presidential candidate Joe Biden does not win the election. Proud Boys affiliated accounts encouraged the group's supporters to join an army for Trump. A user in a QAnon-affiliated Telegram chat group posted a statement warning of the coming attempts by the "deep state" to "steal President Trump's re-election", adding that "ex-military ... heavily armed MAGA patriots with world-class military accessories" would be ready to serve the President in case of an emergency ... and for election interference".
- According to separate SITE reporting from 12 October 2020, signaling support to Trump for not condemning white supremacy during the first presidential debate, neo-Nazi Telegram channel "HL" posted a statement on 2 October 2020 rejecting electoral politics and calling for "total war".
- According to a body of media reporting from 22 September 2020, Canadian citizen Pascale Ferrier was arrested on 20 September 2020 by New York law enforcement authorities at the Peace Bridge border



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crossing in connection with ricin-laced envelopes sent to President Donald Trump at the White House as well as several Texas officials. According to US court records from 20 September 2020, Ferrier wrote in the letter addressed to President Trump that she did not want four more years of Trump as President and called for him to drop out of the US presidential race. Please refer to TH 20/92-E in which

- According to SITE reporting from 14 September 2020, IMV meme circulated by several Telegram channels on 11 September 2020 advocated attacking the US Postal Service to interfere with the US election. The meme depicts convicted terrorist Ted Kaczynski (the Unabomber) saying "I voted by mail", suggesting that IMV extremists are being encouraged to disrupt the vote-by-mail process through attacks similar to that of Kaczynski.
- According to SITE reporting from 10 September 2020, Telegram group Vorherrshaft Division (VD) members urged others to spread an election-related conspiracy theory in September 2020 claiming that a loss by Mr. Biden in the presidential election would result in a military coup "to take out Trump & take over America". User "GFB" implied that he would attack "any Marxist".
- According to SITE reporting from 18 August 2020, on 14 August 2020, IMV Telegram sites called upon followers to join the Democratic National Committee's phone banking team and use it as a platform to dissuade voters from supporting Mr. Biden by defaming him as a "pedophile".

IMV MEME INCITING US POSTAL SERVICE ATTACK

Image depicts "Unabomber" Theodore Kaczynski.



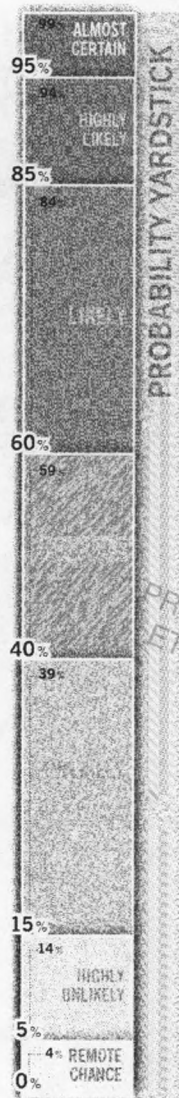
Source: <https://ent.siteintelgroup.com/>

Canadian Interests

According to the Government of Canada's Registration of Canadians Abroad (ROCA), as of 14 October 2020, there were 12,776 Canadians registered in the US; however, the actual number is likely higher. Canadians may seek to travel to the US to participate in US election-related protests; however, their entry is likely to be rejected if their travel is deemed non-essential, due to current COVID-19 border restrictions. It is conceivable that people in Canada may, depending on the election results and events occurring in the US, undertake peaceful protests near venues such as the US Embassy and/or consulates:



DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

THREAT LEVEL	Established	Unsettled	Unsettled
CRITICAL	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
HIGH	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
MEDIUM	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE that a violent act of terrorism will occur.	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
VERY LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

ITAC uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis in applying terrorism threat levels. The setting of threat levels is determined by several factors including current intelligence, recent events, as well as the intent, capabilities, and attack frequency of the group. ITAC cautions that the information may be incomplete and, regardless of the threat level applied, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning.

TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED		Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets
MODERATE		Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets
GENERAL		Capable of simple attacks

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

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THE NATIONAL TERRORISM THREAT LEVEL FOR CANADA

This threat assessment (TA) updates the National Terrorism Threat Level (NTTL) and the threat to uniformed personnel, last published on 30 July 2020—TA 20/45-A.

ITAC assesses the terrorism threat in Canada to be **MEDIUM**; extremist groups and individuals located in Canada and abroad have both the **intent AND the capability** to carry out an act of terrorism in Canada. ITAC assesses that an **attack COULD OCCUR** in Canada.



ITAC assesses the terrorism threat in Canada to uniformed personnel to be **MEDIUM**. ITAC assesses that an **attack targeting uniformed personnel in Canada COULD OCCUR**.

CRITICAL
HIGH
MEDIUM
LOW



KEY JUDGEMENTS

EVOLVING ASSESSMENTS

ITAC continues to assess that the greatest terrorism threat is domestic, lone actors inspired or incited by violent extremist and terrorist ideologies promoted mostly online.

ITAC

assesses that the **primary terrorist threat to Canada stems from those inspired or incited by IMV extremism and religiously-motivated violent extremist (RMVE) groups such as DAESH or al-Qaida (AQ).**

- ITAC assesses that there is a heightened threat of attack in Canada within the current maintained national threat level of **MEDIUM**.

ENDURING JUDGEMENTS

Extremists in Canada maintain the intent and possess the capability to conduct an act of terrorism in Canada. A terrorist attack in Canada could occur.

LEVELS FOR TRANSPORTATION

AVIATION

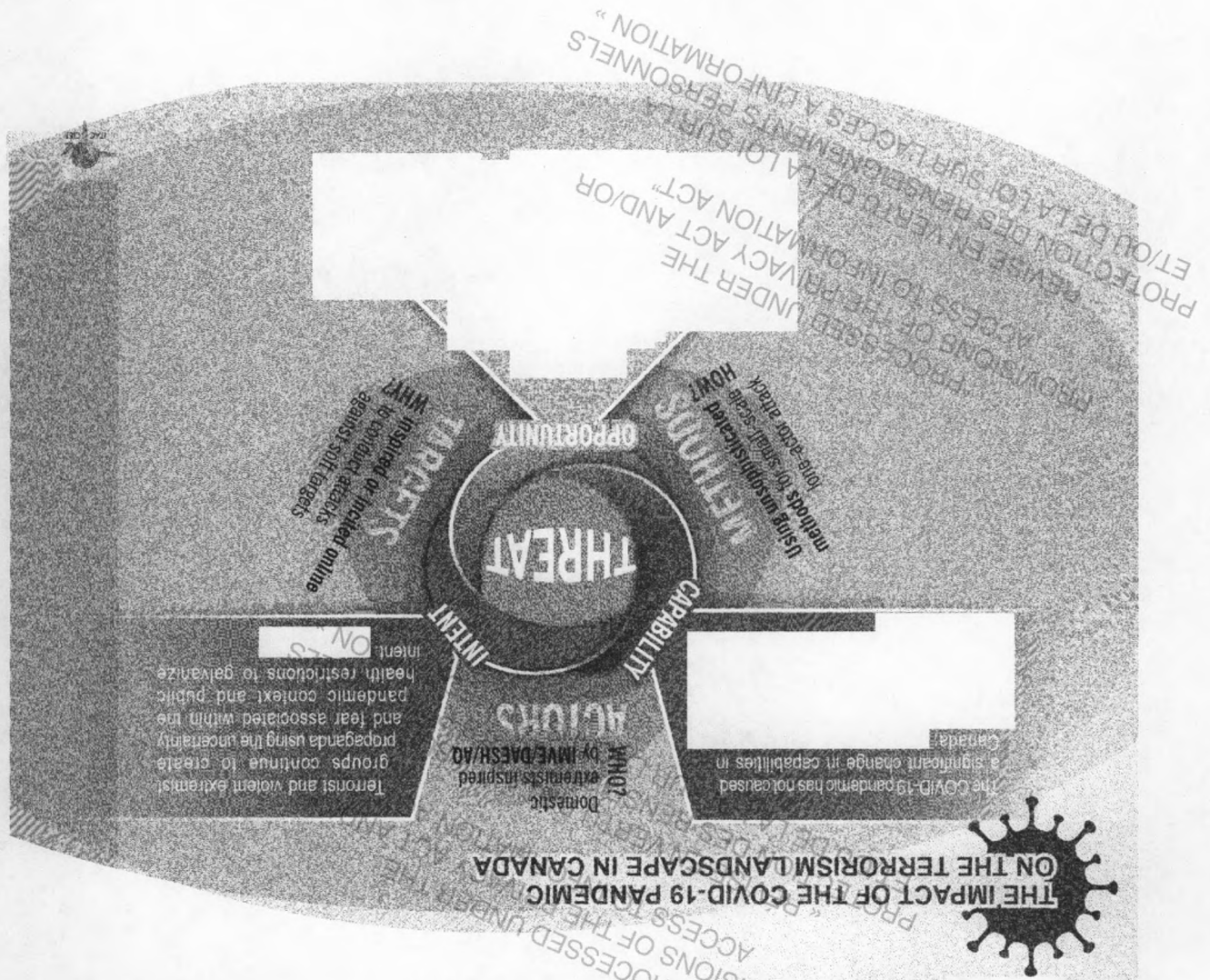
RAIL

MARITIME

ASSESSMENT NOTE:

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Canada



CURRENT CONTEXT

The dynamic interaction of extremist intent, capability and opportunity is the core of the terrorism threat. Actors with extremist intent seek to mobilize their capabilities; realizing this intent and capability requires an opportunity (a physical space and/or time) to carry out an act of terrorism. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, ITAC actively monitors the terrorism landscape in Canada and notes the unique reality presented by the accompanying restrictive public health measures. ITAC assessments herein consider this context and the graphic below depicts the impact of the pandemic on the spectrum of the terrorism threat environment in Canada.

References to Canada and uniformed personnel continue to be present in extremist propaganda.

anti-authoritarian rhetoric and events from IMV extremists (see Targets section) and as such, notes that uniformed personnel could be targeted as a result of these views

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ACTORS

IMVE

AQ/DAESH
Inspired

CETs

Iran
affiliatedKhalistani
secession**IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

Over the past 12 months,

first, Canadian authorities charged an individual with a terrorism-related offence due to his 'Incel' ideology in perpetrating a murder in February 2020 (see TA 20/45-A). As such, the threat from IMV extremists continues to grow in Canada and other Western countries and is increasingly becoming an area of concern.

TRAINING

According to open source reporting from mid-October 2020, The Base (now largely disrupted by law enforcement) has previously been recruiting individuals with military experience from the US and Canada to train in military operations to be ready to take advantage of a believed impending societal collapse.

**PURCHASING AND STOCKPILING
WEAPONS/AMMUNITION**

According to open source reporting from mid-September 2020, a chat between members of the Alberta Separatist Youth League (ASYL) appeared to encourage a member to purchase an SKS rifle online even without a Possession and Acquisition License (PAL) and suggested locations to purchase one even without a PAL.

RECRUITMENT

According to open source intelligence from late-August 2020, a neo-Nazi group called the Folkish Resistance Movement (FRM) was active (on Telegram as well as having a website) in the US and Canada. Anti-Semitic stickers and flyers have been noted in Nova Scotia and Kitchener, ON which link to their website.

ASSESSMENT**QAnon**

A sprawling conspiracy theory that began in late-2017, their central claim is that an elite class, or deep state, controls the world and engages in pedophilia and child sex trafficking. Since then, it has evolved to include a number of different conspiracies, including ones related to COVID-19, and exploded in popularity. Coinciding with COVID-19 and government restrictions, membership in over 100 public QAnon Facebook groups grew from about 155,000 in February 2020 to 1.12 million in June, although Facebook has removed almost 800 QAnon groups in late-August stemming from public backlash. According to a May 2019 FBI intelligence briefing, QAnon was declared a domestic terrorism threat.

AQ/DAESH-INSPIRED EXTREMISTS

Canada continues to see individuals who are inspired by violent extremist groups such as AQ and DAESH. These domestic actors continue to express intent and capability to facilitate terrorist activity while some aspire to conduct a violent act of terrorism in Canada. Western countries remain an attractive target for terrorist organizations abroad



ONLINE PROLIFERATION OF INCITEMENT, TARGETS AND METHODS

There remains a steady flow of calls on social media for attacks against Western targets – often accompanied by suggestion of high impact targets as well as the means to do so. This includes DAESH media calling for arson attacks in the West due to this causing maximum harm and infrastructure damage, inciting lone actor attacks in urban areas using weapons such as arson, poison, vehicle ramming, bladed weapons or improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and attacking trucking and shipping industries to damage the national economy.

- According to media reporting from 23 October 2020, Canada-based imam, Younus Kathrada, delivered a sermon at Muslim Youth Victoria on the killing of French schoolteacher, Samuel Paty, for using *Charlie Hebdo* cartoons during class to mock the Prophet Muhammad. Kathrada's sermon, uploaded to YouTube, described Paty as "cursed," "evil-spirited," and a "filthy excuse for a human being." Kathrada called on his audience to boycott French products and services but ended his sermon with a supplication to Allah to support the mujahideen over the enemies of Islam and to annihilate those who slander the Prophet.

ASSESSMENT

CANADIAN EXTREMIST TRAVELLERS (CETs), RETURNEES & PREVENTED TRAVELLERS

Canada. Currently there are approximately 190 CETs with a nexus to Canada who are abroad, including in Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan and North and East Africa, and 60 CETs who have returned to Canada. These numbers have been stable over the last four years.

Currently, a number of CETs are in detention in Syria.

TRAVEL ABROAD

that Canada-based individuals are seeking to travel abroad.



ASSESSMENT

GROUPS LINKED TO IRAN

Extremist groups linked to Iran, such as Lebanese Hizballah (LH), continue to use Canada primarily as a facilitation and fundraising hub. While these groups have the intent and advanced capabilities to conduct attacks overseas targeting Western interests, such as the late-September 2020 rocket attack linked to Iranian-backed elements against the US airbase in Erbil, Iraq which also houses Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members,

FINANCIAL FACILITATION

Open source reporting from late-November 2020 indicates that a Toronto currency exchange business has helped millions of dollars be wired into Canada from Iran, circumventing international sanctions.

the funds came from Bank Saderat, which is alleged by the US Treasury to fund Hamas, Hizballah and other terrorist groups.

ASSESSMENT



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METHODS

a variety of methods that both inspired and directed terrorists use to conduct attacks overseas – ranging from unsophisticated (a bladed weapon attack/beheading, killing one, by an inspired lone actor in France in mid-October 2020) to sophisticated (a Taliban-linked vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) attack in Afghanistan in early-October 2020 that killed at least 15 individuals and injured over 30 more). However, domestic attacks in Canada are almost certain to be unsophisticated though can occasionally have elements of a sophisticated attack (including the use of firearms).

ATTACK TYPES

Unsophisticated - Uses readily available objects (knives, hammers, vehicles, etc.), in a hasty or indiscriminate way, with little planning done beforehand. Typically, unsophisticated attacks do not require a great deal of planning or ability.

Sophisticated - Makes use of more advanced weaponry/tactics, requiring more advanced knowledge to construct and employ. The use of complex weapons systems, the construction and employment of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or the use of multiple coordinated attackers are examples of a sophisticated method of attack. Sophisticated methods also make effective use of communications security, operational tradecraft, target selection and reconnaissance.

BLADED WEAPONS

Bladed weapons (ranging from kitchen knives to machetes to swords) continue to be used by lone-actor inspired terrorists, almost certainly due to the numerous high-profile attacks using this same method and the propagandizing effect these attacks have likely had. The potential for symbolism when conducting a bladed weapon attack is apparent with the two beheading attacks in France in October 2020. The November 2020 attacker in Vienna, Austria, also carried a machete during the attack despite having a primary and secondary firearm; it is likely that this was done for potential propaganda purposes rather than to be used as a tertiary weapon system. In Canada, the Incel attack of February 2020 also used a bladed weapon.

GHOST GUNS

Ghost guns are self-assembled firearms that are built from spare parts, unregulated kits or by constructing computer machined parts (also known as 3D printing). Kits sold online or by vendors contain unfinished components that do not meet the existing definition of a firearm. Most importantly, ghost guns have no serial numbers, making them almost impossible to trace.

Much of the reported extremist interest in ghost guns, both in Canada and internationally, involves supporters of IMV extremism ideologies. According to MEMRI reporting from May 2020, a Canadian IMV extremist supporter shared an instruction manual on building a homemade submachine gun originally posted by an IMV extremism supporting Facebook group.

In the past year, there have been a number of arrests across Canada related to the manufacture and trafficking of these weapons. In at least one instance of criminal charges in 2020, the individual charged had links to an IMV group.

RICIN

According to open source information ricin is a naturally occurring toxin resulting from processing of the castor bean. It can be found as a powder, a mist, a pellet or dissolved in water or a weak acid. Partially purified or more effectively refined ricin could be used in terrorist attacks. The toxin may be inhaled, injected or ingested; it is unlikely to be absorbed through the skin. Death can occur in affected people within 36 to 72 hours depending on the route of exposure and the dose received. There is no antidote for ricin poisoning.

According to SITE intelligence from mid-April 2019, a neo-Nazi online forum shared instructions for producing ricin as part of their discussions on provoking a race war.



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- According to a SITE intelligence from June 2018, a pro-DAESH Telegram channel published Swahili language instructions for producing ricin.

According to open source reporting from late-September 2020, a Canadian woman was charged in a US court with posting a number of threatening letters to the White House and various detention facilities in Texas. The letter addressed to President Trump was found to contain ricin during inspection at the screening facility for mail destined for the White House. It represents a viable method for extremists to disseminate ricin or other biological agents.

ASSESSMENT

TARGETS

POLITICAL FIGURES

Often seen as emblematic of a larger grievance/cause, political figures across Canada, the West and worldwide are seen as high impact targets from individuals and groups across the terrorism landscape. Both IMV extremists and AQ/DAESH inspired individuals can also see the same individual as antithetical to their beliefs and promote calls to violence against this person. French President Emmanuel Macron has been targeted for violence in 2020 from both IMV extremists (in relation to mid-May 'QAnon Québec' social media group posts about Macron which included a picture of a guillotine and threat to put him in an oven) and AQ/DAESH inspired extremists (such as early-September posts calling for his killing – accompanied with an icon of knives – in response to Charlie Hebdo republishing their Prophet Muhammad cartoons).

According to open source reporting, between January and July 2020 the RCMP reported an increase of threats against the Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers (130 compared to 100 during the same time period in 2019);

Plot to kidnap Michigan Governor

An early-October 2020 plot to kidnap Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer and attack the state capitol building resulted in 14 individuals facing a variety of terrorism charges. Numerous links to the 'Boogaloo' anti-government movement were found along with other anti-law enforcement sentiments (see TH 20/99-E). One individual is linked to the attempted production of ghost guns. These individuals reportedly engaged in firearms training / tactical drills and sought to use explosives as part of their plan.

Corey Hurren was arrested in July 2020 for

ramming his truck through the gates of Rideau Hall in possession of four fire arms and faces a number of charges, including uttering a threat to the prime minister. While not charged with terrorism, it was later discovered that he had posted QAnon material online. Another Québec-based person who regularly posts on a QAnon Quebec public Facebook group posted in late-July 2020 the home address of the Director of Public Health for Québec and suggested individuals might want to visit and 'thank him' (they have also separately posted anti-vaccination & anti-mask material related to COVID-19).



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CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

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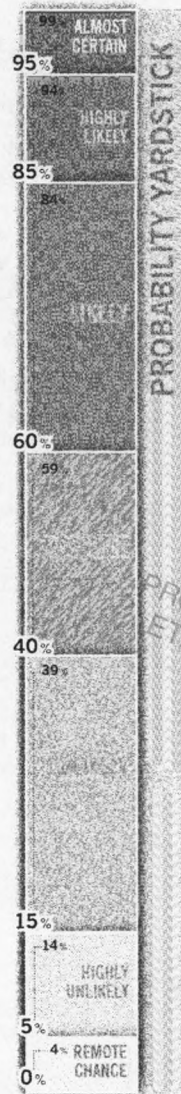
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DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

THREAT LEVEL	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism will occur
CRITICAL	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism will occur
HIGH	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism will occur
MEDIUM	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism COULD OCCUR	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism will occur
LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism will occur
VERY LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism will occur

ITAC uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis in applying terrorism threat levels. The setting of threat levels is determined by several factors including current intelligence, recent events, as well as the intent, capabilities, and attack frequency of terrorist groups. ITAC cautions that the information may be incomplete and, regardless of the threat level applied, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning.

TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED		Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets
MODERATE		Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets
GENERAL		Capable of simple attacks

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

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Any feedback should be directed via email to ITAC at

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THREAT ASSESSMENT

ITAC

CIET

Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre

Centre intégré d'évaluation du terrorisme

TA 20/73-E // 2020-12-04

SECRET//

UPDATE

THE NATIONAL TERRORISM THREAT LEVEL FOR CANADA

This threat assessment (TA) updates the National Terrorism Threat Level (NTTL) and the threat to uniformed personnel, last published on 30 July 2020—TA 20/45-E

ITAC assesses the terrorism threat in Canada to be **MEDIUM**; extremist groups and individuals located in Canada and abroad have both the intent AND the capability to carry out an act of terrorism in Canada. ITAC assesses that an attack **COULD OCCUR** in Canada.

CRITICAL
HIGH
MEDIUM
LOW
VERY LOW



ITAC assesses the terrorism threat in Canada to uniformed personnel to be **MEDIUM**. ITAC assesses that an attack **targeting uniformed personnel** in Canada **COULD OCCUR**.

CITY LEVELS have been reassessed since the last publication of the NTTL in July 2020 (see TA-20/45-E).

KEY JUDGEMENTS

EVOLVING ASSESSMENTS

ITAC continues to assess that the greatest terrorism threat is domestic, lone actors inspired or incited by violent extremist and terrorist ideologies promoted mostly online.

ITAC assesses that the primary terrorist threat to Canada stems from those inspired or incited by IMV extremism and religiously-motivated violent extremist (RMVE) groups such as DAESH or al-Qaida (AQ).

- ITAC assesses that there is a heightened threat of attack in Canada within the current maintained national threat level of MEDIUM.

ENDURING JUDGEMENTS

Extremists in Canada maintain the intent and possess the capability to conduct an act of terrorism in Canada. A terrorist attack in Canada could occur

LEVELS FOR TRANSPORTATION

AVIATION

RAIL

MARITIME

ASSESSMENT NOTE:

DEFINITIONS and HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS are located at the last page.

Canada

CURRENT CONTEXT

The dynamic **INTERACTION** of **extremist INTENT, CAPABILITY and OPPORTUNITY** is the core of the terrorism threat. Actors with extremist intent seek to mobilize their capabilities; realizing this intent and capability requires an opportunity (a physical space and/or time) to carry out an act of terrorism. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, ITAC actively monitors the terrorism landscape in Canada and notes the unique reality presented by the accompanying restrictive public health measures. ITAC assessments herein consider this context and the graphic below depicts the impact of the pandemic on the spectrum of the terrorism threat environment in Canada.

ENDURING JUDGEMENTS (CONT'D)

References to Canada and uniformed personnel continue to be present in extremist propaganda.

- ITAC continues to see anti-authoritarian rhetoric and events from IMV extremists (see Targets section) and as such, notes that uniformed personnel could be targeted as a result of these views



THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE TERRORISM LANDSCAPE IN CANADA

The COVID-19 pandemic has not caused a significant change in capabilities in Canada.

