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**Does Canadian Multiculturalism Foster Extremism?**

Liberal MP, former cabinet minister, and past premier of B.C., Ujjal Dosanjh suggested recently that the political correctness associated with Canada's multiculturalism policy is partially responsible for the rise in extremist views in some immigrant communities in Canada. It is difficult to know if this is the case. We lack the data required to make a sound judgement.  Perhaps we have been too constrained by our fear of offending minorities to develop the appropriate scholarly research? Certainly we lag well behind Britain and many European countries (e.g., Holland, Denmark) that have made a concerted effort to systematically study their Muslim populations, in response to the threat of terrorist radicalization. Of course, the threat has been more pressing in Britain, where since the tragic attacks of 7/7/2005 many major conspiracies have been thwarted and hundreds of groups have been investigated for plotting or facilitating terrorist acts. But the threat is alive here as well. As the Director of CSIS, Richard Fadden, recently informed MPs, four years after the arrests of the Toronto 18 more than 200 Canadians are being investigated for links to terrorism. Yet, as he complained earlier (29/10/2009), neither our universities nor our news media "devote many resources" to the topic, and our elites and the public are complacent about the danger. If our timidity and complacency is fostered by our identification with multiculturalism, however, research into counter terrorism strongly suggests it may also be our saving grace. Experts agree that the first and foremost line of defence against terrorism, in either the form of immigrants plotting mayhem overseas or "home-grown" radicalization, is the relationships we forge with the new communities in our midst. It is the well-being of these immigrants, the degree to which they feel they have found a new home, that best assures our safety by undercutting the conditions that facilitate radicalization. Protection from terrorism depends on the willing co-operation of these communities, and its prevention relies on their positive motivation to monitor and mentor their own. We need to actively create the conditions that make this possible.