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## North American Foreign Fighters<sup>1</sup>

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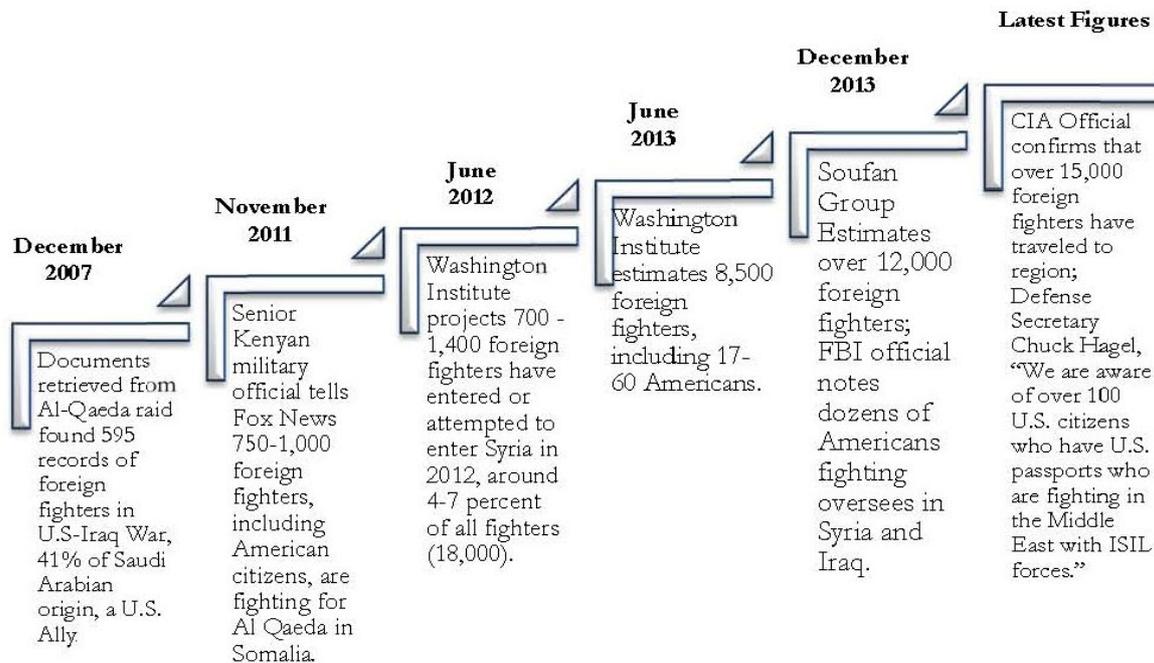
### Introduction

While the phenomenon of so-called “foreign fighters” is in no way new the past thirty-plus years has shown a marked increase in the numbers of individuals traveling abroad to fight in civil conflicts in the Muslim world. The crisis in Syria (2011-present) has created a massive influx of such individuals going to fight. Of particular concern in western capitals has been the numbers of individuals from those countries that have gone to fight in that conflict which has since crossed the border into neighboring Iraq with the establishment of the so-called “Islamic State” and threatens to broaden the conflict into a larger regional sectarian conflagration. While the numbers of such participants from Western Europe have been greater than those who have gone from the United States and Canada there are legitimate concerns in both Washington, DC, and Ottawa about American and Canadian citizens who have gone—or attempted to go—to fight there and in other locales such as the Maghreb and Somalia. The analysis here will provide some background on the foreign fighter phenomenon, discuss the foreign fighter flow model, explore the issue from both Canadian and US perspectives to include providing details of some original research categorizing the characteristics of a small sample of US and Canadian fighters and those who attempted to go and fight, discuss how both governments have attempted to deal with the issue, and offer some policy prescription for dealing with this issue that is of importance to both international security writ large and domestic security in the US and Canada.

### *The Foreign Fighter Phenomenon*

The foreign fighter phenomenon in the Muslim world has grown since the call to jihad against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Following that conflict foreign fighters migrated to such places as the Balkans and Chechnya, Dagestan, and Tajikistan in the former Soviet Union. After 9/11 fighters journeyed to the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq and as stated above the situation in Syria has been an even larger magnet—see Figure 1 below. But this is not a new problem, nor is its scope unique to Islamic countries. Foreign fighter belligerents on both “sides of the hill” were a marked feature of the 1930’s Spanish Civil War. Furthermore, the incidence of such fighters has been fairly widespread throughout history. As David Malet has noted, “Among the 331 civil conflicts [occurring between] 1815 [and] 2005, at least 67 of them featured the presence of foreign fighters.”<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 1: Timeline of Increases in Projected Foreign Fighters**



But the scale of the current rush of foreign fighters going to fight in Syria and Iraq is unprecedented; their numbers dwarf those of their predecessors in 1980s Afghanistan and in Iraq of the 2000s. An estimated 15,000 men and women from 80 or more countries have gone to fight there.<sup>5</sup> The foreign fighters involved in the Soviet-Afghan (1979-1992) and the Iraq War (2003-2011) are greatly celebrated in the jihadist martyrdom canon, but they only reached a small fraction of what the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) has attracted. But those conflicts unleashed what Clint Watts has described as the first and second foreign fighter gluts, respectively.<sup>6</sup> The ongoing civil wars in Iraq and Syria will unleash a third foreign fighter glut that will likely create further regional and global security concerns, and exacerbate existing ones. In addition, as Thomas Hegghammer noted before the Syrian crisis:

Foreign fighters matter because they can affect the conflicts they join, as they did in post-2003 Iraq by promoting sectarian violence and indiscriminate tactics. Perhaps more important, foreign fighter mobilizations empower transnational terrorist groups such as al-Qaida, because volunteering for war is the principal stepping-stone for

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individual involvement in more extreme forms of militancy. For example, when Muslims in the West radicalize, they usually do not plot attacks in their home country right away, but travel to a war zone such as Iraq or Afghanistan first. Indeed, a majority of al-Qaida operatives began their militant careers as war volunteers, and most transnational jihadi groups today are by-products of foreign fighter mobilizations. Foreign fighters are therefore key to understanding transnational Islamist militancy.<sup>7</sup>

The combat skills and human networks that such fighting produce increase the lethality of the fighters both in the conflict zone and when they go home for those that want to carry out attacks. In Iraq (2003-11), for instance, while such fighters accounted for less than 5 percent of insurgents they were estimated at producing over 90 percent of high lethality attacks.<sup>8</sup> Hegghammer notes that in domestic terrorism attacks launched in the West involving foreign fighter veterans their presence “...increases—by a factor of around 1.5—the probability that a plot will come to execution, and it doubles the likelihood that the plot will kill people.”<sup>9</sup>

While a majority of these fighters come from countries near the conflict zone, the number of fighters from the West is also much higher than in past conflicts, and remains a cause for concern.<sup>10</sup> Estimates of Western foreign fighters range between 2000 and 5000, of which between 100 and 300 are from the United States.<sup>11</sup> And approximately 130 Canadians are estimated to be fighting in Syria and other locations.<sup>12</sup> “It’s the largest number of Western fighters we have ever seen in a jihadist theater,” said Seth G. Jones, a former U.S. counter-terrorism official now with the Rand Corp.<sup>13</sup> The May 24, 2014 murders at the Jewish Museum of Belgium in Brussels by the ISIL veteran Mehdi Nemmouche<sup>14</sup> and the disrupted ISIL-linked plot by Australian authorities of individuals wanting to commit “propaganda of the deed” beheadings of unsuspecting victims down under show that there are real concerns about fighters returning from the conflict zone.<sup>15</sup> This is especially true of foreign fighter veterans who hold “golden passports” that allow for visa waiver travel.

