

Running Head: RACIAL PROFILING

Flying While Muslim: Social Exclusion in the Name of National Security

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The new face of Canada is diverse and has often been referred to as a “multicultural mosaic.” This remarkable “mosaic” is not without its flaws however, and has been known to marginalize communities from mainstream Canadian culture. People from various racial, ethnic and faith groups are innocent victims of racial profiling. These are the marginalized members of our society who face discrimination based on their identities. Racial profiling exists when members of particular racial groups are subject to greater levels of scrutiny and criminal justice surveillance than other citizens (Wortley, 2004). It involves “a racial disparity in police stops and search practices, racial differences in customs searchers at airports and border crossings and undercover activities which target particular ethnic groups” (Wortley, 2004). There is an implied perception that various racial groups are more likely to engage in certain acts and this becomes an issue when “racial differences in law enforcement surveillance activities cannot be explained by individual differences in criminal or other illegal activity” (Wortley & McCalla, 2008, p. 190). When authoritative figures abuse their power, it results in the exclusion, discrimination and oppression of people of colour such as the Muslim community who are subject to frequent airport stops and searches.

Racial profiling against the Muslim community has increased since 9/11 when Canada declared its “war against terrorism” (Bahdi, 2003, p. 293). Racial profiling is not authorized in Canada, however it still commonly occurs. These acts of “national security” heighten the susceptibility and exclusion of Muslim people. This paper will address a public forum to promote social change while discussing “flying while Muslim” as an exclusionary process due to Canada’s “no-fly list.” Furthermore, the local and global effects of this phenomenon will be examined, while determining what social inclusion should look like as well as the implications for social work practice.

THE NEW FACE OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION: “FLYING WHILE MUSLIM”

*(*Please note that the term “Muslim” in the context of this paper refers to the South Asian Muslim community)*

“Flying while Muslim” is a form of social exclusion whereby it “refers to the dynamic process of being shut out, fully or partially, from any of the social, economic, political or cultural systems which determine the social integration of a person in a society. Social exclusion may therefore be seen as the

denial (non-realization) of the civil, political and social rights of citizenship” (Walker & Walker, 1997, p. 8). In the aftermath of 9/11, an astonishing number of individuals from the Muslim community were detained and questioned before boarding flights. Many were denied their civil and social right to be deemed innocent until proven guilty. These individuals were ”flying while Muslim” which is an expression that refers to the challenges Muslim and other South Asian travellers face when boarding flights as a result of the 9/11 attacks and Canada’s “no-fly list” (Ghazali, 2006).

Canada’s “no-fly list” was introduced in 2007 and falls under the Passenger Protect Program to enhance the security of air transportation (Transport Canada, 2007). The program was designed to screen passengers against a list (“no-fly list”) of individuals assessed as threats to security. The program intended to strengthen Canada’s approach to aviation security and complement other layers of the screening process such as physical inspections of passengers and their bags before boarding a flight. Airlines compare the names of individuals boarding flights with the names on the “no-fly list.” Since its inception, the “no-fly list” has further marginalized and targeted certain racialized communities, namely the Muslim community.

This legislation is discriminatory in its nature, as it targets people from certain communities. Many times, Muslims are held at customs and relentlessly questioned about their activities and intentions when travelling. The way certain Muslim people look, their names and mannerisms are constantly inspected and under surveillance by airport security and law enforcement officials. “Society is engaging in racial profiling these days. It’s amazing what otherwise intelligent people will say about Muslims” (as quoted in Siddiqui, 2006, p. A12). These prejudices are based on preconceived notions of Muslims as “terrorists” and the belief that they are more likely to engage in criminal behavior. During security checks, investigators have asked members from the Muslim community inappropriate questions such as, “how often do you pray?” ‘Do you read the Qur’an?’ In one case, the person being questioned answered: ‘What do you mean whether I am I a fundamentalist?’ And the officer said, ‘I don’t know’” (as quoted in Siddiqui, 2006, p. A12). These acts, perpetuated by various social institutions, the Canadian government, the “no-fly list” legislation, airport

personnel and law enforcement officials must be readdressed to ensure that no one community is unfairly targeted.

