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# Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

EVIDENCE

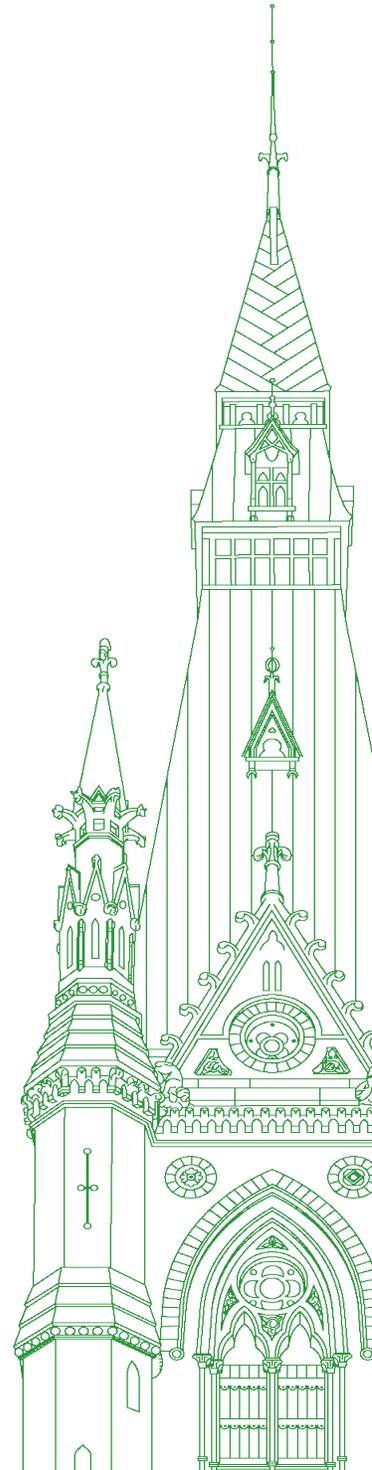
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Wednesday, June 16, 2021

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Chair: The Honourable John McKay





## Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security

Wednesday, June 16, 2021

• (1615)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.)):** I call to order the 36th meeting of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) and a motion that we adopted on Wednesday, June 9, the committee is resuming its study on ideologically motivated violent extremism. Later this afternoon we have some committee business that will be in camera.

We're fortunate today. I appreciate the understanding of both sets of witnesses, that they're able to appear with us together.

From the National Council of Canadian Muslims, we have Mustafa Farooq, chief executive officer, and Sameha Omer, director of legal affairs. From the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, we have Shimon Koffler Fogel, president and chief executive officer.

Again, I thank both groups for agreeing to appear. We look forward to your opening statements of seven minutes each.

With that, I'll turn to the National Council of Canadian Muslims.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq (Chief Executive Officer, National Council of Canadian Muslims):** Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the committee, for providing us the opportunity to offer our thoughts on your study of ideologically motivated violent extremism in the aftermath of the London terror attack.

My name is Mustafa Farooq. I am a lawyer and the CEO of the National Council of Canadian Muslims. I'm joined today by my colleague Sameha Omer, the director of legal affairs for the council.

By way of background, NCCM was founded as an independent, non-partisan and non-profit grassroots organization dedicated to defending the human rights and civil liberties of Muslim communities living in Canada. For almost two decades, we have been a leading voice in the promotion of human rights in Canada, working tirelessly in the areas of community education and outreach, media engagement and public advocacy, and challenging discrimination and Islamophobia.

With the independently documented rise in hate, racism and Islamophobia faced by our communities, we are here today because we are greatly concerned about public safety. I think this came to a clear head for me personally when over the weekend I introduced members of the Quebec City mosque to members of the London Muslim community at the funeral of the Afzaal family, and then

drove back to Toronto to try to attend a vigil at the IMO mosque in Etobicoke.

The reality is that something has gone terribly wrong in this country. The reality is that while I was preparing for this committee last night, I was also at the IIT, the Islamic Institute of Toronto, after two individuals yesterday threatened to bomb the centre after attempting to break in. We were also reaching out to a Black Muslim woman allegedly assaulted in Edmonton. We were also in conversation with the Baitul Hadi centre in Edmonton, which had a swastika drawn on it.

On the evening of January 29, an armed male entered the CCIQ in Quebec. He gunned down six Muslim worshippers and injured several more in a terrorist attack targeting a masjid and the Muslims inside it. The victims were Ibrahima Barry, Azzedine Soufiane, Aboubaker Thabti, Khaled Belkacemi, Mamadou Tanou Barry and Abdelkarim Hassane. In an instance of hate and violence, their earthly presence was taken from us in what remains the worst attack on a house of worship on Canadian soil in modern history.

On the evening of September 12, 2020, a man with alleged links to a white supremacist group, the O9A, walked onto the parking lot of the IMO mosque in Etobicoke and slit the throat of Mohamed-Aslim Zafis. I saw his body that night in the parking lot—even as I had met him that year handing out food to the poor in the worst of the COVID-19 epidemic.

On June 7 a family was run down in London by an accused with alleged hate-based motivations. Terrorism charges have now been brought against the accused. I will read the names of the deceased into the record: Salman Afzaal and his mother, his wife Madiha Salman, and their daughter Yumna. Before leaving London, I met the young child, the sole survivor of the attack. I don't really have words to fully describe what that meant.

We are here today because white supremacist, violent Islamophobic, neo-Nazi and alt-right groups are growing precipitously. They're becoming bolder, whether it's groups like the Soldiers of Odin surveilling a mosque in B.C., a group calling itself "The Clann" intimidating worshippers at Canada's oldest mosque in Edmonton, groups like La Meute in Quebec, or the groups that are now planning celebrations of the London terror attack in Ontario. This list excludes all the other things I was dealing with yesterday. Amongst others, in Calgary a woman wearing a burka was allegedly accosted. As my colleague Sameha can tell you, this is pretty much a consistent occurrence for us. We get these calls 365 days a year.

My submissions before you today are squarely around how we can dismantle white supremacist and neo-Nazi groups that first act as a major source of incitement and enabling of hate, xenophobia and violence against certain segments of the public, including members of the Muslim community. I will also note that our colleagues who join us today from CIJA, in tandem with dozens of leading Canadian organizations, joined with us last year in our call for more action on white supremacist groups,

• (1620)

In the interest of time, I'll dive right into the recommendations that we want to highlight before this committee. These key recommendations and approaches are ones that we will further discuss at the National Action Summit on Islamophobia, which I appreciate also had important bipartisan support. From our perspective, these need to be undertaken in order to dismantle the immediate challenges around white supremacist groups in Canada.

First of all, we believe that existing Criminal Code provisions, especially the terror-listing provisions of the ATA and section 70 of the Criminal Code, should be used to dismantle groups like the Three Percenters. Even as this government utilized current legislative options in dismantling white supremacist groups, such as Blood & Honour, Combat 18, the Proud Boys, we believe that the tools already exist in the Criminal Code to list terrorist groups and to disband militias. These provisions need to be used to deal with the other 250-plus white supremacist organizations in Canada.

