

AUSTRALIAN DOMESTIC JIHAD TERRORIST RISK MANAGEMENT

Peter Adamis 17 July 2014



Australia is currently facing a number of challenges which have short term and long term consequences for the economy, security and culture. Illegal boats, unrest in the Pacific basin, returning "Jihad" Australian citizens, cyber warfare online attacks on individuals and institutions, rising basic foodstuffs and utilities are but some of the issues that are currently hitting our headlines every week.

The present threat Australia is being faced with is how to manage those returning from fighting in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. It in this context we are not talking about our Defence force but rather individual Australian citizens who made the decision to be involved in a war that is not in the best interests of Australia. Citizens of a number of western countries for whatever reasons compelled to do so have been fighting and dying in conflicts that have nothing to do with the interests of the country of birth. This may be their choice but in taking that road creates an uncertain future should they attempt to return back home.

To combat potential domestic terrorism the Australian government is taking a proactive approach by pushing ahead with its reforms to provide our law enforcement agencies with the appropriate and relevant powers to monitor and manage these new threats and are seeking further legislative powers that will encroach upon our privacy as we know it today. It is no secret that our law enforcement agencies are trying to emulate our American cousins in adopting similar legislation to eavesdrop and retain information on Australian citizens. Having said this, who will be watching the monitors and who will they be responsible and accountable to is what is on everyone's lips and there is concern whether sufficient safe guards are in place.

Therefore, one wonders and begs to ask the unthinkable whether we are on the right track regarding our approach to Australians (Jihads) fighting overseas in places like Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria? Are creating an environment of fear to obtain greater powers for our law enforcement agencies and returning us back to the 1950s' and 1960's where the fear at that time was communism and the Cold War was at its highest. I would like to think that over the years we as Australians have matured to the point where we can ascertain the difference between a real and implied threat on a domestic and international level.

Mind you, I am all for arming our law enforcement agencies with every manner of equipment and legislation to safe guard our interests on all levels without the need of creating an environment of an unknown fear. McCarthyism in the USA was proved to be a failure and based on political reasons rather than of a strategic value and the same can be said of Prime Minister Bob Menzies during the Petrov affair being political rather than international communism.

I refuse to believe that we as Australians are so gullible to be taken in by the alleged fears Australians who have fought overseas will return to plot terrorists attacks on our home soil or use the safety of our shores to create terrorist cells. The real fear that our law enforcement agencies are faced with is whether those who have served and fought in the above Middle Eastern countries as "Jihad" warriors will create domestic problems within Australia such as not contributing to the economic stability and long term interests of Australia and/or creating the foundations of groups that are alien to the Australian way of life. That these same individuals should they demonstrate any sign of un -Australian activities will use that training to battle our law enforcement agencies.

I am of the opinion that our law enforcement agencies have the resources, knowhow and skills to identify, contain and neutralise any potential threat to this country we call home, Australia. What they lack is the legislation to act and/or take action in advance to neutralise such scenarios, based on information that is beyond any doubt that the threat is real. The last think we want is to create a climate where "Nazi like jackboots" are kicking doors in of families under the implied threat that a criminal act is in operation or about to be undertaken.

The current government in conjunction with other political parties should and must take an unbiased and collaborative approach to ensure that all threats possible have been planned and identified and appropriate action plans, indoctrination, induction and training has taken place. This collaborative approach should also be applied to our policies on illegal refugees and migrants entering Australia through the recognised visa system. For those Australians silly enough to have fought in a war that is not in the best interests of Australia should be scrutinised, interviewed and monitored at their point of departure and be given the opportunity to provide appropriate Australian authorities of the their activities during their absence from Australia.

In summary, we the ordinary citizen in the street hope that our faith in our law enforcement agencies to look after our interests will never diminish in the face of the adversity and support our agencies to do their job with confidence. What this translates into, is that we the citizen body in conjunction with government department should take a collaborative approach when Australia is faced with new challenges. The article below describes one of the many issues now faced by the Abbott Government.



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ASIO FEARS AUSTRALIANS FIGHTING JIHAD OVERSEAS MAY RETURN HOME TO PLAN TERROR ATTACKS

JESSICA MARSZALEK NATIONAL POLITICS REPORTER HERALD SUN JULY 17, 2014. ASIO director-general David Irvine said "tens" of Australian fighters have already returned home Source: News Corp Australia

MORE than a score of Australians who have fought in Syria and Iraq are already back on home soil, fuelling fears of terrorist conspiracies such as the foiled bid to attack the AFL Grand Final. The director-general of ASIO, David Irvine, said "tens" of the returned fighters had already returned home. The Federal Government fears they'll follow the path of jihadists who trained with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Attorney-General Senator George Brandis on Thursday warned the returned fighters posed a "significant threat". Arguing for new laws now before Parliament that give ASIO more powers to bring down home-grown terror cells, Senator Brandis said lessons learned from Afghanistan revealed the true extent of the danger now.

He said about 30 Australians went to Afghanistan to fight, and of the 25 who returned 19 were "involved in the preparation of a mass casualty terrorist attack on Australian soil", eight of whom were prosecuted and convicted. "So there is a very high correlation between going overseas and fighting jihad, and being trained up on terrorist tradecraft and then returning to Australia with the intention of continuing jihad on Australian soil," he said.

The *Herald Sun* understands some of those eight were involved in a Melbourne-based terrorist cell in 2005, led by Abdul Nacer Benbrika. The trial heard Benbrika had discussed plans to attack the AFL Grand Final, Crown casino and the AFL pre-season competition grand final, although authorities never overheard specific plans that the group were working on.

It was alleged the group was committed to violent jihad against the enemies of Islam and wanted to influence the then government to withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan. Senator Brandis said authorities needed further laws to protect against terrorism, including protecting undercover ASIO agents from prosecution when they embedded themselves in a terrorist cell. The new laws do not include the data retention powers ASIO has asked for.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/asio-fears-australians-fighting-jihad-overseas-may-return-home-to-plan-terror-attacks/story-e6frg6n6-1226992686683>