Muslim communities have been excluded from mainstream society and are not considered to be a part of the dominant ideal (i.e. white, upper class, Anglo-Saxon). “Flying while Muslim” is a form of social exclusion because it is an act of racism that segregates Muslim communities based on shared characteristics. In Canada, we live in a society that promotes fundamental human rights and promises the protection of these rights. However, racialized and marginalized communities such as Muslims encounter oppressive structural and systemic barriers in society that are rooted in Canada’s colonial history. This maintains social exclusion and leads to further inequalities.

AN OLD FALLACY IN A NEW DISGUISE: NATIONAL SECURITY

There is a great concern that denying individuals the right to fly based on unfounded suspicions takes away their rights to be considered innocent until proven guilty. “This has serious and profound ramifications if somebody is on a list that is used for purposes that interfere with their civil liberties” (CBC News, 2008). To further exacerbate this situation, Transport Canada has failed to prove the effectiveness of the “no-fly list” (CBC News, 2008). Though Canada purports to be a democratic society, some believe that this country must enforce these types of measures because they are justified and “necessary.” When individuals or groups are part of the dominant ideal or mainstream society, their social locations give them a number of privileges, not always extended to minorities. Thus, someone from the mainstream would not have to fear being subjected to routine searches when travelling or being questioned by authorities when taking a vacation with their family. Since the “minorities” of Canada will soon make the majority (due to increasing immigration levels), one must understand and study the future implications of targeting marginalized communities.

Many in positions of authority and privilege or, in “better off” situations (i.e. mainstream society, some law enforcement officials) do not experience what it is like to be excluded in this case because they are not judged or restricted by their race. Instead, certain individuals or groups may feel that Canada’s

national security measures are justified as they protect and serve the interest of all Canadians. Some have argued that profiling of Muslims is needed because “Muslims between the ages of 16 and 45 for questioning isn't racial profiling, but criminal profiling” (Boehrlart & Foser, 2006). This implies that Muslims are more likely to engage in criminal behavior. Images of “fanatical” Muslims and terrorists bombard us in the news as those in power and media sources dictate what we see. This fear is further perpetuated by powerful institutions such the government, Transport Canada, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) and law enforcement officials. As Canadians, many of us buy into this discrimination and believe that Muslims pose a threat to our nation. “Yet, terrorists like Timothy McVeigh (the white, Christian American responsible for the bombing of the Federal Building in Oklahoma City) would not be overlooked because of a racialized discourse on ‘terrorism’ which targets those who are or ‘look’ Muslim or Arab” (Abu-Laban, 2002, p. 477). This information can lead to dangerous views demonstrated in the following quote, “we’re not at war with Granny Fricken. We're at war with Muslim fanatics. So, all young Muslims should be subjected to more scrutiny than Granny” (Boehrlart & Foser, 2006). It has been argued that terrorism is driven by Muslim people and that they must be scrutinized. Clearly, more thought and research is required by the media to ensure that all communities are justly represented.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS: MUSLIMS AS “TERRORISTS”

The increased fear of Muslim communities stemmed from the impact of the 9/11 tragedy. The media and other sources perpetuated images of “fanatical” Muslims “plotting schemes” to bomb and destroy innocent American and Canadian towns. This socially constructed image portrayed these communities in a negative light and further promoted social exclusion. “Social constructs may appear to be natural and obvious to those who accept them, but in reality social constructions are inventions of a particular culture or society. Social constructs are generally understood to be the by-products (often unintended or unconscious) of countless human choices rather than laws resulting from divine will or nature” (Hackling, 1999, p. 8). Socially constructed images such as those categorizing Muslims as

“terrorists” have serious impacts on those involved, as they provide a false image that many believe to be true. Since 9/11, the media and the government have presented sensationalized stories linking Muslim communities to possible terrorist acts without any real evidence. A clear distinction must be made between the act of a few people and the representation of an entire community.