Motivations among foreign fighters vary widely. Malet argues that, “[i]n modern history, transnational insurgencies have been based on various ties of ethno-nationalism and ideology, but contemporary foreign fighters in conflicts around the globe now all share the same religious identity.”<sup>16</sup> This does not mean that Islam itself is the cause of this phenomenon, rather “the cause appears to be partly the result of a period effect, the coincidence of increasingly globalized communications and transportation technology with

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a particular identity community whose members have transnational identities that are currently particularly salient.”<sup>17</sup> Perceived threats to such identity communities, thus, foster

and propel defensive mobilization by motivated individuals. To Malet, such defensive mobilization is the key to recruitment across cases, ideologies, and religious networks.<sup>18</sup> Various reporting about those who have gone to fight in Syria, however, suggest that some are motivated by religion, others by humanitarian concerns, and still others are simply searching for excitement.<sup>19</sup>

Western foreign fighters typically do not come from poverty stricken neighborhoods, but are usually middle-class and are not always embraced by those with deeply religious backgrounds. The majority of them are male and under 40. However, women have also traveled to Syria and Iraq in larger than expected numbers; Peter Neumann, of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization (ICSR), believes that as many as 10-15 percent of foreign fighters are females, who join to either marry or participate in all-female units.<sup>20</sup> ISIL, in particular, is attractive to Western foreign fighters—attracting 80 percent of their numbers—because of its extensive use of the English language, and the fact that they had tended to accept foreign fighters more readily than other groups like al-Nusra.<sup>21</sup>

### *The Foreign Fighter Flow Model*

Clint Watts has argued that the foreign fighter flow model has three phases: (1) source country/flashpoint, (2) safe havens and the transit network, and (3) target locations.<sup>22</sup> But a fourth phase, outflow destinations, is important as well.<sup>23</sup> Each of these phases is examined below.

*Source Country/Flashpoint.* Foreign fighters like most other combatants must be recruited. While self-selection and varying degrees of intrinsic motivation are important, extrinsic factors also appear to be crucial. Watts argues that “social-familial-religious” networks fuel such recruitment with the assistance and influence of former foreign fighters.<sup>24</sup> Defensive mobilization recruitment themes similar to former President George W. Bush’s statement to “fight them over there so we don’t have to fight them here” are employed. Autocatalytic recruitment from, say, the internet appears to be rare, but as will be shown later it may help individuals to become radicalized. Cities and neighborhood kinship and cultural nodes are important. For instance, according to the “Sinjar records”—the most complete personnel files on the foreign fighter inflow into Iraq (post-2003) captured near that northwestern Iraqi city—the top five foreign fighter producing cities for that cohort of individuals per capita were: Darnah, Libya; Mecca, Saudi Arabia; Jawf, Saudi Arabia; Dayr al zur, Syria; and Sanaa, Yemen, respectively.<sup>25</sup>

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*Safe Havens and the Transit Network.* Unless such fighters go to fight in a neighboring country, much depends on getting foreign fighters to training sites and to target destinations intact and undetected. In addition, it is necessary to establish logistical hubs not only for the transit and training of fighters, but also locations to conduct a wide array of financial activities—ranging from the illicit (such as product piracy, smuggling, money laundering, etc.) to the more commonplace (access to banking, legitimate businesses, etc.)—which are necessary to fund current and future operations. During the Iraq War (2003-2011) Syria acted as a safe haven and transit network. Turkey has been used to the same effect in relation to Syria (2011-present) even though the Turkish government vehemently denies that.<sup>26</sup>

*Target Locations.* This is where the uninitiated foreign fighters will gain combat experience. Some will gain crucial skills and build human networks with other fighters, others will be killed on the battlefield, and still others will be captured or carry out more mundane tasks.

*Outflow Destinations.* Those foreign fighter veterans who are not killed or captured at target locations generally may either stay there or: (1) return to their source country, (2) go to a safe haven, (3) go to a current or future conflict zone. Examining the so-called “Arab Afghans,” who fought the Soviets in the 1980s, the terrorism scholar Mohammed Hafez suggests that that conflict produced six types of veterans: reintegrationists (those who went home again and reintegrated into their original societies), government assets (e.g., Arab Afghan Yemenis who fought against southern Yemenis during the civil war following Yemen’s reunification), facilitators, social revolutionaries (e.g., Egyptians and Algerians who fought against their governments upon return from Afghanistan in the 1990s), global jihadists, and unaffiliated terrorists (e.g., Ramzi Yusef).<sup>27</sup> Some will continue due to their religious or ideological beliefs while others are attracted to the lifestyle. As the military historian, and retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel, Robert Mackey has stated about a different historical context, “the guerrilla fighters of Arkansas and Missouri during the [American] Civil War formed the cadres of the Old West criminal gangs—Cole Younger, Jesse James. They were people who did not fit back into their societies; they couldn’t go home again.”<sup>28</sup>

But not all foreign fighter veterans who return will attempt to conduct attacks. Many will be happy to have done their perceived duties in the combat zone or be disillusioned by the experience. Hegghammer’s research shows that only roughly 11 percent of returning Western foreign fighters historically have gone on to conduct terrorist acts, and attacks planned by veterans are more likely to be carried out and more lethal when they do.<sup>29</sup> Even those low numbers, however, could mean as many as 220 to 550 Western foreign fighter

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veterans end up plotting terrorist attacks at some point (potentially 11-33 of them in the United States and approximately 14 in Canada). A report from February of this year stated that “U.S. federal counterterrorism authorities are tracking as potential threats a dozen or so ex-rebels trained in Syria who have returned to the United States.”<sup>30</sup>

### *American and Canadian Foreign Fighters: Real and Potential*

As stated earlier it is estimated that there are approximately 300 American and 130 Canadian foreign fighters abroad. Demographically Canada’s population of 35.16 million is a bit more than a tenth of that of the United States, but it has sent roughly 2 foreign fighters per million of the population as opposed to approximately 1 American foreign fighter per million to Iraq and Syria.<sup>31</sup> Perhaps this should be unsurprising given that Muslims make up 3.2 percent of the Canadian population<sup>32</sup> versus approximately .5 percent of the U.S. population.<sup>33</sup> (Reports suggest that 80 foreign fighters have returned to Canada.<sup>34</sup> Although hopefully many of them have grown disillusioned with the causes that led them down that path.) Again, this in no way means to suggest that Islam is the problem, but rather that Canada as with other countries in the West (which have much higher foreign fighters totals) has a small but active network of individuals who are radicalizing people to become violent extremists. Of course, one cannot discount the possibility that the cost of travel, greater distances to Syria and Iraq, and role of law enforcement and intelligence agencies in making such travel more difficult may have a dampening effect on the numbers of fighters who have gone overseas from both countries.