Section 70 of the Criminal Code, for instance, deals with prohibiting assemblies of persons for the purpose of "training or drilling themselves", "being trained or drilled to the use of [firearms]" or "practising military exercises". This could be used to prevent the actions of groups and the mobilization of groups like the Three Percenters. When we're talking about ideologically motivated violent extremism, we need to recognize that there are already existing provisions in the Criminal Code that can be used to dismantle some of these groups.

Secondly, we recommend the addition of new legislative listing provisions to the Criminal Code that specifically list white supremacist groups as white supremacist groups. Groups like the Soldiers of Odin may not meet the high threshold of being a listed terrorist entity and are not a militia, but these groups provide significant threats to Canadian Muslim communities. Like the organization that is planning on hosting a celebration of the London terror attack, there's no reason for these groups to be allowed to continue to exist, congregate, mobilize, plan their hate in Canada.

• (1625)

**The Chair:** Mr. Farooq, can you wind up, please?

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Absolutely.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Thirdly, I think we need to see robust online hate regulation that is balanced and that ensures the protection of civil liberties through consultation with the best experts in Canada and internationally.

Lastly, we'd like to see a review on how national security agencies have been dealing with neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups.

I also note that we will be providing a brief and follow-up to expand further on the recommendations.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Mr. Fogel, you have seven minutes, please.

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel (President and Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, along with the members of the committee, for inviting our participation in this important discussion. My name is Shimon Fogel. I'm the president and CEO of the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, the advocacy agent of the Jewish federations across Canada. We're a national non-partisan, non-profit organization representing more than 150,000 Jewish Canadians affiliated through Jewish federations from coast to coast. Our mission is to preserve and protect the quality of Jewish life in Canada through advocacy.

For Canada's Jewish community, the conversation about ideologically motivated violent extremism is inextricably linked with anti-Semitism. As I speak, Jewish Canadians are facing a dangerous rise in anti-Semitism across the country, and indeed, around the world. The UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, an organization that closely monitors the security situation of the Jewish community in the GTA, reported a fivefold spike in anti-Semitic incidents last month compared to previous months this year. In May, individuals who attended a peaceful pro-Israel rally in Montreal were pelted with rocks. Police seized weapons and made 15 arrests, including for armed assault. In April in Victoria, the words "Kill the Jews" and "Gas the Jews" were spray painted on a Jewish community institution. We too observed swastikas and Nazi symbols on banners at anti-Israel rallies in multiple cities. Jewish businesses were targeted across Canada, either by vandals or for boycotts.

In Canada, no one should ever feel that they're at risk in their own neighbourhood. No one should feel the need to hide their identity. No Canadian should be made to feel they do not belong, yet we have community members who are thinking twice before wearing a kippah or a Star of David necklace in public. This isn't the Canada we know or want.

In 2019, the most recent year for which Statistics Canada data are available, Jews were the most targeted religious group for police-reported hate crimes, and targets of the second-most-police-reported hate crime overall. On average, an anti-Semitic incident happens pretty much every day of the week, 365 days of the year. Comprising only less than 1% of the Canadian population, Jewish Canadians accounted for 16% of all victims of hate crimes in 2019, a trend repeated year after year. This should be of grave concern to all Canadians.

Anti-Semitic incidents are also occurring online, in troubling numbers, where anti-Semitism and ideological extremism percolate and pose a threat to the well-being of all Canadians. As social media has become central to our daily lives, racist, xenophobic, misogynistic, anti-authoritarian and other hate-filled groups are exploiting platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter and Instagram to spread their toxic ideals, often targeting our children and young adults. These vile groups are also active on Parler, 8chan and in other dark corners of the Internet, where they promote their hatred, radicalize and recruit Canadian youth.

We know from experience that this toxicity spread online can and too often does have real-world consequences. Online activities spurred murders of Jews in Pittsburgh and Muslims in Christchurch. The Pittsburgh shooter reportedly posted more than 700 anti-Semitic messages in hate-filled online communities over nine months prior to the attack. The Christchurch shooter's livestreaming of the killings was a means of promoting and inciting more such heinous acts.

While we welcome the addition of the Proud Boys to the list of terrorist entities, we believe more needs to be done. For some time, we have strongly encouraged the Government of Canada to list both the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, in its entirety, and Samidoun, a PFLP-affiliated organization that operates right here in Canada.

However, we must disabuse ourselves of the idea that radicalization happens only with the support of an organized group. The proliferation of online content has empowered the so-called lone wolf. Radicalization can manifest remotely, circulating in chats and forums without the direct support or coordination of an organized group. This new threat also makes it even more difficult for police and security services to track suspicious activity. From what we understand of the horrific tragedy in London, the murderer acted independently and may have been radicalized as a lone wolf. The same is true of the 2018 Toronto van attack.

- (1630)

Anti-Semitism is not associated solely with ideologically motivated violent extremists. While Jew hatred is central to many xenophobic belief systems such as neo-Nazism and white supremacy, anti-Semitism is also a key component in both religiously motivated violent extremism and in politically motivated violent extrem-

ism. Anti-Semitism is a hatred that does not live in a single category. It finds purchase in all three.

What most people may not appreciate is that anti-Semitism is a threat not only to Jews, but also to all Canadians and to our way of life. Combatting anti-Semitism benefits all of us, and we need to call it out whenever and wherever we see it, because what starts with Jews never ends with Jews.

Jewish Canadians value our just, liberal democratic society. There has been a lot of discussion about the role of law enforcement. From our perspective, we believe a well-educated and a well-resourced police force is an essential component in fighting hate crime.

Let me conclude, therefore, by providing five recommendations for the committee's consideration.

First, we recommend that law enforcement be given the tools they need to combat hate and radicalization, including bolstering existing police hate crime and community liaison units, and providing funding to establish new units where they do not yet exist. This includes increasing resources for security services to monitor, track and protect Canadians from online radicalization.

Second, we recommend increasing resources for law enforcement, Crown attorneys, judges and others to ensure they receive sufficient training on the importance of combatting online hate.

Third, we also recommend strengthening legislation to combat online hate, including developing a multipronged approach to raise awareness of online hate, adopting civil remedies to combat online hate, and establishing requirements for online platforms and Internet service providers for monitoring and addressing online hate on their own platform.

Fourth, we believe that funding for the security infrastructure program, SIP, should be increased. This program allows at-risk private not-for-profit organizations, such as places of worship and educational institutions, to enhance their security. To quickly illustrate the value of the program, a security guard at Congregation Shaar Hashomayim in Montreal was able to thwart an arson attack on the synagogue because of the surveillance cameras funded in part by the program.

Finally, we recommend Canada establish a community institution security rebate. As one of the groups most targeted by hate-motivated crime, Jewish institutions spend millions of dollars every year on security personnel. We recommend that the federal government implement a security rebate for at-risk places of worship, schools and community centres.

In conclusion, Mr. Chair and committee members, even though the Jewish community is resilient, we too feel vulnerable at the moment and we are respectfully asking you to take action. What we have proposed will not only serve the Jewish community, but it will benefit all Canadians. History has taught us repeatedly that if left unchecked, the toxin of anti-Semitism can poison all of us.

Thanks for inviting me here today.

• (1635)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Koffler.

With that, we'll turn to our first round of questions.