With the introduction of the “no-fly list,” airport security and law enforcement officials have been given more power to search and detain possible suspects. The measures used to determine who is a potential suspect is not known, however, certain names are targeted because they appear on the “no-fly list.” In 2007, the usefulness of this list was examined when two individuals with the same name were stopped because their name appeared on the list. One was a fifteen year old boy from Ottawa and the other was a ten year old, home-school student from Saskatoon (Chytilova, 2007). On separate occasions, the boys were detained and informed that their names appeared on this list and thus, posed a security threat (Chytilova, 2007). The boys were eventually cleared, but the airline told one of the boys’ parents that, “it would be best to change the child’s name” (Chytilova, 2007). One would assume that cases like this would give the government enough incentive to make changes to the current laws and legislation, however, it seems that a more feasible solution would be to have the victims change their names because they pose a “threat” to national security. A racial stigma is created here as law enforcement and government officials claim they are “cracking down” on the “war against terror” evidently at the expense of profiling innocent people.

The lack of information provided by the media has fixed negative images in the minds of some Canadians regarding Muslims and other communities. For example, after 9/11 many Sikh men with turbans were victims of hate crimes and severely beaten because it was believed that these men resembled Osama bin Laden (Umbreit, 2003). These negative representations must be challenged and the perceptions of Muslims as “violent, immoral, fanatical and untrustworthy barbarians attempting to destroy peace” (Bahdi, 2003, p. 304) proves that it is crucial to critically analyze the ways that socially constructed images are created, institutionalized and made an everyday reality by people. The media must therefore be

held accountable for providing partial truths as facts, especially because in some cases their stories lead to increased violence and racism.

FLYING WHILE MUSLIM: LOCAL AND GLOBAL EFFECTS

In Canada, racial profiling is an issue which needs to be addressed due to both its micro and macro implications. There are a number of racial and ethnic groups which make up the Canadian population and with increasing immigration levels (Statistics Canada, 2006); the face of Canada is changing as many visible minorities are making Canada their new home. Canada is too preoccupied with its image and strives to make itself look like an accepting nation, but not everyone embraces this diversity “Canada has allowed too many fundamentalist Muslim immigrants, who bring along their jihad ideology and deeply ingrained hatred of the West with their luggage. Once here in our diverse and tolerant country, they’re free to poison the minds of their children who become the homegrown jihadis like in Toronto” (Glazov, 2006). Such racist and intolerable views categorize Muslims as a violent group.

There has clearly been a misuse of power when deciding on legislation such as the “no-fly list.” For example, take the story of Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen born in Syria. He came to Canada in 1987, after earning his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in computer engineering. Arar worked in Ottawa as a telecommunications engineer. U.S. officials detained Arar on a stopover in New York as he was returning to Canada from a family vacation in Tunisia in 2002. They claimed he had links to al-Qaeda and deported him to Syria, even though he was carrying a Canadian passport. When Arar returned to Canada more than a year later, he reported that he was tortured during his incarceration and accused American officials of sending him to Syria knowing that they practice torture (CBC News, 2007). Arar sought compensation from the federal government for his abrupt deportation and imprisonment. Despite being exonerated, Arar remains on a U.S. watch list. Although he was compensated, he was wrongly accused and treated like a criminal, all based on “reasonable” grounds.

Racial profiling affects many lives across the globe. Cases like Arar’s have been reported from countries all over the world, including both the United States and the United Kingdom. Some law

enforcement officials claim they do not engage in racial profiling, but these tales tell a different story. In the U.K., a British Muslim airline pilot, Amar Ashraf was pulled off a Continental Airlines' flight from Manchester, U.K. to Newark, New Jersey before take-off. He was returning to his job for one of Continental's partner airlines in the U.S. (Ghazali, 2006). Also, according to the Council on American-Islamic Relations, an American Muslim community leader and his wife, an Islamic school principal, were stopped at San Francisco International Airport coming back from Egypt. The couple was questioned about money they had withdrawn for their son's wedding (Ghazali, 2006). Therefore, the worldwide hysteria with terrorism has generated a hostile global climate which has negatively affected Muslims on many fronts. Those in positions of authority must exercise sound judgment and have an extra responsibility to ensure that each member of society is treated with dignity and respect. Homeland Security Chairman, Peter King, has endorsed ethnic profiling and requires that people of "Middle Eastern and South Asian" descent undergo additional security checks due to their ethnicity and race (Ghazali, 2006). These are considered "reasonable" grounds for detaining certain people. These acts of racism and exclusion are created by the government and media's wartime rhetoric and a fabricated sense of fear. Despite this, we must not allow our society to move towards believing in unjustified correlations between race and crime.

