



What did Canadians do to deserve this?

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Are you surprised that terrorists appear to have set their sights on such unlikely targets as the Parliament building in Ottawa and the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. in Toronto? Astonished that anyone would even consider sawing off the head of a Canadian Prime Minister? Are you thinking: What could anyone have against free, democratic, liberal, multicultural, diverse and tolerant Canada?

The question answers itself. Freedom, democracy, liberalism, multiculturalism, diversity and tolerance – these are precisely the attributes that Militant Islamists find most offensive.

This reality is difficult for some people to fathom. It shouldn't be. The Nazis disdained liberal societies as decadent. The Communists rejected democratic values as bourgeois. Now Militant Islamists regard Western nations as blasphemous. This is old totalitarian wine in new bottles.

Sayed Qutb, the Marx of Militant Islamism, stated unequivocally: "Truth and falsehood cannot coexist on earth...the liberating struggle of jihad does not cease until all religion belongs to God." Looking at the world through such eyes, freedom, tolerance and democratic values are not virtues – they are symptoms of weakness and moral decline.

In the Islamist perception, Canadians have failed to distinguish between right and wrong, have refused to discriminate between monotheists on the one hand, and infidels, idolaters and polytheists on the other. And Canada awards to its citizens rights and powers that belong exclusively to God.

Those who know God's will have an obligation to spread His message to the benighted masses. That can be accomplished with sermons; or with bombs. History suggests the latter can vastly increase the persuasiveness of the former.

No doubt, Canada's Militant Islamists have other grievances as well. It has been reported that those arrested last week planned to take hostages and demand the withdrawal of Canadian troops in Afghanistan.

Militant Islamists do not subscribe to the fashionable view that the smashing of the Taliban was justifiable in a way that toppling Saddam Hussein was not. On the contrary, they believe the Taliban provided just the sort of leadership nations such as Canada ought to be enjoying.

Those arrested last week were acting locally but linking globally. According to Canada's National Post, "before police tactical teams began their sweeps around Toronto on Friday, at least 18 related arrests had already taken place in Canada, the United States, Britain, Bosnia, Denmark, Sweden, and Bangladesh." That doesn't mean those arrested are part of a global organization. It does suggest they are part of a global movement. You don't defeat such movements by forfeiting battlefields or attempting appeasement. How you do defeat such movements we are only beginning to figure out - one must hope.

The suspects arrested in Canada are all Canadian citizens or legal residents. Early reports insisted they "represent the broad strata of our society" but that description did not withstand scrutiny.

It should be obvious that most Canadian Muslims are not terrorists. It should be equally obvious that Canada's Muslim community has a seri-

ous problem to address. What were these young men taught by the religious leaders in their mosques? Did their neighbors not see where they were heading? Was it sympathy or fear that prevented them from speaking up? If it was fear - fear of whom?

Americans generally expect immigrants to adopt not just American citizenship but also American nationality: to embrace American values, to revere the U.S. Constitution and to learn to speak English. Our more multicultural neighbors to the north have demanded less of those who apply for their passports. Canadians have asked immigrants few questions about their religious and political convictions. Recently, the Canadian government has even been considering allowing Muslims to substitute Islamic Sharia law for civil law. It will be instructive to see if this episode prompts any changes in Canadian thinking.

That is not to suggest that every immigrant to Canada must attempt to become a Molson-drinking, hockey-playing, Dudley Do-Right, proudly pronouncing "z" as zed. But would it be too demanding for Canadians to insist that those who want to make their homes in the Great White North not aspire to be suicide bombers and decapitators of infidels?

Free peoples, if they are to stay free, need to exercise control over their borders. They also need to exercise discretion about who they welcome as neighbors and compatriots.