Ms. Stubbs, you have six minutes.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs (Lakeland, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to both the witnesses for being here and providing what was disturbing, moving, compelling and action-oriented testimony. I know that we all appreciate it.

I'm going to ask a couple of questions, and I'd like both of you to share your views.

You raised points about the fluidity between these categories of violent extremist activities, including religiously motivated and politically motivated extremism. Given the definition of IMVE by CSIS, would either or both of you want to expand on whether you have concerns about the relevance of the definitions and the words that are used here? Also, perhaps could you expand on the context of your point about the seeming increasing instances of lone wolf radicalization and violent harmful acts and crimes?

**The Chair:** Who wishes to take that up, Mr. Fogel or Mr. Farooq?

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** Sure, I'll start, and then I'm sure Mustafa will have things of value to add.

Having tracked the discussions of your committee, I was actually a little heartened at the effort to move away from definitions that are somewhat limiting and don't reflect what you spoke of in terms of the fluidity of the situation. I think it also speaks to your second point about the lone wolf phenomenon.

We had, in previous times, always been anchored in the belief that little cells operated and percolated together, and festered and bubbled until they reached a certain threshold, and then something erupted. What social media has really done is that it has given the individual hater a certain independence, where they can anonymously collect online all of the toxic material that really just inspires them to become increasingly radicalized in their own thinking, and to pick and choose from different grievances that are being articulated in ways that aren't limited to one particular perspective.

While I will absolutely agree that there should be a particular concern about right-wing, white supremacist kinds of phenomena that have been around for a while—which really are, especially for racialized communities like the Muslim community, a particular source of threat—individuals who have hate in their heart or perceive grievances will pull from everywhere in order to enrich, if you want to use such a term, their own sense of injustice that gives them permission to act out in real life what they're feeling in their heart.

I'm encouraged by the idea of moving away from specific terms to more of a generic description that really captures everything in a way that's far less limiting.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** I think that, obviously, we have to continue to see how the usage of the term "IMVE" continues to be deployed and utilized. In general, it's a big term that seems all-encompassing. There are certain things that are good about that, and there are certain things that are problematic about it.

I think we do, though, have to be very clear in understanding the major security threat that I could speak to—at least, that I see faced by members of our community—which is a threat of what some call "alt-right" or white supremacist groups in Canada. As I think Shimon correctly pointed out, some seem to be coming out of the woodwork, as it were, through online mechanisms—sort of the classic lone wolf—some of whom are far more mobilized and terrifying, like the Three Percenters. While they've gone through their own internal power schisms and things of that nature, at one point they were training outside Lethbridge with semi-automatic weapons and practising drills with smoke bombs. This is my home province. That can't be something that's allowed to continue to exist. Indeed, if there were groups of folks who were running around doing that—I would presume, to BIPOC communities—I think Canadians would have dealt with that a little differently.

I think we need to be clear, as well, in calling the threat of white supremacy the same threat that came upon the doors of Washington, D.C., earlier this year. We have to be very clear in calling it what it is.

• (1640)

**The Chair:** You have about half a minute.

**Mrs. Shannon Stubbs:** Thanks, Chair.

Thank you, both of you.

Related to your points about moving from words to action, and to your point also about security and safety, of course the national security laws have been revised a number of times.

Mustafa, I was thinking about this during your opening comments. The latest changes, of course, were in Bill C-59, which I know both of your organizations testified about. Particular policies in it that were contentious were the removal of the propaganda and advocacy of terrorism as a criminal charge, and also the limitation of security surveillance of protestors during anti-government demonstrations. I just wonder if both of you want to share some views or thoughts on whether or not those legislative tools should be revisited.

Sorry, Chair, maybe they'll be able to get back to that afterwards.

**The Chair:** Ms. Stubbs is past her time as she knows, which is unfortunate. Maybe you could work in a response to her question at some other time.

With that, I'll go to Ms. Damoff.

I understand you're going to be sharing your time with Madam Lambropoulos.

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

I want to thank both of our witnesses for being here today. It was difficult to listen to your testimony. It's heartbreaking to know that both your communities are afraid to go out, depending on what they're wearing, but I also know it's much more difficult to live that experience—which I don't.

Mr. Farooq, my sincere sympathy for the loss in London, Ontario, my hometown.

I attended a vigil last week in Oakville for the family that was killed in London. One of the things that was brought up at the vigil, as well as by community leaders and constituents, has been the representation of the Muslim community in the media and how that has contributed to the rise of Islamophobia. Could you talk a little bit about community-building programs and other things that we can do to dispel that perception in the media and amongst Canadians?

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** I wish that I had all the answers to that question. I think it's a big question that we're all trying to grapple with, especially in an age where we consume and form opinions and perspectives so quickly in the online sphere. In talking about how discourse is created, I think we also have to be careful that we don't bend the page in the direction of limiting civil liberties. Ultimately, I think that would be harmful to the way that we as Canadians need to engage and talk to each other and think and work through these challenging times together.

I think, though, that there are a number of critical steps that need to be taken so that Canadian Muslims, and also BIPOC folks in general, can tell their stories, can share with Canadians and can make space. Simultaneously, I think it's important that folks at all levels, especially at leadership levels, condemn hateful messages when they are put out there.

Sometimes I think we undervalue the importance of what leadership means. I can tell you that in the aftermath of the London attack, I saw articles in various newspapers with headlines stating something to the effect, "Are Canadian Muslims in danger? Nonsense" Or there were newspapers that came out the day after the London attack that didn't even acknowledge that it had happened. These are things that honestly hurt your heart to see, and I think we all have roles to play not only in speaking up about it but also in producing programs that empower communities to tell their own stories.

• (1645)

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Thank you.

I'll turn it over to you, Emmanuella.

**Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.):** Thanks, Pam.

I'd like to begin by thanking all of our witnesses for being here today to help us figure out what the situation is on the ground and to try to protect communities across Canada.

I represent a riding that has a very high percentage of Muslims as well as Jewish Canadians. I've heard from both sides how much the fear is very real right now. I've heard that the Jewish community does feel that anti-Semitism is on the rise, especially in the last couple of months. After seeing what happened in London last week,

obviously the Muslim community feels afraid to walk in the streets, afraid to go to the mosque, afraid to do things that they shouldn't be afraid of doing.

Currently we have a program—and I'm sure you guys are aware of the it—called the security infrastructure program.

I know that, Mr. Fogel, you mentioned that rebates should be given to institutions to help with security. I'm hearing that perhaps what's already available isn't enough, and maybe there are better ways of doing it. Do you mind commenting on that? This question is for both of you.

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** I'm a big supporter of SIP as it stands now. I think anything that empowers a community to take some sense of ownership of its own situation is empowering. It gives them a sense of belonging and validation for their place. My comments weren't at all meant as criticism of SIP.

That said, this only really addresses one dimension of the overall security threat posed to communal institutions associated with targeted communities. What I'm suggesting is that there are other dimensions that the government should consider with respect to providing and enhancing that sense of validation and ownership that communities have. One is what I described earlier in one of the recommendations, which is a recognition that no matter how many cameras you have, you do need the additional deterrent of power. We used to rely on law enforcement, even paying off-duty police officers to come to be a presence in front of synagogues and other communal institutions at high-risk points. However, that is becoming untenable because of its cost.

