



February 26th, 2009

RE: CACP Prevention of Radicalization Initiative

Dear CACP Members:

As you are aware, every law enforcement agency in Canada is responsible for public safety and security functions within their own jurisdiction. As potential threats against our national security remain a reality, law enforcement agencies are challenged by the complexity of policing terrorism.

The issue of radicalization – the process by which individuals are introduced to and accept an overtly ideological message and belief system that encourages movement from moderate, mainstream beliefs towards extreme views and violent action – is a continuing source of concern for the police community. Radicalization is not limited to any one group or community in Canada, but runs the gamut from white supremacist/neo-Nazi groups to separatist movements to religious extremists.

Radicalization is not unique to Canada. Many of our international partners in Europe, including the United Kingdom, have had to deal with this issue, some more extensively than others.

In early 2008, the Canadian High Commission in London prepared a discussion paper on counter-radicalization initiatives (focused primarily on the PREVENT strategy) in the United Kingdom (UK). Based on its recommendations, the CACP Counter-Terrorism and National Security (CTNS) Committee supported the implementation of a national initiative to address the issue of radicalization leading to violent extremism. The CTNS Committee further directed a Study Group consisting of representatives of several police agencies and relevant Canadian government agencies to travel to the UK to conduct a field visit to observe PREVENT implementation at the working level.

Attached, is a discussion paper titled *Building Community Resilience to Violent Ideologies*, which represents the outcome of the Study Group's mission to the UK. The purpose of this paper is to identify key lessons learned from the UK experience that could be used to inform the development of a counter-radicalization framework for Canada under the auspices of the CACP.

Pg 2/...

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While this paper scopes and defines the problem of radicalization and counter-radicalization, it also identifies key challenges to building an effective Canadian response to radicalization.

The CTNS Committee believes that radicalization, particularly of youth, poses a serious threat to national security. We feel that we must maintain the momentum that we gained with our partners in government by pursuing an aggressive agenda.

Consequently, the CTNS Committee will be proceeding to the next phase of its Counter-Radicalization and Prevention Project by identifying radicalization prevention best practices within the Canadian police environment and aligning similar or related approaches. With the overall objective of assisting in the creation of a whole-of-government framework for addressing radicalization, this initiative will be coordinated by the CACP.

The CACP CTNS Committee will keep you informed of major developments. In the meantime, I would be happy to answer any question you may have on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Bob Paulson, Assistant Commissioner,
RCMP National Security Criminal Investigations
Chair, CACP Counter-Terrorism and National Security Committee