Domestic extremists inspired by IMV/DAESH/AQ

Terrorist and violent extremist groups continue to create propaganda using the uncertainty and fear associated within the pandemic context and public health restrictions to galvanize intent.

Using unsophisticated methods for small-scale lone actor attack

THREAT

OPPORTUNITY

Inspired or incited online to conduct attacks against soft targets

SECRET

ACTORS

IMVE

AQ/DAESH
inspired

CETs

Iran
affiliatedKhalistani
secession**IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

Over the past 12 months,

first, Canadian authorities charged an individual with a terrorism-related offence due to his 'incel' ideology in perpetrating a murder in February 2020 (see TA 20/45-A). As such, the threat from IMV extremists continues to grow in Canada and other Western countries and is increasingly becoming an area of concern.

TRAINING

- According to open source reporting from mid-October 2020, The Base (now largely disrupted by law enforcement) has previously been recruiting individuals with military experience from the US and Canada to train in military operations to be ready to take advantage of a believed impending societal collapse.

**PURCHASING AND STOCKPILING
WEAPONS/AMMUNITION**

According to open source reporting from mid-September 2020, a chat between members of the Alberta Separatist Youth League (ASYL) appeared to encourage a member to purchase an SKS rifle online even without a Possession and Acquisition License (PAL) and suggested locations to purchase one even without a PAL.

QAnon

A sprawling conspiracy theory that began in late-2017, their central claim is that an elite class, or deep state, controls the world and engages in pedophilia and child sex trafficking. Since then, it has evolved to include a number of different conspiracies, including ones related to COVID-19, and exploded in popularity. Coinciding with COVID-19 and government restrictions, membership in over 100 public QAnon Facebook groups grew from about 155,000 in February 2020 to 1.12 million in June, although Facebook has removed almost 800 QAnon groups in late-August stemming from public backlash. According to a May 2019 FBI intelligence briefing, QAnon was declared a domestic terrorism threat.

RECRUITMENT

According to open source intelligence from late-August 2020, a neo-Nazi group called the Folkish Resistance Movement (FRM) was active (on Telegram as well as having a website) in the US and Canada. Anti-Semitic stickers and flyers have been noted in Nova Scotia and Kitchener, ON which link to their website.



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ASSESSMENT

AQ/DAESH-INSPIRED EXTREMISTS

Canada continues to see individuals who are inspired by violent extremist groups such as AQ and DAESH. These domestic actors continue to express intent and capability to facilitate terrorist activity while some aspire to conduct a violent act of terrorism in Canada. Western countries remain an attractive target for terrorist organizations abroad

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ONLINE PROLIFERATION OF INCITEMENT, TARGETS AND METHODS

There remains a steady flow of calls on social media for attacks against Western targets – often accompanied by suggestion of high impact targets as well as the means to do so. This includes DAESH media calling for arson attacks in the West due to this causing maximum harm and infrastructure damage, inciting lone actor attacks in urban areas using weapons such as arson, poison, vehicle ramming, bladed weapons or improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and attacking trucking and shipping industries to damage the national economy.

- According to media reporting from 23 October 2020, Canada-based imam, Younus Kathrada, delivered a sermon at Muslim Youth Victoria on the killing of French schoolteacher, Samuel Paty, for using *Charlie Hebdo* cartoons during class to mock the Prophet Muhammad. Kathrada's sermon, uploaded to YouTube, described Paty as “cursed,” “evil-spirited,” and “a filthy excuse for a human being.” Kathrada called on his audience to boycott French products and services but ended his sermon with a supplication to Allah to support the mujahideen over the enemies of Islam and to annihilate those who slander the Prophet.

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ASSESSMENT

CANADIAN EXTREMIST TRAVELLERS (CETs), RETURNEES & PREVENTED TRAVELLERS

Canada. Currently there are approximately 190 CETs with a nexus to Canada who are abroad, including in Syria, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan and North and East Africa, and 60 CETs who have returned to Canada. These numbers have been stable over the last four years.

TRAVEL ABROAD

that the number of individuals in Canada who desire to travel abroad,

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ASSESSMENT

GROUPS LINKED TO IRAN

Extremist groups linked to Iran, such as Lebanese Hizballah (LH), continue to use Canada primarily as a facilitation and fundraising hub. While these groups have the intent and advanced capabilities to conduct attacks overseas targeting Western interests, such as the late-September 2020 rocket attack linked to Iranian-backed elements against the US airbase in Erbil, Iraq which also houses Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members,

Open source reporting from late-November 2020 indicates that a Toronto currency exchange business has helped millions of dollars be wired into Canada from Iran, circumventing international sanctions.

the funds came from Bank Saderat, which is alleged by the US Treasury to fund Hamas, Hizballah and other terrorist groups.

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SECRET//REL TO CAN, AUS, GBR, NZL, USA

FACILITATION ACTIVITIES

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ASSESSMENT

METHODS

a variety of methods that both inspired and directed terrorists use to conduct attacks overseas – ranging from unsophisticated (a bladed weapon attack/beheading, killing one, by an inspired lone actor in France in mid-October 2020) to sophisticated (a Taliban-linked vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) attack in Afghanistan in early-October 2020 that killed at least 15 individuals and injured over 30 more). However, domestic attacks in Canada are almost certain to be unsophisticated though can occasionally have elements of a sophisticated attack (including the use of firearms).



SECRET

BLADED WEAPONS

Bladed weapons (ranging from kitchen knives to machetes to swords) continue to be used by lone-actor inspired terrorists, almost certainly due to the numerous high-profile attacks using this same method and the propagandizing effect these attacks have likely had. The potential for symbolism when conducting a bladed weapon attack is apparent with the two beheading attacks in France in October 2020. The November 2020 attacker in Vienna, Austria, also carried a machete during the attack despite having a primary and secondary firearm; it is likely that this was done for potential propaganda purposes rather than to be used as a tertiary weapon system. In Canada, the Incel attack of February 2020 also used a bladed weapon.

ATTACK TYPES

Unsophisticated - Uses readily available objects (knives, hammers, vehicles, etc.), in a hasty or indiscriminate way, with little planning done beforehand. Typically, unsophisticated attacks do not require a great deal of planning or ability.

Sophisticated - Makes use of more advanced weaponry/tactics, requiring more advanced knowledge to construct and employ. The use of complex weapons systems, the construction and employment of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or the use of multiple coordinated attackers are examples of a sophisticated method of attack. Sophisticated methods also make effective use of communications security, operational tradecraft, target selection and reconnaissance.

GHOST GUNS

Ghost guns are self-assembled firearms that are built from spare parts, unregulated kits or by constructing computer machined parts (also known as 3D printing). Kits sold online or by vendors contain unfinished components that do not meet the existing definition of a firearm. Most importantly, ghost guns have no serial numbers, making them almost impossible to trace.

Much of the reported extremist interest in ghost guns, both in Canada and internationally, involves supporters of IMV extremism ideologies. According to MEMRI reporting from May 2020, a Canadian IMV extremist supporter shared an instruction manual on building a homemade submachine gun originally posted by an IMV extremism supporting Facebook group.

In the past year, there have been a number of arrests across Canada related to the manufacture and trafficking of these weapons. In at least two instances of criminal charges in 2020.

RICIN

According to open source information ricin is a naturally occurring toxin resulting from processing of the castor bean. It can be found as a powder, a mist, a pellet or dissolved in water or a weak acid. Partially purified or more effectively refined ricin could be used in terrorist attacks. The toxin may be inhaled, injected or ingested; it is unlikely to be absorbed through the skin. Death can occur in affected people within 36 to 72 hours depending on the route of exposure and the dose received. There is no antidote for ricin poisoning.

- According to SITE intelligence from mid-April 2019, a neo-Nazi online forum shared instructions for producing ricin as part of their discussions on provoking a race war.
- According to a SITE intelligence from June 2018, a pro-DAESH Telegram channel published Swahili language instructions for producing ricin

According to open source reporting from late-September 2020, a Canadian woman was charged in a US court with posting a number of threatening letters to the White House and various detention facilities in Texas. The letter addressed to President Trump was found to contain ricin during inspection at the screening facility for mail destined for the White House.

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TARGETS

POLITICAL FIGURES

Often seen as emblematic of a larger grievance/cause, political figures across Canada, the West and worldwide are seen as high impact targets from individuals and groups across the terrorism landscape. Both IMV extremists and AQ/DAESH inspired individuals can also see the same individual as antithetical to their beliefs and promote calls to violence against this person. French President Emmanuel Macron has been targeted for violence in 2020 from both IMV extremists (in relation to mid-May 'QAnon Québec' social media group posts about Macron which included a picture of a guillotine and threat to put him in an oven) and AQ/DAESH inspired extremists (such as early-September posts calling for his killing – accompanied with an icon of knives – in response to Charlie Hebdo republishing their Prophet Muhammad cartoons).

According to open source reporting, between January and July 2020 the RCMP reported an increase of threats against the Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers (130 compared to 100 during the same time period in 2019);
reported

Plot to kidnap Michigan Governor

An early-October 2020 plot to kidnap Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer and attack the state capitol building resulted in 14 individuals facing a variety of terrorism charges. Numerous links to the 'Boogaloo' anti-government movement were found along with other anti-law enforcement sentiments (see TH 20/99-E). One individual is linked to the attempted production of ghost guns. These individuals reportedly engaged in firearms training/tactical drills and sought to use explosives as part of their plan.

Corey Hurren was arrested in July 2020 for ramming his truck through the gates of Rideau Hall in possession of four fire arms and faces a number of charges, including uttering a threat to the prime minister. While not charged with terrorism, it was later discovered that he had posted QAnon material online. Another Québec-based person who regularly posts on a QAnon Quebec public Facebook group posted in late-July 2020 the home address of the Director of Public Health for Québec and suggested individuals might want to visit and 'thank him' (they have also separately posted anti-vaccination & anti-mask material related to COVID-19).

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SECRET

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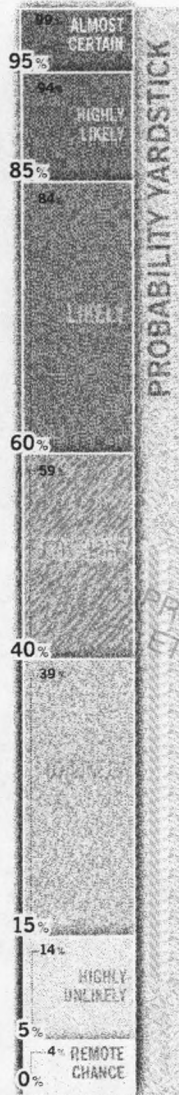
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Toronto-based minor: Faces charges of first-degree murder and attempted murder including terrorist activity as of 19 May 2020 for his alleged incel inspired attack on 24 February 2020 attack at a Toronto massage parlour.



DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

THREAT LEVEL	Established	Raised	Lowered	Retained
CRITICAL	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY .	ITAC assesses it is HIGHLY LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.		
HIGH	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.		
MEDIUM	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses it is POSSIBLE that a violent act of terrorism will occur.		
LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.		
VERY LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is HIGHLY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.		

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TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED		Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets
MODERATE		Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets
GENERAL		Capable of simple attacks

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VIOLENT EXTREMIST THREATS TO COVID-19 VACCINATION EFFORTS IN CANADA

ANTI-VACCINATION MOVEMENT

Adherents of the global anti-vaccination (aka "anti-vax") movement believe that vaccines are dangerous and may cause autism or even death. Adherents from the political right and left find common cause in their distrust of the pharmaceutical industry, whom they accuse of suppressing adverse health effects in the name of profits, as well as the governments and public agencies that mandate inoculations. Studies have shown that individuals against vaccination tend to hold conspiratorial beliefs and are generally resistant to government regulation. A recent poll indicates that 16% of Canadians do not intend to get a future COVID-19 vaccine.

COVID-19 VACCINE CONSPIRACY THEORIES AND THE POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE

(See page 2)

COVID-19 MISINFORMATION AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Conspiracy theories and misinformation related to COVID-19 are pervasive in Canada and throughout the world. Most portray the pandemic as an exaggerated crisis or as part of an elaborate deception. Followers of QAnon, who believe that an elite class of pedophiles controls the world, have absorbed and adapted COVID-19 conspiracy theories that fit with their worldview.

This assessment examines terrorist and violent extremist threats to the eventual distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in Canada. It considers violent threats to all known aspects of the vaccine supply and delivery process including production, storage, distribution, and individual inoculations. that the logistical planning for the distribution and delivery of vaccines is in progress. In that light, this assessment considers general rather than specific threats.

VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Violent extremists, both ideologically and religiously motivated, have exploited the pandemic and government response measures, capitalizing on public fear, distrust and socio-economic unrest to boost radicalization efforts and incite acts of violence. Many violent extremist groups and individuals have adopted conspiratorial beliefs about the pandemic that rationalize their radical worldviews and justify violence. Other violent extremists view COVID-19 as a real but welcome crisis that could hasten the collapse of Western society.

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ASSESSMENT NOTE:

Canada

COVID-19 VACCINE CONSPIRACY THEORIES AND THE POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE

A VAST CONSPIRACY TO MONITOR AND CONTROL INDIVIDUALS

A popular conspiracy theory about the origins of COVID-19 alleges that Microsoft CEO Bill Gates and others engineered the COVID-19 pandemic and the eventual vaccine in order to implant devices and track every human using nanotechnology and 5G towers. The conspiracy theory is based in part on the fact that Gates had been warning about pandemic unpreparedness for years and that his foundation supported a tabletop pandemic exercise in late 2019 called "Event 201" to underscore the need for international cooperation. This theory aligns with the popular film "Plandemic" which claims that pharmaceutical companies and the US government planned the pandemic to eventually profit from dangerous COVID-19 vaccines as well as with QAnon-linked conspiracy theories that claim the "deep state" cabal would use vaccines to exert biological control over populations.

These interwoven conspiracy theories have inspired violent acts and incitements to violence in Canada:

- In July 2020, Canadian Ranger Correy Hurren drove his truck through the gates of Rideau Hall and proceeded with firearms towards the residence of the Prime Minister and Governor General before he was arrested. Hurren cited Event 201 on social media and in an explanatory letter obtained by authorities.
- Fabrice Descurninges, a QAnon supporter from Montreal, posted memes on Facebook suggesting violent resistance to mandatory vaccinations. Descurninges has thousands of followers on social media and has posted several violent, anti-government messages about the pandemic, including a post containing the personal address of Quebec Director of Public Health Horacio Arruda.

GLOBALIST MANIPULATION AND TYRANNY

The "Great Reset" conspiracy theory alleges that globalist elites aim to use the pandemic to manipulate the world economy and curtail individual freedoms. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sparked renewed interest in the Great Reset conspiracy theory when he stated that the pandemic "provided an opportunity for a reset" during a speech to the United Nations, although he said so in the context of world poverty and climate change.

- IMV extremists have seemingly latched on to the Great Reset conspiracy theory and allege that the Government of Canada is creating "isolation camps" for anyone who refuses COVID-19 vaccinations.
- Open source reporting shows some online neo-Nazi and Boogaloo channels alleging that governments will deploy militaries to forcibly inject vaccines and impose martial law. They also claim that the vaccine might even be used to sterilize or kill political dissenters.

PART OF A JEWISH PLOT

Xenophobic IMV extremists and Islamist extremists alike have painted the COVID-19 pandemic as an elaborate Jewish plot, suggesting that Jews created the coronavirus and the vaccine for financial profit or strategic advantage.

- In May 2020, the Pakistani Taliban (TTP) alleged that the coronavirus was a Jewish invention and that Jews would distribute vaccines strategically to increase their international dominance.
- During the early days of the pandemic, a flyer disseminated by the United States-based National Socialist Movement (NSM) claimed that COVID-19 is a Jewish hoax to profit from the development of eventual vaccines. The NSM suggested that the "hoax vaccines" might also be part of Jewish plot to purposefully give people autism.

POTENTIAL TARGETS

FRONTLINE HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Extremists who have strong anti-vaccination beliefs have implied violence against those performing inoculations, especially in response to the notion of the forced vaccinations of schoolchildren.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Politicians and senior public health officials perceived to be responsible for the public health measures continue to face online abuse and threats of violence. This includes Cabinet Ministers and public health leaders like Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, Dr. Theresa Tam.

PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES

The location of Pfizer's Connecticut headquarters was noted online in an apparent incitement to violence. Separately, anti-government and xenophobic extremists in Germany planned to protest near the Mainz headquarters of Pfizer's vaccine development partner, BioNTech.

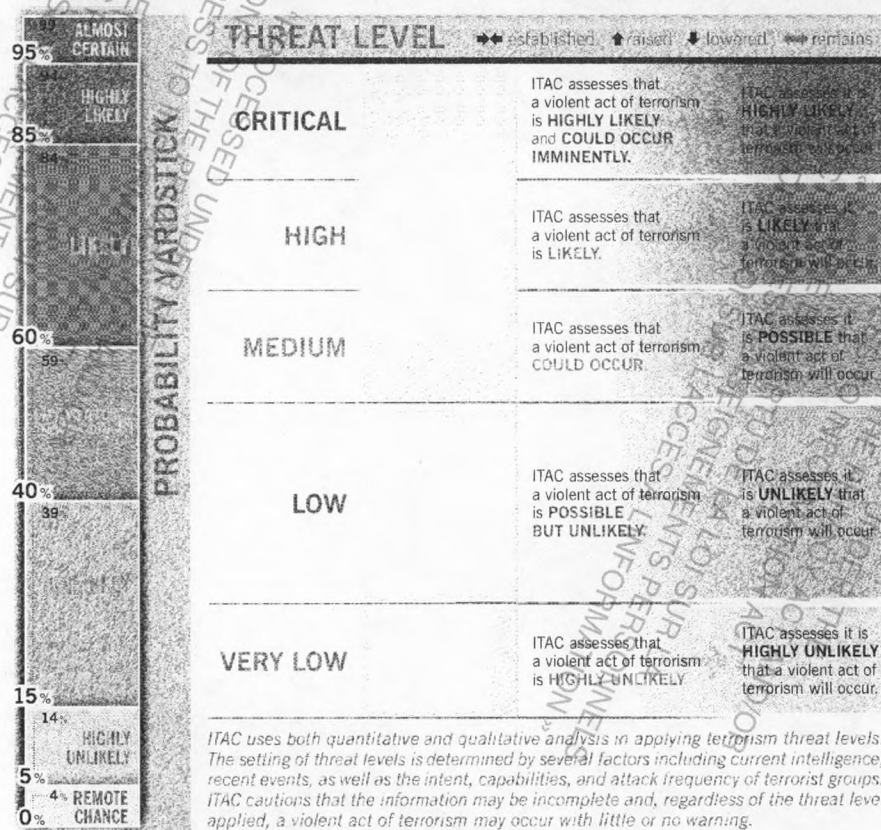
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Bill Gates has been targeted himself for his perceived role in creating the pandemic and for his advocacy for vaccination in general. Gates has been a vocal proponent of the equitable global distribution of vaccines.

UNIFORMED PERSONNEL

The notion of a military-enforced vaccination has animated IMV extremists. The Canadian Armed Forces are supporting the Public Health Agency of Canada in the distribution of vaccines.

DEFINITIONS



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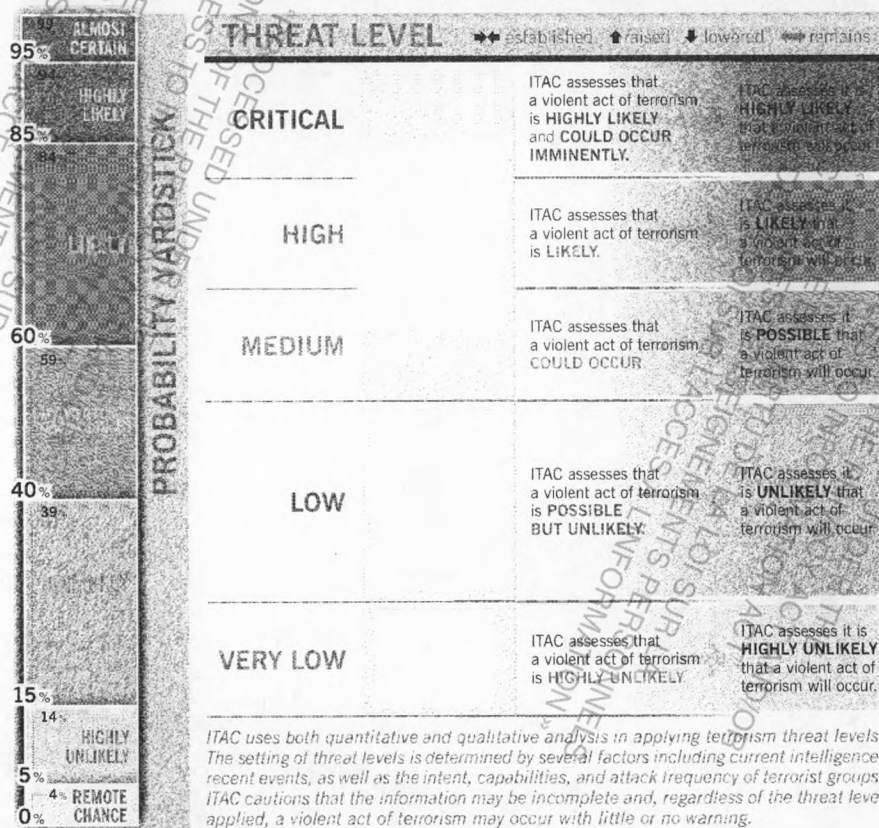
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DEFINITIONS



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HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

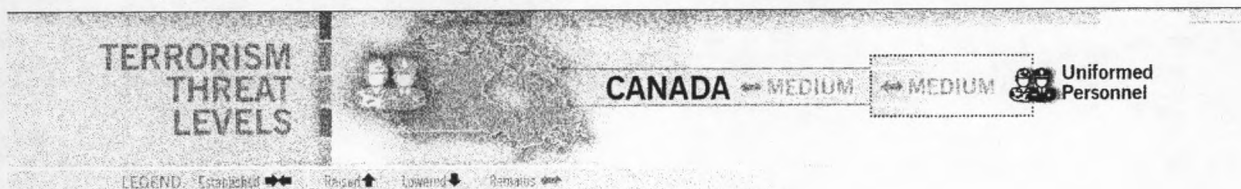
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Update: Threats to COVID-19 vaccination effort in Canada



INTRODUCTION

This assessment updates TA 20/75 and considers potential terrorist and violent extremist disruptions to Canada's vaccine rollout, relating to the production, transportation, storage and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. The scope of this assessment includes pharmaceutical development and manufacturing locations, shipping and logistics providers, political and senior public health officials, healthcare personnel and infrastructure, uniformed personnel, and all 70 distribution sites across Canada. At the time of writing, Canada has contracts with seven vaccine development companies, of which two have been approved: Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna.

At this time, the seven COVID-19 vaccines ordered by the Government of Canada are being manufactured in several countries, but not in Canada itself. Much of the manufacturing is being done through third-party partnerships due to the overwhelming demand. It is unclear exactly which manufacturing sites will produce vaccines destined for Canada.