I think what I suggested offers a reasonable compromise, where the government can give some consideration to the costs attached to these kind of services and presence—

**The Chair:** Unfortunately, we're going to have to leave the answer there. We're way past the time.

[*Translation*]

Go ahead, Ms. Michaud. You have six minutes.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud (Avignon—La Mitis—Matane—Matapédia, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for being with us.

As my fellow members have already mentioned, your remarks are heartbreaking, as well as disturbing. The people you talked about should not have to go through what they are going through. Thank you for your presentations.

As you probably know, on June 11, the House of Commons adopted a motion calling on political leaders at every level of government to urgently change their policies to prevent another attack targeting Canadian Muslims, such as the recent attack in London. The motion called on the federal government to convene an emergency national action summit on Islamophobia that should take place before the end of July 2021.

Mr. Farooq, I know that is something your organization has been asking for a while now. Could you talk about the possible outcome of such a summit and the role the federal government should play in addressing Islamophobia?

• (1650)

[*English*]

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Thank you very much for your question, and again, I want to thank all members and your colleagues as well for your unanimous support of the need to stand up and do something. It meant a great deal to folks. I will say the call for the national action summit actually came from the London Muslim mosque in the immediate aftermath of the attack. It is one that we were happy to echo and to champion as well.

In terms of what palpable action can be taken, I think we have to recognize that the challenge in front of us is a multi-jurisdictional one. It is a challenge that has to be confronted by the federal government, by provincial governments, by municipal governments and by territorial governments. For far too long, it's been easy for folks to say that it's another person's job to fix the problem. I think there are huge roles to play at every level to ensure that we're dealing with the challenges in front of us.

At the federal level, it's everything from figuring out new ways to deal with white supremacist groups to online hate regulations and the appointment of a special envoy on Islamophobia. At the provincial level, it's looking at new methodologies for pedagogy and education to focus on anti-racism. Even as the bodies of our indigenous children come out of the earth, I think now more than ever it's time to think about education as a key part of recognizing some of the tragedies that have occurred over this country's history. At the municipal level, it's looking at street harassment and representation. There are so many critical questions.

I think that is what such a national action summit can do. I look forward to working with all of you to make sure that the recommendations coming out of the summit are implemented. Ultimately, the test for governments and individuals who are committed to action is to implement the recommendations that come forward.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Thank you.

Both of you talked about additional tools for law enforcement as a possible solution.

Back in 2019, your organization called on the federal government to create a grant program to train police on how to counter hate and lay charges under the Criminal Code.

Since 2019, has the government acted on your recommendations?

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Are you directing that to Mr. Fogel, or to Mr. Farooq?

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Mr. Farooq.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Unfortunately, I can't fully comment on that. What I will say is that we have been advocating very strongly for the federal government to continue to move forward with things

like RCMP oversight, as well as CBSA oversight. Those are critical items that I think everyone agrees need to be refined, especially RCMP oversight, which obviously has been a study of the committee. We think those things are critical and important. A further examination of the efficacy of hate crime units will help us determine how those can be best utilized and mobilized, because there is quite a lot of variability in how hate crime units operate across Canada. I think this has been noted before. That's why I think these things have to continue to be looked at and explored.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Thank you.

In the time I have left, I'd like to hear what Mr. Fogel has to say on the subject.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** You have just under a minute, please.

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** We too have been advocating for more robust training and resources for law enforcement at the local level, because it's at the community level that they can build the most dynamic relationships with targeted communities, provide the support necessary and gain the intelligence in order to more effectively track things.

There is a whole range of things that I think are tools that law enforcement, prosecutors and the like can receive, which should be a focus of both the Islamophobia and anti-Semitism summits that will be taking place over the next couple of months.

• (1655)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Michaud.

[*English*]

Mr. Harris, you have six minutes, please.

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP):** Thank you, Chair.

I want to thank both witnesses for coming before us today. It's difficult to find the words to express the shock we all felt and the concern we all feel about what happened in London last week. I think, Mr. Farooq, you yourself found difficulty expressing the concerns as well. I think the whole country is shocked by this once again, I'm afraid to say. Also, we heard from CIJA, and Mr. Fogel, about the ongoing and increasing incidents of hatred against Jews and the anti-Semitism spreading throughout the country.

I think we are here today because we as a committee felt that it was extremely important for us to hear from you about what concrete actions should be taken that haven't been taken to date and that might go some way to show that this country takes it seriously, that the government has a means of following through on recommendations. We welcome the suggestions you've made thus far.

First of all, I recognize that in 2019, Mr. Farooq, you appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights and talked about asking government to fund programs to train police on how to counter hate and lay charges. That seemed to me to be a fairly basic thing that you requested in 2019. Two years later, are you able to say to what extent the government has acted on that recommendation? Have you been able to find out to what extent the government has provided additional funding for programs of this nature?

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Unfortunately, I can't comment on the specifics. I don't have those quite in front of me.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** You haven't been updated on that by anyone?

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** We are obviously continuing to engage with government on these kinds of important questions, and with our colleagues and folks who are in Justice and in Public Safety. I can't comment on the specifics of the question right now. I'm sorry, I just don't have the numbers in front of me.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** One suggestion that has been made is that there be an increase in the availability of programs directly related to hate crimes in each jurisdiction. Is that something you would favour?

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** I think we have to examine training and oversight as critical components, and we have to examine a study of the efficacy at the same time. These are all critical elements to making sure that we have an appropriate and uniform approach in looking at the way that hate crimes are dealt with by police. Ultimately, though, we have to keep in mind that we're not going to fully get to solving this problem by policing our way out of the problem.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, I just wanted to point out to Mr. Harris that Mr. Fogel has his hand up.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Mr. Fogel, would you like to answer that?

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** Yes, and thank you, Mr. Chair, as well.

Further to a point that Mustafa raised earlier about the multi-jurisdictional nature of the challenge and the remedies to that, the challenge that you face at the federal level is that you have limits on what you can do directly, and then can only advise or urge or call on different levels of government to follow through with the other things.

I would respectfully make a suggestion here, and it's not a formal recommendation, but I think it should inform the committee's thinking. One of the real take-aways of their consideration of this challenge is how to better achieve a synergy among the different levels of government so that there could be a much more coherent and comprehensive approach, where each level of government is doing what it is mandated to do in order to advance the overall objective.

• (1700)

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Would you hold out hopes for this summit, then, to try to sort out some of these things? One thing the federal government could do, if it identifies hate crimes as a significant priority and has the ability to respond to that, is properly fund dedicated hate crime units in the communities where it's deemed neces-

sary. Would you expect or hope the federal government to play that role, because it seems to be an important thing that if they're going to have specialized units, there will be special resources needed for that?

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** I think the federal government can allocate resources, but it ultimately will be mostly up to provincial and municipal governments to deploy them in ways that are effectively going to advance that. Look, attorneys general have to be more aggressive about applying the existing Criminal Code provisions—that's a provincial thing. There are educational components that all of us recognize are valuable, and that's going to be more at the municipal level. I think that the central role of the federal government is as a conveyor, as an authority that brings together the different stakeholders at multiple levels of government—as well as the private sector, because we shouldn't ignore the role, for example, of social media platforms in advancing this.