Still, there are reports that recruiters are working to activate or to cultivate flashpoints in both the US and Canada. According to a report of the Voice of America on the Somali expatriate community in Minneapolis, Minnesota, recruiters are trying to stoke grievances in order to get members of that community to go and fight in Iraq and Syria and in Somalia. Fartun Weli, a 43-year-old founder of a Minneapolis non-profit organization helping Somali women told VOA reporters the following:

Here are all the things against us: immigrant, black, Muslim.... We always feel like someone is watching us... If someone is always suspicious about you and you have no other opportunities, what are you going to do?” she asked. “You’re going to say: ‘why am I here?’ You’re being accused so much, you say ‘either way I will never satisfy these guys, so maybe I should I just join (the terrorists).’<sup>35</sup>

In Canada, Calgary has become a major flashpoint for radicalization and foreign fighters. As the city’s police chief Rick Hanson told the *Calgary Herald*, “This is an issue that’s not going

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away and in the near future will continue to grow. You look at what's happening in the Middle East right now, the latest events in Iraq, and (militant Islamic group Boko Haram) in Nigeria. That's going to have an impact in Canada without a doubt."<sup>36</sup> There is speculation that the number of jihadi fighters in the city area may be between 20 and 30, but the police chief thinks that number may be too conservative.<sup>37</sup> Lorne Dawson of the University of Waterloo believes that there must be someone in that city that is radicalizing and recruiting extremists there.<sup>38</sup>

But two attacks in October 2014 in Quebec and Ottawa point to a potentially troubling trend. The perpetrators of the deadly attacks which killed two members of the Canadian Forces —Martin "Ahmad" Couture Rouleau in Quebec<sup>39</sup> and Michael Zehaf-Bibeau in Ottawa<sup>40</sup> — were both converts to Islam with troubled, criminal pasts who when they could not go overseas to fight do to government policies that will be detailed below undertook domestic attacks. (As Humera Khan of Muflehun told Gwen Ifill on the Aug. 27 broadcast of "PBS NewsHour," troubled converts sometimes believe that by conducting such acts with their usually superficial interpretations of Islam that they can earn "shortcuts to heaven.")<sup>41</sup> But as stated above, this isn't a simply a problem of some lone converts. Canada, like many countries in the West, has a problem with a very small, but dangerous population of violent extremists. Sharon Cardash of George Washington University's Homeland Security Policy Institute notes that there have been numerous disrupted plots for attacks in Canada over the past decade.<sup>42</sup>

The October 2014 attacks in Quebec and Ottawa followed a ramping up of Canadian support in the western military operations against ISIL. Canada had recently dispatched six CF18 aircraft to take part in combat operations in Iraq<sup>43</sup> against the Islamic State group and is sending 69 special operations forces advisers there, too.<sup>44</sup> And just before the attacks ISIL spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani called for Muslims in the West to carry out attacks. "If you can kill a disbelieving American or European — especially the spiteful and filthy French — or an Australian, or a Canadian, or any other disbeliever from the disbelievers waging war, including the citizens of the countries that entered into a coalition against the Islamic State ... kill him in any manner or way however it may be," he said.<sup>45</sup>

But this was not the first call for attacks against Canada. A Canadian foreign fighter in Syria, Farah Shirdon who is from Calgary, told the *Hamilton Spectator* through a mobile phone messenger account that "The only thing I have to say to any reporter is tell [the Canadian government] its civilians will pay the price the war your government is waging against the Islamic state." He continued by saying that, "You are waging a war against people who see heaven in the barrel of guns. Do you honestly think you can win? ... The

streets of Western cities will be filled with blood.”<sup>46</sup> (He has also threatened that Canada and the United States will be attacked after Syria and Iraq are won.)<sup>47</sup> In the US the Federal Bureau of Investigation also warned the military in December 2014 that ISIL is calling for attacks on its members stating that “overseas based individuals are looking for like-minded individuals in the U.S. to carry out these attacks” and that US military personnel should review their profiles on social media to make themselves more difficult to target.<sup>48</sup>

*Foreign Fighter and Potential Foreign Fighter Characteristics Profiles.* The appendix to this article contains the profiles of 26 American and Canadian individuals who have gone to be foreign fighters and 20 individuals who attempted to go overseas. These details, an admittedly small sample size, were gleaned from open source press accounts.<sup>49</sup> Each individual, unless they are minors, are listed giving their names, hometowns, whether they were converts to Islam, whether they had criminal records, their race or ethnicity when available, their current status, and their details and motives.

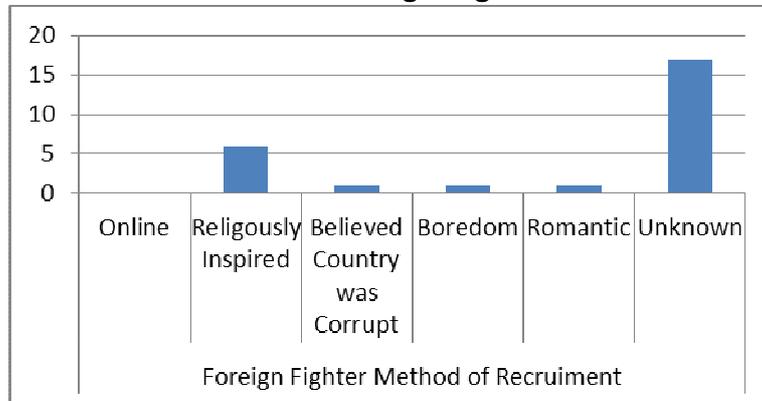
As Table 1 below illustrates, of the sample half of the foreign fighters were Americans and half were from Canada, whereas 85 percent of the potential foreign fighters were Americans. Interestingly converts to Islam comprised nearly 35 percent of the foreign fighters and almost 50 percent of potential fighters.

**Table 1: Statistics Based on Character Profiles**

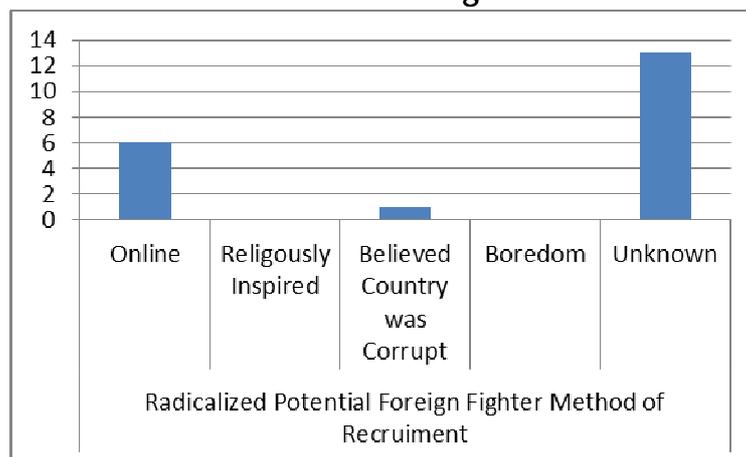
<i>Foreign Fighters</i>		<i>Potential Foreign Fighters</i>	
<i>Total Number Studied</i>	26	<i>Total Numbers Studied</i>	20
<i>Number of Americans</i>	13	<i>Number of Americans</i>	17
<i>Number of Canadians</i>	13	<i>Number of Canadians</i>	3
<i>Converts to Islam</i>	9	<i>Converts to Islam</i>	10

Charts 1 and 2 below graphically represent the ways in which foreign fighters in the sample were recruited and how potential foreign fighters were radicalized, respectively. While there is much unknown information, it is interesting to note that the internet appears to be a strong tool for radicalization. Chart 3 shows the current disposition of those who have gone overseas.

