

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

Introduction



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Focus

A failed terrorism plot occurred aboard a Northwest Airlines airplane on December 25, 2009, triggering security scares in airports around the world. This incident revealed multiple security and intelligence failures and caused renewed efforts to make air travel safer. In this *News in Review* story we will look at the challenges of preventing terrorist attacks in the air.

Quote

"The best defences against terrorism are largely invisible: investigation, intelligence, and emergency response."
— Bruce Scheier, Security Expert, *New Internationalist*, November 2009

Airports around the world were on emergency alert after a young man from Nigeria allegedly attempted to set off an explosive device as an airplane was preparing to land in Detroit. The 23-year-old alleged would-be bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, began his flight in Amsterdam. As the flight was approaching its landing in Detroit, he allegedly tried to destroy the plane by injecting chemicals into a package of explosives that were concealed in his underwear. The chemicals failed to ignite the explosives, but a small fire was started that had to be extinguished by the crew and passengers. After being charged with attempted murder and attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction to kill 300 people, he pleaded not guilty at his first appearance in federal court in Michigan on January 8, 2010. He faces the possibility of a life sentence if convicted of the charges.

Outside the court, small groups of American Muslims and Nigerian-Americans carried signs denouncing Abdulmutallab's alleged actions and extremist violence of any kind.

The event called into question the effectiveness of current airport security measures. Sweeping changes to airport security were ordered at travel hubs in most nations. Carry-on baggage is more restricted than in the past. Passengers carrying passports from certain "suspect"

nations will be asked more questions by security officials and be subject to more detailed searches of their baggage and bodies. Full-body scanners are a new line of defence against concealed materials. This technology allows a security official to detect objects underneath the clothing of a passenger. These changes have caused airports to demand that passengers arrive many hours ahead of international flights.

The failed attack also renewed fears in the United States of the terrorist group Al Qaeda, who claimed responsibility for the incident. As well, the event prompted a re-evaluation of the role that military intelligence plays in preventing future terrorist attacks.

Canada was significantly affected by this bombing attempt. Canadian air travellers faced enormous delays immediately following the events of December 25. The call for increased security measures in air travel resulted in increased costs and lower profits for economically vulnerable Canadian airline companies. The Canadian public was left wondering to what degree of inconvenience they would have to submit in the name of safety. Some wondered if there were more effective measures outside the realm of the airport that might ultimately prevent future terrorist attacks.

To Consider

1. What changes to airport security are likely to be the result of the events of December 25, 2009?
2. Why do you think terrorists target airliners?
3. Have you or anyone you know been affected by the increased security measures at Canadian airports? Explain.

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

Video Review

Quote

"We do not condone terrorism. We do not support terrorism in any way, and terrorism is not a part of our religion whatsoever no matter what you may hear, no matter what terrorists may say."

— Zeinab Moughnia, Muslim American demonstrator, outside the Detroit courthouse

Pre-viewing Activity

Before you watch the video, discuss the following questions with a partner or in a small group.

1. What do you know about the beliefs, motives, and membership of Al Qaeda?
2. What do you think are the pros and cons of tight security restrictions on airline travel?
3. Are you willing to undergo new security measures to increase airport security? Why or why not?
4. Some people say that if we change our lifestyle because of fear of terrorism, the terrorists have won. What do you think that means? Do you agree? Why or why not?

Viewing Questions

As you watch this *News in Review* story, respond to the following questions in the spaces provided.

1. What were the sights, sounds, and emotions on board Flight 253 to Detroit?

2. What specific changes to airport security occurred immediately after the incident on Flight 253?

3. What do authorities know about the alleged bomber?

4. Why is London, England, sometimes referred to as “Londonistan”?

5. Why is Yemen a prime training ground for terrorist groups?

6. How do full-body scanners work?

7. Outline some of the criticisms of these scanners.

8. Why is Abdulmutallab’s court case referred to by some as a “slam dunk”?

9. If convicted, what is the maximum sentence Abdulmutallab may face?

Post-viewing Activity

Based on what you have seen in the video, return to the pre-viewing questions and add any new information you learned. Have any of your responses changed substantially? Why?

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

IV *The Attempted Bombing*

Did you know . . .