**The Chair:** Unfortunately, we're going to have to leave it there. That's the end of our six-minute round, Mr. Harris.

With that, we begin the second round of five minutes with Mr. Motz, please.

**Mr. Glen Motz (Medicine Hat—Cardston—Warner, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you specifically to our witnesses for your amazing testimony. I really appreciate your views on the terminology being used to describe various types of extremism. The consistent message in all of this is hatred. That's the motivation behind all of the violence that we're seeing, whether it be hatred towards political views, towards religious groups, or hatred attached to certain ideologies. I thank you for boiling it down to what it really is as hatred.

I want to go back to my colleague Ms. Stubbs' question about some of the changes to Bill C-59. Both of your groups testified before the public safety committee on that. Some of the things that have changed and were very contentious were the removal of the propaganda and advocacy of terrorism as a criminal charge, and the limitation of security and intelligence or surveillance of protesters in anti-government demonstrations.

Now, you didn't get a chance to respond to that question, both Mr. Fogel and Mr. Farooq.

Should this legislation be revisited with a view to strengthening and actually dealing with the issues—as you both identified in your opening remarks and subsequent testimony—that have created more issues and more ongoing hatred online as a result? I ask because really, law enforcement ability to respond appropriately has been somewhat muted as a result.

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** With your permission, Mr. Chair, I'll quickly begin and make the following observation.

I think the pace of change in the landscape or backdrop with which we're looking at these issues is breathtaking. The idea that it behooves us to review those instruments, policies, regulations and legislation that are currently in place on a regular basis is one that I think is self-evident.

We never would of thought, even two years.... I mean, smart phones only came into existence at the end of 2012. It's really only now that we're beginning to appreciate the power of social media as a vehicle either for good or, in this context, something very, very not good. So I think that it does behoove us to look at old legislation, old regulations and old approaches, and test them against the reality of today.

I'll also point out that, for example, in a concrete way, we're always trying to balance—and I know your committee is struggling with balancing—the issue of free speech with freedom from threat. Some of you will recall that there was a contentious debate about section 13. It was ultimately eliminated by the government of the day, because it is a two-edged sword. On the one hand it enshrines the notion we all believe in, which is freedom of expression. On the other hand, it's also been used as a way to insulate groups that are trying to foment hate with protection from the very thing we're trying to prevent.

It's adding work to your plate, but I think it behooves you to routinely build into legislation and recommendations a need for periodic review that would test the reality against what you are trying to achieve.

• (1705)

**Mr. Glen Motz:** Thank you.

Mr. Farooq.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** I'll say briefly that I think Shimon is right, as I think he often is, on the critical tension here between a desire to protect folks versus those critical constitutional values that we uphold and know that we need to be upheld.

I think those are exactly the kinds of reasons that we had concerns around overly broad language vis-à-vis terrorist propaganda. We were pleased to see that the most recent iteration of legislation narrowed it down to a more focused “counselling” offence. We thought that was important.

From our perspective, we want to see the legislation applied equally, but that's not the same as seeing.... As in the sense that white supremacist terrorist group should be dealt with appropriately through the listing provisions that are there, we have to be careful about overexpanding our Criminal Code, especially around terrorism sections. I think there are existing tools that need to be utilized, and if there are other ways of approaching white supremacist groups, such as the creation of a new listing procedures, I think that could be done outside of the precise mechanics of terrorism legislation, which, of course, has with it a whole regulatory and legislative set of considerations to deal with.

**The Chair:** Okay.

I apologize again for cutting both of you off in the middle of important statements.

Madam Khera, you have five minutes please.

**Ms. Kamal Khera (Brampton West, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to both the National Council of Canadian Muslims and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs not only for joining us

here today but also, importantly, for all the work that you do and for your moving and heartbreaking testimonies today.

I know that the last few weeks have been immensely difficult for so many members of our communities. I know that our communities are hurting, and we are hurting with them. Certainly, this senseless act of terrorism that took the lives of four innocent Canadians in London and left a nine-year-old in critical condition has shaken the whole community and our country, and I just want to first give my condolences to the Afzaal family and prayers for young Fayeze and the entire community during this difficult time.

Mr. Farooq, you talked about the terrorist attack in London, Ontario, the attack on the Black Muslim woman wearing a hijab in Edmonton, and the incident at the Islamic Institute of Toronto. These events aren't isolated incidents. These incidents continue to show us that white supremacy and Islamophobia exist in our communities and pose a huge risk to public safety. I know that we all have a role to play in fighting Islamophobia. I know that our government has taken steps in the work that we're doing through Canada's anti-racism strategy, from the work we're doing in adding white supremacist groups such as Proud Boys to Canada's terrorist listing, increasing funding to protect places of worship and communities' spaces, and now leading the national summit on combatting all forms of hate, including Islamophobia, which I know the NCCM has advocated that we do. These are all steps in the right direction. However, from your perspective, what could we specifically do right now to combat Islamophobia, discrimination and hatred in all their forms—whether online or offline and which pose such a big threat to our communities—to ensure that nothing like what happened in London ever happens again in our communities?

• (1710)

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Thank you for your very important question, and thank you also for continuing to reach out and engage. Indeed, I thank all members for chatting with our communities at this time. Your words are appreciated and very heartfelt.

What I think is critical to understand is that there are a number of steps that can be taken immediately, and by “immediately”, I mean some today and some within the next few months that are critical in order to protect Canadian Muslims, Canadian Jews, Black Canadians and indigenous folks. These are steps that need to happen. There's absolutely no reason whatsoever that the Three Percenters are allowed to exist as a group in Canada. It baffles me that we have appeared and spoken to folks again and again about the existence of groups like the Three Percenters and that our concerns don't appear to be heard. They don't appear to be dealt with. It baffles me that a group like the O9A, which is deeply connected and implicated with anti-Semitism and Islamophobia internationally...that the individual who is linked to the O9A and the killing of Mohamed-Aslim Zafis.... It boggles my mind that the O9A is not dismantled. That's something that could be done today. There is nothing to prevent that.

There is an urgent security threat in Canada that needs to be dealt with, and I think that at the national action summit, we also want to discuss important long-term systemic changes that need to happen. We want to make sure that those are actioned appropriately. However, indeed, there are numerous things that can be done today.

**The Chair:** You have a little less than a minute.

**Ms. Kamal Khera:** Thank you.

I probably won't have the opportunity to hear the response, but I'll pose the question, and maybe I'll get a response. I want to ask about the recent findings in the NSICOP report, which noted that right-wing extremist actors are active online with 6,600 channels, pages and groups. Professor Barbara Perry noted that there are over 300 groups in Canada that are anti-Muslim, as well as anti-Semitic, and that are described as a foundation—

**The Chair:** Excuse me, Kamal. Mr. Farooq's connection seems to be frozen.

Am I right about that?

You may be addressing your question to him, or at least he should hear the question. I don't want to go on until we get him back.

Now we've lost him totally.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** I think he's gone, Chair.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Mark D'Amore):** Mr. Chair, we're contacting him right now.