THREATS AGAINST PERSONS

According to media reporting on 15 January 2021, SOS-Québec, a Quebec-based anti-vaccination group with more than 10,000 online members, has delivered "indictment" letters to police forces. The group plans to deliver similar letters to COVID-19 vaccination sites, demanding that the vaccination effort ceases and accusing those involved in the vaccination program of breaking the Nuremberg Code (a set of research principles related to human experimentation established following World War II). Ronald Marenger, one of the group's leaders, was arrested in 2017 for making threats towards personnel in the justice system in Gatineau, Quebec. Other members of the group have been implicated in threats towards Canadian politicians, including Quebec Premier François Legault. Currently, the Service de police de la Ville de Montréal (SPVM) assesses that the group is "peaceful".

The locations of several Canadian vaccine immunization sites (primarily hospitals) are available online through media reporting and are easily searchable. Likewise, the federal contract for the provision of logistics solutions was made public by the Government of Canada. Although pharmaceutical and biotech company headquarters and regional offices are visible and central in several major cities, both in Canada and internationally, manufacturing sites are often in remote industrial locations.

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DEFINITIONS and HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS are located at the last page.

Canada

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Due to ongoing media attention, politicians and senior public officials engaged in the promotion, procurement, distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines are often identifiable. The residential addresses of certain political figures have been released publicly, sometimes in an apparent attempt to incite violence.

POTENTIAL THREAT ACTORS

Ideologically motivated violent (IMV) extremism

According to a body of open source reporting, IMV extremists around the world have incorporated various conspiracy theories related to COVID-19 and vaccines into their ideological beliefs. Although their beliefs about how and why vaccines are being deployed differ, IMV extremists often focus their hatred on the political and business leaders whom they perceive to be part of a globalist scheme that uses vaccines to control or kill certain populations. Others view the vaccination effort as part of an elaborate Jewish plot (see TA 20/75).

IMV EXTREMISM

IMV extremist networks generally operate in a decentralized fashion with threats of violence emanating from individual influences or small groups, rather than centrally coordinated, structured organizations. Individuals often connect with other like-minded extremists in the online space. Individual actors may belong to one or more IMV extremist groups, or to none. Many of these actors perceive violent resistance to government interventions such as vaccination programs as a patriotic fight against "tyranny," while others hope to hasten the collapse of Western society so that a new political order can be established.

Anti-authority and anti-government IMV extremists include anarchists, radical libertarians, sovereign citizens, neo-fascists, white nationalists and survivalist militias.

The increasing support for anti-government conspiracy theories such as QAnon is a growing issue in Canada. Experts have voiced concerns about the role that conspiracy theories are playing in online radicalization and incitements to violence.

REAL-WORLD IMPACT OF COVID-19 CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Recent incidents in Canada and the United States demonstrate the ability of COVID-19 conspiracies to mobilize individuals to act.

In November 2020, during separate incidents in Manitoba, hospital staff members were confronted by individuals who questioned the existence of COVID-19 patients. (U//FOUO)

In December 2020, a fire at a hospital in Burnaby, BC, which led to the spread of COVID-19 cases, is believed to have been an act of arson.

In late December 2020, a Wisconsin pharmacist, Steven Brandenburg, purposefully spoiled 500 doses of the Moderna vaccine by leaving them unrefrigerated. Brandenburg was convinced that the world was "crashing down" and that vaccines would mutate human DNA. He had also brought a gun to work on two occasions.

Although explicit IMV extremist incitements to vaccine-related violence are rare, a December 2020 body of SITE reporting highlights the ongoing concern about calls for violence by IMV extremists on social media. Some individuals called for violence against vaccine delivery trucks and truck drivers, and violence against specific wealthy "elites" such as Bill Gates. There have also been calls to bomb the "Pfizer factory," and encouragement for others to "shoot anyone with a vaccine in their hand" and to



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"kill the drivers that deliver the...vaccines." Other social media posts urged followers to track the trucks' movement, ostensibly to identify distribution sites.

In addition to issuing threats of violence, some extremists have also been involved in disinformation campaigns and cyber threats. For example, according to open source reporting, on 13 January 2021, extremists shared hacked vaccine data taken from Pfizer and BioNTech to several online platforms. Stolen information included regulatory reports and internal documents about the COVID-19 vaccine formula.

Religiously motivated violent (RMV) extremism

RMV extremists in Canada, such as individuals inspired by DAESH or al-Qaida (AQ), could also disrupt vaccine distribution in Canada. Recent incidents around the world have highlighted this intent. According to open source reporting, on 12 January 2021, a police officer was killed in Pakistan while escorting a polio vaccination team. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), implicated in some of these attacks, has claimed that the COVID-19 vaccination program is part of an elaborate Jewish plot to sterilize Muslims. According to further open source reporting, in a recent online DAESH forum, a user mused about administering fake but deadly COVID-19 vaccinations, suggesting that this would not only kill the victim but would also sow distrust in society. Finally, a media outlet aligned with AQ published a magazine in November 2020 that encouraged individuals living in the West to conduct attacks by exploiting pandemic conditions. The magazine offered specific tactical suggestions, such as distributing poisoned masks, and encouraged readers to be creative in their operations.

ASSESSMENT



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Terrorism Threat Levels

Canada

MEDIUM

MEDIUM

Threat level as of 1 December 2009



An act of terrorism **COULD OCCUR**. (U//FOUO)



There is intent *and* capability from both domestic and international extremist actors to commit an act of terrorism in Canada. (U//FOUO)



An act of terrorism affecting **uniformed personnel** in Canada **COULD OCCUR**. (U//FOUO)

•

an individual or group **within Canada** or abroad has the intent *and* capability to commit an act of terrorism in Canada.

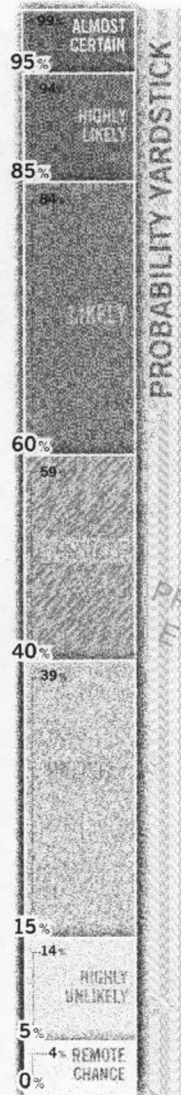
ITAC assesses that an act of terrorism could occur in Canada.

- Propaganda identifying **uniformed personnel** as potential targets continues to be published online.

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism affecting *uniformed personnel* in Canada could occur.

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DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

THREAT LEVEL	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur
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THREAT HIGHLIGHT

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Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre

Centre intégré d'évaluation du terrorisme

TH 21/06-E // 2021-01-28

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CANADA: Proud Boys variants in the United States and Canada

TERRORISM
THREAT
LEVELS

CANADA

MEDIUM

MEDIUM



Uniformed
Personnel

LEGEND: Established Based Reported Rumors

INTRODUCTION

While sharing a recognizable name, the Proud Boys (PB Canada) and Proud Boys United States (PB US)

Proud Boys Canada is a version of an originally US-based ideologically motivated violent (IMV) extremist group whose participants espouse misogynistic, Islamophobic, anti-Semitic and anti-immigrant views. The extent of the membership of Proud Boys in Canada. The majority of the activities conducted by PB Canada chapters

PROUD BOYS IN THE US

Since 2016, the Proud Boys US have engaged in various online and real-world activities in American cities. Real-world activities include violence, particularly in support of adherents to xenophobic and anti-government ideologies or against ideological opponents such as Antifa activists. This includes the 2017 Unite the Right rally.

Social media accounts associated with the Proud Boys US used violent rhetoric when promoting protest action in the weeks leading up to the attack on Capitol Hill. Media reporting indicates that Proud Boys US members were at the protest; some were arrested. Since the breach, major social media platforms have banned the Proud Boys.

BACKGROUND

In 2016, the original PB group was founded in the US by a Canadian based in the US;

PB actions in Canada and in the US may be interpreted as being in line with white-nationalist ideology, although the group does not self-describe as such. Both the American and the Canadian versions state that they are a "fraternal organization of Western Chauvinists who will no longer apologize for creating a modern world".

Based on a body of media reporting from late-2020 to late-January, 2021, PB is far more prevalent in the US than in Canada;

The American group has been tied to the neo-Nazi, pro-fascist ideology; its members participated in events that have resulted in violence and deaths.

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According to media reporting, PB Canada has several chapters, yet they have largely not been involved in real world activities over the past two years. In 2020, a pro-fascist and neo-Nazi arm of PB Canada splintered, leading to the formation of Proud Boys Canada First (PB CF). The latter was disavowed by PB Canada for promoting violence and genocide.

After the Capitol Hill attack, two PB Canada chapters, PB Manitoba and PB Ottawa, formally disbanded, citing "ever-growing differences between [their] autonomous chapter's values and how the name is perceived." The Manitoba chapter's spokesperson relayed that they have always been an organization opposed to political violence and that "the events in the US made it impossible [for them] to continue". A separate statement on Telegram mentioned an upcoming "rebrand" of the chapter.

PROUD BOYS ACTIVITIES IN CANADA

open-source reporting indicates that, in the last two years, PB Canada have only been involved in a handful of small-scale, real-world confrontations, largely with "left-wing" protesters. These confrontations were mainly verbal.

ASSESSMENT

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Terrorism Threat Levels

Canada

MEDIUM

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- An act of terrorism **COULD OCCUR**.
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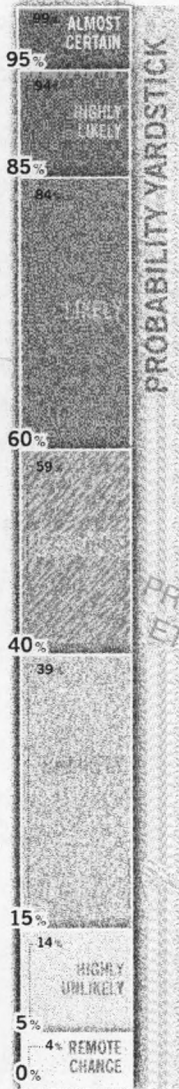
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TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED	Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets
MODERATE	Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets
GENERAL	Capable of simple attacks

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WTR 20/46-E // 2020-11-19

TOP SECRET//

CANADIAN EYES ONLY

Week: 2020 11 12 to 2020 11 18

CONTENTS	CANADA-RELATED	AMERICAS - EUROPE	MIDDLE EAST NTR
	AFRICA	EURASIA - PACIFIC	

5. **MALI:** JNIM's Chief of Military Affairs killed by French forces

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TOP SECRET

CANADIAN EYES ONLY

Canada-related

1. CANADA:

Source:

open sources

Urban Infidels Canada

Urban Infidels Canada

Open sources indicate that the Urban Infidels group is a splinter group of Soldiers of Odin. The originally Alberta-based "patriot" group have been opening new chapters in cities across Canada.

Source: Canadian Anti-hate Network

Americas-Europe

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CANADIAN EYES ONLY

Middle East

NTR

Africa

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5. MALI: JNIM's Chief of Military Affairs killed by French forces

Source: Media

Summary: According to a body of media reporting of mid-November 2020, on 10 November 2020, French military forces killed Bah Ag Moussa in northeastern Mali. French drones identified Moussa's vehicle 140 km north of Menaka in eastern Mali and helicopters and commandos from the Barkhane counter-terrorism mission were dispatched to intercept the vehicle. The truck's occupants were killed after they ignored warning shots by French forces. Moussa was the military leader of al-Qaida (AQ)-affiliated Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) and the right-hand man of JNIM's leader Iyad Ag Ghali. Moussa was believed to be responsible for multiple attacks on Malian and international forces in the country.

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TOP SECRET//

CANADIAN EYES ONLY

Changes to Terrorism Threat Levels

What follows is a list of other ITAC products published between 12 and 18 November 2020.

Threat Highlights

TH 20/112 CANADA: Profile of the leader of a

Threat Assessments

TA 20/66

TA 20/66-A

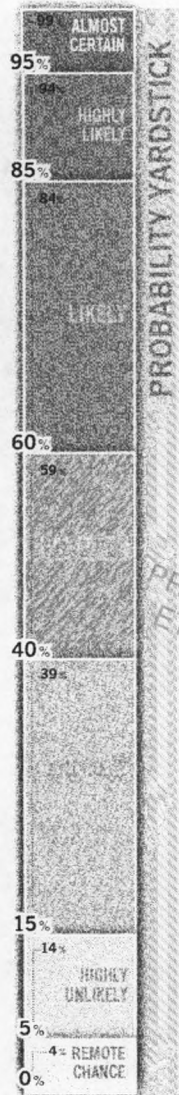
TA 20/67 Uniformed personnel and ideologically motivated violent extremism

TA 20/68

TA 20/69 Terrorism and COVID-19 Update - 17 November 2020

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DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL		
CRITICAL	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY .	ITAC assesses it is HIGHLY LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
HIGH	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
MEDIUM	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses it is POSSIBLE that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
VERY LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is HIGHLY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

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WTR 21/01-E // 2021-01-07

TOP SECRET/

Week: 2020 12 17 to 2021 01 06

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CANADA-RELATED

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1. UNITED STATES: Leader of Proud Boys arrested in Washington, DC
2. UNITED STATES: Attack on gas pipelines in Colorado; perpetrator unconfirmed

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AFRICA

4. MALI: JNIM claims killing of five French soldiers in two separate attacks

EURASIA - PACIFIC

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Canada

TOP SECRET

Canada

Americas-Europe

1. UNITED STATES: Leader of Proud Boys arrested in Washington, DC*Source: Media*

Summary: According to media reporting from 5 January 2021, Enrique Tarrio—the leader of the Proud Boys, a xenophobic extremist group—was arrested on 4 January 2021 in Washington, DC, and was charged with destruction of property and a firearm offence. Tarrio was arrested ahead of pro-Donald Trump protests planned for 5–6 January 2021 in Washington, DC, to coincide with the United States (US) Congress's vote to affirm President Elect Joe Biden's victory. He was subsequently released. A judge signed an order on Tuesday banning Tarrio from entering DC, with very limited exceptions related to his criminal case. Tarrio's property destruction charges relate to his admitted role in burning a Black Lives Matter banner torn from a historic Black church during a previous pro-Trump protest on 12 December 2020. The firearm charge relates to two high-capacity ammunition magazines found in his possession during his arrest.

2. UNITED STATES: Attack on gas pipelines in Colorado; perpetrator unconfirmed*Source: Media*

Summary: According to media reporting from 29 December 2020, on 26 December 2020, coordinated acts of vandalism occurred at three separate gas pipeline sites in Aspen, Colorado, disrupting gas service to the area and leaving about 3,500 customers without heat or hot water. The name of a self-described "radical environmental group," Earth First!, was written on a pipe. It is unclear if the group was actually involved in the incident.

WTR 21/01-E

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TOP SECRET//SI//ORCON/REL TO CAN, AUS, GBR, NZL, USA

Africa

4. MALI: JNIM claims killing of five French soldiers in two separate attacks

Source: SITE Intelligence Group

Summary: According to SITE Intelligence reporting from early January 2021, Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen (JNIM) claimed, in two separate statements, to have killed five French soldiers in two improvised explosive device (IED) attacks on 2 January 2021 and on 28 December 2020 in northern and central Mali. According to separate SITE Intelligence reporting of early January 2021, al-Qaida (AQ) senior leadership instructed JNIM and its other affiliates to target French interests in Africa as retribution for the offence caused to Muslims by the publication of Charlie Hebdo caricatures.

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Changes to Terrorism Threat Levels

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Threat Highlights

NIL

Threat Assessments

TA 20/72-B **UPDATE: The persistent threat of Hydrogen Sulphide**
(UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

TA 20/78-A **The threat of ghost guns**

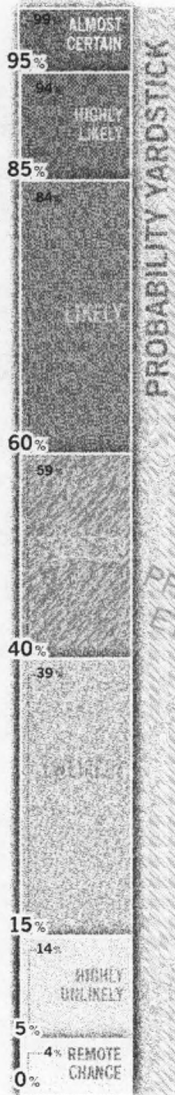
TA 20/78-B **The threat of ghost guns**
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TA 20/80

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TOP SECRET

DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

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HIGH	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .
MEDIUM	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .
LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .
VERY LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE and COULD OCCUR .

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Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremism Newsletter QANON SPECIAL EDITION

decided to put together a special edition

on QAnon

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Armed Man Who Allegedly Stormed Trudeau's Residence Appears to Have Posted QAnon Content

Vice News, 2020 07 03

Vice News is reporting that less than an hour before Corey Hurren allegedly drove his pickup truck through the gates of Rideau Hall, where Prime Minister Justin Trudeau lives, a social media account for his business posted a meme that blames the global elite for COVID-19.

At 6:05 AM, the Instagram account for Grindhouse Fine Foods, the company Hurren operates, posted a meme relating to Event 201—a pandemic training event put on in part by the Bill Gates Foundation. At 6:40 AM, RCMP said Hurren rammed his truck, which contained multiple firearms, through the gates hard enough to set his airbags off. He left the truck on foot with a rifle in his hand and was intercepted by RCMP officers who, after hours of negotiation, were able to take him into custody without incident just before 8:30 A.M.

On Friday afternoon, RCMP announced a slew of firearms charges against Hurren, a member of the Canadian Armed Forces Reserve. They include: four counts of careless use of a firearm, four counts of illegally transporting of a firearm, four counts of possession of a weapon for a dangerous reason, one count of possession of a prohibited devices, four counts of possession of a restricted firearm with ammunition, and one count of uttering threats. Hurren attended a bail hearing Friday afternoon but it was pushed back until July 17. He will remain in police custody till then.

RCMP Deputy Commissioner Mike Duheme said there was never any danger to Trudeau or Governor General Julie Payette as they weren't at their homes at the time of the incident. While the RCMP says the man had "several weapons" on him they did not elaborate about the specifics of the weapons.

Citing anonymous sources, several media outlets have reported that Hurren was armed with several rifles and a shotgun, at least one of which was on him at the time of his arrest. Hurren also allegedly had a note on him that he wished to deliver to Trudeau.

On March 27, Grindhouse Fine Foods posted a QAnon meme. It features a white rabbit (the mascot for the conspiracy) at the wheel of a car. The Instagram caption says: "Has anyone else been following 'Q' and the 'White Rabbit' down the rabbit hole and how this all relates to the coronavirus/COVID-19 situation? Lots of coincidences in all these 'Q' posts if this turns out to be a 'Nothingburger'." He then lists a plethora of conspiracies in the hashtags which include the killing of Seth Rich, adrenochrome, pizzagate, pedogate, and several related to sex offender Jeffery Epstein. The account also posted several hashtags linked to QAnon like WWG1WGA, a storm is coming, and the deep state.

QAnon is a wide-ranging conspiracy in the United States that focuses on Donald Trump's battles with deep state enemies.

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One of Canada's More Prominent Politicians Is Sharing QAnon YouTubers

Vice News, 2019 06 07

Maxime Bernier, one of the more prominent conservative politicians in Canada, is now sharing videos created QAnon YouTubers, according to *Vice News*.

In case you luckily aren't aware, QAnon is a massive and ever-morphing conspiracy theory that revolves around Donald Trump operating a secret war against the elites. Many have started to liken the community built around the conspiracy to that of a cult.

Bernier just barely missed being the leader of the Conservative Party last year, and subsequently started his own party, the People's Party of Canada. Since the inception of the party, the politician best known for his obsession with dairy lobby groups, and leaving sensitive government information around his Hells Angels connected girlfriend has been driving deep into the heart of conspiracy country.

The People's Party of Canada has been inundated with controversies, mainly focused around frequent accusations of racism. Recently, a prominent party executive in BC was alleged to have sent emails that said the party should remove people of colour from positions of power, and a PPC Twitter account shared memes focused on the debunked and racist science of phrenology. This isn't even mentioning Bernier's frequent fights with media, and loud dog whistles for the Canadian far-right.

Now, the leader of the People's Party has decided to drive the people deep into one of the biggest conspiracies of the modern age by sending them towards a prominent QAnon YouTuber.

"Must watch video by Amazing Polly @99freemind if you are preoccupied with rising threat against free speech in Canada," tweeted Bernier on Thursday. The bio of the Amazing Polly's Twitter handle, which Bernier linked to, reads, "This is the Great Awakening WORLDWIDE... *Super Elite* c us #Qanon #WWG1WGA #MEGA."

The Amazing Polly is explicitly a QAnon YouTuber. The video Bernier shared featured the QAnon hashtag #GreatAwakening and many of her videos namedrop Q, the eponymous centre of the conspiracy. The description of her channel further hammers this home.

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Born on the dark fringes of the internet, QAnon is now infiltrating mainstream American life and politics

CNN, 2020 07 03

CNN reports that since its origin three years ago, QAnon has festered in the darker corners of the internet. Now the group's followers, who call themselves "believers," have found a niche on social media and within the Republican Party.

QAnon began as a single conspiracy theory. But its followers now act more like a virtual cult, largely adoring and believing whatever disinformation the conspiracy community spins up.

Its main conspiracy theories claim dozens of politicians and A-list celebrities work in tandem with governments around the globe to engage in child sex abuse. Followers also believe there is a "deep state" effort to annihilate President Donald Trump.

But followers of the group have expanded from those beliefs and now allege baseless theories surrounding mass shootings and elections. Followers have falsely claimed that 5G cellular networks are spreading the coronavirus.

There's no evidence that any of what QAnon claims is factual.

Followers make unfounded claims and then amplify them with doctored or out-of-context evidence posted on social media to support the allegations.

The anarchical group's birth, and its continued seepage into mainstream American life, comes on the coattails of the Russian disinformation campaign that targeted US elections in 2016.

While the Russian campaign had an apparent objective -- influence voters to elect Trump -- QAnon is decentralized, having no clear objective aside from its popular slogan, "Question everything."

Anyone can create a conspiracy, offer evidence to support it and tag it with QAnon hashtags to spread it. But no one is held responsible for the trail of chaos and disinformation it leaves behind.

How QAnon began

QAnon's origins are emblematic of what it has evolved into: An unfounded, out-of-context claim made to support an allegation, which is easily discredited.

It all goes back to a cryptic, anonymous post on October 28, 2017 on 4chan, an online message board that frequently features extremist and bigoted content. The individual, which followers would later call "Q," claimed that Hillary Clinton was going to be arrested.

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QAnon Conspiracy Theories about the Coronavirus Pandemic are a Public Health Threat *The Conversation, 2020 04 08*

In April of 2020, Marc-André Argentino, a PhD candidate Individualized Program at Concordia University wrote an op-ed published by The Conversation entitled "QAnon conspiracy theories about the coronavirus pandemic are a public health threat". The following is an excerpt of the article:

First there was the pandemic, then came the "infodemic" — a term the head of the World Health Organization defines as the spread of false information about COVID-19.

The most dangerous conspiracy theories about the coronavirus are now part of the QAnon phenomenon. For months now, actors in QAnon have downplayed the severity of the crisis, amplified medical disinformation and have been originators of hoaxes.

The QAnon movement started in 2017 after someone using an anonymous account known only as Q posted wild conspiracy theories about U.S. President Donald Trump on the internet forum 4chan.

QAnon conspiracy theorists believe a deep state cabal of global elites is responsible for all the evil in the world. They also believe those same elites are seeking to bring down Trump, whom they see as the world's only hope to defeat the deep state. QAnon has now brought the same conspiracy mentality to the coronavirus crisis.