According to officials in Yemen, the alleged would-be bomber, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, may have met with Anwar al-Awlaki in that country. al-Awlaki is a U.S.-born radical cleric who exchanged e-mails with Major Nidal Hasan before the U.S. Army psychiatrist went on a murderous rampage at the Fort Hood military base in November 2009.

Did you know . . .

The U.S.'s "no fly" or "watch" list was established after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on American targets. The list includes any individual who has been linked to terrorism or terrorists in some way. Originally, authorities estimated the list would contain 20 000 to 30 000 names. The list purportedly includes over one million names. The governments of the U.S. and Canada will not say how many Canadians are on the list.

Before Reading

Create a chart in your notes to record information as you read. The chart will summarize two or three significant points of information for each subheading. Be prepared to share your chart with a partner after reading the information and discuss any similarities and differences in your summary charts.

The Suspect: Who is Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab?

Described by his peers as a quiet, studious, and devout Muslim, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab has gained worldwide notoriety as an attempted airline bomber. Immediately following his alleged bombing attempt, the world media began investigating his life and the possible motive for his alleged acts. What they discovered was that he had ties to Al Qaeda operatives in Yemen.

Abdulmutallab is the son of a wealthy Nigerian bank executive and his second wife. He studied mechanical engineering at University College London, where he headed the school's Islamic Society. He lived in a \$3.5-million central London flat while attending school. His father said he had warned U.S. officials in Nigeria of his son's involvement with Islamic fanaticism.

Abdulmutallab broke off all ties with his family and went to Yemen in August 2009 to study Arabic at a language institute. At some point in his young life, Abdulmutallab's deeply held belief in the moral superiority of the Muslim faith turned to radicalization. His suspected contact with Islamic extremists may have led him to consider terrorist acts. He told investigators that he acquired his bomb-making materials in Yemen from an Al Qaeda member. On December 24, 2009, Abdulmutallab flew from Lagos, Nigeria, to Amsterdam where he transferred to Northwestern Airlines Flight 253 to Detroit.

The "Systemic Failures" of United States Intelligence: Why wasn't Abdulmutallab stopped from boarding the plane?

Investigations into Abdulmutallab's life and his actions just prior to boarding Flight 253 point to the fact that a breach of security occurred in this case:

- Despite his possible connection to terrorists, a misspelling of his surname left the State Department unaware of the fact that he had a valid U.S. visa. Someone with ties to terrorists is automatically placed on the U.S.'s "no fly" list, which restricts passage to the United States.
- If the Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam had required Abdulmutallab to pass through its one body scanner, it would have exposed the explosives that he allegedly concealed.
- An intelligence report on Abdulmutallab was improperly filed, so database searches of his name were incomplete or faulty.
- A systemic failure kept Abdulmutallab off a watch list of known or suspected terrorists. A counter-terror analysis from the U.S. identified that a Yemen-based branch of Al Qaeda was a growing threat, but the focus of the analysis was on "imminent" attacks in Yemen rather than attacks in the United States—this, despite warnings of attacks in the U.S.
- Security personnel at the airports overlooked the unusual circumstances

of a Nigerian man flying to Detroit in December on a tourist visa without a return ticket and no checked baggage. Ironically, in Detroit, customs officers identified the name “Abdulmutallab” on the watch list and had preselected Umar for special questioning—after he landed in Detroit.

In an article in the *Toronto Star* on January 8, 2010, Deputy National Security Advisor John Brennan admitted that intelligence agencies had all the information they needed to stop Abdulmutallab from boarding a plane but that “no one intelligence entity or team or task force was assigned responsibility for doing that follow-up investigation. The intelligence fell through the cracks.”

The Bombing Attempt: What happened on the plane?

Half an hour before landing, and while over Canadian territory, Abdulmutallab went to the bathroom. When he returned he covered his lap and legs with a blanket and complained to his neighbor of stomach pains. As the plane was

preparing for a landing, investigators believe that Abdulmutallab pulled out a syringe and moved to inject a pouch of 80 grams of PETN (a compound related to nitroglycerin) with TATP, another highly explosive compound that he had sewn into his underwear. Had he successfully triggered an explosion, a hole would have been blown in the side of the plane’s fuselage, potentially causing a crash.

