

Bill S-7 “Combating Terrorism Act” Now in Force in Canada

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By Karin Brothers

On May 24, 2013, Bill S-7, with the short title of the Combating Terrorism Act (S.C. 2013, c.9), received Royal Assent and came into force.

This omnibus legislation both revives some of the “sunsetted” and most controversial provisions of the 2001 Anti-terrorism Act and creates new terrorism provisions under the Criminal Code and other Acts. For a five-year period, the Combating Terrorism Act reinstates preventive detentions and investigative hearings.

As well, the new terrorism provisions involve ... facilitating terrorism in foreign countries (an individual could be prosecuted for providing material support to a terrorist group in a foreign country, e.g. providing medical assistance or basic necessities to an individual who later is revealed to be involved with a terrorist group).

[Foreign Activities Focus of New Terrorism Law Allowing Preventative Detention](#) By Sean S. Carter. *Charity Law Update*, May 2013.

Some observations:

- “revealed” might be in quotes, since evidence tested by courts of law seems to be obsolete. Unaccountable “anonymous” government sources would probably be all that the government requires to charge or put people away.
- Also, one might ask: How much “later” might be relevant? If a child receives food or medical help (which could be as called for by international law) and is accused of being a “terrorist” by an enemy decades later, would the people who fed or clothed the person be liable? The government’s broad wording gives them the ability to do whatever they want.
- Noam Chomsky recently noted that the international definition of “terrorism” encompasses acts of our allies, which is clearly not the definition that Canada uses, which criminalizes what might be legitimate acts of resistance.

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