As a researcher of online movements like QAnon, I use a combination of data science and digital ethnography to research how extremist movements use technology to create propaganda, recruit members to ideological causes, inspire acts of violence or impact democratic institutions.

Bottom-up approach

A central component of QAnon is the crowdsourcing of narratives. This bottom-up approach provides a fluid and ever changing ideology. My analysis of Twitter shows from January to March, there was a 21 per cent increase (a total of 7,683,414 posts) in hashtags used by the QAnon community. This means the misinformation they spread has the capacity to reach a wider audience.

For instance, QAnon community influencers on Twitter promoted Miracle Mineral Supplement as a way of preventing COVID-19. The toxic product was sold by the Texas-based Genesis II Church of Health and Healing for US\$45. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration had previously issued a warning about the dangerous and potentially life threatening side effects of the supplement.

In January, QAnon was amplifying narratives on 8kun (the internet forum formally known as 8chan), Facebook and Telegram (an encrypted instant messaging platform) about a false theory that Asians were more susceptible to the coronavirus and that white people were immune to COVID-19. Not only are there racist undertones associated with this disinformation, it minimizes the threat posed by the virus."

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The Atlantic Daily: QAnon Is a New American Religion

***The Atlantic*, 2020 05 14**

The following article was published by *The Atlantic* on May 14th, 2020.

To believe in QAnon is to believe, among other things, that a cabal of global elites are secretly harming children (think: 2016's Pizzagate), that their behavior is propped up by members of the deep state, and that President Donald Trump is working to bring their crimes to an end. Adherents learned all this from Q, an anonymous figure who they believe has high-level military ties, who periodically leaves clues on the internet. He is their prophet.

QAnon is a pro-Trump conspiracy theory, yes, but it's also more important than you might think. Adrienne LaFrance, our executive editor, spent more than a year trying to make sense of the movement and its followers. Her full, enthralling report is our latest magazine cover story.

Here are three ways to understand QAnon, as explained by Adrienne:

1. It's a real-time participatory conspiracy theory.

The eventual destruction of the global cabal is imminent, Q prophesies, but can be accomplished only with the support of patriots who search for meaning in Q's clues. ... Surely there are people who know that Q is a fantasy but participate because there's an element of QAnon that converges with a live-action role-playing game.

2. It's a mass rejection of reason and Enlightenment values.

In the face of inconvenient facts, it has the ambiguity and adaptability to sustain a movement of this kind over time. For QAnon, every contradiction can be explained away; no form of argument can prevail against it.

3. It's not going anywhere. In QAnon, we are witnessing the birth of a new religion.

Among the people of QAnon, faith remains absolute. True believers describe a feeling of rebirth, an irreversible arousal to existential knowledge. They are certain that a Great Awakening is coming. They'll wait as long as they must for deliverance.

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How Covid-19 spread QAnon in Germany

Coda, 2020 06 19

The following article was posted on Coda on June 19, 2020:

On a cold and windy Monday at the end of April in the eastern German city of Chemnitz, 15 members of the far-right group "Pro-Chemnitz" organized a rally in defiance against coronavirus lockdown measures. Allowed to stand in pre-drawn spaces, six feet apart on all sides, and cordoned off by police, they stood around a 40-ton, 42-foot-tall bust of Karl Marx and likened the social distancing measures to totalitarianism.

The gathering coincided with Hitler's birthday — a significance lost on no one in a city where, two years ago, more than 6,000 neo-Nazis flooded the streets for a week of rioting. Just outside the police cordon, some 300 people gathered in support. The demonstration had all the main characteristics of the contemporary European far-right, focusing on anti-immigrant sentiment and distrust of the state. One placard bore racist caricatures and the slogan, "Freedom of movement for asylum seekers and harvest workers, prison and fines for me and my relatives?"

But also visible was something more common at pro-Trump rallies in the United States than at European protests. One man's mask bore a red letter "Q" — a symbol of the QAnon conspiracy theory. Beneath it, he chanted "Wir sind das Volk" ("We are the people"), a slogan that has become the rallying cry for racist nationalists in Germany.

Germany's response to the coronavirus crisis has, so far, been the most successful in Europe. The country has reported by far the lowest mortality rate per capita within the EU and has been able to widely and safely reopen. But the Covid-19 crisis has also led to a spike in interest within the country. Even as the country has begun to return to normalcy, the effects of the disinformation are persistent.

Since mid-March, experts have noted an explosion of membership in German online groups related to the theory. Analysis of Qlobal-Change, a German QAnon YouTube channel, shows that its follower count has grown exponentially in this period. Similarly, its Telegram channel had around 20,000 members in February and now has more than 110,000 followers. The same group hosts channels in Italian and Spanish, but each has only a fraction of the membership of its German-language iteration.

Researchers first began to notice QAnon hashtags circulating on German social media in 2018, but back then the movement was extremely fringe. It partially surfaced in the mainstream when a far-right extremist murdered 10 people and wounded five others in a racially motivated attack on a shisha bar in the western city of Hanau. The case was widely reported in the national media, including a rambling 24-page manifesto published on the killer's own website that cited theories popular in QAnon circles.

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Down the Rabbit hole: How QAnon Conspiracies Thrive on Facebook

The Guardian, 2020 06 25

According to a *Guardian* investigation, more than 3m aggregate followers and members support QAnon on Facebook, and their numbers are growing.

In early May, QAnon braced for a purge. Facebook had removed a small subset – five pages, six groups and 20 profiles – of the community on the social network, and as word of the bans spread, followers of Q began preparing for a broader sweep.

Some groups changed their names, substituting “17” for “Q” (the 17th letter of the alphabet); others shared links to back-up accounts on alternative social media platforms with looser rules.

More than just another internet conspiracy theory, QAnon is a movement of people who interpret as a kind of gospel the online messages of an anonymous figure – “Q” – who claims knowledge of a secret cabal of powerful pedophiles and sex traffickers. Within the constructed reality of QAnon, Donald Trump is secretly waging a patriotic crusade against these “deep state” child abusers, and a “Great Awakening” that will reveal the truth is on the horizon.

QAnon evolved out of the baseless Pizzagate conspiracy theory, which posited that Hillary Clinton was running a child sex ring out of a Washington DC pizza restaurant, and has come to incorporate numerous strands of rightwing conspiracy mongering. Dedicated followers interpret Q’s cryptic messages in a kind of digital scavenger hunt. Despite the fact that Q’s prognostications have reliably failed to come true, followers rationalize the inaccuracies as part of a larger plan.

Q’s initial commentary on the Facebook bans was concise: “Information Warfare,” Q posted on the website 8kun. Two days later, in a post that included a collage of dozens of news headlines about the takedowns, Q went further, speculating that there had been a “coordinated media roll-out designed to instill ‘fear’” in believers and dissuade them from discussing QAnon on social media. “When do you expend ammunition?” Q wrote. “For what purpose?”

The anticipated purge never came. Instead, QAnon groups on Facebook have continued to grow at a considerable pace in the weeks following the takedown, with several adding more than 10,000 members over 30 days.

A *Guardian* investigation has documented more than 100 Facebook pages, profiles, groups, and Instagram accounts with at least 1,000 followers or members each dedicated to QAnon. The largest of these have more than 150,000 followers or members. In total, the documented pages, groups and accounts count more than 3m aggregate followers and members, though there is likely significant overlap among these groups and accounts.

These groups and pages play a critical role in disseminating Q’s messages to a broader audience and in recruiting more believers to the cult-like belief system, researchers say.

[Back to top](#)

THREAT HIGHLIGHT

Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre

ITAC

CIET

Centre intégré d'évaluation du terrorisme

CRITICAL INCIDENT

TH 21/01-E // 2021-01-07

SECRET//CANADIAN EYES ONLY

This assessment is current as of 10:00 hrs, 07 January 2021. ITAC will update this assessment as new information becomes available. (U//FOUO)

According to a body of media reporting, on 6 January 2021, four people died and at least 14 police officers were injured when thousands of people attending an anti-election protest in Washington, D.C., broke through security barricades and breached the United States (US) Capitol Building. People from across the US, some connected to Ideologically Motivated Violent (IMV) extremist groups, were protesting a perceived stolen election during the final ratification of the US presidential election results by Congress. The breach of the Capitol follows months of escalating rhetoric by IMV extremist groups and some individuals within mainstream US politics, and appeared to have been further radicalized after President Trump addressed the protesters outside the White House. Of note, one of the individuals involved in the breach was Republican Representative Derrick Evans, a newly elected Congressman from West Virginia.

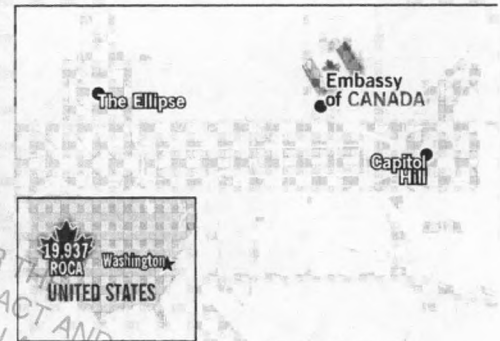
US authorities indicated that a US Capitol police officer shot and killed one protestor after her group forced entry into the House chamber while it was still in session. While the woman has not been officially named, local media has identified her as San Diego-area US Air Force veteran Ashli Babbitt. Media reporting indicate the cause of death for the three other protestors as "medical emergencies".

According to media reporting, some protestors wore body armour and used chemical irritants to attack police, and considerable property damage was done both in the Capitol and against media observers. US authorities have stated that at least five weapons have been recovered and 52 people have been arrested to date; however, 47 of those were for curfew violations. Two pipe bombs were recovered from the headquarters of the Republican and Democratic national committees, and a cooler containing Molotov cocktails was found in a vehicle on US Capitol grounds. The Department of Defense activated the entire D.C. National Guard to support local law enforcement.

A curfew was enacted between 18h and 6h and a previously announced public emergency has been extended until the Presidential inauguration on 20 January 2021.

While the US Congress formally certified the final Electoral College vote early 07 January 2021, there is still some resistance by mainstream US politicians to the presidential election results.

WASHINGTON, DC



ASSESSMENT NOTE: This assessment is based on media, open source reporting and

The intelligence cut-off date is

DEFINITIONS and HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS are located at the last page.

Canada

RELATED PROTESTS ELSEWHERE IN THE US

According to media reporting, sympathetic protests occurred at statehouses in Oregon, Minnesota, Kansas, Georgia, Ohio, Iowa, Colorado, and New Mexico. In addition, four people were arrested in Los Angeles after a clash between protesters and counter-protesters. Washington police responded to dozens of protesters at the Governor's mansion who were waving flags and chanting slogans.

IMV EXTREMIST CONNECTIONS

According to various IMV extremist groups ranging from patriot militias to the Proud Boys had extensively promoted the protest during the weeks leading up to yesterday's events. On various social media platforms, some users suggested an expectation of violence at the protest. Some individuals indicated they would "take direct action", that they would be armed, and that they should "string up the corpses of Democrats". The Proud Boys leader, Enrique Tarrio, had also claimed that members would be dressed in plain clothes in order to blend in. Tarrio was charged on 4 January 2021 with destruction of property and a firearms offense, relating to his admitted role in burning a Black Lives Matter banner torn from a historic Black church during a previous pro-Trump protest that had occurred on 12 December 2020. A judge signed an order Tuesday banning Tarrio from entering D.C., with very limited exceptions related to his criminal case. Media reporting have stated that Proud Boys members were sighted at the protest, trying to incite yells and chants.

According to media reporting, adherents to xenophobic ideologies, particularly accelerationists, have celebrated the incident online and consider this to be a "historic moment" for their cause. Some have posted various memes that celebrate the violence, call for violence against politicians and law enforcement, or have used images of the woman killed by police as propaganda. Experts have indicated that this incident "benefits the accelerationist narrative that violent force can achieve what electoral politics cannot...and it is likely...propagandists will seek to capitalize on disorder and encourage acts of terrorism to further inflame the situation".

CANADIAN INTERESTS

According to media reporting, Canada's Ambassador to the United States has stated that all embassy staff in Washington D.C. are "safe and accounted for".

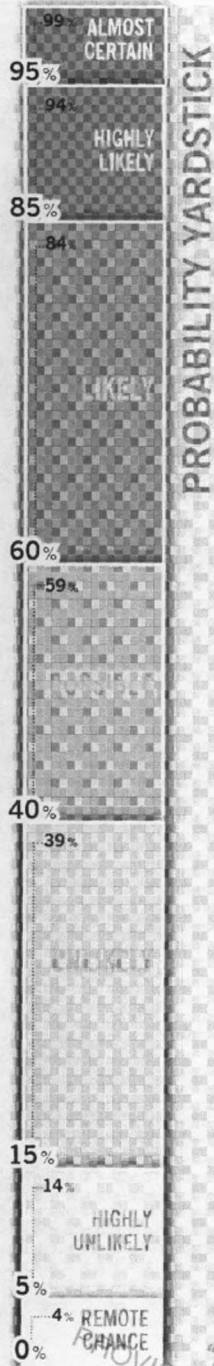
According to media reporting, small sympathetic demonstrations occurred in various Canadian cities on 6 January 2021. In Toronto, a convoy of more than a dozen vehicles emblazoned with Trump and "Stop the Steal" flags passed through the city, driving past the U.S. consulate. In Vancouver, about two dozen demonstrators with Trump and Canadian flags gathered at the Vancouver Art Gallery North Plaza. In Calgary, several dozen people gathered outside Calgary City Hall.

Canada is represented in US by the Canadian Embassy and consulates in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Honolulu, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle.

According to the Government of Canada's Registration of Canadians Abroad (ROCA), as of 6 January 2021, there were 19,937 Canadians registered in the US;

ASSESSMENT

DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

established
 raised
 lowered
 remains

CRITICAL

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **HIGHLY LIKELY** and **COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY**.

ITAC assesses it is **HIGHLY LIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

HIGH

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **LIKELY**.

ITAC assesses it is **LIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

MEDIUM

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism **COULD OCCUR**.

ITAC assesses it is **POSSIBLE** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

LOW

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY**.

ITAC assesses it is **UNLIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

VERY LOW

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **HIGHLY UNLIKELY**.

ITAC assesses it is **HIGHLY UNLIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

ITAC uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis in applying terrorism threat levels. The setting of threat levels is determined by several factors including current intelligence, recent events, as well as the intent, capabilities, and attack frequency of terrorist groups. ITAC cautions that the information may be incomplete and, regardless of the threat level applied, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning.

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TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED



Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets

MODERATE



Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets

GENERAL



Capable of simple attacks

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

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Source: Open Source

The Relevance of January 6th 2021

The significance of January 6, 2021, is not so much about the events themselves, but rather the impact on the IMVE milieu who feel emboldened by their perceived successes and who could potentially mobilize to violence long after the presidential inauguration.

Canadian Threat Environment

Adherents of Canadian-based IMVEs are driven by a range of grievances and narratives in which threat actors (individuals/cells/networks, etc.) often act without a clear affiliation to an organized group or external guidance, but are nevertheless shaped by hateful voices and messages online that normalize and advocate violence. The resulting worldview often consists of a personalized narrative which centres on the willingness to incite, enable or mobilize to violence.

US Threat Environment

On January 21, FBI is reporting that 430 persons of interest have been identified as having unlawfully entered the US Capitol on January 6. One hundred seventy individuals have been arrested, with an additional 15 outstanding warrants and 5 complaints being reviewed. The FBI has received more than 206,717 digital media tips.

Media articles indicate that QAnon followers are in disarray after Joe Biden's inauguration and some key influencers may stop their online activities. The Service is aware of the emergence of small but violent offshoots in that milieu. Discontent is also visible in the extremist militia milieu. Some Proud Boys members are now criticizing Trump and dropping their support to him.

The FBI advised that some individuals who stormed the Capitol stole items including phones and documents that list personal information of members of the Senate and Congress. As such, home addresses and other information are being posted online. The FBI is looking to identify the items that were taken, and potential consequences.

The FBI is investigating witness information that a woman who entered the Capitol during the riots on January 6 gained access to and stole a laptop from Speaker Nancy Pelosi's. The alleged thief intended to sell the laptop to Russian Intelligence Services.

Service Stance

CSIS continues to closely monitor IMVE subjects of interest and is working closely with all its US partners.

Accurate as of January 21, 2021

SECRET/CEO



Why it Matters to Canada



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Canada



Extrémisme violent

à caractère idéologique

lié à l'investiture

du président des

E.-U.

Source: Open Source

Contexte de la menace au Canada

Le discours d'extrême droite, l'opposition au gouvernement, l'anti-nationalisme, et la xenophobie ont été utilisés pour inspirer et des récriminations générales qui sont ensuite interprétées dans un contexte local. Notons, à titre d'exemples les opposants aux restrictions et aux vaccins liés à la COVID-19, aux lois sur les armes à feu et à l'ingérence perçue du gouvernement.

Contexte de la menace aux E.-U.

En date du 21 janvier, le FBI constate que 430 personnes d'intérêt avaient été identifiées comme étant entrées illégalement au Capitole le 6 janvier; 107 d'entre elles ont été arrêtées. De plus, 15 mandats non exécutés et 5 plaintes sont en cours de révision. Le FBI a également reçu plus de 206 717 signalements par moyen des médias numériques.

Selon des rapports médiatiques, des partisans de QAnon se retrouvent en désarroi à la suite de l'investiture de Joe Biden; certains membres influents pourraient même cesser leurs activités en ligne. Des experts soulèvent la possibilité que des petites ramifications violentes puissent apparaître parmi les partisans de QAnon. Les milices extrémistes sont également désorganisées. Quelques-uns des « Proud Boys » critiquent Trump et ont retiré leur appui à ce dernier.

Le FBI fait remarquer que certains individus parmi ceux qui ont envahi le Capitole ont volé des articles, notamment des téléphones et des documents qui contenaient des renseignements personnels des membres du Sénat et du Congrès. Des adresses personnelles et d'autres informations sont, en conséquence, affichées en ligne. Le FBI cherche à identifier des articles qui avaient été volés et des conséquences potentielles du vol.

Le FBI enquête sur des informations d'un témoin concernant une femme qui était entrée dans le Capitole pendant les manifestations du 6 janvier et a pu accéder à un portable dans le bureau de Nancy Pelosi qui avait été utilisé pour faire des présentations. La présumée voleuse avait l'intention de vendre le portable aux services de renseignement étrangers de la Russie.

Importance pour le Canada



LES PRÉSENTES INFORMATIONS SONT COMMUNIQUÉES UNIQUEMENT À DES FINS DE RENSEIGNEMENT ET NE PEUVENT ÊTRE UTILISÉES DANS LE CADRE D'INSTANCES JUDICIAIRES. IL NE FAUT PAS MODIFIER LA COTE DU PRÉSENT DOCUMENT NI LE COMMUNIQUER, EN TOUT OU EN PARTIE, SANS LE CONSENTEMENT ÉCRIT DU SERVICE CANADIEN DU RENSEIGNEMENT DE SÉCURITÉ (SCRS). SI VOUS RECEVEZ UNE DEMANDE D'ACCÈS PRÉSENTÉE SOUS LE RÉGIME DE CES LOIS, VEUILLEZ CONSULTER LE SCRS RELATIVEMENT À L'APPLICATION DES EXCEPTIONS PRÉVUES. EN OUTRE, LE SCRS PRENDRA TOUTES LES MESURES NÉCESSAIRES PRÉSCRITES PAR L'ARTICLE 38 DE LA LOI SUR LA PREUVE AU CANADA OU PAR TOUTE AUTRE MESURE LÉGISLATIVE POUR PROTÉGER LES PRÉSENTES INFORMATIONS. SI VOUS APPRENEZ QUE CES INFORMATIONS ONT ÉTÉ OU POURRAIENT ÊTRE COMMUNIQUÉES OU QUE LES PRÉSENTES MESURES EN GARDE N'ONT PAS ÉTÉ RESPECTÉES, OU SI VOUS NE POUVEZ PAS VOUS Y CONFORMER, VEUILLEZ EN INFORMER LE SCRS IMMÉDIATEMENT.

Canada

IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



SECRET//CANADIAN EYES ONLY

THE POST-ELECTION LANDSCAPE

On December 14, 2020, the US Electoral College formally voted for the Democratic Party nominee Joseph Biden to become President-Elect of the United States.



ASSESSMENT

CONSPIRACY THEORIES AND A CANADIAN DIMENSION

As part of the larger voter fraud narrative, QAnon adherents alleged that Dominion Voting Systems (DVS), a manufacturer of voting machines, was deleting millions of Trump votes. In early December 2020, death threats against a contractor for Dominion Voting Systems were issued after a high-profile QAnon influencer orchestrated a Twitter campaign targeting the contractor. In addition, a noose was placed outside the contractor's home in Georgia.

XENOPHOBIC NARRATIVES and MILITIA MOVEMENTS

In the weeks following the 2020 US presidential election, open sources have continued to report violent propaganda from xenophobic groups and individuals, smaller scale than in October

Members of various neo-Nazi channels have advocated taking up arms "to have their voice heard" rather than relying on electoral politics. Other neo-Nazi channels have encouraged outright violence in the US, including the use of drones and vehicles. Footage from previous mass shootings has been used as encouragement for similar attacks.

Open sources indicate that, in mid-November, various Telegram channels associated with the Proud Boys have made claims that the election was fixed and that US politicians and high-profile tech CEOs must be held accountable. One user indicated that supporters have a limited timeline in which to act before "enemies" take over the political system.

Various Telegram channels affiliated with the Proud Boys shared news reporting of the November 14, 2020, Million MAGA March, which claimed that altercations with Antifa members justified aggressive action. Groups and individuals continue to promote rallies and counter-protests relating to the US election results. Some individuals on social media encourage participants to disobey local laws and to be armed for "self-defence". On December 12th, 2020, US media reported that a white-supremacist plot to damage power stations in the event of a defeat of President Trump had been disrupted in Wisconsin.

On December 12, 2020, a "Stop the Steal" pro-Trump protest was organized in Washington, DC. Despite tense standoffs with counter-protesters, law enforcement successfully managed the event. While there was no widespread violence, media reported that at least 33 people were arrested and four others stabbed (some critically) after clashes between protesters and counter-protesters (including members of the Proud Boys and Antifa).

QANON IN A POST-TRUMP PRESIDENCY WORLD

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8. UNITED STATES: Online IMVE chatter examples – 23 December to 5 January 2021

Source: .

Summary:

various IMVE groups ranging from militias to the Proud Boys are promoting a pro-Trump, "Stop the Steal" rally in Washington DC on 6 January 2021. On various social media platforms, some users have indicated an expectation of violence at the rally. Some individuals have indicated they will "take direct action", that they will be armed, and that they should "string up the corpses of Democrats". The Philadelphia branch of the Proud Boys are also warning their members that DC officials want "to limit the [Proud Boys and right-wing] presence so that they can deny Trump has the People's support" and so to expect the closures of major bridges and possibly the Metro. The Proud Boys leader, charged on 4 January 2021 with destruction of property and a firearms offense, also claimed that members would be dressed in plainclothes, rather than the "traditional Black and Yellow" color scheme the group typically wears to events.

various IMVE groups have praised the bombing in Nashville on 25 December 2020. Some argue that the damage done to an AT&T building near the explosion had revealed an exploitable weakness in the communications systems of first responders and government agencies. Others continue to propose various conspiracy theories as the motive behind the attack, including allegations of a false flag operation and potential connections to the 2020 Presidential election.

on 23 December 2020, the Noble Klans of America (nfi), a branch of the broader Ku Klux Klan) announced on Stormfront that a chapter has been formed in Canada (nfi).