Luckily, his alleged attempt to ignite the substance was unsuccessful, but smoke and flames did result. One passenger in particular, 32-year-old Dutch film director Jasper Schuringa, is being heralded as a hero for sitting on Abdulmutallab while putting out the flames with his hands and water bottles. Assisted by other passengers, he dragged Abdulmutallab to the first-class cabin and subdued until the plane landed.

After landing, Abdulmutallab was taken to a Michigan hospital for treatment for burns. He was then transported to a federal prison in Milan, Michigan, where he awaits trial.

Post-reading Activities

Reflect on what you read in this feature and individually or with a partner respond to the following questions. Be prepared to share your responses with your classmates.

1. If you were an investigator on this case, what questions would you ask Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab?
2. What questions would you ask his family, friends, and teachers?
3. What questions would you ask the intelligence agencies charged with anti-terrorist responsibilities?
4. What questions would you ask the security personnel in the airports?
5. What do you think about Jasper Schuringa’s actions? Do you think he should be rewarded for his actions? Why or why not?

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

The Response

When news of the attempted bombing reached other airports, security measures immediately reflected the heightened sense of alert and panic. These measures—such as detailed body and baggage searches, restrictions on carry-on luggage, and increased questioning of all passengers—caused lengthy delays and the cancellations of some flights. Many airport customers were caught unprepared by the new rules and long waits for their flights.

U.S. President Barack Obama was criticized by some for his failure to immediately address American citizens at the first opportunity. He was in Hawaii on vacation with his family on the day of the attempted bombing and was reportedly kept informed of the situation by advisors. On January 7, he addressed the nation with tough rhetoric, reiterating

that the United States was “at war” with Al Qaeda terrorists and that the serious breaches of security that led to this failed bombing attempt would be dealt with.

Al Qaeda is a terrorist organization under the purported leadership of Osama bin Laden. The organization is a fundamentalist Sunni movement that believes a Christian-Jewish alliance exists to destroy Islam and that this alliance is largely supported by the U.S. and Israel. The leadership of Al Qaeda has called for a global *jihād*—a holy war undertaken as a sacred duty by Muslims—against the governments and citizens of those nations. The September 11, 2001, attacks were the most violent of their terrorist actions. Since that date, the U.S. has declared a “war on terror” that extends to such nations as Pakistan, Sudan, and Afghanistan.

Responses and Reactions to the Bombing Attempt

The memories of the 9/11 attacks were revived by this bombing attempt. Americans in particular engaged in heated discussions on the nature of the terrorist threats, the security implications, and the appropriate way to respond.

Read the quotes below. Indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each quote. Provide reasons for each choice and be prepared to explain your choices.

“Flying is very, very safe.” — Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, *Toronto Star*, December 28, 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“There was a tip from the father of the individual who is alleged to have put together the Detroit plot. We did nothing. And we could have kept the individual far, far away from the airport. Frankly, airports are not a good last line of defence.” — Robert Mann, aviation consultant, *The Globe and Mail*, December 29, 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“We are at war against Al Qaeda, a far-reaching network of violence and hatred that attacked us on 9/11, that killed nearly 3 000 innocent people, and that is plotting to strike us again. . . . That’s why we must communicate clearly to Muslims around the world that Al Qaeda offers nothing except a bankrupt vision of misery and death, including the murder of fellow Muslims, while the United States stands with those who seek justice and progress.” — U.S. President Obama, *The Globe and Mail*, January 8, 2010

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“The history is that these things do subside—there’s an immediate reaction and then, as time goes on, the memory fades and the reality of the invasiveness and the inconvenience of strict screening persists, and so we eventually move toward a system that is less stringent.” — Mark Hansen, professor at UC Berkeley and specialist in aviation security, *The Globe and Mail*, December 28, 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“Security is both a feeling and a reality. . . . When people are scared, they need something to be done that will make them feel safe, even if it doesn’t truly make them safer. Politicians naturally want to do something in response to a crisis, even if that something doesn’t make any sense.” — Bruce Schneier, security expert, *New Internationalist*, November 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“Great and proud nations don’t hunker down and hide behind walls of suspicion and mistrust. That is exactly what our adversaries want, and so long as I am president we will never hand them that victory.” — U.S. President Barack Obama, *Toronto Star*, January 8, 2010