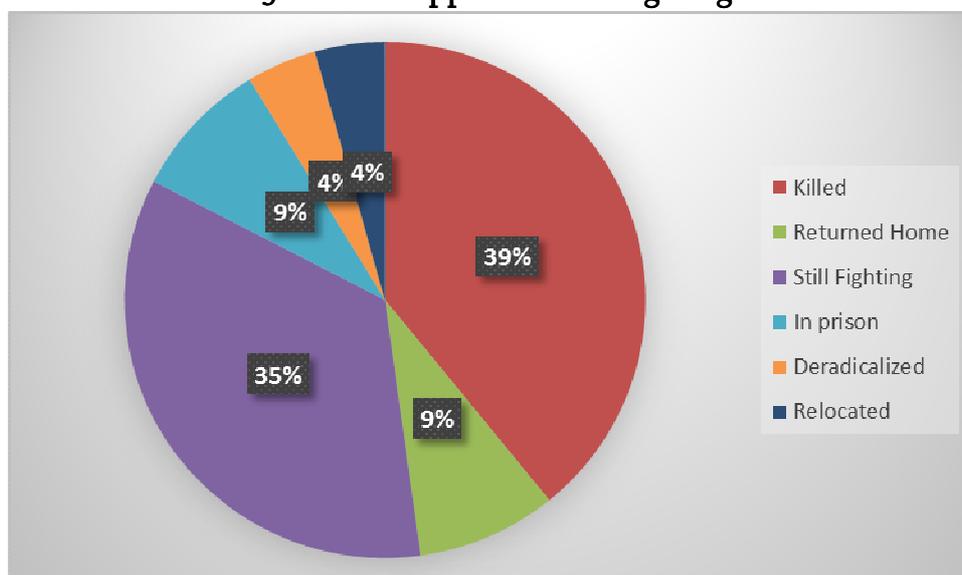
**Chart 1: How Are Foreign Fighters Recruited?**



**Chart 2: How Are Potential Fighters Radicalized?**



**Chart 3: What Happens To Foreign Fighters?**



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## ***US and Canadian Responses to Foreign Fighters: Real and Potential***

What are the United States and Canada doing about the issues of real and potential foreign fighters?

*The United States.* The US is confronting the threat posed by foreign fighters across the elements of its national, state, and local capabilities. In the military realm it is conducted limited strike operations against ISIL and al-Nusra in Syria and Iraq and against other foreign fighter elements in places such as Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia. Its intelligence, Treasury, and law enforcement communities are all actively engaged in dealing with real and potential foreign fighters both overseas and in the US. We will focus on the domestic angles here.

As Attorney General Eric Holder stated in a speech in Oslo in July 2014:

In the face of a threat so grave, we cannot afford to be passive. Rather, we need the benefit of investigative and prosecutorial tools that allow us to be preemptive in our approach to confronting this problem. If we wait for our nations' citizens to travel to Syria or Iraq, to become radicalized, and to return home, it may be too late to adequately protect our national security.<sup>50</sup>

U.S. efforts have mainly followed — if not created — many of the best practices of the Global Counterterrorism Forum's Rabat Memorandum — a document outlining a series of recommended approaches for countries to deal with combating terrorism through their criminal justice systems.<sup>51</sup> In the Oslo speech, Holder outlined the United States' then four-pronged strategy to counter violent extremism: (1) Criminalizing the providing of "material support to terrorist organizations," (2) ensuring the proper law enforcement "investigative tools and techniques that are both effective and protective of individual rights and the rule of law," (3) cultivating international cooperation, such as using Interpol notices, and (4) public engagement. On the last point, he noted, "We must seek to stop individuals from becoming radicalized in the first place by putting in place strong programs to counter violent extremism in its earliest stages."<sup>52</sup>

In keeping with the spirit of this final point, General Holder announced the Pilot Projects to Counter Violent Extremism program on September 15, 2014. With this program, the Department of Justice will

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...partnering with the White House, the Department of Homeland Security, and the National Counterterrorism Center to launch a new series of pilot programs in cities

across the nation. These programs will bring together community representatives, public safety officials, religious leaders, and United States Attorneys to improve local engagement; to counter violent extremism; and — ultimately — to build a broad network of community partnerships to keep our nation safe.<sup>53</sup>

He noted that since 2012, U.S. Attorneys have held or attended 1,700 engagements to raise trust and awareness. In addition, he mentioned that there will be a Countering Violent Extremism Summit at the White House in 2014.

Reports suggest these pilot projects will begin in Boston, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis.<sup>54</sup> As President Obama stated in his address before the UN Security Council Summit on Foreign Terrorist Fighters last week, such community engagement is key because

Often it is local communities — family, friends, neighbors, and faith leaders — that are best able to identify and help disillusioned individuals before they succumb to extremist ideologies and engage in violence. That's why the United States government is committed to working with communities in America and around the world to build partnerships of trust, respect and cooperation.<sup>55</sup>

But will this be effective in the United States? Civil libertarians have concerns with this program, to be sure. Still, community outreach might be able to spread awareness of potential warning signs among particularly vulnerable communities. The case of Fadi Fadi Dandach, an Orange County man who allegedly wanted to fight for ISIS, shows the importance of tips from family members.<sup>56</sup>

The FBI, for its part, has launched an initiative identifying fighters who have traveled to Syria. "We need the public's assistance in identifying U.S. persons going to fight overseas with terrorist groups or who are returning home from fighting overseas," said Michael Steinbach, the assistant director of the FBI's Counterterrorism Division. They have released a video in October 2014 of potentially an American foreign fighter to the public in hopes of someone recognizing the individual.<sup>57</sup>

The Department of Homeland Security is also attempting to limit those with violent extremist beliefs from entering the United States through countries from which a visa is not required. They have added additional questions to the U.S. Visa Waiver Program, which

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requires visitors from these countries to file an electronic application before entering the U.S. This program is aimed at preventing foreign fighters who have returned to their original countries from entering the U.S and possibly plotting an attack on American soil. The additional questions will also help the DHS track potential terrorists.<sup>58</sup>

Last, but not least, on the legislative side Senator Ted Cruz (Republican-Texas) introduced legislation similar to that of Canada—that will be turned to in a moment—in which he proposed that those who fight abroad with terrorist organizations have thus renounced their U.S. Citizenship.<sup>59</sup> Senator Cruz was seeking unanimous passage, but the bill did not pass.

