

Fascist terrorist cell uncovered in Canada's military

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The arrest last week of two active members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), a CAF veteran, and an Army Cadet trainer in an armed terrorist plot has exposed, yet again, that Canada's military is serving as an incubator of fascist forces.

Five years after a CAF reservist sought to assassinate then Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and as the ruling class showers the military with tens of billions of dollars in additional funding, far-right activities among CAF members clearly continue unabated.

On July 8th, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) announced the exposure of a fascist cell, allegedly comprised of four men plotting to form an anti-government militia and "seize land" near Quebec City. Marc-Aurèle Chabot, 24, Simon Angers-Audet, 24, Raphaël Lagacé, 25, and Matthew Forbes, 33, face multiple terrorism and weapons offences.

Forbes and Chabot are corporals serving at CFB (Canadian Forces Base) Valcartier with the "Van Doos" Royal 22nd Regiment, while Lagacé was a decorated member of the Army's Cadet training program. Angers-Audet allegedly left the CAF due to his opposition to COVID vaccinations.

In a January 2024 raid on Forbes' house, the RCMP seized the largest trove of weapons ever found in a terrorist raid in Canada, including "16 explosive devices, 83 firearms and accessories, approximately 11,000 rounds of ammunition of various calibres, nearly 130 magazines, four pairs of night vision goggles and military equipment." Forbes was arrested at that time, but terrorism charges against the cell members were only laid this month.

Forbes faces charges under the Explosives Act and the Defense Production Act, which "regulates access to military supplies." Forbes allegedly obtained the weapons—enough for a massacre—from the CAF. Angers-Audet's role at the Voltigeurs army reserve regiment in Quebec City was to "take care of, adjust and maintain all of the unit's weapons."

The plotters promoted right-wing conspiracy theories on social media, many of them directed against Trudeau, a hate-figure for the far right, which blames Trudeau variously for "wokeism," COVID lockdowns, and increased immigration.

The group began paramilitary training in 2021, less than a year after reservist Corey Hurren's failed July 2020 attempt to kill Trudeau. The group ran an Instagram account to recruit new members. The RCMP began its investigations in 2023.

The exposure of yet another network of fascists within the armed forces underlines that such forces are being cultivated within Canada's national security apparatus—where bellicose nationalism, virulent anti-communism, and support for monarchy and authoritarianism are ingrained—and that there is increasing sympathy,

if not outright support, for the far right within the higher ranks.

The CAF top brass' readiness to openly patronize and embrace the far right found expression in the fascistic rant retiring army commander Lt. Gen. Michel Maisonneuve delivered in late 2022 to a Conservative Party convention; and by the notorious standing ovation that the Chief of Defence Staff and other top military personnel gave to the Ukrainian Nazi collaborator and Waffen-SS member Yaroslav Hunka when he was introduced to parliament in September 2023.

At the moment there are far more questions than answers. Why was the fascist cell allowed to continue its operations 18 months after its weapons were first seized? What was the exact nature of the plot and the group's plans?

In an interview with Global News, the father of Angers-Audet has alleged that the group was infiltrated by "a strange, much older man, about 47 years old." Who is this figure?

A photograph released by the RCMP showing what is alleged to be the group's military training at an unidentified rock quarry shows seven men in fatigues, not four. Who are the other three?

To these, and the more fundamental questions which arise out of the discovery of yet another fascist grouping inside the Canadian Armed Forces, the RCMP, CAF and the government have responded with a giant shrug of the shoulders, and some carefully chosen weasel words.

When asked about the discrepancy between the number of men in the photo and the number of charges laid, RCMP spokesman Eriek Gasse responded, "We know that, because of the Instagram account, there are more people who are interested in that ideology, and who took part in military-style training. The RCMP does not investigate movements or ideologies. It investigates only the criminal activities of individuals..."

In other words, the fascist milieu in which the four accused operate is much larger, but the RCMP has decided to make an example of the ringleaders only. One can only imagine to what uses those with potential terrorism charges hanging over their heads are now being put by the RCMP. From the milieu of military men with skeletons in their closet have been drawn countless agents-provocateurs and informants.

Although the fascist motivations and modus operandi of the terrorist plotters are plain for all to see, the authorities have gone out of their way to obscure this.

Quebec RCMP Staff Sgt Camile Habel told the *Globe and Mail*, "When it comes to ideologically motivated extremisms, it's not clear cut—so people can gather a few different ideologies and make it their own. I guess the main thing about the ideology is anti-authority is in there. In this case, that is what it was. People can have a range of grievances from across the spectrum."

For his part, Defence Minister David McGuinty claimed that "The

question of extremism is something that's throughout Canadian society. This is not something that is unknown to armed forces around the world."

The remarks of Habel and McGuinty are a slander on the working class, and in two senses.

First, there is no mass public support for the fascist extremism that is commonly encountered in the Canadian military and the armed forces of other countries. To the contrary, their views and actions are viewed with revulsion.