Reading about these injustices gives one an idea of the difficulties that people from particular backgrounds face. As a South Asian woman, it is upsetting to hear of the countless stories of innocent people having to defend themselves when travelling. Racial profiling restricts one's freedom of movement and mobility is a basic right in any democratic society. In order to understand the feelings and reactions of those who are scrutinized and searched vigorously, I interviewed two individuals who experienced this form of treatment firsthand (pseudonyms will be used to protect the identities of these individuals). Rahim was targeted before boarding a flight to Miami, Florida from Toronto, Ontario. He was going through customs and "the airport security officer looked at me and my passport three times. He gave me this really weird look (emphasis added). I knew something was wrong and all of a sudden, I was being escorted by him and another officer to a holding room" (Rahim, personal communication, November 22, 2008). "I was

in this room for two hours and I was so pissed off. I kept banging on the door, but no one came and I missed my flight!” (Rahim, personal communication, November 22, 2008). He did not know why he was detained and expressed his frustration, “the officer came in and I asked, ‘why did you bring me here?’ The guy told me it was a ‘random search,’ which is so not true. I was straight with him and said ‘I’m in the same field as you (security), I know you’re looking for brown people since all the 9/11 stuff’” (Rahim, personal communication, November 22, 2008). The airport official interrogated him and asked him where he worked, who he was seeing in Miami and where he would be staying. The unusual part was that Rahim was asked why he wanted to go to Miami more than once, “‘why Miami?’ The guy grilled me. He kept asking me why not somewhere like New York and I said ‘because I want to go to Miami!’” (Rahim, personal communication, November 22, 2008). The airport security personnel apologized to Rahim, but he knew that he was picked because of his race, “damn right it’s a brown thing. Not one white person was in any of those holding rooms. I saw some Asians and Muslim people” (Rahim, personal communication, November 22, 2008). This story illustrates the reality that people face when trying to travel.

Another individual who shared his story with me was Harman. Harman was travelling from Toronto, Ontario to St. Louis, Missouri for a family wedding. He explained that he never had any problems travelling before, but faced a few incidents after this story. As with any other trip, Harman checked in his baggage, and proceeded to security in order to board his flight. He went through the metal detector and his hang baggage was scanned, but he noticed something a bit unusual. After his bag was scanned, an airport official thoroughly inspected his bag. He noticed that everyone was going through the same process and assumed that it was just a new step that security was taking. He had a wallet that was large enough to hold his passport and contained sections to insert credit cards. These slots were empty but “the lady was checking the content of every slot; she even stuck her finger in each one to make sure they were empty” (Harman, personal communication, November 23, 2008). Harman was ready to board his flight at the gate, but was pulled aside to be questioned. “It was me and another person of the same nationality that got pulled aside” (Harman, personal communication, November 23, 2008). He was

searched and questioned again. Harman explained that he travelled to numerous places before and he believed that the “random” searches were justified and needed to ensure the safety of others.

After my experience that’s not how I felt. I can understand being searched, but after going through security and having my bag checked in great detail I felt that this was a bit extreme. I felt embarrassed because they don’t even pull you to the side to search you, they do it in front of everyone and people stare at you. Once it happens to you, you can understand why people get frustrated. (Harman, personal communication, November 23, 2008).

This creates a negative image of targeted individuals because they are made to look like criminals.

Yea, I felt I was targeted. I’d like to know how they decide who to stop. I was in jeans and a t-shirt, clean shaven and didn’t think I looked any different from any of the other guys getting on that plane. When they say ‘random’ why is it that only people of various racial groups are selected? Random would be saying something like everyone in seat E20 from every airline should be questioned. Why are only South Asians being questioned? (Harman, personal communication, November 23, 2008).

Harman brings up many key questions which are vital to understanding the nature of how this process works and the underlying factors causing racial profiling. It is a discriminatory act and blanketed as a “random search.” Even Harman wanted to ask why he was selected, but he was afraid to “rock the boat” as are many other people of colour due to fears that it will make matters worse. I asked both Rahim and Harman what they would like to see change, “they need to change the legislation and have better use of judgement. They better think twice before they stop people of different races for nothing. Stop treating us like we’re criminals” (Rahim, personal communication, November 22, 2008). Harman expressed similar sentiments, “I think the random searches are an issue. It needs to truly be random in nature. Why don’t we see other people being selected? They should include every race and gender. There are many crimes that happen in the world, but that doesn’t mean that any one race or gender commits all those crimes” (Harman,

personal communication, November 23, 2008). Passengers can be wrongly identified and these stories reveal the frustration that one experiences when one is targeted.