*Canada.* Canada has worked towards limiting the number of foreign fighters who travel to or back into the country. Their efforts include invalidating passports, under the Canadian Passport Order, and attempts at revoking citizenship.<sup>60</sup> It is illegal in Canada to leave the country to commit terrorist acts, and the government has the authority to remove citizenship from suspected foreign fighters.<sup>61</sup> Prime Minister Stephen Harper was quoted saying that he will continue to “monitor and take action against both organizations and individuals who may undertake activities that are potentially threatening to Canadians.”<sup>62</sup>

But revoking or denying passports to potential extremists may have an unintended consequence. Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, the man who killed a Canadian soldier at the War Memorial and then shot up the Parliament in Ottawa, had applied for a passport seemingly to go and fight in Syria,<sup>63</sup> but his name had recently been added to a list of so-called “high-risk” travelers.<sup>64</sup> The Royal Canadian Mounted Police are investigating 93 such individuals who they suspect may try to go and fight in Syria or other locations.<sup>65</sup> It is unclear whether he had connections to a wider physical network of extremists, but U.S. counterterrorism officials linked him with the Canadian foreign fighter Hasibullah Yusufzai through social media.<sup>66</sup> Martin Couture-Rouleau, the man who killed and injured another Canadian soldier by running them down with his car, for his part, had had his passport seized at the airport when he tried to fly to Turkey to go and fight in Syria and was detained for questioning before he was later released.

Individuals who keep a low profile and exercise personal discipline in not raising red flags, however, are more difficult to stop. If someone cannot be directly linked to a terrorist organization, the only other law designed to prevent Canadians from fighting with foreign militias is Canada’s Foreign Enlistment Act of 1937. It was created in response to the amount of Canadians traveling to take part in the Spanish Civil War. However, the law is not applicable to the current foreign fighter situation because its legal language is

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outdated.<sup>67</sup> But the shock of the dual attacks in October 2014 may change the political landscape for enforcing tougher laws.

### ***Policy Prescriptions and Conclusions***

One may ask if perhaps too much is made of the small numbers of foreign fighters leaving and returning to the United States and Canada. After all, if the numbers of violent extremists returning to both countries are only 11 percent of the totals as Hegghammer has illustrated then perhaps it makes more sense to deal with the threat posed by them in a calm and measured approach. That may seem practical and the best course of action by some, but politicians, bureaucrats, spies, diplomats, soldiers, and law enforcement personnel operating in the post-9/11 security environment in the US and the post-October 2014 period in Canada seem unwilling to try to deescalate threat concerns on their watches. As the old saw goes the counterterrorists have to be perfect all the time while the terrorists only need to succeed some of the time in order to press their goals.

Still, there seems to be room for some recalibration in both nations' policies while remaining vigilant. One area may be in not conflating all of those who go overseas to fight as potential severe threats. Perhaps a better approach is to allow some who have gone overseas to return home and be placed under close supervision until it can be ascertained as to whether they harbor any will to launch attacks in both countries. Canada's practice of revoking passports might better mitigate the ability of individuals to go overseas to build human networks and to acquire lethal combat skills and experience, but it might also redirect some of that radicalism at home. This is problematic and raises the possibility that more low-level "propaganda of the deed"-style attacks might be launched to instill fear and to whip up a frenzy of conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims.

While some (many?) returnees may disagree with elements of American or Canadian foreign policy that does not necessarily mean that they will launch attacks. Furthermore, allowing back those that went overseas and became disillusioned might help to de-tooth concerns that led some to become radicalized in the first place and their messages about the real experiences of fighting overseas may dissuade others who are on a path to violent radicalization. Such authentic narratives would likely carry significantly more credibility than public diplomacy narratives that might sound good to their creators but come off as tin eared to the actual target audiences.

An alternative approach that might prove more effective would include passive programs that are privately run. An example of such a passive approach is the Hayat Program (*hayat* is

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both the Arabic and Turkish word for life) of the Institute for the Study of Radical Movements.<sup>68</sup> The Hayat Program is based on the Exit Germany program, which was started in 2000 and helps to get people out of neo-Nazi groups. The program has shown positive results, but it is still fairly small-scale.

Hayat is a passive program that works with families who: (1) are worried about family members who might be prone to becoming radicalized, (2) have family members who have been radicalized overseas, and (3) have family members who have returned from fighting abroad. The program is both anonymous and free of charge. It works with families to assess whether there is a problem with radicalization, determine driving factors for such radicalization, identify possible de-radicalization or counter-radicalization solutions, provide alternative options for vulnerable individuals, work on societal reintegration, and deal with matters like returnees with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Such counseling may take between three and four years, and some individuals may be irreconcilable, but a benefit of this program is that it might be able to reach and work with individuals who are not even on the radar of the law enforcement or intelligence communities. That in and of itself may make the application of such programs overseas worthwhile, particularly in the West, where the features of self-radicalization mean that family members are much more likely than government authorities to detect important warning signs.

None of the above is meant to discount the seriousness of the threat posed. Responding to the outflow issue will rightly be the concern of law enforcement, intelligence, and in some cases, counterterrorism forces. While the number of Western fighters may be small, and the number committed to taking the fight to the West smaller still, there are legitimate concerns that ISIL will plot attacks in the West. (Additionally, threats involving foreign fighters are not exclusively linked to ISIL; al Qaeda may try launch a large attack in the West to reassert itself out from ISIL's shadow and to attract donors.<sup>69</sup> This is why the U.S. hit al Nusra and Khorosan Group targets in Syria during the initial stage of airstrikes in Syria).<sup>70</sup> The United States and other Western states will need to use all of the tools at their disposal to mitigate the third foreign fighter glut. Bombs, bullets, and bracelets (i.e., handcuffs) will not be enough to cope with the problem. Education and outreach will also be crucial to defuse the hate, confusion, and other driving factors of the vulnerable. If Hegghammer's 11 percent is an accurate estimation and applicable to the current cohort of foreign fighters, then working to adjust it downward in any way will be good for the public's safety and peace of mind. Most importantly, finding ways to decrease Hegghammer's percentage will weaken the third foreign fighter glut that currently threatens to exacerbate regional and international security tensions. Taking a proactive approach at home to stem recruitment — and denying jihadists the safe haven they seek abroad — may prevent an attack.

**Appendix  
Foreign Fighter Character Profiles**

<u>Name:</u>	Ahmad Waseem
<u>Hometown:</u>	Windsor, Ontario
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Charged with passport fraud.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Unknown
<u>Status:</u>	Fighting in Syria.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Waseem traveled to Syria multiple times, potentially with extremist groups. However, the groups he is known to be associated with are not on a list of terrorist organizations recognized by Canada and thus he is technically not engaged in illegal activity because being a member of a foreign militia is not illegal.

<u>Name:</u>	Farah Shirdon
<u>Hometown:</u>	Toronto then Calgary, Canada.
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	History of dealing drugs as a teenager.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Somali
<u>Status:</u>	Originally pronounced dead in August 2014 but currently with IS in Iraq.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Shirdon says that his extremism began after watching the victimization of Muslims after 9/11. He says he was not recruited and came after being inspired by the Quran; he was known to challenge speakers openly in Muslim seminars and his twitter statuses were becoming more and more disturbing.