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

“A terrorist attack cannot possibly destroy a country’s way of life: it’s only our reaction to that attack that can do that kind of damage. The more we undermine our own laws, the more we convert our buildings into fortresses, the more we reduce the freedoms and liberties at the foundation of our societies, the more we’re doing the terrorists’ job for them.” — Bruce Schneier, *New Internationalist*, November 2009

Strongly agree _____ **Agree** _____ **Disagree** _____ **Strongly disagree** _____

Reasons _____

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

International Security

Did you know . . .

On September 11, 2001, airport procedures such as metal detectors and X-ray screening of luggage failed to prevent the 9/11 attackers from boarding four jets with knives and box cutters.

In December 2001, Richard Reid attempted to blow up a plane by igniting explosives in his shoe. That led to the demand to remove footwear when passing through airport checkpoints.

In August 2006, British authorities uncovered a plot to blow up aircraft using liquid explosives. That event led to restrictions on liquids and gels in carry-on luggage.

Did you know . . .

Guantanamo Bay is an American detention facility for prisoners captured in the U.S.'s "war on terror." It is located in Cuba.

As a result of the attempted bombing attack on Flight 253 to Detroit on December 25, 2009, many changes in airport security were made, some short-term and some long-term. A few examples of the potential long-term changes include passport profiling, intensive screening for citizens of 14 countries, and the use of new technology such as whole-body scanners. Yemen, in particular, became the subject of heightened U.S. scrutiny due to the fact that the suspect had connections to Al Qaeda leaders in that country. While airport security was once again affected by a terrorist attempt, it is anticipated that many restrictions—such as the demand to remain in plane seats during the final hour before arrival, and the rule preventing passengers from having pillows, blankets, and other personal items in their lap at the end of a flight—will be eased over time.

Suspect Nations

New rules in the United States demand that the citizens of 14 countries identified as "state sponsors of terrorism"—or travellers flying to the United States from these countries—may be subject to passport profiling and intensive screening measures such as body and baggage searches, intensive questioning, and passing through whole-body scanners. These countries include Cuba, Iran, Sudan, and Syria. "Countries of interest" to the United States include Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Algeria, Lebanon, Libya, Iraq, Somalia, and Yemen. Civil right groups protested that the changes are discriminatory in that they imply that people living in these countries are automatically terrorist suspects. But many air travellers

agreed with government and intelligence officials that the added security was a necessary inconvenience.

Focus on Yemen

Yemen in particular has been the focus of U.S. military attention since a group called Al Qaeda in Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) stated on an Islamic Web site that they co-ordinated the attack plans with Abdulmutallab and assisted in the making of the explosives he carried on the flight. The bombing was intended as retaliation for a U.S.-aided operation in Yemen in which two airstrikes were made against AQAP leadership. The second airstrike occurred one day before Abdulmutallab's flight.

An AQAP statement posted on the Internet demanded its followers "kill every crusader using all the killing methods available in support of Allah's religion and in glorifying His words on Earth" (translation of the AQAP December 28, 2009, statement at www.nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/nefaAQIYChristmas1209.pdf). AQAP is purportedly part of Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network that is based in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Yemen is also Osama bin Laden's ancestral homeland.

As a consequence of Abdulmutallab's alleged actions and the AQAP's statement of responsibility for the failed bombing attempt, President Obama suspended transfers to Yemen of prisoners held in Guantanamo Bay. Seven Yemeni detainees had already been sent home by the Obama administration, which is under intense pressure from some critics not to send more detainees back to Yemen due to fears they will once again become extremists.

Western allies such as the U.S., Britain, and Canada considered ways to bolster Yemen's government, with offers of financial support and military training due to fears that Al Qaeda might exploit the country's instability to launch more international terrorist attacks. Yemen, the poorest country in the Middle East, faces a Shia Muslim rebellion in the north and separatist protests in the south.

Meanwhile, a Canadian warship, the HMCS *Fredericton*, continued to patrol the international shipping lanes through the Gulf of Aden, which separates Somalia from Yemen. The warship was looking for suspected Al Qaeda-inspired fighters—the al-Shabab—who threatened to leave Somalia to fight in Yemen.

Yemen has requested Canadian and international aid and assistance to help fight Al Qaeda. Yemeni security forces killed two Al Qaeda militants who were threatening to attack U.S. and British embassies in January 2010. Canada does not have an embassy in Yemen, although the Calgary-based Nexen runs the largest oil project in the country. It remains to be seen to what extent, and with what

international assistance, Yemen could contain Al Qaeda extremists.

Body Scanners: A Controversial New Measure

Canada intends to purchase 44 new imaging scanners, at the cost of \$250 000 each, for use in international airports across the country. The scanners use electromagnetic waves to scan through clothing and produce images of hidden objects. Some politicians, airline passengers, and civil liberties spokespeople have questioned the use of the scanner.

Although the scanners blur passengers' facial features, the images do reveal breasts, buttocks, and genital areas. Officials claim the body scanners are quick, accurate, and less embarrassing than "pat-downs." They also argue that scanning will not be used on children and that the images are deleted after being viewed. Critics of the scanners cite the cost, privacy issues, and constitutional protections against "unreasonable searches" as arguments against the use of scanners.



Follow-up

Events and actions often have both intended and unintended consequences. Explore the intended and unintended consequences of this event using the Multiple consequence Web worksheet at <http://newsinreview.cbclearning.ca> and discuss your completed work with a classmate or in a small group.

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

What makes a terrorist?

“I am a terrorist, and I am proud of it.” — Ramzi Yousef, “mastermind” of the World Trade Center bombing, September 11, 2001

Before Reading

1. Brainstorm words that you would use to describe terrorists and the actions of terrorists.
2. How is the terrorist portrayed (consider age, sex, racial/cultural/national background, personality, intelligence) in popular culture (television shows, movies)? Give specific examples to support your answer.
3. If you were to conduct research on terrorists what three questions would you use to focus your research?

Investigating Terrorism

Who becomes a terrorist and why? This is an important question as increasingly dangerous terrorist groups emerge as potential threats to civilians worldwide. Technology has made the threat even more menacing due to the larger scale of destruction now possible.

Terrorists have existed in different periods of history and have claimed allegiance to various ethnic, cultural, national, separatist, ideological, political, and/or religious groups. What they have in common is that they share strong beliefs in an ideological or religious message. They feel compelled to share the message through terrorizing the general public. Terrorist actions are intended to have high-profile impact; the actions should be unexpected and shocking. Terrorist groups thrive on the fear and intimidation they promote. The media are implicated in promoting the spread of terrorism because the terrorist's actions are aimed at a global audience more so than at its intended victims.

Terrorist Personality

Is there a terrorist personality? It is not enough for a person to have strongly held beliefs; the person must also want to risk their own life for the beliefs and be

willing to engage in violent behaviours to promote the beliefs. Terrorist actions usually result from multiple causes: psychological, sociological, economic, political, and religious. The belief that terrorists are insane is a simplistic assumption. Terrorists have not been adequately studied by psychologists, so relatively little is known about their personalities; researchers do not typically have access to them, even if they are imprisoned, and terrorists tend not to divulge their motivations during questioning. There does not appear to be a single terrorist personality. More importantly, terrorists are not typically mentally ill, since terrorist groups don't want members who arouse suspicion.

Political psychologist Jeanne N. Knutson's extensive research on political terrorists in the 1980s found that “their violent acts stem from feelings of rage and hopelessness engendered by the belief that society permits no other access to information-dissemination and policy-formation processes” (*Social and Psychodynamic Pressures Toward a Negative Identity*, 1981). Terrorists are frustrated individuals; their strongly held beliefs become moral imperatives that distort their view of the world and of other human beings. Other general traits

of terrorists are that they feel a sense of alienation, they may view themselves as victims, they are single-mindedly devoted to a cause, and they do not regard their actions as criminal. They can exhibit initiative, cunning, skill, and ruthlessness. They show no fear, pity, or remorse.

Why become a terrorist?