Second, trusted ruling class spokesmen that they are, Habel and McGuinty are disingenuously seeking to draw an equal sign between an armed fascist terror plot and what the government and intelligence agencies have also claimed is "ideologically motivated extremism"—opposition to imperialist war and genocide.

Opposition to government support for Israel's genocide against the Palestinians does indeed run broad and deep among working people, and that "anti-authority" sentiment truly terrifies the ruling class and its functionaries. By lumping fascists and principled and peaceful opponents of genocide together as "other extremists" and "opponents of authority," the state both covers up its own role in incubating and promoting fascist forces and seeks to legitimize its repression of social opposition from the working class and left.

The primary purpose of the official line of equivocation and downplaying of an armed, fascist terror plot within the military is to divert attention away from the essential truth: the Canadian ruling class and its capitalist state are increasingly reliant on fascistic and far-right forces at home and abroad to advance the aims of Canadian imperialism and shore up the profits of Canadian capitalism.

The four terror plotters were drawn from the socially backward, right-wing milieu which produced the fascistic, misnamed "Freedom Convoy" in 2022. The Convoy mobilized truckers, police officers and veterans together with desperate and confused elements of the lower middle class against basic public health measures in an occupation of downtown Ottawa and the Ambassador Bridge linking Detroit, Michigan, and Windsor, Ontario. At the time, the Joint Forces Command, an elite unit within the Canadian military, was so concerned about its members joining the far-right protests that it felt compelled to issue an order not to do so.

As the WSWS exposed at the time, the Convoy was used—until it escaped their control—by powerful sections of Canadian ruling as a blunt instrument to put an end to all public health measures against the COVID 19 pandemic which stood in the way of capitalist profit accumulation. The Conservative Party deposed its then leader Erin O'Toole, who was viewed as too conciliatory to Trudeau, and soon replaced him with the far-right Pierre Poilievre, who had emerged as a prominent Convoy supporter. Ontario Premier Doug Ford, a Trump enthusiast, used his jurisdictional control over policing to delay Ontario Provincial Police enforcement (OPP) of laws regulating protests and harassment to intensify and escalate the crisis for Trudeau in Ottawa. The RCMP, police and military were infested with Convoy supporters, feeding them intelligence and personnel at every turn.

Canadian imperialism has absolutely no problem whatsoever working with avowed Nazis in Ukraine, who have been trained by Canadian officers, and politically defended and armed by NATO governments. These are Canadian imperialism's own fascists, faithfully doing its bidding. That they flaunt Swastikas and Sonnenrad symbols and distribute Nazi literature is something to be hushed up and denied, because they are prosecuting Canadian imperialism's war against Russia for strategic minerals, resources and trade routes.

The CAF exists to advance the predatory interests of Canadian capitalism and the profit system, which must necessarily trample on the freedom and violate the human rights of people in countries targeted for violent intervention. "We are the Canadian Forces, and our job is to be able to kill people," quipped General Rick Hillier, the commander of Canada's occupation force in Afghanistan, in a rare moment of honesty.

Millions have died as a result imperialism's wars in the Greater Middle East since 2001. As the WSWS reported last week, the Canadian ruling class remains desperate to conceal the war crimes perpetrated by the CAF in Afghanistan while waging a war of neo-colonial occupation. Before his retirement in 2024, the former diplomat Richard Colvin submitted a 1000-page report to his superiors at the Ministry of Global Affairs—which they have suppressed—demonstrating the CAF systematically committed war crimes in Kandahar and that the military command and the Harper government concealed them.

The government of Mark Carney, who has served the financial oligarchy throughout his entire adult life as a central banker and financial consultant, is hostile to any serious investigation into far-right extremism in the military and the Canadian state. This is because it cuts across its agenda and that of the ruling class as a whole.

Central to that agenda is massive rearmament and preparation for global war, with the Canadian Armed Forces—whose budget Carney has already increased by \$9.3 billion or 17% just in this fiscal year—paraded before the public as the "defender" of "democracy" and "Canadian values."

The reality is the Canadian ruling class, like its imperialist counterparts around the world, is turning toward authoritarian methods of rule. Under Carney, it is veering sharply to the right, aligning its policies with the fascist-minded President Donald Trump in the United States, and backing the genocide of the Palestinians by the Zionist regime and American imperialism. The Liberal government is adopting Trump-style domestic policies, including slashing social spending, demonizing immigrants, strengthening the border and criminalizing strikes using a patently illegal "reinterpretation" of the Canada Labour Code. Canadian imperialism hopes this will help it reach a modus vivendi with the would-be dictator in the White House, which it views as the best way to advance its own predatory global interests.

This class war agenda cannot be implemented democratically, which is why the Canadian ruling class will intensify its cultivation of far-right forces both inside and outside of the military. It requires fascist shock troops to supplement state repression in seeking to silence what will inevitably be increasingly radical and determined working-class opposition.



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