

# Canada and U.S. Intelligence Systems: A Comparative Intelligence Study

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## *Abstract*

*This paper explains why Canada and the U.S. have taken different approaches to addressing terrorism. Through a comparative analysis of each country's intelligence systems, one may begin to identify critical transformation points and trends. This paper will also identify areas where each system can learn from the other's experiences, specifically in the areas of law enforcement, domestic intelligence, counterterrorism. In applying a comparative intelligence approach, the following points of analysis will be considered: national strategy, national security context, and technology (availability and use of).*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The evolution of national security policies can be viewed as a state's shifting perceptions of threats. States are threatened by actors or acts that threaten a state's legitimacy. Terrorism threatens a state when the political intention is to undermine a state's ability to create and enforce laws. By comparing counterterrorism policies, broadly, and intelligence systems, specifically, this paper attempts to answer why states take different policy approaches toward similar threats. The question becomes particularly interesting when comparing similar political systems.

In addition to sharing similar demographics and common history, the United States (U.S.) and Canada also share common political structures and national interests. However, a comparative analysis of their intelligence systems reveals significant differences in how each country values and manages threats. If intelligence is a product of state strategy; regime; and available technology,<sup>1</sup> specific state strategies, like counterterrorism strategies, should be reflected in the intelligence agencies that support those strategies. This research uses a comparative intelligence framework to identify transformational points and trends within each country as a means of better explaining differences in counterterrorism approaches.

In constructing a comparative intelligence framework, this research draws upon the works of

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<sup>1</sup>Variables first introduced by Michael Warner. See: Michael Warner, "Building a Theory of intelligence Systems" in *National Intelligence Systems: Current Research and Future Prospects*. Treverton, Gregory F. and Wilhelm Agrell, eds. (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2009). 11-37.