According to a body of MEMRI reporting, some individuals continue to advocate for violence against police officers, politicians, Supreme Court Justices, and their families in the US.

Africa

Eurasia - Pacific

9. PAKISTAN: DAESH-PAK kill 11 Shiite miners in Baluchistan (

Source: media;

Summary: Media reporting from 3 January 2020 indicates that gunmen kidnapped and later executed a group of minority Shiite Hazara coal miners, killing 11 in southwestern Baluchistan province. DAESH-Pakistan (DAESH-Pak) later claimed responsibility for the attack, according to SITE reporting. Furthermore, the chief of the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) condemned the attack, attributing it to Pakistani intelligence because of Baloch resistance.

Middle - East

Foreign Fighters

In brief

WEEKLY THREAT REVIEW

ITAC

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WTR 21/01-A // 2021-01-08

SECRET//

Week: 2020 12 17 to 2021 01 06

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4. **MALI:** JNIM claims killing of five French soldiers in two separate attacks

EURASIA - PACIFIC

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Canada

Americas-Europe

1. UNITED STATES: Leader of Proud Boys arrested in Washington, DC*Source: Media*

Summary: According to media reporting from 5 January 2021, Enrique Tarrio—the leader of the Proud Boys, a xenophobic extremist group—was arrested on 4 January 2021 in Washington, DC, and was charged with destruction of property and a firearm offence. Tarrio was arrested ahead of pro-Donald Trump protests planned for 5–6 January 2021 in Washington, DC, to coincide with the United States (US) Congress's vote to affirm President Elect Joe Biden's victory. He was subsequently released. A judge signed an order on Tuesday banning Tarrio from entering DC, with very limited exceptions related to his criminal case. Tarrio's property destruction charges relate to his admitted role in burning a Black Lives Matter banner torn from a historic Black church during a previous pro-Trump protest on 12 December 2020. The firearm charge relates to two high-capacity ammunition magazines found in his possession during his arrest.

2. UNITED STATES: Attack on gas pipelines in Colorado; perpetrator unconfirmed*Source: Media*

Summary: According to media reporting from 29 December 2020, on 26 December 2020, coordinated acts of vandalism occurred at three separate gas pipeline sites in Aspen, Colorado, disrupting gas service to the area and leaving about 3,500 customers without heat or hot water. The name of a self-described "radical environmental group," Earth First!, was written on a pipe. It is unclear if the group was actually involved in the incident.

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Middle East

Africa

4. MALI: JNIM claims killing of five French soldiers in two separate attacks

Source:

Summary:

from early January 2021, Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen (JNIM) claimed, in two separate statements, to have killed five French soldiers in two improvised explosive device (IED) attacks on 2 January 2021 and on 28 December 2020 in northern and central Mali.

of early January 2021, al-Qaida (AQ) senior leadership instructed JNIM and its other affiliates to target French interests in Africa as retribution for the offence caused to Muslims by the publication of Charlie Hebdo caricatures.

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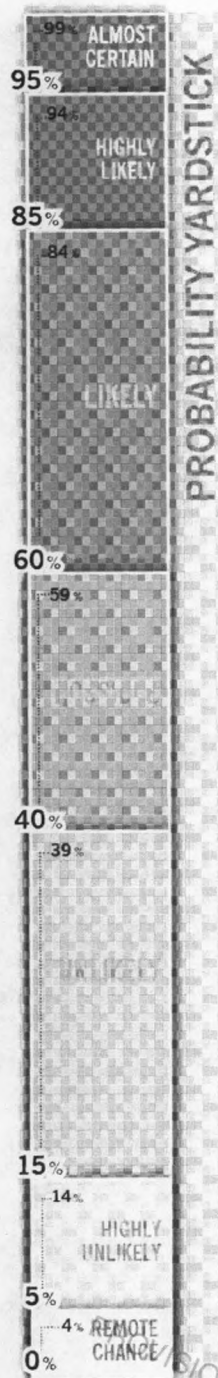
Eurasia-Pacific**Changes to Terrorism Threat Levels**

What follows is a list of other ITAC products published 17 December 2020 and 6 January 2021.

Threat Highlights**NIL****Threat Assessments****TA 20/72-B UPDATE: The persistent threat of Hydrogen Sulphide****TA 20/78-A The threat of ghost guns****TA 20/78-B The threat of ghost guns**

SECRET

DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

THREAT LEVEL		← established	↑ raised	↓ lowered	← remains
CRITICAL	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY .	ITAC assesses it is HIGHLY LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.			
HIGH	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.			
MEDIUM	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses it is POSSIBLE that a violent act of terrorism will occur.			
LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.			
VERY LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is HIGHLY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.			

ITAC uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis in applying terrorism threat levels. The setting of threat levels is determined by several factors including current intelligence, recent events, as well as the intent, capabilities, and attack frequency of terrorist groups. ITAC cautions that the information may be incomplete and, regardless of the threat level applied, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning.

TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED		Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets
MODERATE		Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets
GENERAL		Capable of simple attacks

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

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THREAT ASSESSMENT

ITAC

CIET

Integrated Terrorism Assessment Centre

Centre intégré d'évaluation du terrorisme

TA 21/01-CORRECTED // 2021-01-14

SECRET//CANADIAN EYES ONLY

IMV extremism and the US presidential election: What to expect between now and Inauguration Day (S//CEO)

The purpose of this paper is to assess the period leading up to the presidential inauguration on 20 January 2021, specifically considering the ideologically motivated violent (IMV) extremist environment in the United States (US) and in Canada.

INTRODUCTION

On 6 January 2021, thousands of people attending an election protest in Washington, D.C., broke through security barricades and breached the US Capitol Building. People from across the US, some of whom were connected to IMV extremist groups, were protesting what they perceived to be a stolen election. The protest occurred as Congress was counting the Electoral College votes (see TH 21/01). During the breach, parts of the Capitol Building were damaged, congressional offices were vandalized, and certain items were stolen, including a laptop allegedly belonging to the office of the Speaker of the House.

Two pipe bombs were recovered from the headquarters of the Republican and Democratic national committees, and a cooler containing Molotov cocktails was found in a vehicle on US Capitol grounds. As of 13 January 2021, at least 90 arrests had been made and numerous charges had been laid. In addition, two US Capitol Police officers have been suspended and 10 more are under investigation for their alleged role in the day's events. (U//FOUO)

RECENT ATTEMPTED BREACHES

According to media reporting, in the past six months, attempted breaches have occurred both in the US (Oregon State Capitol building) and in Germany (Reichstag building in Berlin). Both events were attended by individuals originally protesting coronavirus measures, and included individuals from the IMV extremist milieu and/or conspiracy theorist movement. In Berlin, protesters broke through police cordons. In Salem, Oregon, protesters used bear mace on police. Although protesters did not successfully breach either building, extremists in both countries were ultimately empowered by the attempts, calling for more radical action.

KEY JUDGEMENTS

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ASSESSMENT NOTE: This report is based on
in this report is 13 January 2021.

open source reporting and media reporting. The cut-off date for the information

DEFINITIONS and HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS are located at the last page.

Canada

UPCOMING PROTESTS

According to US authorities and media reporting, protests are expected at all 50 state capitols and in Washington, D.C., from 16 January 2021 to at least 20 January 2021, and at the US Capitol from 17 to 20 January 2021. Some social media channels, including those affiliated with the Proud Boys and the Nordic Resistance Movement have also indicated possible protests by "nationalist crowds" on 20 January 2021 at Capitol Hill. Others have proposed a secondary attack on the US Capitol and state Capitol building on 17 January 2021. According to media reporting, various chat groups on social media platforms are calling for protests in the days leading up to Inauguration Day, including the "Million Militia March" scheduled for 20 January 2021 in Washington. Further media reporting states that "thousands" of armed extremists are planning to surround the Capitol "ahead of President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration" and "prevent any Democrat from going in"; in addition, a related "rules of engagement" has been published online.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS AND CORRESPONDING FALLOUT

Capitol Hill: IMV Extremist Presence

According to media reporting, a diverse IMV extremist presence was noted at the Capitol Hill assault, including adherents to xenophobic and anti-government/anti-authority ideologies, with substantial overlap with the conspiracy theorist movement. Militia groups and gun rights groups were also present. Since 6 January 2021, some IMV extremists have posted photos of stolen items such as police riot gear and a livestream of the assault online.

According to a body of media and open source reporting, various individuals and IMV extremist groups ranging from patriot militias to the Proud Boys extensively promoted the protest in the weeks leading up to 6 January 2021, and discussed it using violent rhetoric. Language included threats against elected officials and law enforcement, and threats regarding the destruction of Washington, D.C. Some individuals indicated a desire for an escalation of violence because the "peaceful process has failed." Others indicated a belief that this day would be remembered as "the day the white revolution began." Although many QAnon supporters have celebrated the Capitol Hill assault, some leading QAnon influencers have begun to distance themselves from the incident, claiming it was a "false flag" operation or that it was conducted by Antifa.

Capitol Hill: IMV Extremists, Law Enforcement and the Military

Some IMV extremist groups actively recruit individuals from law enforcement and the military and, in the wake of anti-racism/anti-police brutality protests across the US, have been prominent in their support for uniformed personnel (see TA 20/67). According to media reporting, some military and law enforcement personnel are alleged to have participated in the Capitol Hill assault. The US Marine Corps standard flag was seen flying at the demonstration, and at least two identified military veterans, one of whom was killed, were part of the crowd that breached the Capitol Building. According to additional media reporting, some police officers appeared to pose for photos with rioters or wore "Make America Great Again" hats.

PROUD BOYS CANADA

Proud Boys was founded in 2016. The group adheres to a white nationalist, anti-Muslim and misogynistic ideology.

recruitment activities occurred via online platforms and real-world poster campaigns.

ANTIFA AND ANARCHISTS

According to media reporting, some elected representatives have attempted to blame "left-wing" groups such as Antifa for the violence that occurred on Capitol Hill. These representatives have made these claims on social media, in the media and within the House chamber. Digitally altered images, among other items, are being used as proof. American authorities have indicated that there is no credible evidence that Antifa infiltrated the crowds at Capitol Hill or led the attack.

According to open source reporting, on 6 January 2021, a Portland-based anarchist collective issued three tweets encouraging followers to arm and train ahead of a protest planned for 20 January 2021 in Portland, Oregon.

Others appeared to let protesters into the Capitol Building, and some may have given protesters directions around the building.

At the same time, according to further media reporting, increasing tensions between certain law enforcement and IMV extremists have been observed in recent weeks, particularly online. Participants in the Capitol Hill assault demonstrated anger and disillusionment with some law enforcement (i.e. those perceived to be preventing them from achieving their objective), some verbalizing this sentiment by calling officers traitors. According to US authorities, other protesters physically attacked police officers with weapons such as metal pipes. Some protesters who remained online during the Capitol Hill assault called for the killing of police officers.

ARREST OF ENRIQUE TARRIO

The Proud Boys leader, Enrique Tarrio, was charged on 4 January 2021 with destruction of property and a firearm offence relating to his admitted role in burning a Black Lives Matter banner torn from a historic Black church during a previous pro-Trump protest on 12 December 2020. On 5 January 2021, a judge signed an order banning Tarrio from entering D.C. On 7 January 2021, Tarrio posted advice and support on social media for protesters who were being investigated for their part in the Capitol breach. He also posted suggestions for more "secure" future organizing platforms.

The arrest of the Proud Boys leader, Enrique Tarrio, has also led to online chatter between extremists regarding the loyalties of law enforcement, with some extremists stating that the police are not their "friends or allies," but rather "allies to the state."

Capitol Hill: Social Media Reaction

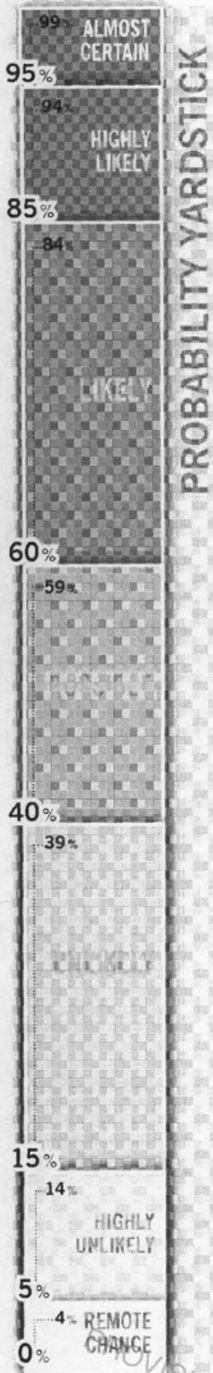
According to media reporting, most mainstream social media companies, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Twitch, have barred President Trump from their platforms either temporarily or permanently. Other social media platforms, such as YouTube and TikTok, have indicated that they will continue to remove videos that spread misinformation or that helped incite the violence at Capitol Hill. Apple, Google and Amazon have all suspended the Parler app from their mobile stores and web hosting sites for allowing egregious or violent content. As a result, some IMV extremists have migrated to alternative social media or web sites that do not filter unverified claims, including Newsmax, Rumble, Signal and Gab.

CANADA AND CANADIAN INTERESTS

ASSESSMENTS



DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

	Established	Raised	Lowered	Remains
CRITICAL	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY .			
HIGH	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.			
MEDIUM	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism COULD OCCUR .			
LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY .			
VERY LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY .			

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TOP SECRET//

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Canada-Related

Americas - Europe

2. UNITED KINGDOM: Counterterror police chief warns of 'new and worrying trend' of teenage neo-Nazis*Source: media /*

Summary: According to media reporting on 18 November 2020, teenage neo-Nazis are being arrested on suspicion of terrorism offences in record numbers. As stated by the head of UK counterterror police, individuals as young as 14 were detained in the past year, and almost all of those investigated by police had been radicalised online. Official figures show that between January 2019 and June 2019, 17 children under the age of 18 were arrested on suspicion of terror offences – the vast majority were thought to hold “extreme right-wing” beliefs. According to the same media reporting, a recent example was 17-year old Paul Dunleavy, jailed for preparing acts of neo-Nazi terrorism and for providing “advice and encouragement” to fellow extremists online. Dunleavy also joined the Feuerkrieg Division, a banned terrorist organization in the United Kingdom.

3. UNITED STATES: Online IMVE chatter examples – 14 November to 18 November 2020

Source:

Summary: on 17 November 2020, an anonymous 4chan user declared that if Joseph Biden wins the presidential election, the user may go “door to door” on a mass shooting. The user also urged “every other white American” to do the same.

on 15 November 2020, a self-identified Proud Boys affiliated channel on Telegram referenced the “Million MAGA March” that had occurred on 14 November 2020, issuing threats targeting Democrats, activists, and counter-protestors, indicating that they “need to fear the millions of our people whose hands are untied and who are more angry than ever before.”

on 14 November 2020, referencing the so-called “Day of the Rope,” several neo-Nazi Telegram channels called for unrestricted violence targeting political opponents and ethnic minorities. The Day of the Rope is a hypothetical cataclysmic event referencing the far-right novel “The Turner Diaries.” The event is described as a period in which accelerationist “far-right” groups would publicly attack and kill political adversaries as well as various minority groups.

Africa

Eurasia - Pacific

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5. **UKRAINE: A Knife for a Knife: IMV groups hold knife tournament for deceased Azov Battalion member Mikola "Nizh (Knife)" Nichega**

Source:

Summary:

of mid-November 2020, members from the Ukraine-based IMV groups Nord Storm and Centuria held a knife tournament in the southeast Ukrainian municipality of Kryvyi Rih in honour of an Azov Battalion member who was allegedly killed recently in the Donbass conflict. Both neo-Nazi groups focus on training and preparation for military service and claim to have members who have served in the Ukrainian military, possibly within the Azov Battalion, which is a sanctioned unit in the Ukrainian military. News of the event was posted on Nord Storm's Telegram channel on 17 November 2020. Although the post did not mention if anyone required stitches following the tournament, it concluded with well wishes for their fallen comrade noting that it will be good for him "to feast in Valhalla with a knife."

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Middle - East

NTR

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Americas - Europe

2. UNITED STATES: Online IMVE chatter examples – 27 November to 3 December 2020

Source:

Summary: on 2 December 2020, certain anarchist groups have announced a counter-protest in Sacramento, California on 5 December and a protest in Washington Dec on 11-12 December in response to the StopTheSteal rallies that have occurred and will occur across the country.

on 30 November 2020, members of a certain Facebook group encouraged participants to disobey local laws and to be armed for "self-defence" against anarchists when attending the 12 December "March for Trump" rally in Washington DC. Separate indicated that a leading Proud Boys figure made a statement that promoted the rally, declaring "this isn't about the president anymore...it's about our freedom".

on 30 November 2020, a neo-Nazi boogaloo affiliated Telegram channel posted a statement claiming that de-escalation in the status quo was no longer possible and that the only resolution to mounting political tensions was violent conflict. Anti-Semitic rhetoric was also used in the statement.

on 29 November 2020, a leading Proud Boys figure made a statement on Parler calling on his supporters and fellow members of the neo-Fascist group to organize an "army of patriots", "fight back", and "take this country back from the evil, globalist empire."

and media reporting, on 29 November 2020, about 50 members and affiliates of Patriot Prayer held a rally in front of a local Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspector for allegedly fining a Salem, Oregon gym for staying open against the current lockdown policies. Local authorities indicated, "there were no problems, no issues" resulting from the rally.

on 28 November 2020, a member of a prominent QAnon group on social media urged others to "march" to the homes of certain European political officials and "kill them." The user directly named the Spanish Prime Minister, the French President, the German Chancellor, and the British Prime Minister as targets.)

Africa

Eurasia - Pacific

Middle - East

DAILY RADAR SCREEN

ITAC CIET

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DRS 2020 12 17

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Canada-Related

2. CANADA: Member of "Toronto 18" granted day parole in Quebec

Source: Media.

Summary: According to media reporting from Tuesday, 8 December, 2020, Shareef Abdelhaleem, a member of the "Toronto 18" group that planned to blow up the Toronto Stock Exchange and a Canadian military base, was granted day parole in Quebec. The Parole Board of Canada granted Abdelhaleem parole despite his case management team advising against it. The board agreed to release him to a "closed day parole," a reference to a halfway house run by Correctional Service Canada. "Toronto 18" was a group of 18 men located around Toronto that planned to blow up the Toronto Stock Exchange and a Canadian military base, while also running training camps with the goal of preparing terrorists to storm Parliament in Ottawa. Abdelhaleem was arrested in November 2006, after arranging to buy three tons of ammonium nitrate fertilizer and other chemicals that were to be used to make truck bombs.

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Americas - Europe

4. UNITED STATES: Online IMVE chatter examples – 10 December to 17 December 2020

Source:

Summary: on 16 December 2020, users of a xenophobic Telegram channel indicated intentions to attend a pro-Trump rally in the future, specifically with the goal to commit mass violence against counter-protesters and people of colour. The statements were made in response to a video that showed, according to the channel's caption, participants of a recent March for Trump in Washington DC that were supposedly being "physically assaulted and maced by Antifa/BLM militant."

on 16 December 2020, a user of a named Parler account indicated that people needed to start "systematically assassinating liberal leaders, liberal activists, BLM leaders and supporters, members of the NBA/NFL/MLB/NHL, mainstream media anchors and correspondents, and Antifa. The user also claimed to have a "newsworthy event" planned. In additional posts, the user threatened violence against liberal college professors, a named member of the Michigan House of Representatives, Mark Zuckerberg, and Jack Dorsey.

on 15 December 2020, social media users on 4chan expressed violent anti-police sentiments, referring to them as "the real enemy" or "agents of ZOG" (Zionist occupied government), and others claimed the police in Washington DC were specifically aiding antifascist counter-protesters. Some urged the Proud Boys to use force and dominate police officers present at protests.

on 11, 12, and 14 December 2020, users of various social media platforms discussed employing violent methods to subdue political opposition or to prepare for the impending collapse of the US, some in reaction to the US Supreme Court's rejection of a Texas lawsuit contesting the election results. Proposed targets included mainstream media, politicians, judges, lawyers, CEOs, district attorneys, and tech companies.

on 9 December 2020, a leading Proud Boy member shared online a partial video whereby a female Democratic congressional representative warned Trump supporters to "walk lightly". In response, the

member construed the video as a direct threat against Trump supporters—and therefore, the Proud Boys as well—incited retaliatory action against the congressional representative. The member's followers responded with racist language, calling for violence against her as well as encouraged doxxing activity.

Africa

Eurasia - Pacific

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TA 20/67-E 2020 11 17



UNIFORMED PERSONNEL and IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENT EXTREMISM

This Threat Assessment (TA) highlights 17 examples of individuals or groups from Canada (CAN), United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), Germany (GER) and New Zealand (NZ) which serve to illustrate the intersections and relationships between ideologically motivated violent (IMV) extremism and uniformed personnel.



- Adhere to Extremist Ideology
- Recruit Others
- Incite Violence
- Disrupted Plots
- Violent Action

IMV EXTREMIST GROUPS ACTIVELY RECRUITING UNIFORMED PERSONNEL

Several xenophobic and anti-government/anti-authority violent extremist groups openly recruit current and former military and law enforcement personnel, including:

BOOGALOO MOVEMENT is an anti-government movement with ties to neo-Nazism and white nationalism who believe in coming civil war and/or the fall of civilization. It is rooted in online forums, but the COVID-19 pandemic became a catalyst for real-world activity, with many followers attending protests armed with weapons. These extremists seek to exploit unrest, predominately in the United States (US), and incite violence in order to instigate the second civil war.

THREE PERCENTERS MOVEMENT (III%ERS) began in the US in 2008 and supports the idea of a small number of dedicated 'patriots' protecting Americans from government tyranny. The group says its main goals are to protect the right to bear arms, defend an 'overreaching government' and 'pushback against tyranny'. While there is a small number of members in every province, including members of the military, ex-military, and police, the movement is growing in Canada.

OATH KEEPERS was founded in 2009 by a former US army paratrooper and claims to include tens of thousands of current and former law enforcement officials and military veterans as members. The group is based on a set of conspiracy theories about the federal government working to destroy the liberties of Americans and its members vow to support the oaths they took on joining law enforcement or military, to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies".

PROUD BOYS was founded in 2016 and adhere to a white nationalist, anti-Muslim and misogynistic ideology. The Canadian chapter of the group says it is a "fraternal organization of Western Chauvinists who will no longer apologize for creating a modern world".



ASSESSMENTS



ADHERE TO EXTREMIST IDEOLOGY

A. ERIK MYGGLAND (CAN): A Canadian Rangers member who has shown online support for the III%ers Movement and xenophobic group Soldiers of Odin, as early as 2016. He also expressed anti-government/anti-authority sentiments online, referring to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as a "treasonous bastard" in April 2018. Myggland is expected to be formally released from the Canadian Rangers in late fall 2020.

B. BORIS MIHAJLOVIC (CAN): He joined the Canadian reserves in early 2016 and indicated that his rationale was to gain combat experience for an eventual race war. He was one of the administrators and a prolific contributor of the now-defunct neo-Nazi online forum Iron March. Mihajlovic was assigned restricted duties pending an investigation; however, he has since been reinstated.