**The Chair:** We'll suspend for a minute, or for a few seconds, I hope.

• (1710) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (1715)

**The Chair:** Let's just back up a bit here. We'll say that you have another minute, Ms. Khera.

**Ms. Kamal Khera:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question was about the recent findings of the NSICOP report that right-wing extremist actors are now active online with 6,600 channels, pages, groups, accounts and Canadians. They're actually perhaps more active than we've seen in the U.S. or the U.K. Professor Barbara Perry noted that there are about 300 such groups in Canada that are anti-Semitic as well as anti-Muslim, which describe a foundation for so many other forms of hatred.

I want to ask both of you, based on your experiences, do these numbers surprise you? What role do you think social media played in terms of hatred towards your members?

**The Chair:** Be very brief, please.

You're on mute, Shimon.

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** John, you'd like to keep me on mute.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**The Chair:** I know that's impossible, Shimon.

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** Maybe Sameha has something else to offer.

I think there is no question that social media has changed everything. It has allowed for not just the flourishing but the explosion of

hate that is insulated, protected, anonymous and enables people to act out their most vile thoughts. We have to come up with remedies that are calibrated to align with the potency that social media represents.

I don't think it's unique to Canada, but here's the thing: We have to be mindful. That's why I was so happy, Mr. Chair, that you were focusing more broadly and moving away from some terms, because what pose as specific threats to Jews may not pose the same threat to Muslims and may not pose the same threat to women or to indigenous people. We have to have instruments that are sufficiently malleable or flexible that they can address and include the whole range of threats that are out there and that are expressed on a common platform like social media.

**The Chair:** Okay. We really did blow through the time there.

I apologize. I'm going to have to move on.

Madame Michaud, you have two and a half minutes.

**Ms. Kamal Khera:** Mr. Chair, may I only suggest that I get a written response from the NCCM on that as well? Thanks.

**The Chair:** Okay.

I'm sorry. Time is the enemy at all of these kinds of meetings.

Madame Michaud, you have two and a half minutes, please.

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As I was going over the briefing note prepared by the analysts—who, by the way, did a great job—I was surprised to learn something. In 2019, Quebec City's police force under-reported hate incidents targeting Muslims. The National Council of Canadian Muslims flagged the situation that same year, criticizing the police force. According to the council, Statistics Canada's figures for Quebec City indicated three times more incidents than the number reported by the city's police force.

Perhaps Mrs. Omer can answer this.

Why do you think there was such a discrepancy between Statistics Canada's figures and the police force's reporting of hate incidents targeting Muslims in Quebec City in 2019?

• (1720)

[English]

**Mrs. Sameha Omer (Director of Legal Affairs, National Council of Canadian Muslims):** I'm sorry, Madame. I won't be able to answer that question in regard to it being in 2019. We can follow up with you in our submission.

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Thank you. That would be great.

I'd like to hear what Mr. Fogel has to say, since it doesn't seem to be an isolated occurrence; apparently, the figures do not match in a number of places.

Why is that? Is there an attempt to keep the number of hate incidents from coming out?

What do you think the reason is? Is it merely an error?

I am curious to hear what you have to say.

[*English*]

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** That's a super-important question, and thank you for putting it on the floor. I'm going to offer you two explanations. They're complementary; they're not mutually exclusive.

Number one, there is no uniform way of capturing what constitutes a hate crime. Different jurisdictions define it differently. They have nuanced distinctions about what would fit within a category and what would not. One of the needs is for the federal government to set national standards that everybody is able to respond to.

I'm also going to be very frank. Law enforcement has a real challenge, and I don't mean this in an adversarial way, but they have to ensure that the information they then forward to the Crown is responded to in a way that's going to reflect the amount of investment, investigation, research, interviews and so forth they put in. When they get the sense that the Crown is not going to lay hate-related charges, that's a disincentive for them to move in that direction when they're investigating a particular allegation or crime.

One of the things that really has to be addressed is, for the lack of a better term, Mr. Chair, the "political will" of attorneys general to direct their staff to accurately and vigorously look at particular crimes to see if they meet the standards of hate crime, because reluctance on their part means it won't go ahead.

**The Chair:** The reluctance on my part is to interrupt your answers, but it is what it is.

Mr. Harris, you have two and a half minutes please.

Apparently Mr. Farooq's Wi-Fi has crashed, and he's trying to connect through his cellphone.

Mr. Harris, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Fogel.

Perhaps you could elaborate on that. I think I agree with you that there need to be national standards to identify and record all incidents of hate. It seems to me that you're right that there isn't a procedure whereby they can even be identified, and there needs to be political will.

Is there more that the federal government can do in treating this as a national priority and establishing those national standards? I think you talked about a leadership role and playing a convenor role, but is there more that you would suggest?

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** I think a lot of it, Jack, has to do with demonstrating moral leadership. If they convey signals and expectations to their provincial and municipal counterparts, those cues will be picked up, and if there's a sense that there's a broad consensus reflecting all levels of government, I think we would see more aggressive attention on the part of the appropriate bodies—in this case, the attorneys general—to lay the kind of charges that reflect the seriousness of these crimes and the category or the nature of these crimes.

Police forces are going to be reluctant to expend the resources necessary if they feel they're going to fall on deaf ears of the Crown. It's so much interrelated and therefore requires that kind of leadership on the part of the federal government.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Thank you.

I think this meeting here today and the focus there's been nationally on this issue maybe means that the time is right to at least enforce that as a national priority, or to convince the public, the provinces and other jurisdictions that it is so. Thank you for that view.

As for the Internet, I think we all agree that it is a monster that's been unleashed, for good reasons in part, but has shown lots of bad, unintended effects. What do we have to do to specifically to make sure that YouTube and the other vehicles of this this can be controlled?

● (1725)

**The Chair:** It's an important question, but Mr. Harris is out of time.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** There may be another chance.

**The Chair:** Indeed, there may be another chance.

I notice that Mr. Farooq has returned.

With that, we're going to have Mr. Kurek for five minutes.

**Mr. Damien Kurek (Battle River—Crowfoot, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Let me start by simply saying thank you, again, to the witnesses. It's powerful testimony and an important part of this very important discussion. Just to emphasize, in your opening statements, both of you alluded to the fact that no one should be at risk and that all Canadians deserve to feel at home in our country. Certainly I hope that message is something that rings true, not just on this committee, but across this country; and that needs to be the case, and we need to work to get to that point.

I have a few questions I hope to get to. I would just ask both witnesses to comment on the security infrastructure grants that are available. I know that the Province of Alberta recently announced something, and a number of other provinces have done something similar. It's very important, but it is treating a symptom. Do you have further comments on how those programs could be effective in ensuring that the organizations and the people whom you both represent are protected and are able to feel safe in our country?

**The Chair:** Mr. Farooq, maybe you want to take that, given that you have been absent.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Absolutely, and I apologize. I think my Wi-Fi just cut out, so my apologies.

I think the security infrastructure program is important. Obviously it is addressing a need, and in an ideal world we wouldn't have to have a security infrastructure program, but while there remains the need, I think there are a number of critical, key things that need to be done to fix the security infrastructure program.