These incidents can have a profound effect on individuals and communities. Individuals may feel stigmatized or labelled due to their race. A victim may suffer from emotional and/or psychological harm and may fear authority figures as a result (Bourouh, 2006). As well, people may feel disconnected from their community or uncomfortable with their own identity. Furthermore, this negatively impacts marginalized groups in society because they may feel socially isolated, angry and betrayed by these systems, which are supposed to protect their rights. Acts of racial profiling disseminate stereotypes and justify the unjust treatment of certain communities. It is hoped that further exposure and education around this issue will help people from all backgrounds critically challenge the criminal justice system and security measures in Canada to make necessary changes.

RACIAL PROFILING: RESISTANCE!

It is important to examine racial profiling from a social justice lens in order to consider strategies that promote social inclusion and equity. As Canadians, many of us value our safety, however, the implemented security measures must prove to be necessary, useful, and impartial and apply equally to all members of society. In reality, this currently does not happen and marginalized communities such as Muslims are forced to fight back. Resistance has taken several forms from advocacy groups, letters to local Members of Parliament (MP's), lobbying the government and "whistle blowing." Numerous advocates, non-profit organizations, faith and ethnic groups and human rights activists and organizations (such as the Ontario Human Rights Coalition (OHRC)) are collaborating, to create awareness and educate the public to ensure the government is held accountable for its actions and making the appropriate changes to the "no-fly list" policy. Canada can achieve security without forgoing people's rights through legislation that reflects equity, social justice and community involvement.

Advocacy and social movements are vital to create change and allow marginalized communities to have a voice. It is the pursuit of influencing outcomes including public-policy and resource allocation

decisions within political, economic and social systems and institutions that directly affect people's lives (Nazli, 1996). Some Canadian groups and projects advocate against racial profiling and it is essential to reflect upon the work they do because it demonstrates what resistance can look like, how it can be done and the results that can follow. There is great value in this learning as public demonstrations and advocates such as the OHRC, International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group (ICLMG) and stopracialprofiling.ca fight against incidents of systemic racism and lobby the government for policy changes. For example, in 2003, the OHRC released a report entitled *Paying the Price: The Human Costs of Racial Profiling*. The report emphasized the need to listen to the concerns of those who believe profiling to be a problem and also discuss monitoring whether racial profiling takes place within specific contexts. More importantly, the report highlights key solutions. Another group worth mentioning is the ICLMG, pan-Canadian coalition of civil society organizations that was established in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attack in the U.S (Travel Watch Lists, 2008). This group has attempted to battle racial profiling and the "no-fly list" on a national level through the use of press conferences, demonstrations and information sharing sessions. Also, stopracialprofiling.ca (2008) is a project of the MARU Society, which is a registered not-for-profit organization. This project engages in research on racial profiling and social activism. They are unique in that they also support victims of racial profiling (Stopracialprofiling.ca, 2008). Finally, many faith and ethnic groups have also created initiatives to support their own communities and lobby the government to address its role in racial profiling.

Resistance creates awareness and a deeper understanding of this phenomenon in order to facilitate long-term change. Racial profiling can be eradicated if communities work together to fight for improvements, changes, and ensuring that practical safeguards are implemented to address issues under the "no-fly list." Knowledge is a powerful tool, thus, being informed about racial profiling in the media and news around us is important too.

MOVING FORWARD: PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION

The various manifestations of racism lead to social exclusion. It is vital to analyze existing

institutional policies and practices which discriminate against others. Social inclusion “reflects a proactive, human development approach to social well-being that calls for more than the removal of barriers or risks. It requires investments and action to bring about the conditions for inclusion” (Saloojee, 2003, p. 1). Social inclusion is a desired outcome which is concerned with equity, the protection of one’s rights and “restructuring relations between racialized communities and institutions of the dominant society” (Saloojee, 2003, p. 2). Achieving social inclusion is a process that is determined by the level of commitment and in the way in which it deals vis-a-vis social exclusion in order to promote social cohesion within a nation.

The process of social exclusion experienced by people of colour and other marginalized communities must be reconsidered in order to present opportunities for social inclusion. It is imperative that those who are affected by discriminatory practices such as the “no-fly list” are involved in this process of change. Their experiences, knowledge and recommendations must be considered in order to make necessary changes. It is essential to focus on a “ground up” approach (please see Appendix 1 for a new model of social inclusion) in order to build a new, all-encompassing model of social inclusion. However, it is important to recognize that before implementing solutions, the government must acknowledge the oppression faced by marginalized members of society. In order to move forward, there is value in first reflecting and recognizing the deep affects of racial discrimination. “The various manifestations of racism as important expressions of social exclusion need to be tabled before there can be a meaningful and constructive discussion of social inclusion. Thus for social inclusion to matter, for it to resonate, it must provide space for a discussion of oppression and discrimination” (Saloojee, 2003, p. 1). An opportunity for social inclusion in this case would involve looking at it not as a continuum (from exclusion to inclusion), which is typically done (Richmond & Saloojee, 2005, p. 205), but rather “emerging out of a thorough analysis of exclusion. It has to simultaneously transcend the limits of essentialism, critique hierarchies of oppression and promote a transformative agenda that links together the various, often disparate struggles against oppression, inequality and injustice” (Saloojee, 2003, p. 1). Marginalized communities such as

people of colour must be involved at all levels such as direct political action through various political processes, organizational networking and cooperation and advocacy to influence public policy changes. Change also comes from increased education including a needs assessment and issue identification.

Those in the national security sector such as law enforcement officials and airport personnel must practice sound judgment and professionalism in their roles to reflect practices which are inclusive, but also practical to ensure the safety of all people. This may be achieved through a government organized session (driven by the community) in every province across Canada, involving members from various faith and ethnic communities, government officials (Transport Canada and CSIS employees), law enforcement officials, members from non-profit and advocacy groups and organizations, to begin a dialogue between each member and group. It would begin and focus particularly on marginalized communities so they have an opportunity to speak directly to those in power about the effects of racial profiling. This phenomenon is much more real when one can see and hear the true impact it has on a human life and/or a community. After victim impact statements have been shared, an open forum will be followed to allow all parties involved to engage in dialogue to address and publicly acknowledge the harm done. Finally, solutions can be discussed and concretely implemented to achieve social inclusion. It is also important to recognize that rigorous monitoring and review are crucial to examine whether these changes are applied, which holds the government accountable to the public.

After all the involved parties have collaborated and discussed, a nation-wide report could be published to disseminate the findings and outcomes to the Ministry of Transportation, CSIS and law enforcement officials, and the general public. This process would involve marginalized communities because their voices and knowledge must be integrated in a way that promotes social justice. The recommendations would be concrete, inclusive and reflect a community informed approach where the exchange of dialogue, ideas and knowledge would be shared between the government and the affected groups. The strength of any decision making lies in the ability to be representative and inclusive. This

would build a model of social inclusion that respects and embraces **all** members of society, in policy and practice.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE AND SOCIAL LOCATION

Fostering social inclusion in everyday practice is inherent to the social work profession. The profession's core ideologies drive social workers to act as agents of change for marginalized and oppressed communities. Social workers can play a crucial role against racial profiling on both a micro and macro level. We exist in a society characterized by power imbalances. As social workers, we recognize that a client's issue(s) are not due to personal characteristics, but rather linked to larger social systems which sustain inequalities. The systems and structures that we currently live in must be committed to protecting human rights, democracy and liberties guaranteed under the Canadian constitution. However, this does not always happen as marginalized communities are socially excluded and face restricted democratic freedoms. There has been a rise in repressive action by the state and homeland security forces in matters of national security, which has led to further profiling of Muslims.

In this context, social workers must consider a structural analysis to intervene and implement solutions that curb such discriminatory institutions and/or practices which target people of colour. Using a factor such as race to predict one's behavior is illegal and an unethical practice because it is blatant stereotyping. It is essential that social workers fight bureaucracies and the state in order to challenge current policies such as the "no-fly list" and other discriminatory acts. The social work profession must be actively involved in understanding this issue, creating awareness, educating the public and the transformation of injustices which are perpetuated by the government and those in positions of authority.