C. POLICE OFFICERS (GER): In mid-September 2020, 29 police officers were suspended pending an investigation and criminal charges for sharing 126 images of Hitler and violent neo-Nazi propaganda online.

D. ELITE SPECIAL FORCES UNIT (KSK) (GER): In early July 2020, the KSK was partially disbanded due to xenophobic and anti-government/anti-authority extremism after several incidents involving members. In February 2019 an officer in the unit was suspended after he posted extremist opinions online. In 2017, a party was held where the soldiers reportedly listened to neo-Nazi rock music, sang neo-Nazi lyrics and showed Hitler salutes.

RECRUIT OTHERS

E. STEPHAN PARSHALL (US), ANDREW LYMAN (US), AND WILLIAM LOOMIS (US): These three men were arrested on terrorism, explosives and firearms charges in May 2020, in what American authorities state was a conspiracy to incite violence during protests in Las Vegas, Nevada. The men, all with military experience and all adherents to the Boogaloo Movement, were arrested on the way to a Black Lives Matter protest in downtown Las Vegas with gas cans and Molotov cocktails. Lyman told authorities that they would recruit like-minded individuals at rallies and protests with members being vetted by undergoing physical training and surveying law enforcement at the protests and rallies. (U//FOUO)

F. PATRIK MATHEWS (CAN): In August 2019, the former Canadian combat engineer reservist spoke with an uncover journalist about his role in spreading neo-Nazi views on his social media accounts and attempts to recruit young white men for a "race war".

G. MIKKO VEHVILAINEN (UK): Lance Corporal Vehvilainen was sentenced to eight years in prison in March 2018 for being a member of National Action, a terrorist organization that was banned in the United Kingdom in 2016. Vehvilainen tried to recruit fellow soldiers for National Action, which is a key part of the organization's strategy to expand its membership within the armed forces.

H. "RUSTY" (CAN): Chat room discussions by approximately 180 users in Canada posted on the encrypted platform Discord between February 2017 and early 2018 revealed xenophobic ideologies with the objective of creating white nationalist state. One man, who went by the online handle 'Rusty', described himself as a member of the Canadian Armed Forces and was seen by other members as a leader and his advice on training, weapons, and tactics was sought after. He encouraged group members to join the reserves in order to benefit from the training. To date, 'Rusty's' membership in the military has not been corroborated.

INCITE VIOLENCE

I. BRANDON CAMERON (CAN): Cameron joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 2015 and left as a reservist in 2018. Starting in 2009 and throughout his time in the military, he posted extensively in white nationalist chat rooms, celebrating the 2018 targeted killing of a gay Jewish man by members of Atomwaffen Division and expressing the need to "take real, violent action against Jews".

J. "MATT" (NZ): In March 2020, the former New Zealand Defence Force member discussed purchasing weapons and forming terror cells in New Zealand on a Telegram channel. Matt incited others by sharing propaganda from the New Zealand-based white supremacist group Action Zealandia, participating in chats with the neo-Nazi group Atomwaffen Division, and circulating a threat against the al-Noor Mosque in Christchurch.

DISRUPTED PLOTS

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F. PATRIK MATHEWS (CAN): The former Canadian combat engineer reservist was arrested in the US in January 2020 along with two fellow members of the neo-Nazi paramilitary group The Base after they discussed disrupting a gun-rights rally in Richmond, Virginia, planned for 20 January 2020.

K. ETHAN MELZER (US): Former Army Private Melzer was charged in June and September 2020 with planning a mass casualty attack on his own unit during its upcoming deployment to Turkey. In May 2020, Melzer allegedly sent sensitive details to members of the satanic neo-Nazi group known as Order of Nine Angles (O9A) with the intention of this information being passed to radical Islamist extremists who would then carry out an attack on the unit.

L. JARRETT WILLIAM SMITH (US): In August 2020, Private Smith was sentenced to two years in prison for distributing information about building a bomb and making napalm to Atomwaffen Division members. Smith also had social media discussions on building improvised explosive devices and attacking unspecified American news networks with a "large vehicle bomb".

M. CHRISTOPHER HASSON (US): The former Coast Guard Lieutenant was sentenced to more than 13 years in prison in late January 2020 after being charged with four federal gun and drug charges. Media reporting indicates that Hasson had stockpiled weapons and plotted to kill journalists, Democratic politicians, university professors, Supreme Court justices and those he described as 'leftists in general'. For at least two years, Hasson visited white nationalist and neo-Nazi websites and studied Anders Breivik's manifesto, bomb making and sniper manuals.

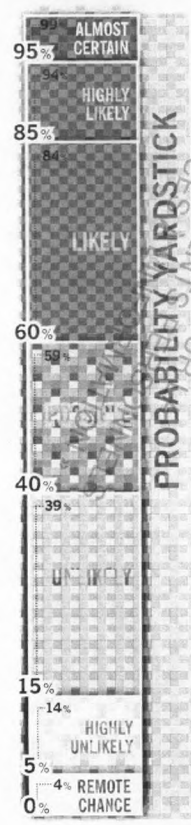
N. FRANCO A. (GER): In April 2017, the Army First Lieutenant was arrested on terrorism-related charges after authorities found evidence of xenophobic extremism, theft of military weapons, and plotting to attack politicians and public figures.

VIOLENT ACTION

O. CORREY HURREN (CAN): He was arrested on 2 July 2020 after ramming his vehicle through the pedestrian gate at Rideau Hall in Ottawa, Ontario. Hurren, a member of the Canadian Rangers, had multiple firearms in his vehicle and threatened Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau with bodily harm.

P. STEVEN CARRILLO (US): Air Force Sergeant Carrillo was arrested on 6 June 2020 in connection with the 29 May 2020 shooting attack on federal security officers in Oakland, California, which resulted in one death. According to authorities, when they went to apprehend Carrillo at his residence, he attacked them with pipe bombs, killing a police officer. Investigators found a Boogaloo-themed patch in a vehicle used by Carrillo. He had also scrawled 'BOOG' and various Boogaloo slogans in his own blood on the hood of a car.

DEFINITIONS



PROBABILITY YARDSTICK

THREAT LEVEL		
LEVELS	DESCRIPTIONS	LANGUAGE
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	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
HIGH	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism COULD OCCUR .	ITAC assesses it is POSSIBLE that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
MEDIUM	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is HIGHLY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
VERY LOW		

ITAC uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis in applying terrorism threat levels. The setting of threat levels is determined by several factors including current intelligence, recent events, as well as the intent, capabilities, and attack frequency of terrorist groups. ITAC cautions that the information may be incomplete and, regardless of the threat level applied, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning.

TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED		Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets
MODERATE		Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets
GENERAL		Capable of simple attacks

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

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THREAT REVIEW

WEEK: 2020 12 17 to 2021 01 06

UNITED STATES

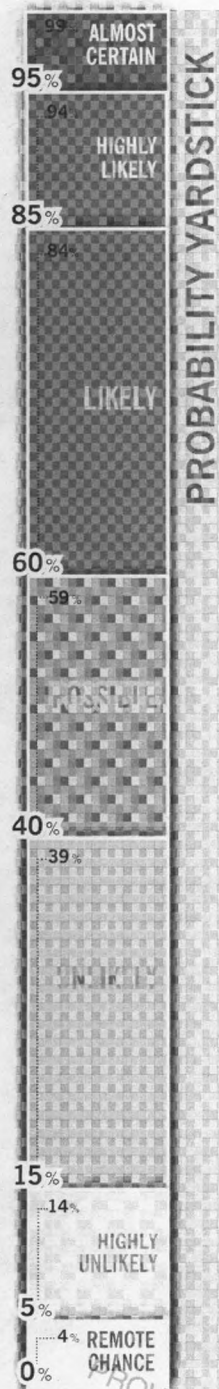
LEADER OF PROUD BOYS ARRESTED IN WASHINGTON, DC

Source: Media

SUMMARY: According to media reporting from 5 January 2021, Enrique Tarrio—the leader of the Proud Boys, a xenophobic extremist group—was arrested on 4 January 2021 in Washington, DC, and was charged with destruction of property and a firearm offence. Tarrio was arrested ahead of pro-Donald Trump protests planned for 5–6 January 2021 in Washington, DC, to coincide with the United States (US) Congress's vote to affirm President Elect Joe Biden's victory. He was subsequently released. A judge signed an order on Tuesday banning Tarrio from entering DC, with very limited exceptions related to his criminal case. Tarrio's property destruction charges relate to his admitted role in burning a Black Lives Matter banner torn from a historic Black church during a previous pro-Trump protest on 12 December 2020. The firearm charge relates to two high-capacity ammunition magazines found in his possession during his arrest.



DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

established
 raised
 lowered
 remains

CRITICAL

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **HIGHLY LIKELY** and **COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY**.

ITAC assesses it is **HIGHLY LIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

HIGH

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **LIKELY**.

ITAC assesses it is **LIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

MEDIUM

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism **COULD OCCUR**.

ITAC assesses it is **POSSIBLE** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

LOW

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY**.

ITAC assesses it is **UNLIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

VERY LOW

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **HIGHLY UNLIKELY**.

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ITAC uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis in applying terrorism threat levels. The setting of threat levels is determined by several factors including current intelligence, recent events, as well as the intent, capabilities, and attack frequency of terrorist groups. ITAC cautions that the information may be incomplete and, regardless of the threat level applied, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning.

TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED



Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets

MODERATE



Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets

GENERAL



Capable of simple attacks

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Analytical Brief Précis analytique



Confidential//CEO

CAB 2020/24
July 20, 2020

QAnon: An Online Conspiracy Theory with Real-World Implications

Key Points

-
-

Rideau Hall Incident

On July 2, 2020, Corey Hurren gained access to the grounds of Rideau Hall; he was in possession of firearms and allegedly threatened Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. As reported in the media, Hurren wrote a letter in which he stated that Canada required a “wake up call”; he also referenced the lack of parliamentary sittings and federal firearms legislation as grievances. Media also reported that Hurren posted messages referencing conspiracy theories, some of which included QAnon hashtags.

QAnon is a meta-conspiracy theory¹ which, according to researchers, was first referenced in October 2017 on the anonymous image board 4Chan. At its core, the narrative alleges that US President Donald J. Trump is engaged in a battle against a global elite (“The Deep State”) which aims to keep the people of the world poor, ignorant and enslaved. QAnon adherents believe that the COVID-19 pandemic is a myth orchestrated by “The Deep State” that was created primarily to harm Trump’s re-election campaign.

Online Reaction

The Rideau Hall incident resonated with individuals online. Social media posts painted Hurren

¹ A meta-conspiracy theory combines multiple narratives into a consolidated narrative using its own vernacular.

as a hero for trying to kill Trudeau; portrayed Trudeau as a dictator; and lamented Hurren's lack of success. One post proclaimed the hope that the next incident will bring the "great awakening", a QAnon vernacular term for abolishing the existing political and economic system. Examples of such postings are visible on page one. (

Conspiracy Theories and Misinformation During the Pandemic

the manifestation of this trend in several ways—from a sudden spike in hate crimes against Chinese or immigrants to attacks against critical infrastructure, including telecommunications masts.

The pandemic particularly accelerated the spread of QAnon online. According to a recent social media analysis, QAnon has seen a 71% increase in Twitter content and a 651% increase in Facebook content since March 2020. Another study shows that the number of visits to qmap.pub, a website that catalogues QAnon's posts, had more than 10.5 million hits in May 2020, compared to 4.1 million in January.

A Canadian researcher has recently conducted an estimate of QAnon resonance on Facebook. The study concluded that there are approximately 179 Facebook QAnon groups with more than 1.4 million members and 120 QAnon pages with a total of 911,000 page likes. The academic also highlighted the international scope of the narrative, as there was ample evidence of dedicated efforts to create QAnon propaganda in many different languages. Media articles are also reporting an expansion of QAnon outside of North America to countries such as Germany, France and Australia.

From the Internet to Real-World Violence

While most adherents are not violent and generally limit their involvement to furthering the conspiracy online, some real-world events have involved serious violence, including murder and kidnapping. For example, a QAnon follower pleaded guilty to a terrorism charge and aggravated assault after blocking the Hoover Dam in Nevada with a homemade armoured vehicle in 2018. More recently, in March 2020, a female QAnon follower was arrested in New York City after posting threatening messages about former Vice President Joe Biden and former presidential candidate Hillary Clinton on Facebook. She was later charged with multiple counts of criminal possession of a weapon. In Germany, Tobias Rathjen killed nine people on February 19, 2020. While he had racist beliefs, he was also influenced by anti-government conspiracy theories overlapping with the QAnon narrative.



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SECRET//CANADIAN EYES ONLY

CAB 2020/42

September 22, 2020

QAnon: An Online Conspiracy Theory with Real-World Implications (Part II)

It describes key new developments associated with the QAnon conspiracy theory and their implications for the COVID-19 pandemic and the US Presidential Election.

Key Points

QAnon and the US Presidential Election

QAnon started as a fringe online conspiracy three years ago and has since substantially grown in resonance. The movement is regularly discussed by global media, and supporters have shown the ability to impact US political trends. In August 2020, a QAnon-supporting congressional candidate won the Georgia Republican House primary and is favoured to win the seat in November 2020. In early September 2020, she posted a picture of herself holding a gun superimposed on images of prominent female Democrats. In the post, the candidate encouraged supporters to go on the "offense against these socialists".

According to media watchdogs, as of September 16, 2020 there are 80 US candidates who have either endorsed or given credence to QAnon content. In total, 74 of these candidates are Republicans; two are Democrats; one is a Libertarian; one is a member of the Independence Party of Delaware; two are independents.

In late August 2020, US House lawmakers introduced a bipartisan resolution condemning QAnon and rejecting its ideas. The resolution declares that QAnon is "no longer simply a fringe conspiracy theory but an ideology that has demonstrated its capacity to radicalize to violence individuals at an alarming speed".

What is QAnon?

QAnon is a meta-conspiracy theory that surfaced in 2017 on an anonymous image board. At its core, the narrative alleges that US President Donald J. Trump is engaged in a battle against a global elite ("The Deep State") which aims to keep the people of the world poor, ignorant and enslaved.

Adherents believe world governments are being controlled by a shadowy cabal of pedophiles. In this narrative, political opponents are enemies of humanity.

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Social Media Platforms' Responses to QAnon

QAnon continues to grow beyond the United States, Canada and Europe. QAnon's online presence has been observed by experts in Australia, Russia, Argentina, Mexico, Venezuela and Brazil. In July and August 2020, Facebook and Twitter announced major crackdowns on accounts that promote the QAnon conspiracy theory narrative.

A Veneer of Respectability: Coopting #savethechildren

Following this wave of restrictions, various credible media articles reported that QAnon supporters had hijacked #savethechildren, a hashtag used by legitimate charities and organizations to draw attention to child trafficking. This strategy allowed QAnon to circumvent restrictions and reach a new audience of individuals concerned with child exploitation. The strategy seems to be working, as interactions on posts with the #savethechildren hashtag have grown more than 500% since July. QAnon supporters are now the driving force behind #savethechildren or #saveourchildren hashtags and numerous "Save the Children" rallies across the world, including in Canada.

For example, on August 12, 2020, a woman from Texas allegedly chased two cars and intentionally crashed into one, thinking she was chasing pedophiles who had kidnapped a girl for human trafficking.

QAnon Growth in Canada and Threats to Canadian Politicians

where QAnon extremists have created a social media brand - Radio-Québec. Radio-Québec intentionally has chosen this name to closely resemble existing mainstream media brands (like Radio-Canada). The effort appears to be successful, with academic research demonstrating that Radio-Québec is now the fifth-largest QAnon page on Facebook globally. Radio-Québec's YouTube channel is also growing in popularity, with 113,000 subscribers. While the brand name may appear mainstream, the content posted by Radio-Québec is highly inflammatory, with a recent video claiming that citizens who resist COVID-19 emergency measures will be detained by the government in secret prison camps.

Media reporting also indicates that, since May, provincial police in Quebec have arrested five individuals for allegedly making online threats against politicians and other public figures. Police have interviewed several others, following complaints from the public. The suspects all have Facebook accounts that promote conspiracy theories about COVID-19, including some that originate from QAnon.

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THREAT ASSESSMENT

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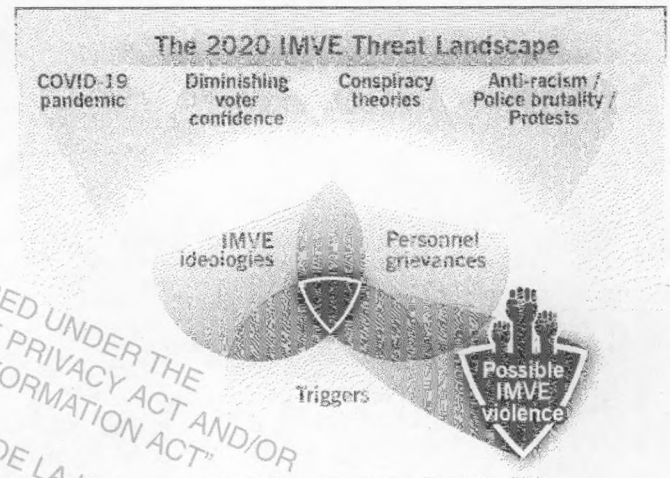
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United States: The Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremist Threat Surrounding the 2020 US Presidential Election

The Ideologically Motivated Violent (IMV) extremist landscape in North America is a complex, highly individual confluence of ideological beliefs and personal grievances that interact—often unpredictably—with broader societal trends and events to provide triggers for violent action. This paper assesses the threat of violence from IMV extremism to the 2020 United States (US) presidential election within the context of the current social and political landscape in North America.

KEY ASSESSMENTS



Source: ITAC AE20 46

INTRODUCTION

IMV extremist networks generally operate in a decentralized fashion with threats of violence emanating from individuals or small groups, rather than the collective. IMV extremist networks have posed a challenge to law enforcement as they predominately exist online, making their real-world identification difficult. While many ideologies have overlapping elements, the ideology of an IMV extremist attacker tends to be unique to the individual, as they cherry-pick from a plethora of beliefs and prejudices that make up the IMV extremist milieu.

According to media reporting, US authorities believe that the greatest threat of lethal violence to the 2020 election comes from IMV extremists with "personalized ideologies". According to open sources, it is expected that this threat will not only exist in the period leading up to Election Day, 3 November 2020, but may continue to be of particular issue during the 79-day period between Election Day and Inauguration Day on 20 January 2021.

ASSESSMENT NOTE

This report is based on

open source reporting and media reporting.

DEFINITIONS and HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS are located at the last page.

Canada

THE COLLISION OF IDEOLOGY, GRIEVANCES AND OPPORTUNISTIC EVENTS

Ideological beliefs

IMV ideological beliefs can be categorized into four groups: xenophobic, single-issue, gender-driven and anti-authority/anti-government. The primary IMV extremists promulgating violence during the 2020 US election period are those who ascribe to xenophobic, particularly white nationalists and neo-Nazis, and anti-authority/anti-government ideologies. Xenophobic extremist groups, generally believe that white identity should be the organizing principle of the countries that make up Western civilization. Some, such as white nationalists, focus on "simple" hatred of the other or seek the creation of a fascist political state (neo-Nazism), while others do not believe in a political solution and work towards societal and governmental collapse, which in turn will provide the opportunity to build an all-white society (accelerationism).

Adherents of anti-government ideologies generally define themselves as opposed to the "New world Order" and/or adhere to extreme anti-government narratives. According to open source reporting, there were 576 anti-government groups active in 2019 in the US and of these, 181 were militias. According to open source reporting, militia groups are generally "patriot" groups, not aligned with an elected government, that actively engage in military-style training. The FBI recently disrupted a plot by Michigan-based militia Wolverine Watchmen to overthrow the Michigan State Government before the US election (see text box). Another concerning militia is the Patriot Coalition of Oregon, a network of "pro-Trump, pro-police activists". Members have expressed a growing desire to train and prepare for violence, up to and beyond November's presidential election, and some have expressed a willingness to engage in "guard shifts" at November voting locations or even kill their perceived left-wing enemies".

Personal Grievances

Grievances are highly personal and unique to the individual. While IMV extremists generally adhere to one or more ideologies, they tend to cherry-pick from a plethora of beliefs and prejudices that make up the IMV extremist milieu. While the expression of social and political grievances is not unusual during democratic elections, social unrest by actors against Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, widespread conspiracy theories, encouraged distrust in the democratic process, and anti-racism/police brutality protests and counter-protests in the US has meant that ideologically-based grievances have risen to particular prominence in the 2020 US election season. These events are being co-opted by extremists to support their ideologies and, in some cases, justify violence.

XENOPHOBIA: PROUD BOYS

On 29 September 2020, media reporting indicated that social media accounts attributed to the xenophobic extremist group Proud Boys reacted positively after being mentioned during the September 29 presidential debate. For example, one account read, "President Trump told the proud boys to stand by because someone needs to deal with ANTIFA... well sir! we're ready!"

ANTI-GOVERNMENT: PLOT TO OVERTHROW THE MICHIGAN STATE GOVERNMENT

According to media reporting, on 8 October 2020, thirteen people were charged in an alleged plot to overthrow the Michigan State government, including kidnapping Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, before the November 2020 US presidential election. The individuals are alleged to be a diverse group of anti-authority/anti-government extremists, Boogaloo movement and members of the Michigan-based militia group Wolverine Watchmen (see TH 20/99).

EXTREMIST VIOLENCE ON THE "FAR-LEFT"

The "far-left" includes a decentralized mix of actors, including Antifa, whose objective has been to intimidate, doxx and dissuade perceived racists. Targets include white supremacists and other "far-right" extremists, as well as some conservative politicians and their supporters. There are also armed leftist groups, such as the Puget Sound John Brown Gun Club, that are invited to protests and events to provide security against "right-wing aggression", according to media reporting. According to open source reporting, some on the "far-left" have undertaken violent extremist activities in the past purportedly in relation to President Trump and as such, it remains possible that some could resort to extremist action if he is re-elected in November.

Opportunistic Events (Triggers)

While there is currently no specific threat-related information regarding the 2020 US presidential election season, the election itself is a triggering event for many IMV extremists of varying ideologies. Trigger events are usually difficult to predict in advance, with the exception of major pre-planned events like a national elections. Furthermore, if any one of a variety of predicted or novel "trigger" events were to occur during this time, it is possible that the confluence of these events could escalate the threat of violence from IMV extremists.

A review of the online activity across the IMV spectrum suggests that results of the election could be considered a "trigger" event. No matter who wins on 3 November 2020, it is possible that IMV extremist networks or individuals will react violently. However, considering open source rhetoric put forward by IMV extremists online, if President Trump were to win, it is possible they will take the results as tacit approval to undertake violent action against perceived enemies which could spark reciprocal violence among divergent IMV groups. In addition, if there were a delay of weeks or months in releasing the election results, it is possible that IMV extremist networks or individuals will react violently against a perceived fraud.

