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Iterations of Olympic security: Montreal and Vancouver

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Abstract

This article compares security dynamics at two Olympic Games hosted by Canada: Montreal (1976) and Vancouver (2010). It is the first study of security at the Montreal Olympics and was only made possible after four years of requests under the Access to Information Act that resulted in the release of thousands of classified security documents in French and English. A comparative study of the two largest peacetime security operations in Canadian history offers unique insights into the challenges of hosting a major international gathering in the aftermath of an international terrorist incident: the 1972 Munich massacre and the 11 September 2001 attack on the World Trade Center. The comparison further offers an opportunity to chart the continuities and differences in Olympic security over time. We focus in part on how the historical context of each event informed 'imaginaries of disaster'. We also examine continuities in the official security response, such as the emphasis on advance intelligence gathering, security 'mock-ups', manpower allocation, coalitions of security agencies and technological innovation. We conclude with some considerations on security legacies and the importance of major event security as a subject of comparative inquiry.

Keywords

legacy, mega-events, Olympics, security, surveillance

Introduction

The Olympics are popular events for promoting national unity and critical moments in cycles of capitalist accumulation. They have also evolved into extensive security projects, the significance of which can persist long after the closing ceremonies.

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Canada has hosted three Olympics: the 1976 Summer Games (Montreal), the 1988 Winter Games (Calgary) and the 2010 Winter Games (Vancouver). Here, we analyse the security dynamics of the earliest and the most recent of these events. We chart the continuities and differences in Olympic security over time, and in this regard the Montreal and Vancouver Olympics are useful case studies. Each event occurred in a fraught security climate. The Montreal Games followed the Munich massacre in which Palestinian terrorists murdered 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team. Vancouver's Games occurred in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (hereafter '9/11') and in the midst of the so-called war on terror. Montreal and Vancouver are the largest peacetime security operations in Canadian history.

While the security dynamics of the Olympics have become a focus of analysis since 9/11 (Richards et al., 2012), there have been few sustained efforts to explore the longer-term trends in security (but see Fussey and Coaffee, 2011). What little comparative work there is focuses on cross-national comparisons of the Olympics or other mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup and the European Football Championships (Klauser, 2011; Samatas, 2011). Even these studies tend to compare fairly current events. Consequently, our analysis will be of interest not only to the increasing number of scholars studying the Olympics and Olympic security (Bennett and Haggerty, 2011; Fussey et al., 2011; Girginov, 2010; Hiller, 2012), but also to anyone concerned about historical trends in policing and security. Moreover, there is a dearth of scholarship on the Olympics in Canada, which is surprising given the country's long history of participating in and hosting the Olympics.

We draw on an impressive archive of material we have amassed on each of these Games. This includes more than 50,000 pages of documents on security planning for the Montreal Olympics in French and English that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) released to us over the past five years under the federal Access to Information Act. These documents include cost and manpower estimates; equipment lists; correspondence with government officials, other police forces, community groups and foreign governments; planning documents; newspaper clippings; threat assessments; and reports assessing the overall security operation. For the Vancouver Games, we conducted 30 interviews with 28 participants between November 2007 and July 2010 with representatives of activist and advocacy groups in British Columbia; law enforcement and public safety officials at the municipal, provincial and federal levels in Canada; UN officials; and representatives of various corporations. We also collected documents dealing with major-event security and Canada's preparations for the 2010 Winter Games, some of which were obtained through Access to Information Act requests to the RCMP, Public Safety and the Canadian Forces.

Comparing Summer and Winter Olympics presents some challenges. The scale of the events is different: Montreal hosted twice as many visitors, athletes and events as the Winter Games in Vancouver. