

EXTREMISM AND DOMESTIC TERRORISM

Struggle between extreme and moderate Islam

Over half of Canadians believe there is a struggle in Canada between moderate Muslims and extremist Muslims. Fewer than half of Muslims agree, and a large majority of this group identify as moderates.

As terror perpetrated in the name of Islam has preoccupied much of the world over the last five years, there has been debate both within and outside the Muslim world about whether extremism is growing among Muslims – and even whether extremism threatens to engulf the international Muslim community. Some claim that terror perpetrated by Muslims is a fringe movement that has little to do with Islam per se or the wider Muslim community. Others argue that terror is simply the most obvious manifestation of a hardening and growing extremist movement in Islam – an extremism which moderate Muslims must be prepared to contend with in their own communities.

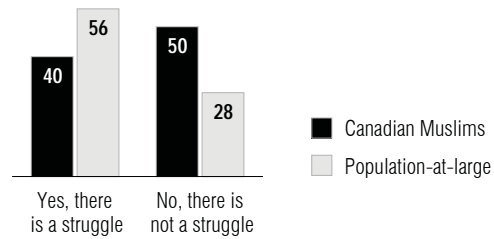
Canadians at large are more likely than Canadian Muslims to believe that there is a struggle afoot *in Canada* between moderate and extremist Muslims. A small majority of the general public (56%) believe that such a struggle is taking place. About one in six (16%) do not know whether such a struggle is afoot, and just over a quarter (28%) believe that there is no such struggle in the Canadian Muslim community.

By contrast, among Muslims only four in ten (40%) believe that moderate and extremist Muslims are engaged in a struggle in Canada, while half (50%) doubt that this is so and one in ten are unsure.

Notably, it is Canadians with higher levels of educational attainment who are most likely to believe that moderate and extremist Muslims are engaged in a struggle in Canada. About six in ten Canadians who have completed at least some post-secondary

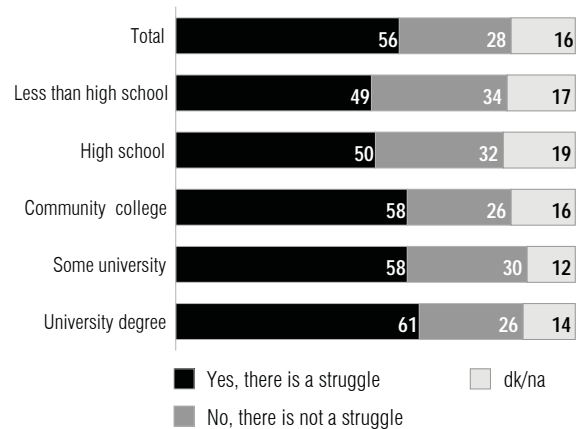
Struggle in Canada between moderate and extremist Muslims

December 2006



Struggle in Canada between moderate and extremist Muslims

Population-at-large By education December 2006



Q.M26/FC43

Do you think there is a struggle in Canada between moderate Muslims and extremist Muslims or don't you think so?

education believe such a struggle is afoot, as compared to half of those who have completed high school or less.

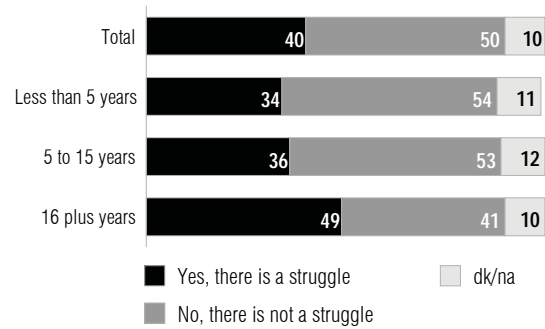
Among those born outside Canada, there is a marked difference of opinion about whether Muslims in Canada are engaged in a struggle between moderation and extremism. Among immigrants with origins in Europe, six in ten (59%) believe that moderate and extremist Muslims are engaged in a struggle, while a quarter (23%) see no struggle and one in five (18%) do not know. Among non-European immigrants, opinion is divided, with 46 percent seeing a struggle and 45 percent seeing none. A smaller proportion of non-European immigrants (9%) offer no opinion.

Some marked differences emerge among Canadian Muslims on the question of whether, among their co-religionists in Canada, moderates and extremists are engaged in a struggle. Muslims who have lived in Canada the longest are the most likely to believe that there is a struggle afoot in the Canadian Muslim community. Among those who have been in Canada 16 years or longer, the proportion seeing a struggle (49%) lies almost dead centre between the national average and the Muslim average.

Muslims with higher incomes are more likely to see a struggle between moderate and extreme Islam. Half (50%) of those earning more than \$60,000 annually see such a struggle, as compared to a third (34%) of those earning less than \$30,000 annually. Those with incomes under \$30,000 are only slightly more likely to state that no struggle is taking place within the Canadian Muslim community, but considerably more likely (12% versus 3%) to say they do not know. Canadian Muslim women (45%) are more likely than

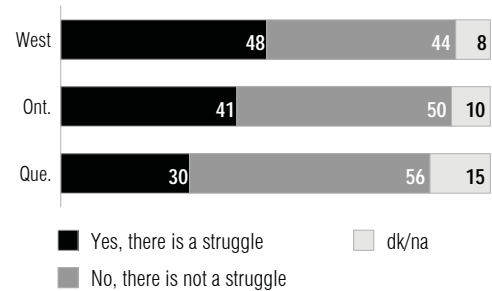
Struggle in Canada between moderate and extremist Muslims

Canadian Muslims By years in Canada
December 2006



Struggle in Canada between moderate and extremist Muslims

Canadian Muslims By region December 2006



Q.M26

Do you think there is a struggle in Canada between moderate Muslims and extremist Muslims or don't you think so?

men (35%) to see a struggle between moderation and extremism.

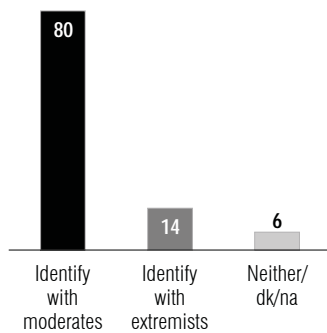
Views on this issue also vary by sect. Shia Muslims (48%)¹³ are more likely than Sunni Muslims (36%) to believe that a struggle between moderates and extremists is taking place in Canada. Because Shia

13 Small sample size (n=73) – interpret with caution.

Muslims are more heavily concentrated in the west, this difference may partially explain the higher than average proportion of Muslims in the Western provinces (48%)¹⁴ who see a struggle between moderate and extreme Islam in Canada. Ontario Muslims (41%) are more likely than Quebec Muslims (30%) to believe that such a struggle is taking place among Muslims in Canada.

Of the minority of Muslims who believe there is a struggle in Canada between moderate Muslims and extremist Muslims, eight in ten (80%) say they personally identify more with the moderates, while 14 percent identify with the extremists. Two percent identify with neither side and four percent offer no opinion.

Identify more with moderates or extremists?
Canadian Muslims December 2006



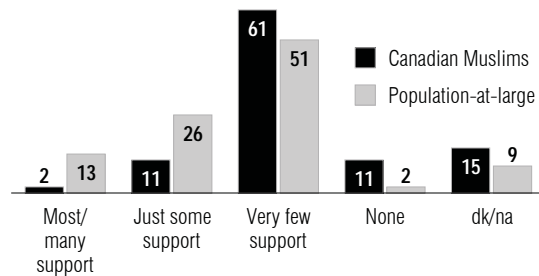
Q.M27
Which side do you identify with more in this struggle, moderate Muslims or extremist Muslims?
Subsample: Those who believe there is a struggle between moderate and extremist Muslims in Canada

Canadians overall believe there is little support for extremist groups such as al-Qaeda among Canadian Muslims; Canadian Muslims themselves see even less.

Among public voices purporting to represent Muslims in Canada, there tends to be conflicting representations of attitudes. Leaders of Muslim organizations in Canada argue that extremism is rare among Muslims, yet extremists themselves often claim to represent and fight on behalf of a wider, generally international, Muslim community. Both Canadian Muslims and the public-at-large believe that, in fact, support for extremism among Muslims in this country exists but is minimal.

Only a small minority of Canadians (13%) believe that “most” or “many” Muslims in Canada support Islamic extremists such as al-Qaeda, while most believe that support for extremist groups is limited to just some Muslims (26%), very few (51%) or none at all (2%).

Perceived support for extremists like al-Qaeda
December 2006



Q.M27.1/FC44
In your opinion, how many Muslims in Canada support Islamic extremists like al-Qaeda? Would you say most, many, just some, or very few?

14 Small sample size (n=85) – interpret with caution.

Canadians who believe that large proportions of Muslims in Canada support extremist groups such as al-Qaeda tend to have low levels of personal contact with Muslims and negative impressions of Islam as a religion. Among Canadians who have frequent personal contact with Muslims, six in ten (62%) believe that very few Muslims in Canada support extremism, while among Canadians who have no personal contact with Muslims, that proportion is just four in ten (39%). Among those with a negative impression of Islam, about a third (36%) believe that very few Muslims support extremist groups, while a quarter believe that most or many Canadian Muslims support such groups. Among those with a positive view of Islam, however, just six percent believe most or many Canadian Muslims support extremism, while fully two-thirds estimate that very few Muslims do. Perhaps surprisingly, Canadians who think there is a struggle between moderate and extreme Islam in Canada are no more likely than those who see no such struggle to believe that extremism enjoys considerable support among Canadian Muslims.

Among Canadian Muslims, estimates of support for extremism are lower still: just two percent believe that most or many Muslims support extremists like al-Qaeda, and only one in ten (11%) believe there is some support. A majority believe very few (61%) or no (11%) Muslims support extremists.

Compared to four European countries surveyed by the Pew Global Attitudes Project, Canadians at large and Canadian Muslims are the least likely to believe that Muslims in their country support extremist organizations such as al-Qaeda. (See table on p.112)

Canadians with higher levels of education are less likely to believe there is widespread support among Canadian Muslims for extremist groups. Just six percent of those with university degrees believe that most (1%) or many (5%) Canadian Muslims support extremists. The proportion among those with less than a high school diploma is one in five (10% most, 12% many). Younger Canadians are also less likely to estimate strong support among Muslims in Canada for extremism. Canadians aged 18 to 29 are considerably more likely (59%) than those aged 60 or over (41%) to imagine that “very few” Muslims in this country support extremism.

Among Canadian Muslims, the trend by age is reversed, with older Muslims less likely to see extensive support for Islamic extremists among their co-religionists in Canada: eight in ten Canadian Muslims aged 45 and over (79%) believe that support for groups like al-Qaeda is limited to very few Muslims in Canada or none at all, while the proportion among those aged 18 to 29 is two-thirds (67%).

Muslims who have spent more time in Canada are also less likely to see much support for extremism among their co-religionists. Among those who have lived in Canada for 16 years or longer, eight in ten (80%) believe that very few or none of their Canadian co-religionists support extremism, while two-thirds (67%) of those who have lived in Canada for less than five years say the same. This difference is attributable not so much to newer Canadians making higher estimates of support for extremism in Canada, as to their greater likelihood of saying they do not know how many Canadian Muslims support extremist groups (24%, compared to 9%).

Perceived support among Muslims for extremists like al-Qaeda
2006

	MOST	MANY	JUST SOME	VERY FEW	NONE	DK/NA
Canada						
Muslims	1	1	11	61	11	15
Population-at-large	5	8	26	51	2	9
United States						
Population-at-large	8	11	31	39	n/a	13
Great Britain						
Muslim	6	6	19	54	n/a	15
Population-at-large	9	11	31	41	n/a	8
France						
Muslims	4	5	18	71	n/a	2
Population-at-large	6	14	37	43	n/a	*
Germany						
Muslims	5	7	16	50	n/a	21
Population-at-large	4	14	48	29	n/a	4
Spain						
Muslims	4	8	22	46	n/a	20
Population-at-large	15	26	30	16	n/a	13
Russia						
Population-at-large	8	20	32	28	n/a	13
Egypt						
Population-at-large	6	16	30	46	n/a	3
Turkey						
Population-at-large	2	11	23	42	n/a	22
Indonesia						
Population-at-large	3	11	39	35	n/a	12
India						
Population-at-large	16	25	33	17	n/a	9
Pakistan						
Population-at-large	14	21	17	15	n/a	33
Jordan						
Population-at-large	2	16	33	46	n/a	3
Nigeria						
Muslims	12	44	28	12	n/a	4
Population-at-large	11	34	24	14	n/a	18

Q.M27.1/FC44/Pew
In your opinion, how many Muslims in Canada support Islamic extremists like al-Qaeda? Would you say most, many, just some or very few?
Note: "None" was not an option in the Pew survey.
International data from Pew Research Centre, 2006

* Less than one percent

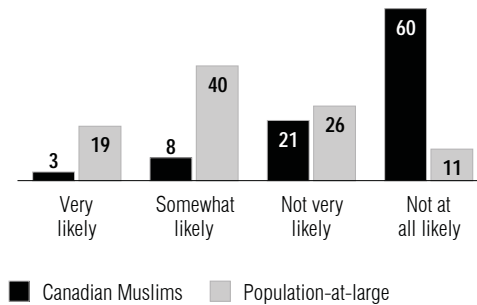
Muslim-initiated terrorism in Canada

Six in ten Canadians feel that a terror attack by Canadians with a Muslim background is likely in the near future. Just one in ten Canadian Muslims share this view.

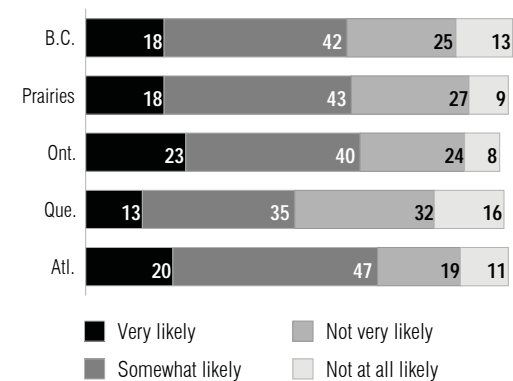
One of the most marked disjunctions between Canadian public opinion overall and opinion among Canadian Muslims relates to the perceived likelihood of a Muslim-initiated terrorist attack perpetrated by Canadians of a Muslim background in the near future.¹⁵

Marked regional differences emerge in Canadians' opinions of the likelihood of a terrorist attack perpetrated by Canadians with a Muslim background. Quebecers, despite their generally more negative impression of Islam and greater concern about Muslim integration, are the least likely to believe that a terrorist attack by Muslims is imminent, while Atlantic Canadians are the most likely to believe that such an attack is probable.

Likelihood of terrorist attack in Canada by Muslim Canadians 2006



Likelihood of terrorist attack in Canada by Muslim Canadians Population-at-large By region 2006



Q.M28/PET74

How likely do you think it is that Canada will experience terrorist attacks in the near future carried out by Canadians with a Muslim background? Is it very, somewhat, not very or not at all likely?

¹⁵ General population data from a FOCUS CANADA 2000-3 omnibus survey for the Pierre Trudeau Foundation. It bears noting that this question was posed to the general population in September and October of 2006, shortly after the June arrests of 18 Muslim men in the Greater Toronto Area on suspicion of terrorist activity, an event which heightened general anxiety about an imminent terror attack. (The question was posed to Canadian Muslims in December 2006 and January 2007.) Still, even in surveys of the general population prior to the Toronto arrests, the proportions of Canadians believing a terrorist attack on Canadian soil to be likely was substantially higher than the proportion of Muslims in this survey.

Among Canadian Muslims, those who are most likely to believe a terrorist attack is likely in the near future are those who have lived in Canada the longest; still, opinion among those with the longest tenure in Canada remains very different from the national average. Among foreign-born Muslims who have lived in Canada for 16 years or more, one in five believe that a terrorist attack perpetrated by Canadian Muslims is very (5%) or somewhat (13%) likely. Among those who have been in Canada less than five years, just

six percent believe an attack to be somewhat likely, and none believe it is very likely. Those with a shorter tenure in Canada are more likely to say they do not know. Similarly, Muslim-Canadians who self-identify primarily as Canadian are more likely (19%) than those who self-identify primarily as Muslim (11%) to see a Muslim-engineered terrorist attack as likely. But across all Muslim subgroups, overwhelming majorities believe such attacks to be unlikely.

Muslims' responsibility to be vigilant about extremism

Almost nine in ten Muslim-Canadians believe that ordinary Muslims have a responsibility to report on potentially violent extremists they may encounter in their communities.

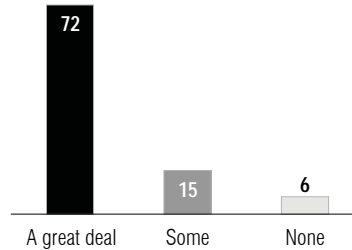
As the relationship between extremism and mainstream Islam is debated both within and outside the Muslim community, questions about law-abiding Muslims' attitudes and responses toward extremism often arise. Some critics claim that moderate Muslims are not sufficiently strenuous in their condemnation of terror carried out in the name of Islam. Others claim that to suggest law-abiding Muslims bear any responsibility for the actions of their radical co-religionists is unjust.

This research finds not only a large majority of Muslims condemning extremist violence, but most agreeing too that ordinary Muslims have a responsibility to report on extremists who might perpetrate violence. Seven in ten Canadian Muslims (72%) say that ordinary, law-abiding Muslims have "a great deal" of responsibility to report on potentially violent extremists they may encounter in their mosques and communities. Just seven percent say that Muslims have no such responsibility (6%) or that "it depends" (1%).

There is a marked regional difference on this issue. The view that Muslims have a great responsibility to be vigilant about extremism is much higher among Ontario Muslims (80%) than among Quebec Muslims (48%). One in five Quebec Muslims (20%) say that Muslims have no responsibility at all to be vigilant or that it depends, compared with just three percent in Ontario and two percent in the western provinces.

Degree of responsibility for reporting potentially violent extremists

Canadian Muslims December 2006



Q.M29

To what extent do you feel that ordinary, law-abiding Muslim-Canadians have a responsibility to report on potentially violent extremists they might encounter in their mosques and communities? Do they have a great deal of responsibility, some responsibility or have no responsibility at all, for reporting on such activity?

In terms of tenure in Canada, those Muslims most likely to say that law-abiding adherents of Islam have a great deal or responsibility to report on potentially violent extremists are those who have lived in Canada longer. Eight in ten Muslims who have lived in Canada for 16 years or longer express this opinion, compared to seven in ten among those who have been in Canada for 15 years or less.

Muslims who attend religious services more frequently are more likely than those who attend services rarely to feel a great deal of responsibility for extremism among their co-religionists. Eight in ten (78%) of those who attend services at least weekly, and just seven in ten (69%) of those who attend rarely or never, say that law-abiding Muslims' responsibility to be vigilant about extremism is a great one.

Most Canadian Muslims are aware of the arrests of 18 Muslim men and boys in the GTA on suspicion of terrorist activity. Very few believe such activity is justified, or have any sympathy for the feelings or motives behind them.

Seventy-five percent of Muslims in Canada have heard about the arrests of a group of Muslim men and boys in the Greater Toronto Area accused of plotting terrorist attacks on Canadian targets; 24 percent are not aware of the arrests.

Awareness of the arrests is higher among those with a longer tenure in Canada; 88 percent of those who have been in the country for 16 years or longer report an awareness of the arrests, as compared to seven in ten of those who have been in Canada for less than 16 years. This disparity is likely a result of longer-standing citizens being more engaged with Canadian news media.

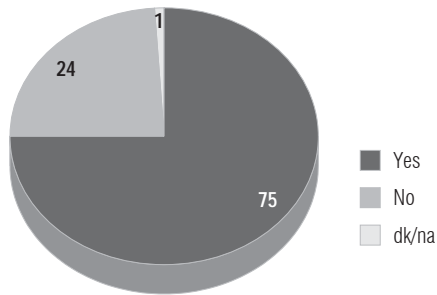
Those who attend religious services frequently are more likely (84%) than those who attend rarely or never (67%) to report an awareness of the arrests, perhaps pointing to discussion of the arrests in mosque communities – either in sermons or in informal discussions among worshippers.

Among those Canadian Muslims who are aware of these arrests, five percent believe the attacks, if carried out, would have been completely justified. An additional seven percent believe the attacks would have been somewhat justified. Three-quarters of Muslims in Canada (73%) say the attacks would have been not at all justified, while a substantial proportion say they do not know (14%) or that it depends (1%).

Younger Muslims are more likely to feel the attacks would have been at least somewhat justified. Among

Heard of arrest of 18 Muslim terrorist suspects in Toronto

Canadian Muslims December 2006

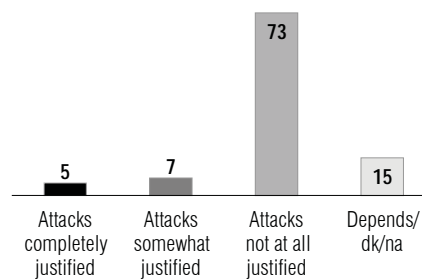


Q.M30

Have you heard about arrests of 18 Muslim boys and men in the Greater Toronto Area earlier this year, who were accused of plotting terrorist attacks on Canadian targets?

Justification for terrorist attacks

Canadian Muslims December 2006



Q.M31

If these attacks had been carried out, do you think they would have been completely justified, somewhat justified, not at all justified?

Subsample: Muslim-Canadians who have heard about the arrests

those aged 18 to 29, 15 percent say the attacks would have been at least somewhat justified, as compared to 12 percent of those aged 30 to 44 and nine percent of those aged 45 and older. Less educated Muslims are also more likely to believe the allegedly planned attacks would have been justified.¹⁶

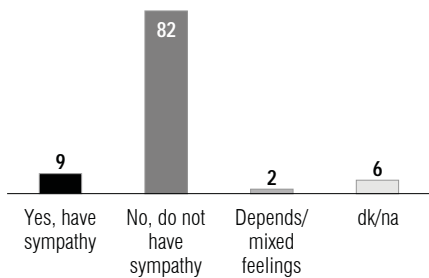
¹⁶ Small sample sizes, particularly in the oldest group (n=76) and the least educated group (n=61) – caution advised in the interpretation of these numbers.

In discussing terror attacks, Muslim commentators are sometimes accused of softening their condemnation of violence with a “yes, but...” What some critics view as qualified condemnations are usually expressions of the frustration Muslims feel at their treatment either in western societies or in international conflicts. Understanding such frustrations, Muslim commentators sometimes counter their critics, is a crucial step in understanding terror. In an effort to understand whether Muslims who condemn terror attacks acknowledge any sympathy with alleged would-be terrorists, FOCUS CANADA asked those who had heard about the arrests, “Whether or not you think the attacks were justified, do you personally have any sympathy with the feelings and motives of those who allegedly wanted to carry them out?”

Nine percent of Canadian Muslims who had heard about the arrests indicate that they have some sympathy with the 18 terror suspects in the GTA, while an additional two percent expressed ambivalence. Eight in ten (82%) say that they have no sympathy at all with those allegedly plotting terrorist attacks on Canadian targets.

Have sympathy with feelings/motives of alleged terrorists

Canadian Muslims December 2006



Q.M32

Whether or not you think the attacks were justified, do you personally have any sympathy with the feelings and motives of those who allegedly wanted to carry them out?

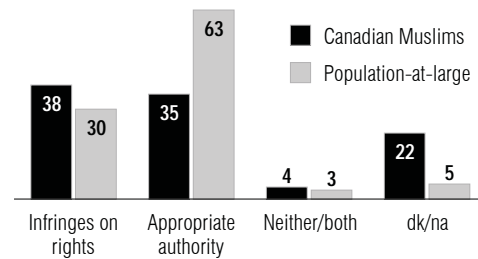
Subsample: Muslim-Canadians who have heard about the arrests

Anti-terrorism legislation

Muslim-Canadians are more likely than other Canadians to believe that the federal government’s anti-terrorism legislation infringes on Canadians’ rights.

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, the effort to find a balance between security measures to protect against terror and the personal freedoms essential to democratic society have preoccupied many countries, including Canada. A modest majority of Canadians (63%) believe that the anti-terrorism legislation passed by the federal government shortly after 9/11 provides the government with the appropriate level of power and authority to counter terrorist activities, while three in ten (30%) believe the legislation infringes too much on Canadians’ rights.¹⁷

Canada’s anti-terrorism laws 2006



Q.M36/FC63-65

As you may know, the federal government passed anti-terrorism legislation shortly after the September 11th attacks in 2001. Some say Canada’s Anti-Terrorism law provides the government with the appropriate level of power and authority to counter terrorist activities in Canada. Others say the law infringes too much upon the civil rights of ordinary Canadians. Which view is closer to your own?

17 General population data from FOCUS CANADA 2006-3.

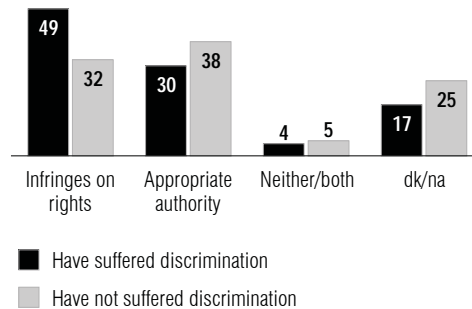
By comparison, Canadian Muslims are markedly less likely to express such approval; the proportion of Muslims believing that Canada's anti-terror legislation grants the government appropriate authority is fully 28 points below the national average (35%), while the proportion believing it goes too far is eight points higher (38%). Muslims in Canada are more than four times as likely (22%) as Canadians at large (5%) to say they do not know whether the power granted by Canada's anti-terrorism legislation is appropriate.

A key factor influencing the views of Muslims on this issue is whether they have been the targets of discrimination in the last two years. Among those Canadian Muslims who say they have had a bad experience in the last two years related to their race, ethnicity or religion, fully half (49%) say that Canada's anti-terrorism legislation infringes too much on citizens' rights, as compared to just a third (32%) of those who report no discrimination in the last two years. Those Canadian Muslims reporting discrimination may feel that the discrimination they experienced was perpetrated under the aegis of anti-terrorism measures, whether codified in actual legislation or not.

Canadian Muslims with higher incomes are markedly more likely to believe that the country's anti-terrorism legislation infringes too much on citizens' rights. Fully half (50%) of those earning more than \$60,000 annually, as compared to 30 percent of those earning less than \$30,000 believe that the anti-terror legislation goes too far. The least affluent are not more likely to say the authority granted by the legislation is appropriate, but are markedly more likely to say they do not know.

Canada's anti-terrorism laws

Canadian Muslims
By discrimination suffered December 2006



Q.M36

As you may know, the federal government passed anti-terrorism legislation shortly after the September 11th attacks in 2001. Some say Canada's Anti-Terrorism law provides the government with the appropriate level of power and authority to counter terrorist activities in Canada. Others say the law infringes too much upon the civil rights of ordinary Canadians. Which view is closer to your own?