First of all, the security infrastructure program does not operate effectively as a prophylactic tool. In other words, one generally has to demonstrate a risk of hate-motivated crime. Often that tends to come up once you've experienced a hate-motivated crime. Mosques across the country don't typically end up applying to the security infrastructure program, or they have to go through something first before applying for it, at which point it's far too late.

I think a second key area in which the security infrastructure program needs to reform is in simplifying the process. I am sure all of you, as members, have had folks in your communities reach out to you to ask for help in applying for the security infrastructure program. Applying is an arduous, difficult task for communities that are already under threat, and I think it can be simplified.

I think the kinds of rebate suggestions that have been raised by colleagues are important ones. I think changing it so that it's more prophylactic, easier for communities under threat to access, are critical reforms that could improve the security infrastructure program. Of course, even with the difficulties that it already has, it's often oversubscribed, so I think looking at that is important.

I will say that we have had positive conversations with Public Safety, and our continuing conversations with them, I think, continue to make SIP work better. I look forward to seeing it continue to improve.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** Mr. Fogel, would you have anything you want add to that?

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** No, I'm good, and I'll yield some stuff up just so you can catch up on time.

**Mr. Damien Kurek:** I appreciate that.

The point was made about the Internet and social media and the echo chambers, and certainly as a public figure I have experienced a little bit of the political side of that. I cannot imagine what some of you folks go through, having read some of the reports and what-not.

The unique aspect is that this sort of activity and kind of lone wolf action can be prompted by activity on the Internet, and then there's the need to balance freedoms and civil liberties with ensuring that that hateful content is dealt with, and dealt with effectively. There is a tension there to ensure that this happens appropriately.

I am wondering, Mr. Farooq and Mr. Fogel, whether you could comment on the following. How, as parliamentarians, do we attempt to find that proper balance to ensure that we deal with the real issues, that there's clear action, but also respect the fact that we're a free country that values freedom of speech and that we find that appropriate balance that is so important?

Mr. Farooq, I would ask you that.

• (1730)

**The Chair:** It's an important question, but the answer would require a Ph.D. Unfortunately, you're out of time.

With that, I'm going to turn to Mr. Lightbound for five minutes, please.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound (Louis-Hébert, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses as well.

I represent the riding where, unfortunately, the Quebec City mosque attack occurred on January 29, 2017. The mosque is in the heart of my riding.

I can tell you one thing: Quebec City's Muslim community was experiencing fear long before January 29, 2017. Groups like La Meute were behind a number of incidents. For example, group members would hand out cards at halal markets and in front of mosques. They wouldn't give their names, but they would tell people they were keeping an eye on them, watching them. They put a pig's head at the front door of a mosque. They were responsible for all kinds of incidents that contributed to a climate of fear, something no one in the country should have to experience because of their faith.

I don't think it was a lack of good faith on the police force's part. I just think it was a lack of training and awareness. Police likely did not have the necessary level of trust or the resources to properly support a community that very clearly felt threatened in its day-to-day activities. Unfortunately, the community still feels that way at times. I think that's true right across the country.

I want both Mr. Fogel and Mr. Farooq to talk about best practices police can apply to build trust with communities. Do you have any examples of things we can do at the federal level? You talked a bit about that in your opening statements, but I'd like you to elaborate.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Who is that for? Mr. Farooq or Mr. Fogel? Either one?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Mr. Farooq, you can go first.

[*English*]

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Thank you.

This is an important question. I think there are a number of best practices that do need to be undertaken. Part of those best practices involve a lot of community listening and working with local communities in an authentic way. I mean if we look at the Quebec City police, for instance.... I remember, in 2019, the Quebec City police put forward the notion that hate incidents had significantly decreased. That wasn't true, and when we talked to folks, we were able to clarify quite quickly that they had calculated their statistics wrong in terms of the fact that hate crimes were much higher than what they said they were. When police agencies are working with local communities, when they're listening to local communities, when they're listening to those who are saying that we can't police our way out of this problem and that there needs to be a multifactorial approach while, of course, maintaining that there has to be a role for effective law enforcement, I think that's really when we start to come to solutions.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Go ahead, Mr. Fogel.

[*English*]

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** I'm hesitant, but I'm going to be a little provocative over here.

Mustafa, if I get it wrong, then please tell me.

Here's part of the challenge. Different communities have different relationships and histories with law enforcement. When you ask how law enforcement, police services can play a more constructive or more effective role, the answer is going to be different based on the experience of a particular community. For Muslim Canadians who may have felt racially profiled, or for indigenous peoples, or for women who have felt that police have been generally dismissive, there's a first step that has to take place before everybody can be aligned in the same place to move forward. I think it's a really complicated question that speaks to the need for this to be assessed and managed at the granular level, which is why municipalities are so important to the solution.

• (1735)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** The federal government would play more of a coordinating role, as you said before.

[*English*]

How much time do I have, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** I was about to go down the same road as Damien and ask you about the fundamental elements that we need to address when fighting online hate while balancing our rights, but I think that's too much to ask in 30 seconds.

**The Chair:** It is.

**Mr. Joël Lightbound:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I believe that brings the second round to an end.

We're now on to the third round, which is for 25 minutes. We have 10 minutes left, so I'm going to be a little arbitrary and cut it down to two minutes each, with one minute for the Bloc and the NDP.

Mr. Van Popta has two minutes and I notice that Mr. Motz is apparently taking the Liberal question. I imagine it's a little bit of a surprise to Mr. Motz and to the Liberals. If the Liberals could indicate to me who will be taking the first Liberal question, I would appreciate it.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** I'd be happy to ask it, Chair.

**The Chair:** I'm sure you would, but everyone would have a bit of a heart attack.

Mr. Van Popta, you have two minutes, please.

**Mr. Tako Van Popta (Langley—Aldergrove, CPC):** Thank you.

Two minutes is too short for this, but thank you to all three witnesses. Mr. Fogel from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, and Mr. Farooq and Ms. Omer from the National Council of Canadian Muslims, thanks for being with us and helping us through this very difficult conversation.

I'm going to ask a question that a couple of people attempted to ask and ran out of time, which is about balancing civil liberties and keeping Canadians safe, particularly when it comes to the Internet.

Mr. Fogel, I think it was you who said that we need new tools when it comes to regulating the Internet. I don't know if you were talking about criminal laws or civil remedies. Perhaps you could expand on that. What would civil remedies look like as far as that goes?

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** Thank you for the question.

I'll try to be really brief over here. It's a challenge for me.

I think one of the takeaways of this whole discussion is that to really address this effectively you need a whole-of-government approach. You have sister committees in Parliament that are looking at some of these questions. Online hate is something that the anti-racism secretariat has been focusing on a lot and providing some resources for stakeholders, such as the NCCM and us, to be able to explore remedies. Social media platforms have been brought in and not quite coerced, but encouraged, to take some ownership and to provide some of the solutions.

I don't know what all of the instruments will be. I know that for them to be effective it requires the buy-in from all of the stakeholders. That means government, communities and social service providers.

We have to distinguish between two groups. There are the vast bulk of Canadians who may be ignorant and insensitive to the impact of social media posts. They need to be educated. Then there are the marginal ones who have to be chased into the corner or prosecuted or somehow defanged, so that they don't constitute an ongoing threat.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Van Popta.