<u>Name:</u>	John "Yahya" Maguire
<u>Hometown:</u>	Ottawa, Canada
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Charged because of his association with a terrorist organization.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Fighting with IS in Syria
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Like other foreign fighters, he believed Canada had become too corrupt and traveled to Syria to fight with IS. Maguire had family issues and was mostly

	raised by his grandparents.
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<u>Name:</u>	Andre Poulin (Abu Muslim)
<u>Hometown:</u>	Timmins, Ontario
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Poulin was arrested several times. In particular, he threatened a man who he lived with on multiple occasions. On one incident, he had a box cutter and another weapon.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in battle.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Andre was one of the first to encourage foreigners to join IS in the English language. He was a janitor before joining IS. According to the video he posted before he died, Andre was distraught that his tax paying dollars were going to fund a war on Islam; he wanted to know what he could do to help the Islamic cause.

<u>Name:</u>	Clement Rodney Hampton-El
<u>Hometown:</u>	Brooklyn, NY
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Convicted for 1993 World Trade Center bombings.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	African American
<u>Status:</u>	Resides in the United States.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Hampton-El went to Afghanistan to help his fellow Muslims against the Russians. He is linked to the 1993 World Trade Center bombings.

<u>Name:</u>	Wadih El Hage
<u>Hometown:</u>	Sidon, Lebanon; moved to Arizona
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Convicted of perjury and conspiracy in the embassy bombings of 1998.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Lebanese
<u>Status:</u>	Serving time in prison.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	El Hage moved to the U.S. from Lebanon. He had traveled to fight in Afghanistan multiple times during the Russian invasion. In 2001, he was

	convicted of perjury and conspiracy.
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<u>Name:</u>	Daniel Boyd
<u>Hometown:</u>	North Carolina
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Boyd was convicted in 2012 for conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists and conspiracy to commit murder, maiming and kidnapping overseas.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Serving time in prison.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	After returning from fighting in Afghanistan, Boyd seemed to live a normal life, but was collecting weapons at his home. He was convicted in 2012 for encouraging his sons to fight jihad with terrorists.

<u>Name:</u>	Omar Hammami; also known as Abu Mansoor Al-Amriki.
<u>Hometown:</u>	Alabama
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Indicted for providing material support to terrorists.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Killed by Al-Shabab.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Hammami joined Al-Shabab and was instrumental in their recruitment of foreign fighters. Eventually, he was killed by Al-Shabab for disagreements he was having with the group's leader.

<u>Name:</u>	Mohammed Loay Bayazid
<u>Hometown:</u>	Kansas City, Missouri
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Arrested under suspicion of funding activities related to terrorism.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Syrian
<u>Status:</u>	Unknown
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	After traveling to Afghanistan for jihad multiple times during the Russian invasion, he became close with Osama Bin Laden during the creation of Al-

	Qaeda.
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<u>Name:</u>	Samir Khan
<u>Hometown:</u>	Queens, NY
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Samir was investigated thoroughly by the FBI and local law enforcement prior to his travel to Yemen.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Saudi born of Pakistani heritage
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in a drone strike.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Khan was an Al-Qaeda sympathizer who traveled to Yemen to fight with their Al- Qaeda affiliate. He was very active in pro-jihadi media like the Inspire magazine which provided jihadi advice.

<u>Name:</u>	Anwar al-Awlaki
<u>Hometown:</u>	Las Cruces, New Mexico
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Previously been arrested in the United States on two different occasions for soliciting prostitutes. He had also been arrested in Yemen.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Family is from Yemen
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in drone strike.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Awlaki was a former imam in California and Virginia where he reportedly met three 9/11 hijackers. Eventually, he went to Yemen where he was Al-Qaeda's spokesperson.

<u>Name:</u>	Adam Gadahn
<u>Hometown:</u>	Winchester, California
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Indicted for treason and providing material support to terrorists.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Fighting with Al-Qaeda.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Gadahn moved to Pakistan in 1998 and has since been a senior member of Al-Qaeda and occasionally posts video messages online.

<u>Name:</u>	Ruben Shumpert
<u>Hometown:</u>	Seattle, Washington
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes

<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Shumpert pleaded guilty to gun and counterfeiting charges.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	African American
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in a missile strike.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Shortly after pleading guilty to gun and counterfeiting charges, Shumpert traveled to Somalia to join jihadists. The FBI began tracking him because there were reports of pro-jihadi talk in the barber shop he owned.

<u>Name:</u>	Moe Abdullah Mohammed
<u>Hometown:</u>	Somalia, then Canada
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Unknown
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Somali
<u>Status:</u>	Founder of Generation Islam, an organization that focuses on de-radicalizing youth.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Mohammed went to Somalia during the Ethiopian invasion and returned to Canada immediately after; he would go on to found Generation Islam, an organization focused on de-radicalizing youth.

<u>Name:</u>	Muhammed Elmi Ibrahim
<u>Hometown:</u>	Scarborough, Canada
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	No
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Somali
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in Somalia.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Ibrahim went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and did not return with his companions. He was a student who attended his mosque frequently until he began college. He died fighting for Al Shabab in Somalia.

<u>Name:</u>	Chris Jeon
<u>Hometown:</u>	Orange County, California
<u>Convert:</u>	Unknown
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Unknown
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Asian American
<u>Status:</u>	Studying at UCLA

<u>Details and Motives:</u>	He was interning in a financial firm when he realized that his life was not exciting. He traveled to Libya to fight with freedom fighters over the summer.
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<u>Name:</u>	Ahmed Said Khadr
<u>Hometown:</u>	Originally Egyptian, but moved to Canada.
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	He was arrested on suspicion of funding the bombing of an Egyptian Embassy, but was released.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Egyptian
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in Afghanistan.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Khadr originally went to Afghanistan to fight off the Russian invasion. There, he met Osama Bin Laden and is said to have been a founding member of Al-Qaeda.

<u>Name:</u>	Maiwand Yar
<u>Hometown:</u>	Canada
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Wanted by Royal Canadian Mountain Police (RCMP) for terrorist activity.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Pakistani
<u>Status:</u>	Unknown
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	He and Ferid Imam traveled to Pakistan to receive terrorist training and to align themselves with the Taliban. He is still wanted by Canadian police.

<u>Name:</u>	Ferid Imam
<u>Hometown:</u>	Canada
<u>Convert:</u>	Unknown
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Wanted in the U.S. for providing material support to Al-Qaeda and wanted in Canada for traveling to Pakistan for terrorist training.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Unknown
<u>Status:</u>	Unknown
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	He attempted to train three individuals for acts of terrorism in the New York Subway system. No one has heard from him since traveling to Pakistan.

<u>Name:</u>	Hasibullah Yusufzai
<u>Hometown:</u>	Burnaby, B.C
<u>Convert:</u>	No

<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Charged with joining a terrorist group.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Afghani
<u>Status:</u>	Currently fighting in Syria.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	He grew up wanting to be a police officer and was not known as a religious person, but over time began to grow a beard and wear traditional garb. He was seemingly frustrated with his inability to fully express his religious beliefs in Canada.

<u>Name:</u>	Salman Ashrafi
<u>Hometown:</u>	Calgary, Canada
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	No
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Pakistani
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in suicide bombing.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Ashrafi was about to start an MBA program when he suddenly left his family; he killed 19 Iraqis in a suicide bombing. How his conversion came about is unknown.