Social workers can serve as activists and find allies in local groups, non-governmental organizations (NGO's) or communities to combat racial profiling. We can work together as leaders, facilitators and policy makers to advocate with and for communities who are at risk of racial profiling to provide them with resources and give them an opportunity to be heard. It is important to note that there is great

power in numbers, so finding other social workers or groups (locally and globally) to combat racial profiling creates a coalition to challenge the government to make changes in legislation.

On a micro level, we can work with our local MP's to lobby for policy changes, voice our concerns and/or organize some form of a provincial and/or federal forum which would allow victims the opportunity to tell their stories. This would educate and inform leaders and the public that national security measures must involve reaffirming democratic values, not violating them. We can also work with marginalized communities and victims of racial profiling by supporting them with the negative effects of racism that they must cope with. For example, one could offer counseling to a client or link them to required resources to minimize the harmful effects incurred due to racial profiling.

FUTURE OUTLOOK: CANADA MUST STEP UP TO THE PLATE

Through a collective approach, we can foster an alternative reality, one which promotes social inclusion. Although Canada is concerned with the protection of the state, it has simultaneously increased the vulnerability of Muslims through intrusive and unjustified stops. Until the government makes changes, Canada will not be able to move towards building a socially inclusive society. In order to eradicate racial profiling, future efforts must focus on implementing measures that raise awareness and encourage community mobilization to bridge the gap between those who argue that profiling is needed and communities who are targeted (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2003). The government, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, airline security, law enforcement and CSIS officials must be key players in making these changes because they are in positions of power. They should be required to participate in trainings and/or workshops designed to promote an understanding of cultural competency and race relations. Marginalized groups such as Muslims could work with government officials to engage in dialogue to develop recommendations for legislative changes that focus on respecting the rights of each individual. Furthermore, the government could also develop some form of a Racial Diversity Secretariat (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2003) designed to review issues of racism in Ontario, report solutions to fight profiling and shape government policy to ensure that diversity and equity are respected.

Another vital step would involve measures to monitor, review and implement changes to discriminatory practices conducted by Transport Canada, CSIS and airport and airline security because these parties are responsible for public safety and security. “By deputizing airport officials -- who are untrained, ill-equipped and inexperienced in identifying potential terrorists -- the no-fly list will only lead to more racial/religious discrimination and the only difference is that this will be government-legislated discrimination” (Glazov, 2006). The government should provide (new) staff with sufficient support to ensure they learn appropriate practices when working with diverse communities. It is important that those in power recognize the need to address the concerns of the communities they serve.

In addition, improvements in research would increase our awareness and understanding of the issue. Research must consider broader policy directions and specific recommendations that derive from community members to fully grasp how these policies shape their lived realities. Another area of research would look at “alternative media and grounded sources of information to provide alternative sources to publicize notions of racialization and invisibilization, and critically examine changed policies and laws, and their implications” (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2003, p. 69). Powerful persons and institutions have preferential access to the media, so news processing and coverage leads to the reproduction and legitimizing the ideologies of the political and economic elite (Wortley & Roswel, 2002). For example, after 9/11 there was a huge increase in the depiction of Muslims as “terrorists.” If future research could find alternative media sources to inform and educate us, while measuring their effectiveness, it would allow us to realize that there are various socially defined realities. The media is a powerful tool which often shapes our understanding of phenomenon and influences our learning, so we must use a critical lens when looking at representations of marginalized communities.

CONCLUSION

The safety of our nation is a priority, however targeting Muslims under the “no-fly list” represents a serious attack on this community because they are denied their basic rights to safety and freedom of movement. Racial profiling often promotes harmful stereotypes and hatred. The government’s focus on

national security must not treat every Muslim as a walking criminal due to preconceived assumptions. Furthermore, Transport Canada must not be given leeway to deny Canadians of their mobility and equality rights, even though national security is a great concern. The “no-fly list” has proven to be racist in nature as Canada equates security with discrimination. As a result, Muslims are no longer invisible as they are directly targeted during airport stops and searches. Racial profiling produces a false sense of security, while excluding valuable members of society, all in the name of national security.

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