Madam Damoff, you have two minutes, please.

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Thank you, Chair.

We talked about listing terrorist organizations. As you both know, it wasn't very long ago—prior to 2019—that no white supremacist organizations were listed and now there are six.

We have also talked a lot about the lone wolf and how listing those organizations, while incredibly important, doesn't deal with the young people we're seeing—like in the Quebec mosque and in London—who are being radicalized online. We've talked about this a lot, but how do we deal with the online radicalization of these individuals?

Maybe Mr. Fogel you could start first and then Mr. Farooq.

• (1740)

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** I'm not by any means an expert in this area, but I do know this: Social media companies have the most sophisticated algorithms that exist. They do have the capacity to track, to monitor, to isolate and to pull out words, phrases and context. It's scary how much they're able to do. If there's the will to do it, there's the technological capacity to do. It seems to me that the first order of business is to try and weed out all of those toxic sites, those conversations, those chat rooms and so forth, so that the individual has far-reduced options in terms of gravitating towards things that are toxic and hateful.

**The Chair:** Unfortunately, that's the end of your two minutes.

With that, we will turn to Madame Michaud for a minute, please.

[Translation]

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Since we have Mr. Farooq back, I'm going to ask him the same question I asked Mr. Fogel earlier.

The figures capturing hate crimes, as reported by the Quebec City police force and even Statistics Canada, are not accurate. Only a third of hate crimes are reported or documented as hate incidents.

Why do you think that is? Is it merely a mistake?

Mr. Fogel had some interesting things to say about it.

[English]

**The Chair:** You don't have one minute. You have 10 seconds, but please go ahead.

**Ms. Kristina Michaud:** I'm sorry.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Statistics Canada itself identifies that one of the major gaps in the numbers is from a lack of reporting. I can tell you that one of the major gaps in our community doesn't come from a lack of literacy. She alluded to this. Oftentimes it comes from the fact that our communities have historically had unfortunate dealings when it comes to law enforcement.

I have been in conversations with police agencies across countries, including with hate crime units, where people will call to report a hate crime and will be discouraged from reporting, or their complaint will not be taken seriously at all. That's simply a reality that's happened too many times for us to fully canvass. I can tell you that when the Wolves of Odin visited Al Rashid Mosque, Canada's oldest mosque, no charges were brought despite their clear stalking, intimidation and trespassing.

This is the kind of reason that people then tire of calling the police, because they call and they call, and things are not necessarily dealt with. A man tied a noose in an Edmonton LRT station in front of a hijabi Canadian woman and said "This is for you" and started singing the Canadian national anthem. No charges were brought.

**The Chair:** Okay, I'm going to leave it there, I apologize.

Mr. Harris, you have one minute.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Thank you, Chair.

I believe we have to be concerned about safety first. We can't cover.... These are not the only targets, but do each of the witnesses

believe that the security infrastructure program ought to be enhanced and that the security rebate program, as Mr. Fogel mentioned, should be put in place to the extent that every mosque and synagogue in Canada that desires to have the security it needs will have access to that and have the support to do that?

• (1745)

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** My short answer is yes.

**The Chair:** We like short answers.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** My short answer is yes; they should be able to have the resource to do that, but it also breaks my heart that we have to have this conversation. Good fences don't make good neighbours.

**Mr. Jack Harris:** Absolutely.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I believe Mr. Motz is up next, having given up his flirtation with the Liberal Party.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** Yes, thank you.

How much time do I have, Chair?

**The Chair:** You have two minutes.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** Thank you.

Mr. Farooq, I want both of you to comment on this, but I address this initially to you specifically. You wrote an article recently that you said "Anti-semitism and Islamophobia are two sides of the same coin". Can you both comment on that and why you see it that way?

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Sure, I'll speak to it quickly. I think that, as I saw yesterday, there was a swastika painted on a mosque in Edmonton. There is a confluence in the way that white supremacists target Canadian Muslim and Canadian Jewish communities. The O9A, the white supremacist organization linked to the killing at the IMO, is a neo-Nazi Satanist group where folks involved in it worship Hitler. This is the kind of thing we are dealing with, and that's why Canadian Muslims and Canadian Jews are united among many other racialized and minority groups on the need to stamp out dangerous, violent, white supremacist groups and the threats that our communities are facing jointly.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** Thank you.

Mr. Fogel, just a yes or no: Do you agree with that sentiment?

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** Overall, yes.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** Thank you. That gives me time to move on to my next question.

I know recently the court struck down consecutive sentences as unconstitutional. The case involved the Quebec mosque shooting. He was given a 40-year sentence, but it was reduced to 25 years, and he had killed six people.

To my knowledge, the government hasn't appealed this decision.

Does giving longer sentences to this kind of horrific, unthinkable crime send a message, and does it say that we don't accept it? Should this be appealed, and should these unforgivable crimes be given consecutive sentences and these sentences be upheld?

The question is for both of you. Please respond very briefly.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** Just to make sure that the record is clear, the decision has been appealed and was granted leave at the Supreme Court of Canada.

**Mr. Glen Motz:** That's perfect. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

The final question will be from the Liberals. I see Mr. Fisher hasn't asked a question yet.

Mr. Fisher.

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Sure, Mr. Chair.

First of all, thank you very much to the witnesses.

Mr. Farooq, ever since you did your sound check today, I've been wanting to talk to you a bit more.

You talked about the terror listing and the new listing procedures, but you didn't go into in-depth detail. I know we don't have very much time, but perhaps you could tell me what you believe those new listing procedures could or should be?

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** I think we need a new approach in listing white supremacist groups as white supremacist groups and provide new mechanisms to dismantle them that are separate and distinct from the regime of terrorism legislation under the Criminal Code and under the ATA.

Obviously, I can't fully discuss that, but making sure that we're bringing forward new measures for new challenges that are in front of us is important right now.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Koffler Fogel, would you like to comment on that as well?

**Mr. Shimon Koffler Fogel:** Just mindful of your time, I really don't have anything to add to that.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Staying on the same topic of dismantling groups, Mr. Farooq, you talked about listing and disbanding militias. You talked about it as not terrorist and not militia, but hate.

Give one recommendation to this committee on exactly what we should do with regard to terror listing.

**Mr. Mustafa Farooq:** The one recommendation I would have is to bring forward new legislation that deals with the new challenges of white supremacist groups, by recommending the introduction of new sections to the Criminal Code that list white supremacist groups as white supremacist groups.

• (1750)

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you very much for that.

I can't remember who said that it hurts your heart. Listening to the testimony of all our witnesses today and the stories you have told and the things you endure—and Mr. Farooq, the things you have endured today and yesterday—it hurts the heart. It truly does.

I thank both of you very much for your testimony and for being here.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Fisher.

I think Mr. Fisher articulated my sentiments as well as I listened to you for the last hour and a half. On behalf of the committee, we appreciate your efforts to be here and your deep insights into this, some might say, “intractable” problem. This is a time when Canada needs to look into its own soul. Thank you for aiding us in that look.

With that, we will suspend and go in camera to deal with committee issues.

Again, thank you for your presence.

*[Proceedings continue in camera]*







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