<u>Name:</u>	Damian Clairmont; also known as Mustafa al-Gharib.
<u>Hometown:</u>	Calgary, Canada
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Unknown
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in Syria.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Al-Gharib had been bipolar, and attempted suicide at age 17; originally, his family thought that a conversion to Islam would calm him down. He told his mother he would travel to Egypt to be an imam but instead went to Syria.

<u>Name:</u>	Douglas McAuthur McCain
<u>Hometown:</u>	Minneapolis suburbs then moved to San Diego, California.
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	He had previously been arrested for disorderly conduct and obstruction.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	African American
<u>Status:</u>	Killed fighting with IS.

<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Before traveling to Syria, McCain was actively supporting IS on social media. He was killed fighting for IS.
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<u>Name:</u>	Moner Mohammad Abu-Salha
<u>Hometown:</u>	West Palm Beach, Florida
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Unknown
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	American mother and Palestinian father.
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in suicide bombing.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Abu-Salha told his family he would study nursing in Jordan but instead joined the Al Nusra Front. He was inspired by Anwar Al-Awlaki and killed 37 people driving a truck bomb into a restaurant.

<u>Name:</u>	Ali Mohamed Dirie
<u>Hometown:</u>	Markham, Ontario
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Convicted for smuggling weapons for the Toronto 18 terrorist plot.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Somali
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in Syria.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Dirie has not been seen since traveling to Kenya. He had previously been convicted for smuggling weapons and fled the country on a fake passport.

<u>Name:</u>	Ahmad Al-Mohifi
<u>Hometown:</u>	Brooklyn, NY
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Currently being investigated by the NYPD.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Yemeni
<u>Status:</u>	Resides in Yemen.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Al-Mohifi, a restaurant owner in Brooklyn, caught the eye of the NYPD after a number of posts on Facebook in which it seemed he was leading a large group of men into battle. He is most likely with the Omar al-Mukhtar Battalion, a rebel group with ties to the U.S. backed Free Syrian Army. He married a Syrian refugee and moved to Yemen.

### Potential Foreign Fighter Character Profiles

<u>Name:</u>	Martin Couture-Rouleau; also known as Ahmad the Converted.
<u>Hometown:</u>	Quebec, Canada
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes.
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Couture-Rouleau was being investigated by Quebec police.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Killed in police chase.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Martin killed a Canadian soldier in a hit and run. The attack was "clearly linked to terrorist ideology" according to Steven Blaney, Canada's Public Safety Minister. He had been monitored by the government, and his passport had been revoked, preventing his travel abroad. He is known as a lone wolf, with no known links to terrorist organizations.

<u>Name:</u>	Michael Zehaf-Bibeau
<u>Hometown:</u>	Has lived in Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver.
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes.
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Zehaf-Bibeau had pleaded guilty to drug possession and was found guilty for threats he made in Vancouver.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	His father is Libyan and his mother is Canadian.
<u>Status:</u>	Killed.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Michael shot and killed a soldier at a War Memorial then started firing shots in Parliament. Shooting occurred days after Martin Couture-Rouleau's hit and run, although there is no evidence to connect the two incidents; he tried to obtain a passport in the past, but his efforts failed.

<u>Name:</u>	Three Unidentified Teenage Girls
<u>Hometown:</u>	Denver, Colorado
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	No
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	One was Sudanese and the other two were Somali.
<u>Status:</u>	Intercepted at Frankfurt Airport en route to Turkey.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	The three girls played hooky in order to join IS in Syria. They made it to Turkey before they were intercepted and brought back to the United States. Their parents are shocked and are unsure of how their children became radicalized. The teenagers are suspected to have been radicalized online.

<u>Name:</u>	Colleen LaRose; also known as "Jihad Jane."
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<u>Hometown:</u>	Suburban Philadelphia
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Convicted of a terrorism related offense.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Serving time in prison.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	LaRose converted to Islam online and was involved in a plot to kill a Swedish artist who depicted the Prophet Muhammad inappropriately.

<u>Name:</u>	Zale Thompson
<u>Hometown:</u>	Unknown
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Arrested six times in California prior.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	African American
<u>Status:</u>	Shot and killed at the scene.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Thompson attacked two police officers with a hatchet. In the nine months prior, he had visited “277 sites” that had something to do with radical ideology. He was a lone wolf and does not seem to have any connection with terrorist organizations.

<u>Name:</u>	Mohammad Hassan Khalid
<u>Hometown:</u>	Ellicott City, Maryland
<u>Convert:</u>	Unknown
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Convicted with others in a plot to kill a Swedish artist.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Pakistani
<u>Status:</u>	Serving prison time.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Khalid was convicted before reaching adulthood. He was an honors student who met Jihad Jane online when he was 15 and helped her plot the killing of a Swedish artist who inappropriately depicted the Prophet Muhammad.

<u>Name:</u>	Mohammed Hamzah Khan
<u>Hometown:</u>	Bolingbrook, Illinois
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Arrested for attempting to aid ISIS.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Unknown

<u>Status:</u>	Arrested at O'Hare Airport.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Mohammed was detained in Chicago as he was planning to fly to Vienna and then travel to Syria to join IS. He was quoted saying, "We are all witness that the Western societies are getting more immoral day by day...I do not want my kids being exposed to filth like this." He said he met someone online who provided him with the contact information of someone in Turkey who could help him arrive in Syria. It is unknown how he was radicalized.

<u>Name:</u>	Alton Nolen; also known as Jah'Keem Yisrael.
<u>Hometown:</u>	Oklahoma
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Drug charges and resisting arrest.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	African American
<u>Status:</u>	Killed by another in self-defense.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	He beheaded a worker at a food processing plant which he had recently been fired from, and attacked another one before being shot and killed by the CEO. He had no immediate connection or alliance to a radical terrorist organization, but he is seen on his Facebook page forming the IS sign with his fingers. He was fired in part because he attempted to convert fellow employees to Islam.

<u>Name:</u>	Jesse Curtis Morton; also known as Younus Abdullah Mohammad.
<u>Hometown:</u>	Brooklyn, NY
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Convicted of threatening those he considered were "enemies of Islam".
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Serving prison time.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	He and two others were charged with threatening the creators of South Park and others who mocked Islam through their website <a href="http://www.revolutionmuslim.com">www.revolutionmuslim.com</a> . They are still serving time in prison.

<u>Name:</u>	Zachary Adam Chesser; also known as Abu Talhah Al-Amrikee
<u>Hometown:</u>	Fairfax County, VA
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Convicted of threatening creators of South Park and others he considered "enemies of Islam"
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian

<u>Status:</u>	Serving prison time.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	He is known for threatening the creators of South Park for depicting the Prophet Muhammad as a bear, as well as threatening Jews and others.

<u>Name:</u>	Mohamed Hersi
<u>Hometown:</u>	Canada
<u>Convert:</u>	No
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Convicted of attempting to join a terrorist group.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Somali
<u>Status:</u>	Serving prison time.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Mohamed was on his way to Cairo when he was arrested at Toronto's Pearson International Airport. It is believed he was on route to Somalia.