THE BROADER SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

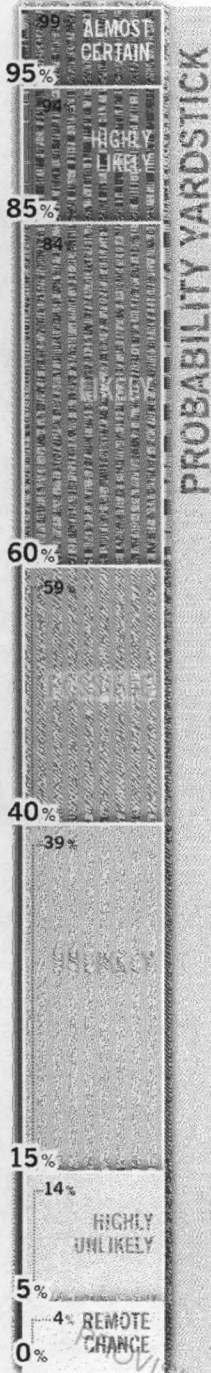
There are a number of broader trends within the US social landscape operating in the background of the possible IMV extremist threat to the US election season, the most prominent in 2020 relate to social restrictions emanating from COVID-19 pandemic mitigation efforts and ongoing anti-racism/police brutality protests and counter-protests. According to media reporting, another trend is diminished American voter confidence and concerns about the validity of the upcoming election result, particularly if the numbers for the candidates are close or if the results of the election are delayed. According to American authorities, this could motivate some to "take matters into their own hands". Another prominent issue is the increasing mainstream support for false narratives and conspiracy theories that implicate prominent US citizens, including many involved in the US election. Over 60 Congressional candidates have expressed sympathy for QAnon (i.e. an umbrella term for many different conspiracy theories, which primarily allege that President Donald Trump is waging a secret war against an international cabal of satanic pedophiles), according to open source reporting, contributing to the mainstreaming of fringe conspiracy theories. There is concern among American authorities that as fringe conspiracy theories become more popular, they could motivate some IMV extremists, wholly or in part, to incite or commit violence.

CANADA

Fringe conspiracy theories are also part of the Canadian social landscape. According to open source reporting, as of May 2020, 46% of Canadians believed in at least one conspiracy theory relating to the pandemic. Experts have voiced concerns about the role conspiracy theories are playing in radicalizing people, particularly in the online IMV milieu, and the possibility it could turn into real world violence.



DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL

Established ↑ raised ↓ lowered ↔ remains

CRITICAL

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **HIGHLY LIKELY** and **COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY**.

ITAC assesses it is **HIGHLY LIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

HIGH

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **LIKELY**.

ITAC assesses it is **LIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

MEDIUM

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism **COULD OCCUR**.

ITAC assesses it is **POSSIBLE** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

LOW

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY**.

ITAC assesses it is **UNLIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

VERY LOW

ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is **HIGHLY UNLIKELY**.

ITAC assesses it is **HIGHLY UNLIKELY** that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

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TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED



Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets

MODERATE



Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets

GENERAL



Capable of simple attacks

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

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SECRET

CAB 2020/46

September 28, 2020

Boogaloo Bois and Hamas: For Money Not Shared Ideology

Key Points

- On September 3, 2020, the FBI arrested and charged two American citizens and self-described "Boogaloo Bois"¹ (see text box at right)² with conspiring and attempting to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization (Hamas).³

The Boogaloo

Boogaloo Bois are a loosely connected network of individuals and cells espousing violent anti-government sentiments. The catchphrase 'Boogaloo' refers to the impending civil war between gun rights proponents, neo-Nazis, ethno-nationalists and those holding anti-government and anti-law enforcement views and the state. Although it originated in the United States, the Boogaloo narrative has also emerged, albeit to a lesser degree, in Canada.

Over the past year, the term has expanded from relatively limited online memes/imagery to various elements of the broader ideologically motivated violent extremist (IMVE) landscape, both online and in real life.

Calls for violence linked to the 'Boogaloo' are increasingly common in the United States and have resulted in several fatalities. Law enforcement has also foiled bombing and shooting plots by individuals who made reference to Boogaloo terminology or had connections to the movement.

Context

The Boogaloo movement is a loosely connected collection of individuals and cells espousing violent anti-government/police sentiments with the objective of preparing for, if not actively encouraging a coming civil war. The Boogaloo movement, however, is comprised of individuals holding a diverse range of, white supremacist, pro-gun, conspiracy theory and libertarian views. Beyond the common goal of overthrowing of the government there is minimal agreement or commonality of worldview which explains why adherents may hold ideological views which are in opposition to one another. While some white supremacists adhere to the Boogaloo narrative others have joined in support of anti-racism movements protesting against the

¹ The terms Boogalo Boys, Boogaloo Bois, and Boogah deen are often used interchangeably.

³ Canada designated Hamas a terrorist entity on November 27, 2002.

police. One of the Americans arrested in the above-referenced case claimed that he was actually an anarchist who wanted to "completely remove the government and then just start over".

Boogaloo-Inspired Killings

On May 29, 2020, American Steven Carrillo was charged with two counts of murder in the deaths of a Federal Protective Service officer and a Santa Cruz, California County deputy.

Court documents reveal that Carrillo, an active-duty member of an elite Air Force unit, wrote "Boog" and the phrases "I became unreasonable" (a popular Boogaloo meme) in his own blood on the hood of a vehicle he hijacked; a Boogaloo patch was found in the van allegedly used in the murders.

On July 30, 2020, the Americans delivered five functioning suppressors they had manufactured for Hamas. The Americans subsequently provided a "drop in auto sear" (DIAS)⁴ to the FBI agent and the FBI informant and negotiated a price of \$1,800 to manufacture an additional five suppressors.

Teeter and Solomon also repeatedly discussed committing acts of violence in furtherance of the movement's goal of overthrowing the government. Possible violence included shooting police officers, bombing a county courthouse in northern Minnesota, destroying historic monuments, killing politicians and "raid[ing]" the headquarters of a white supremacist organization in North Carolina (the home state of one of the Americans).⁵ Based on court documents, their plots did not evolve beyond discussions prior to their arrests.

Boogaloo in Canada

⁴ According to open information, The George Floyd protests are an ongoing series of protests and civil unrest which began in Minneapolis, Minnesota on May 26, 2020. The protests began as part of the responses to the killing of George Floyd, a 46-year-old African-American man who was killed during an arrest by officers of the Minneapolis Police Department.

⁵ Participants in the Boogaloo movement use other similar sounding derivations of the word, including *boog*, *boojahideen*, *big igloo*, and *big luau* to avoid crackdowns and automated content flags imposed by social media sites to limit or ban Boogaloo-related content.

⁶ Immediately after the arrests, Hamas officially denied any connection to the Boogaloo movement or knowledge of their plans.

⁸ A DIAS is a part designed and intended for use in converting a weapon to shoot automatically by a single pull of the trigger.

⁹ According court documents, one of the Americans claimed "if we can make it so twenty, forty of them can't go home ... it's a win-win." It is unclear why the Americans wanted to attack the headquarters – hatred of their ideological views or because it would cause more societal strife.

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On May 1, 2020, the Government of Canada announced that it would immediately ban the purchase, sale, transport, import or use of approximately 1,500 models of assault-style firearms.

In June 2020, social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram launched an initiative, with some success, to remove overtly Boogaloo-themed pages and accounts, thereby forcing adherents in Canada and the United States onto more obscure platforms.
: extreme Boogaloo-themed narratives can be easily located online.

Considerations

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Canadian Security
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Service canadien du
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Analytical Brief Précis analytique



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CAB 2020/57
October 26, 2020

Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremism: Landscape and Threat Considerations

Key Points:

- Adherents of ideologically motivated violent extremism (IMVE) are driven by a range of grievances and by a selection of ideas from across the traditional left/right ideological spectrum. The resulting worldview often consists of a personalized narrative which centres on the willingness to incite, enable or mobilize to violence. These individuals/cells often act without a clear affiliation to an organized group or external guidance, but are nevertheless shaped by hateful voices and messages online that normalize and advocate violence.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated xenophobic, accelerationist¹ and anti-authority narratives, many of which may impact — directly or indirectly — law enforcement and national security considerations. The pandemic has also created cross-ideological bonds with conspiracy theories and real or perceived grievances related to lockdown or sanitary measures.

IMVE: A Complex Milieu With Real World Implications

1. Since 2014, Canadians motivated in whole or in part by their IMVE views have killed 21 and wounded 40 on Canadian soil, and includes the 2014 Moncton shooting, the 2017 Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City shooting and the 2018 Toronto van attack. This number of casualties from IMVE adherents in Canada is higher than violence from any other motivation, including religiously motivated narratives like al-Qaida or DAESH. IMVE is not inherently “right-wing” or “left-wing”. The reality is much more complex, with narratives being driven by a range of grievances and individualized interpretations of ideas from across the traditional left/right ideological spectrum (see graphic on the following page). The resulting worldview often consists of a personalized narrative which centres on the willingness or necessity to incite, enable or mobilize to violence.

2. Threat narratives within the IMVE space have unprecedented diversity and fluidity. Broadly speaking, IMVE ideologies are not only rooted online — they are often influenced to the point of direction by decentralized online trends and communities of extremist influencers who interpret local, national and international events through a radical lens.² These broader narratives are then often individualized by extremists and impacted by perceived concerns regarding economic well-being, safety/security, the COVID-19 pandemic, elections (national or international), or other special events. Grievances can therefore be both — or even simultaneously — deeply personal (e.g. loss of employment) or existential (e.g. perceived threat to one’s way of life posed by immigration, government corruption, etc.). Violent acts are often carried out by individuals or small groups without a clear affiliation to an organized group or external guidance, but are nevertheless shaped by hateful voices and messages online that normalize and advocate violence.

¹ Accelerationism is the belief that Western governments are irreparably corrupt and that multiculturalism and democracy will fail. As a result, there will eventually be an outbreak of violence across ethnic and racial lines — often referred to as “the coming race war”. Accelerationists therefore routinely encourage violence to escalate the pace of societal collapse.

² IMVE influencers work in an extensive extremist counterculture which includes books, images, lectures, music, online discussions, videos and conversations.

3. The IMVE threat occurs from across the socio-economic spectrum. Moreover, age and gender are not determining factors — minors are active in this narrative and could potentially create online rhetoric that incites individuals to radicalization and even violence.

Xenophobic & Accelerationist Threat Narratives

4. The primary IMVE threat continues to emanate from the neo-Nazis, white supremacist and ethno-nationalist extremists. Xenophobic ideologies have been a fixture on the IMVE landscape for decades, with media, academics and anti-hate organizations repeatedly noting the presence and activities of neo-Nazis, white supremacists and ethno-nationalist extremists in Canada, the United States and other countries. Extremists in that milieu are often technologically savvy in their efforts to propagate narratives and tactics.

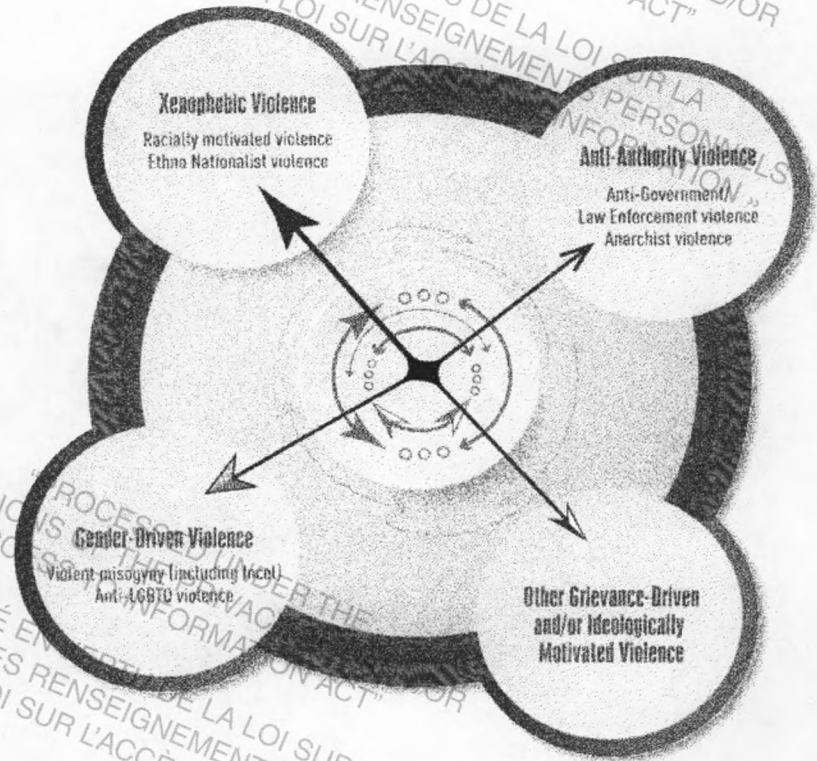
5. These movements often have accelerationist overlays that shape their narrative. As accelerationism (see footnote 1) is inherently revolutionary in nature, adherents support any effort that will incite a "race war" (a concept outlined in the book *The Turner Diaries*). Accelerationists therefore reject any effort to seize political power through elections and may even support ideologies that seem contradictory (such as movements like al-Qaida), but which they believe will hasten the collapse of society.

6. Additional hallmarks of recent IMVE attacks, such as gamification and livestreaming of attacks, are concerning. IMVE adherents have created media that celebrates casualty numbers as "high scores"; livestreaming attacks and publishing manifestos on social have also been a way for violent actors to secure online adulation.

The Boogaloo, Anti-Authority Narratives and "Militia Movements"

7. Several anti-authority movements have fringes that engage in extremist narratives (and may overlap with xenophobic or accelerationist rhetoric). One such narrative is "The Boogaloo", initially a series of online memes and jokes about coming chaos that was generally intended to shock or create confrontation for amusement.

8. Over time, elements of "The Boogaloo" meme began to draw support from extreme elements of the gun enthusiast community who view a second civil war as the likely outcome of the perceived government assault on their right to own



firearms. As the social media joke transitioned into an anti-authority narrative trend, it was also adopted as a theme seen in libertarians, militias and other anti-government/anti-law enforcement social media posts.

9. Antigovernment and militia movements in the United States have actively opposed COVID-19 pandemic control measures and have attempted to use the pandemic to forward a narrative that the State should be resisted. These narratives (occasionally mixed with conspiracy theory rhetoric — see following section) have grown in resonance during the pandemic and the partisan atmosphere that has permeated the election cycle in the United States. Specific real-world action often fixates on online incitement to violence, real-world protests and intimidation campaigns against election officials or high-profile policy-makers. The threat of lone-actor/small-scale violence cannot be discounted, as evidenced by the recently disrupted kidnapping plot against a US Governor by a cell linked to a Michigan-based militia group.

QAnon and Anti-Authority Conspiracy Narratives

10. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly increased the resonance of anti-authority conspiracy narratives, including QAnon.³ These narratives have contributed to efforts to undermine trust in the integrity of government and law enforcement and confidence in scientific expertise.

11. While aspects of conspiracy theory rhetoric are a legitimate exercise in free expression, elements of such narratives could be extremely violent, particularly calling for the arrest, trial and execution of a politician. In addition, QAnon influencers have engaged in significant efforts to mimic legitimate sources of news to perpetuate false narratives, particularly around human trafficking. QAnon has specifically become an increasingly widespread and decentralized social media phenomenon that is vast; audience specific and inflammatory content is spread by millions — often by individuals who are unaware that their specific post is linked to a greater narrative. Some of these online messaging campaigns, such as police reports of roving kidnapping/human trafficking prowling Canadian neighbourhoods, may result in unfounded concerns and suspicions directed to local police by individuals who are concerned for their safety. In addition, these narratives will also attempt to create resistance to health campaigns related to the pandemic.

IMVE and Elections

12. The partisan atmosphere that accompanies Western elections will almost certainly impact IMVE narratives worldwide. Depending on the electoral outcomes, IMVE threats may shift emphasis or grow/decline in priority in the wake of political developments and online discourse. Within the backdrop of a COVID-19 pandemic, a heightened IMVE threat can exacerbate emerging vulnerabilities in Canada. Indeed, one of the long-lasting impacts of the pandemic and the highly volatile US threat environment is the proliferation and normalization of threats against politicians, public figures and scientists in Canada and the United States. As IMVE narratives are rooted in a borderless online space, extremists will attempt to incite transnational violence as well as the migration of specific tactics.

³ QAnon is a meta-conspiracy theory. At its core, the narrative alleges that US President Donald J. Trump is engaged in a battle against a global elite — “The Deep State” — which aims to keep the people of the world poor, ignorant and enslaved. Adherents believe world governments are being controlled by a shadowy cabal of pedophiles. In this narrative, political opponents are enemies of humanity.

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Conclusion

13. IMVE narratives are rapidly growing transnationally, both in resonance and reach. Canada is no exception to this trend. The sheer diversity of narratives put forward on a wide variety of online platforms makes for a highly dynamic landscape. New narratives and threat trends must be quickly identified and assessed for public safety considerations within strategic and more specific individual contexts. The current COVID-19 pandemic and partisan realities of the US election have also impacted this space negatively, raising the need for increased awareness and synergy among national security and law enforcement agencies.

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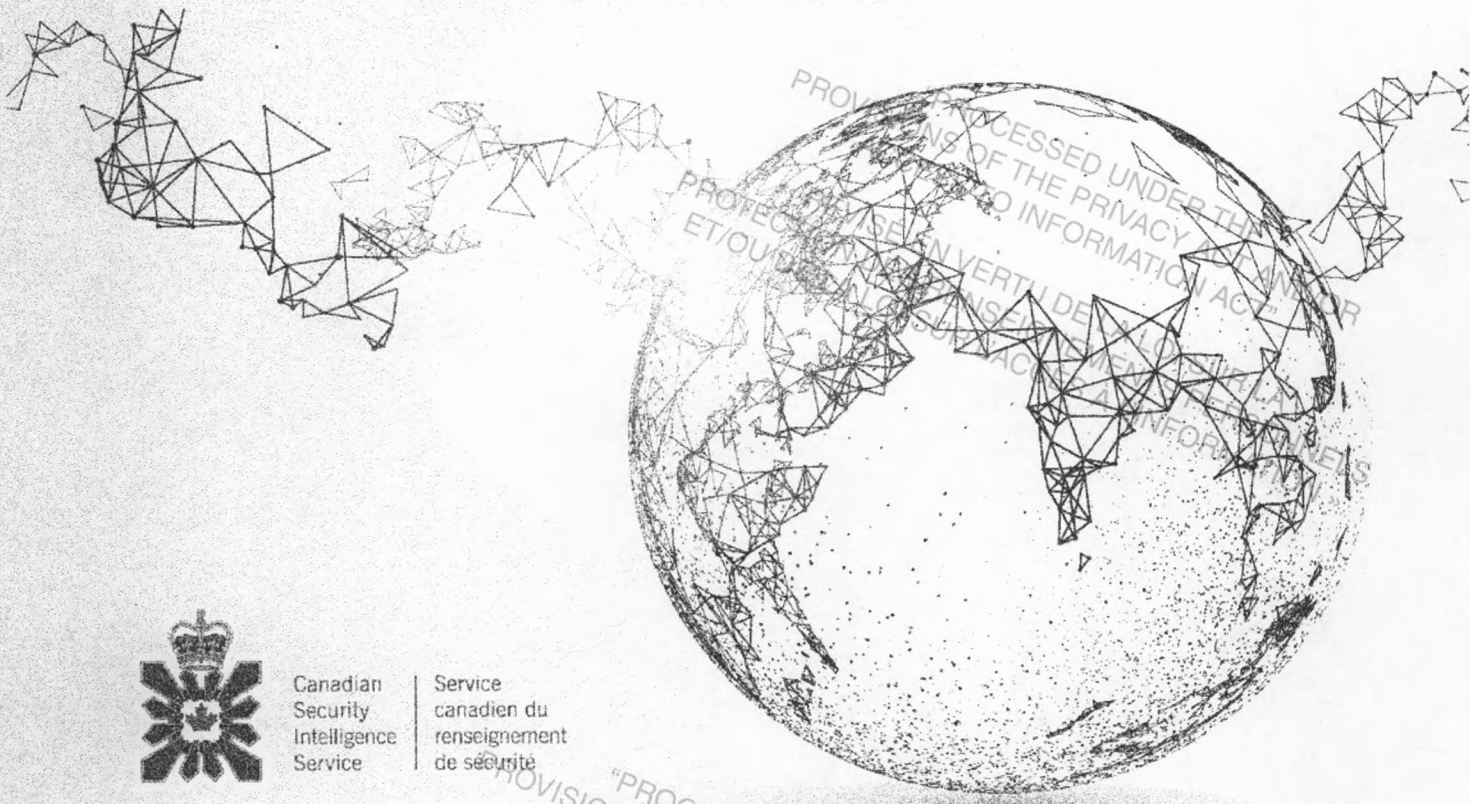
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White Supremacist/Neo-Nazi Women: Canadian Implications

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White Supremacist/Neo-Nazi Women: Canadian Implications

Key Assessments

- White supremacist/neo-Nazi ideology is often misogynistic in its view of women; it consistently describes women as biologically and sociologically inferior. Despite this perception, women have long undertaken roles as facilitators, recruiters, ideologues and violent actors.
- Women who have mobilized to violence on behalf of their white supremacist/neo-Nazi ideology have rarely acted alone; rather, they most often act as part of a group or *dyad*.
- A woman's influence and ability to recruit adherents into xenophobic ideologies should not be underestimated. Online commentators in the milieu use soft, aesthetically pleasing images that blend everyday topics with extreme ideology, making white supremacy more palatable for mainstream viewers.
- Determining the scope of women's involvement in this space is challenging, given the trend toward decentralized narratives rather than an adherence to groups with traditional central administrative structures. The predominately online nature of this threat enables women to obfuscate their identities, thereby complicating the ability to determine gender roles in this space. That said, such anonymized engagement could potentially expand the opportunity for women to engage and participate freely in an otherwise male-dominated space that is hostile to women.



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The 'Traditional' Role of Women in White Supremacy

1. One of the primary tenants of white supremacy/neo-Nazism is the biological inferiority of women compared to men. In one of Adolf Hitler's earliest speeches to Nazi women in 1933, he emphasized their role as "breeders of the superior, Aryan race". He further proclaimed women are responsible for ensuring the success of the future nation. In addition to reproductive capabilities, many white supremacist organizations also view women as social facilitators who ensure group cohesion.

- The role of the 'mother' is central to the mission of maintaining white numerical superiority through birth rates. Women are also responsible for performing tasks such as 'war nursing' and 'survival cooking' in the event of the looming race war.
- Related to the primary role as mother, there are various portrayals in extremist literature of women who are ideal symbols or exemplars when working to benefit men. For example, Katherine in *The Turner Diaries*¹ is portrayed as a loyal partner to the protagonist who is contributing to the revolution. Another example of overt symbolism of 'ideal' women includes the Miss Hitler pageant, a virtual competition that was held as recently as 2020. Notably, a contestant from the 2019 Miss Hitler pageant was arrested and sentenced to three years in prison in June 2020 for her involvement in now proscribed UK-based neo-Nazi group National Action.
- Conversely, another common representation within the white supremacist/neo-Nazi space is the less favourable "whore" archetype that highlights the misogynistic ideology underscoring the movement (see case study below).



¹ *The Turner Diaries* is a novel written by William Pierce (under the alias of Andrew MacDonald). The "Foreword" is set in the year 2099. The bulk of the book quotes the diary of a man named Earl Turner, an active member of the white revolutionary movement; it details a violent, apocalyptic overthrow of the United States federal government (referred to as "the System") by Turner and his comrades in a brutal race war. Since its publication in 1978, the novel has inspired numerous attacks, including the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing that killed 168 people and injured nearly 700 others.