Terrorists typically do not act alone; they have a network of like-minded people who support them and encourage their beliefs and actions. It was once supposed that terrorists were recruited from the uneducated, and while this is often the case, it is not always so. Many terrorists are recruited from the fields of engineering, science, computer science, chemistry, and communication. Some of the more common sociological characteristics of terrorists studied in the last 30 years are that they are

young men between 22-25 years of age, unmarried, with a higher than average education. That being said, more women are engaged in terrorist activities than in previous decades. Those living in poverty can be particularly vulnerable to the financial and emotional support offered by terrorist groups.

So if the psychology of terrorists is largely unknown, and if each terrorist group has different motivations, how can governments protect their citizens from terrorist attacks? It seems that three pre-emptive actions are needed:

- effective counterterrorism measures that focus on collecting intelligence information regarding individuals and groups who are suspected of terrorism
- psychological warfare aimed at dividing the group's political and military leaders
- education to deter alienated youth from joining terrorist organizations

After Reading

1. Refine your earlier research questions with a partner and create a set of essential questions regarding terrorists.
2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Give supported reasons for your answers.
 - a) "Terrorists are made, not born."
 - b) "Researchers should focus more on why people join terrorist groups rather than studying the personality types of terrorists."
 - c) "The media help to support the goals of terrorism."
 - d) "Accidental guerrillas are people who fight us not because they hate the West and seek our overthrow but because we have invaded their space to deal with a small, extremist element that has manipulated and exploited local grievances to gain power in their societies. They fight us not because they seek our destruction but because they believe we seek theirs." — David Kilcullen, author of *The Accidental Guerrilla* quoted in *The Globe and Mail*, January 12, 2010

Sources: *The Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who becomes a terrorist and why?* by Rex Hudson, Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. 1999; *Social and Psychodynamic Pressures Toward a Negative Identity*, by Jeanne N. Knutson, in Yonah Alexander and John M. Gleason, eds., *Behavioral and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism*. New York: Pergamon. 1981.

THE PLANE BOMBER AND AIRPORT SECURITY

Activity: Considering Islamophobia

Note to Teachers

Teachers should be aware that the teaching of sensitive and controversial issues may provoke emotional responses from students. A high degree of care should be taken before the lesson to ensure that the learning environment allows for conflicting sets of values to be processed analytically and with respect for differences in peoples and their cultures, identities, and world views.

Islamophobia is fear and/or hatred of Muslims and Islam. People who suffer from Islamophobia may share one or all of the following beliefs: all or most Muslims are religious fanatics, all or most Muslims have violent tendencies toward non-Muslims, Muslims view common Western concepts such as equality, tolerance, and democracy as being in opposition to Islam.

The term *Islamophobia* gained worldwide recognition after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States and the resulting global backlash against Muslims. Islamophobia could be considered a new form of racism, whereby Muslims, an ethno-religious group (not a race), are nevertheless viewed by non-Muslims as a race.

As Canadians, we pride ourselves on living peacefully in a pluralistic and diverse society. For this reason, Islamophobia is a serious concern in our democratic way of life. When a set of negative assumptions is made about an entire group to the detriment of that group, then tension, hatred, and persecution often result. Indeed, there have been incidents of violence and discrimination against Muslims in Canada and other nations as fear of aggressive Islamic terrorists gains widespread media attention. This violence and discrimination are also fuelled by the lack of knowledge in the West about Islamic religion and cultures of the nations where Islam thrives.

Islam is often portrayed in Western media and popular culture as irrational, intolerant, sexist, resistant to change, and inferior to the Western cultures. The diversity within the Muslim community is not recognized or understood, and criticisms made of the West by Muslims are considered irrational and rejected outright.

Activity

Consider the issue of Islamophobia by individually answering the questions below. Be prepared to share your answers with a partner or in a small group. In group and class discussions you should be mindful of the need to respect differences in peoples and their cultures, identities, and world views.

1. How does Islamophobia affect you?
2. How does Islamophobia affect your class and your school?
3. How does Islamophobia affect Canada?
4. How does Islamophobia affect the world?
5. What are the causes of Islamophobia?
6. What are the solutions to Islamophobia?
7. Is this an important issue? Explain your response.