<u>Name:</u>	Mohamed Alessa and Carlos Almonte
<u>Hometown:</u>	Bergen, NJ
<u>Convert:</u>	Unknown
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Accused of attempting to join a terrorist group.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Alessa is born to Palestinian immigrants while Almonte is from the Dominican Republic.
<u>Status:</u>	Awaiting trial.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Alessa and Almonte were planning on taking a flight to Cairo and then traveling to Somalia for terrorism training. They were intercepted at New York's Kennedy Airport.

<u>Name:</u>	Fadi Fadi Dandach
<u>Hometown:</u>	Orange Country, California.
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	On trial for passport fraud.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	African American
<u>Status:</u>	Killed fighting with IS.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	His intention was to fly to Turkey and join IS; when his mother found out, she took his passport. He told authorities he had lost his passport. He was apprehended at John Wayne airport.

<u>Name:</u>	Don Morgan
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<u>Hometown:</u>	North Carolina
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Arrested for carrying a gun while previously being arrested for a felony (illegal).
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Awaiting trial.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	He had pledged allegiance to IS and would have traveled to Syria but did not have the funds to do it. He is charged for trying to sell a rifle online, and not for terrorism charges.

<u>Name:</u>	Shannon Conley
<u>Hometown:</u>	Denver, Colorado
<u>Convert:</u>	Yes
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Conley pleaded guilty to conspiracy.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Caucasian
<u>Status:</u>	Serving time in prison.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Conley planned to marry a Tunisian man, who was fighting in Syria for IS; she met him online, and was planning to use her military training to help their cause.

<u>Name:</u>	Michael Todd Wolf
<u>Hometown:</u>	Houston, Texas
<u>Convert:</u>	Unknown
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Pleaded guilty to providing material support to terrorists.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Unknown
<u>Status:</u>	Serving time in prison.
<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Wolf tried to use a \$5,000 federal income tax refund to travel to Syria and was looking for a contact to help; the contact was an FBI agent.

<u>Name:</u>	Rahatul Ashikim Khan
<u>Hometown:</u>	Round Rock, Texas
<u>Convert:</u>	Unknown
<u>Criminal Record:</u>	Accused of conspiring to provide material support to terrorists.
<u>Race/Ethnicity:</u>	Unknown
<u>Status:</u>	Serving time in prison.

<u>Details and Motives:</u>	Khan tried to recruit others to join terrorist groups and to wage jihad; Khan said that “he could not wait to spill blood.” His plan was to join Al Shabab.
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<sup>1</sup> Some of the material in this article draws upon Michael P. Noonan’s presentations for the European Foundation for Democracy in Brussels, Belgium on 23-24 September 2014, blog entries at U.S. News & World Report and War on the Rocks, and on his piece “Disrupting the Foreign Fighter Flow,” *FPRI E-Notes*, October 2009. Accessible at: <http://www.fpri.org/articles/2009/10/disrupting-foreign-fighter-flow>.

<sup>2</sup> Michael P. Noonan, Ph.D., is the Director of Research and Director of the Program on National Security at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. He is the editor of the FPRI reports *The Foreign Fighters Problem, Recent Trends and Case Studies: Selected Essays* (2011) and *Foreign Fighters, Sovereignty, and Counter-Terrorism: Selected Essays* (2010) and is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

<sup>3</sup> Phyl Khalil is completing an MPA from the Fels Institute of Government at the University of Pennsylvania and served as a Research Assistant in the Program on National Security at FPRI.

<sup>4</sup> See: [http://davidmalet.com/The\\_Foreign\\_Fighter\\_Project.php](http://davidmalet.com/The_Foreign_Fighter_Project.php). See also his “Foreign Fighters: Transnational Identity in Civil Conflicts,” Ph.D. dissertation, The George Washington University, 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Office of the Press Secretary, “FACT SHEET: Comprehensive U.S. Government Approach to Foreign Terrorist Fighters in Syria and the Broader Region,” The White House, September 24, 2014. Accessible at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/24/fact-sheet-comprehensive-us-government-approach-foreign-terrorist-fighte>.

<sup>6</sup> Clint Watts, “Countering Terrorism from the Second Foreign Fighter Glut,” *Small Wars Journal*, 2009. Accessible at: <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/247-watts.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Hegghammer, “The Rise of Muslim Foreign Fighters: Islam and the Globalization of Jihad,” *International Security*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (Winter 2010/11), p. 53.

<sup>8</sup> Figures cited by David Malet during panel one of the FPRI “The Foreign Fighter Problem” conference. Available at: <http://www.fpri.org/multimedia/20090714.foreignfighterphenomenon.html>.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Hegghammer, “Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists’ Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting,” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 107, No. 1 (February 2013), p. 111.

<sup>10</sup> “It ain’t half hot here, mum,” *The Economist*, April 30, 2014. Accessible at: <http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21614226-why-and-how-westerners-go-fight-syria-and-iraq-it-aint-half-hot-here-mum>.

<sup>11</sup> Jomana Karadsheh, Jim Sciutto and Laura Smith-Spark, “How foreign fighters are swelling ISIS ranks in startling numbers,” CNN.com, September 14, 2014. Accessible at: [http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/12/world/meast/isis-numbers/index.html?hpt=hp\\_t2](http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/12/world/meast/isis-numbers/index.html?hpt=hp_t2).

<sup>12</sup> “Canada revokes passports of suspected foreign fighters,” *The Economist Intelligence Unit*, September 23, 2014. Accessible at: <http://country.eiu.com/article.aspx?articleid=1632309547andCountry=Canadaandtopic=Politicsandsubtopic=Foreca standssubsubtopic=International+relationsandu=1andpid=912296075andoid=912296075anduid=1>.

<sup>13</sup> Brian Bennett and Richard A. Serrano, “More Western fighters joining militants in Iraq and Syria,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 19, 2014. Accessible at: <http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-foreign-fighters-20140720-story.html#page=1>.

<sup>14</sup> Christopher Dickey, “French Jihadi Mehdi Nemmouche Is the Shape of Terror to Come,” *The Daily Beast*, September 9, 2014. Accessible at: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/09/09/the-face-of-isis-terror-to-come.html>.

<sup>15</sup> Jonathan Pearlman, “Australia foils Islamic State terror plot to commit Lee Rigby-style murders,” *The Telegraph*, September 18, 2014. Accessible at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/australiaandthepacific/australia/11103346/Australia-foils-Islamic-State-terror-plot-to-commit-Lee-Rigby-style-murders.html>.

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- <sup>16</sup> David Malet, "Why Foreign Fighters? Historical Perspectives and Solutions," *Orbis* (Winter 2010).
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> See, for instance, "It ain't half hot here, mum," *The Economist*.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup> Eline Gordts, "15,000 Foreign Fighters Have Joined Extremist Groups In Iraq And Syria. Here's Why They Went," *The Huffington Post*, November 11, 2014. Accessible at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/11/08/foreign-fighters-iraq-syria\\_n\\_6116440.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/11/08/foreign-fighters-iraq-syria_n_6116440.html).
- <sup>22</sup> Watts, *Countering Terrorism from the Second Foreign Fighter Glut*.
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