² *SIEGE* is a collection of essays written by James Mason in the 1980s; it is used as the ideological foundation of AWD and the Feuerkrieg Division (FKD). Mason's work advocates "lone wolf" violence, assassinations and mass murders ("noble violence") that would destroy the "system".



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Facilitation: Beyond the Symbolic Archetype

2. Women are often assumed to be exclusively passive actors within the racially motivated, antigovernment and gender-driven violent extremist subsections of the broader IMVE spectrum, all of which are dominated by men. More often than not, men are characterized as the main actors and leaders, despite numerous women who have occupied leadership positions within the milieu.

3. a body of academic research shows that women have long been integral to sustaining and advancing white supremacist/neo-Nazi groups.

- According to academic research, at the height of the Klu Klux Klan (KKK) in the 1920s, the US women's branch boasted over half a million members, encouraging and normalizing violence. One example was an Atlanta woman named Elizabeth Tyler, who was credited for spearheading the KKK's Propagation Department in the early 20s, where she was responsible for publishing weekly letters, recruiting, and spreading the group's ideology.
- By World War II, the National Socialist Women's League (the women's arm of the Nazi Party of Germany), led by Getrud Scholz-Klink, was made up of 2.3 million members. Domestic and child-rearing training courses for girls were established to spread Nazi ideology into the everyday lives of German women. The League was also responsible for disseminating propaganda to other women. Later, Gudrun Burwitz, the daughter of leading Nazi Party of Germany member Heinrich Himmler, was intrinsic in assisting Nazi war criminals escape prosecution in the 1960s through to the 1980s.
- According to a 2010 estimate by the German Office for the Protection of the Constitution, only 11% of the 25,000 "far-right" extremists in Germany were women. However, roughly half of the women involved were recorded as holding leadership positions within nationalist political organizations.

Women for Aryan Unity

4. Women for Aryan Unity (WAU) is one of the few public online women-led groups advancing white supremacist ideology in recent decades.



WAU's logo and flag feature the colour scheme of the Nazi flag.



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Women mobilizing to violence

5. A historic examination of white supremacist/neo-Nazi women who plotted attacks and/or participated in acts of violence shows that they rarely acted alone. In most cases, women mobilized to violence in conjunction with a group or a dyad. Their violent participation is extensive and involves bomb plots, arson, shootings and murder.

- A notable case of a female violent extremist is Kathy Ainsworth, a Mississippi housewife and member of the KKK. Ainsworth was killed in a shootout with police as she and a companion attempted to bomb the home of a Jewish businessman.

Example #3: Lindsay Souvannarath

Lindsay Souvannarath is a 28-year-old US citizen currently serving a life sentence⁵ in Canada due to her leadership role in the 2015 mass shooting plot in Halifax along with two male accomplices. Souvannarath travelled from Illinois to Halifax, Nova Scotia, to conduct an attack that matched the lethality of the Columbine massacre.



3 Azov Battalion is as a volunteer militia formed in May 2014. It is a Ukrainian National Guard regiment that has fought against Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine since June 2014, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea two months earlier. According to open source reporting, the Azov Battalion uses symbols consistent with neo-Nazi ideology. Foreigners who are in contact with the Azov Battalion may receive training and/or guidance which may increase their capability for mobilization to violence.

5 Souvannarath is currently serving a life sentence with no chance of parole for ten years.



Female Ideologues / Proselytizers

- One of the most prominent and historic female ideologues in this space is Savitri Devi, a French academic, convert to Hinduism and staunch National Socialist. Many of Devi's widely available texts serve as foundational reading for adherents to esoteric Hitlerism.⁷ Within her work *The Lightning and the Sun*, Devi wrote that Hitler's death was a sacrifice for humanity, signalling the end of the Kali Yuga (the last stage of a cyclical world history) and the renewal of the Aryan world.

7. Modern female proselytizers are prominent in the alt-right movement and many boast online followings in the hundreds of thousands. These figures have openly celebrated white supremacist and ethno-nationalist ideals in a normalized, more palatable manner compared to many of their male counterparts. Through their open engagement, they have normalized attitudes and shaped public discourse around topics such as feminism. Moreover, researchers have also noted that women have proven to be active online without disruption for much longer periods than their male counterparts.

8. Many of these female ideologues have been highly critical of feminism, rather creating preferred narratives that suit their 'traditional' values.

- Lauren Southern is a prominent Canadian alt-right commentator and proponent of the European-centric group *Generation Identity*. Southern became one of the movement's figureheads and spokesperson. She

Savitri Devi



6 DeviantArt is a website launched in 2000 to host material created by artists, videographers and the photography community. As of 2017 the site had over 26 million members and 251 million submissions.

7 Esoteric Hitlerism is any of a number of mystical interpretations and adaptations of Nazism in the post-World War II era. These beliefs combine occult ideas with established neo-Nazi beliefs. Interpretations have included the concept that Hitler himself could be deified following the fall of the Third Reich.



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is well known for her YouTube video entitled "The Great Replacement" — likely an ode to Renaud Camus' 2011 book of the same name — promoting concerns over the cultural extinction of white European populations.⁸ This video had received over 680,000 views as of August 2019 and is widely credited as popularizing the theory to modern audiences.⁹ Notably, "The Great Replacement Towards a New Society We March Ever Forwards" is also the title of 2019 New Zealand Christchurch shooter Brenton Tarrant's manifesto. While it is unknown whether Tarrant's views inspired Southern, he made a \$2,264.00 donation to the Austrian-Chapter of *Generation Identity* and communicated with the Branch's leader via e-mail in 2018 prior to the attack.¹

traditionalwives

r/traditionalwives

About Community

This subreddit is aimed at white women who want to learn about or already value and or live by traditional patriarchal values.

209
Members

4
Online

Created Apr 4, 2017

"#Tradwives"

- Ayla Stewart is a #tradwife who is best known for her 'white baby challenge' in 2017, urging white women to have as many children as possible. After Stewart's separate video

⁸ Proponents of the "Great Replacement" theory argue that white European populations are being deliberately replaced at an ethnic and cultural level through migration and the growth of minority communities. Renaud Camus' book "The Great Replacement", published in 2011, warns that Europeans will, over time, be replaced by the non-European immigrants who are "flooding" into Europe, coupled with the high birth rates from the immigrants once resettled.

⁹ Notably, Southern announced her retirement from political activism in June 2019, but has since returned online following her move to Australia.



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on the "mass influx of migrants/refugees/Islamic invaders" into Europe was shared on neo-Nazi forum Stormfront. Ayla became well known within the community. In addition to her online content regarding organic recipes and gardening tips, much of her content was layered with explicit mentions of white pride. Stewart encouraged followers to take a stand against teachings about slavery in schools and shared memes associated to the alt-right movement, including Pepe the Frog.¹⁰



Mrs Midwest

177K subscribers

HOME

VIDEOS

PL

Outlook

¹⁰ Red-pilled is an INCEL reference to the film *The Matrix*. It is the belief that once one is 'red-pilled', they are awakened to the reality of men's victimization and women's privileges.



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Canadian Vaccination Rollout: Implications for Possible Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremism (IMVE)

Key Points

- Canada began its national COVID-19 vaccination rollout in mid-December 2020. Known as Operation Vector, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) will play a role in the rollout.



- Public online and real world opposition has focussed to date on creating and promoting anti-COVID/vaccine narratives rather than the use of serious violence.

Service Threshold

Adherents of IMVE are driven by a range of grievances and a selection of ideas from across the traditional left/right ideological spectrum. The resulting worldview often consists of a personalized narrative that centres on the willingness to incite, enable and/or mobilize to violence. Often, these individuals/cells act without a clear affiliation to a specific organized group or external guidance, but are nevertheless shaped by hateful voices and messages online that normalize and advocate violence.

¹ Since 2014, Canadians motivated in whole or in part by their extremist views have killed 21 and wounded 40 on Canadian soil – more than any other category (e.g. religiously motivated violent extremism [RMVE]). In early 2020, for example, a Canadian minor motivated by the Incel ideology was charged under the terrorism provisions of the *Criminal Code*.

³ The scope of this this assessment did not consider foreign, state-directed misinformation.

Online Conspiracy Narratives

Situations of crisis (perceived or real) in society only serve to increase the volume of such material online. The COVID-19 pandemic, subsequent lockdowns and ultimate vaccination development and distribution⁴ serve as a catalyst to significantly increase the volume of conspiracy theories online.

Adherents of IMVE and others are using the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to promote disinformation and alternative narratives regarding both the cause of the pandemic and potential societal outcomes. Blame for the pandemic focusses primarily on specific communities, global corporations, China, the government and societal elites.

Individuals and groups adopt or promote those conspiracies that best suit their personalized worldviews and range of grievances. In particular, they include anti-government and ethno-nationalist views. Key anti-vaccination conspiracy narratives include:

- *Threat to liberty and freedom*: mass vaccinations constitute government overreach and pose an increasing threat to individual rights – vaccination will be mandatory and the government will establish ‘internment camps’ for those who do not adhere to government rules. The vaccination program is the next step towards the ‘New World Order’⁵;
- *Vaccine development, provision and access*: vaccines have only been tested on animals (taking the vaccination will constitute human testing); Russian and Chinese vaccines are safer and more effective;
- *Safety and necessity*: rejection of the existence of the pandemic and/or its severity and the safety of the vaccination – the vaccine is not needed and causes a multitude of health issues (e.g. autism and mass sterilization of women) or will contain small microchips placed by the government⁶;
- *Political and economic*: lack of confidence in government and scientific advice – governments are corrupt and puppets of big business; the pandemic was man-made to the financial enrichment of politicians and international corporations.

⁴ The broader anti-vaccination movement is not new and the COVID-19 vaccination has amplified their conspiracy beliefs.

⁵ The New World Order (NWO) hypothesizes a secretly emerging totalitarian world government. The common theme regarding a New World Order is that a secretive power elite with a globalist agenda is conspiring to eventually rule the world through an authoritarian world government — which will replace sovereign nation states — and an all-encompassing propaganda whose ideology hails the establishment of the New World Order as the culmination of history's progress.

⁶ In particular, conspiracy theories relating to vaccination safety will be linked to instances (real or perceived) regarding adverse reactions.

Overarching and intertwined with all of the above-mentioned conspiracy theories is QAnon a global, wide-reaching and remarkably elaborate conspiracy theory that has taken root across the IMVE landscape (see text box above).⁷ It is an amalgam of both novel and well-established theories, with marked undertones of antisemitism and xenophobia.

What is QAnon?

QAnon is a decentralized violent anti-establishment ideology that revolves around the belief that a global "Deep State" cabal of satanic pedophile elites is responsible for all the evil in the world. In this narrative, political opponents are viewed as enemies of humanity.

QAnon ideology has already led to several acts of violence in the United States.

Canadian Extremists⁸

Violent extremists continue to exploit the pandemic online, thereby amplifying the perceived failures of government response measures. Violent extremist entities have also adopted conspiracy theories about the pandemic that rationalize and justify violence. Other violent extremists view COVID-19 as a real but welcome crisis that could hasten the collapse of Western society (often referred to as accelerationism).¹⁰

Public Opposition to COVID-19/Vaccination Development and Distribution

Dozens of public protests in opposition to COVID-19 restrictions and, more recently, vaccinations have occurred across the country since mid-March 2020. While most have drawn only a handful of supporters, more recent events in Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver have drawn crowds ranging from approximately 2,000 to approximately 10,000 people.

⁷ See: CSIS Analytic Brief 2020/24: QAnon: An Online Conspiracy Theory with Real-World Implications and CSIS Analytic Brief 2020/42 entitled: QAnon: An Online Conspiracy Theory with Real-World Implications (Part II).

⁸ An unclassified document produced by the Chief of the Defence Staff entitled *CDS Planning Directive – Operation Vector – CAF Support to COVID-19 Vaccine Roll Out* was cited online as 'proof' of the lengths to which the government will go to force immunize the entire population of Canada

¹⁰ Accelerationism is the belief that Western governments are irreparably corrupt and that multiculturalism and democracy will fail. As a result, there will eventually be an outbreak of violence across ethnic and racial lines — often referred to as "the coming race war". Acceleration therefore routinely encourages violence to escalate the pace of societal collapse. For additional information see CSIS IA 2020-21/26: *The Boogaloo: From Meme to Violence*

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TA 20/45-E 2020 07 30



UPDATE

THE NATIONAL TERRORISM THREAT LEVEL FOR CANADA

This graphic threat assessment (TA) updates the National Terrorism Threat Level (NTTL) and the threat to uniformed personnel, last published 7 April 2020 - TA 20/26-A.

MEDIUM

MEDIUM



Uniformed Personnel

CRITICAL
HIGH
MEDIUM
LOW
VERY LOW

City levels have been reassessed since the last publication of the NTTL in April 2020 (see TA-20/26-A).

CURRENT CONTEXT

ITAC actively monitors the terrorism landscape in Canada and notes the unique reality presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, accompanied by restrictive public health measures and widespread protest (see next page) attended by differing factions. ITAC assessments herein consider this context.

CANADIAN EXTREMIST TRAVELLERS AND RETURNEES

Currently, there are *believed to be alive* and currently abroad: *are in Turkey/Syria/Iraq, with the remainder in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, North and East Africa. These individuals travelled to support and facilitate terrorist-related activities. individuals, with a nexus to Canada and suspected of having engaged in terrorist activities abroad, have returned over the last decade, though none since the publication of the last NTTL. Of that number, returned from Turkey/Syria/Iraq.*

THREATS TO TRANSPORTATION

transportation networks, such as rail, marine and air, continue to be desirable targets for extremist groups.

ITAC has reassessed the threat to rail networks in Canada in March 2020 (see TA 20/23-A). Updates to both the civil aviation and maritime transport are currently underway and are scheduled to be completed in 2020.

AVIATION

RAIL

MARITIME

SECRET//

ITAC assesses the terrorism threat in Canada to be **MEDIUM**: Extremist groups and individuals in Canada and abroad have both the **intent AND the capability** to carry out an act of terrorism in this country. ITAC assesses an attack *could occur*.

ITAC assesses the terrorism threat to uniformed personnel in Canada to be **MEDIUM**: An attack targeting uniformed personnel in Canada *could occur*.

ITAC ASSESSMENTS

A terrorist attack in Canada could occur

The greatest terrorism threat to Canada remains domestic extremists who have been inspired or incited online

References to Canada and uniformed personnel continue to be present in extremist propaganda. This has not resulted in attacks or more active planning in Canada.

Canada

THREAT DEVELOPMENTS

IDEOLOGICALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENT EXTREMISM

INCEL ATTACK LABELED AS A TERRORIST ACTIVITY

According to open source reporting as of 19 May 2020, the killing of a woman at a Toronto massage parlour in February 2020 was designated an act of terrorism; the attack was inspired by the Incel sub-culture with the 17-year-old attacker indicating he was familiar with Elliot Rodger, author of the first 'Incel manifesto', and Alex Minassian. **This is the first instance in Canada of an Incel attack including criminal charges related to terrorist activity as an aggravating factor.** 'First-degree murder - terrorist activity' and 'Attempted murder - terrorist activity'.

RECENT ATTACKS IN CANADA are also connected to the Incel sub-culture:

3 June 2019: Alex Stavropoulos conducted a bladed weapon attack in Sudbury, ON. A 35-year-old mother was nearly killed and her nine-month-old child sustained minor injuries. He espoused anger at white women/ female children and said he identified as an Incel (see TA 19/92).

23 April 2018: Alek Minassian conducted a vehicle ramming attack in Toronto and was charged with ten counts of first-degree murder and 16 counts of attempted murder. He made a social media post shortly before the attack that stated '(t)he Incel Rebellion has already begun' and '(a)ll hail the Supreme Gentleman Elliott Rodger'.

'INCEL' SUB-CULTURE

According to media reporting, the involuntary celibate (Incel) sub-culture first started in the late 1990s as a website with articles for 'lonely virgins' that served as a group and support forum for men and women to discuss their loneliness and the reasons behind it. The Incel community morphed over the years to become an online forum where misogynists could post violent anti-female sentiment. See TA 19-112-A / TA 19-109-E for previous ITAC publications related to 'Incels'.

USE OF 'MURDER - TERRORIST' CHARGE IN RECENT 2020 ATTACKS

In addition to the minor who was charged with terrorist activity following the February 2020 Toronto Incel attack, Toronto-based Saad Akhtar, accused of killing a 64-year-old woman in a random blunt weapon attack (see TH 20-35A), saw his criminal charges changed to include 'first-degree murder - including terrorist activity'. **He reportedly made statements concerning DAESH which led to this charge.** According to open source, this was almost certainly the first instance of this specific charge [Section 231 (6.01)] being used to invoke terrorism. Previous legal terrorism charges in Canada have been administered under Section 83.

ITAC ASSESSMENT

ITAC ASSESSMENTS

the Incel sub-culture will continue to be promoted and accessed in the online space and its own unique language and symbology allows adherents to find like-minded individuals.

SUSPECTED INCEL DISCOVERED TO HAVE MADE TATP

So far, attacks connected to the Incel sub-culture have been unsophisticated (small arms, bladed weapons or vehicle ramming against soft targets) by inspired lone actors (refer to TA 19/109-E). Yet, according to open source reporting from 5 June 2020, US-based Cole Carini sustained injuries consistent with an explosion. Authorities discovered triacetone triperoxide (TATP) during a search of his home, a substance used in creating improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and parts of a letter referencing Elliott Rodger.

ITAC ASSESSMENT

EXTREMIST ACTIVITY IN THE CONTEXT OF PUBLIC PROTEST MOVEMENTS

Ongoing political and social developments - such as those relating to COVID-19 pandemic public health directives as well as the anti-police brutality / anti-systemic racism protests - continue to be referenced by individuals and groups with violent intent and propaganda. A majority of these occurrences have been seen in the US, though Canadian content continues to appear.

VIOLENT INTENT

- In March 2020, an individual with reported neo-Nazi links planned to bomb a hospital in Missouri; his target selection was impacted by the outbreak of COVID-19 and he was subsequently killed by law enforcement during an attempted arrest (see TH 20/51).

PROPAGANDA

- Both the Proud Boys and Hundred-Handers (anti-immigration) have placed posters throughout Canada between March and April 2020 with some making negative reference to China/ multi-culturalism and tying it to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A French neo-Nazi blog made posts in early-June 2020 in which they called Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau a traitor for taking a knee and also declared that a racial holy war is on the horizon

ITAC ASSESSMENTS



TERRORISM RELATED OR OTHER LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Saad AKHTAR: Charged with first-degree murder, including terrorist activity, for allegedly killing a pedestrian in Scarborough, ON, on the evening of 21 February 2020.

Hussein Sobhe BORHOT: Charged with terrorism-related offences pursuant to the Criminal Code. Between 2013 and 2014, he allegedly travelled to Syria where he enlisted with DAESH, received training, participated in the activities of the group and knowingly committed a kidnapping at the direction of, or in association with DAESH. He remains in custody awaiting the next court appearance.

Kingston-based minor: Charged with terrorism-related offences pursuant to the Criminal Code. After being released on bail, he was arrested on 21 April 2019 after an alleged breach of his bail conditions, and has remained in custody since. The youth pled guilty to four terrorism-related offences on 28 July 2020. Sentencing is expected at a later date.

Ikar MAQ: Charged with participating in the activity of a terrorist group and leaving Canada to participate in the activity of a terrorist group. He was denied bail on 12 December 2019, and will remain in custody until trial.

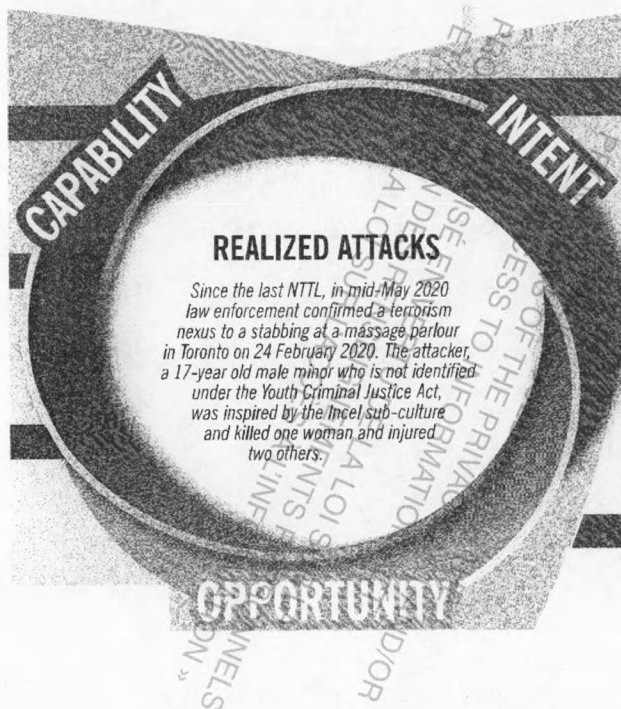
Patrik MATHEWS: Charged in the US with transporting a firearm and ammunition with intent to commit a felony and of being an alien in possession of a firearm and ammunition. He allegedly videotaped himself advocating killing people, poisoning water supplies and derailling trains. Mathews has been denied bail.

Alek MINASSIAN: Charged with first-degree murder and 16 counts of attempted murder in connection with the 23 April 2018 Toronto van attack. His trial was scheduled to commence on 6 April 2020 but was delayed to 9 November 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Minassian is not facing terrorism charges.

Awso PESHDARY: Charged with participating in the activity of a terrorist group, facilitating an activity for a terrorist group, and two counts of conspiring to participate or contribute to an activity of a terrorist group; his trial is ongoing.

Toronto-based minor: Faces charges of first-degree murder and attempted murder including terrorist activity as of 19 May 2020 for his alleged Incel inspired attack on a Toronto massage parlour.

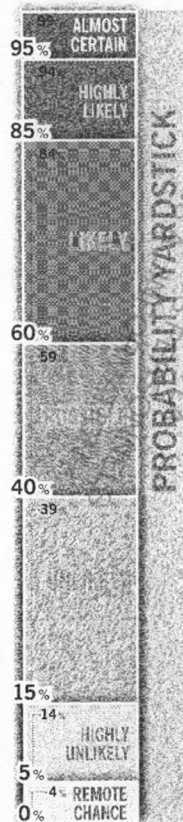




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DEFINITIONS



THREAT LEVEL		
LEVELS	DESCRIPTIONS	LANGUAGE
CRITICAL	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY LIKELY and COULD OCCUR IMMINENTLY .	ITAC assesses it is HIGHLY LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
		ITAC assesses it is LIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
HIGH	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is LIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is POSSIBLE that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
		ITAC assesses it is UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
MEDIUM	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is HIGHLY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
		ITAC assesses it is VERY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is VERY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
		ITAC assesses it is VERY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
VERY LOW	ITAC assesses that a violent act of terrorism is HIGHLY UNLIKELY .	ITAC assesses it is VERY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.
		ITAC assesses it is VERY UNLIKELY that a violent act of terrorism will occur.

ITAC uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis in applying terrorism threat levels. The setting of threat levels is determined by several factors including current intelligence, recent events, as well as the intent, capabilities, and attack frequency of terrorist groups. ITAC cautions that the information may be incomplete and, regardless of the threat level applied, a violent act of terrorism may occur with little or no warning.

TERRORIST GROUP CAPABILITIES

ADVANCED		Capable of sophisticated attacks, including against hard targets
MODERATE		Capable of high profile attacks against soft targets
GENERAL		Capable of simple attacks

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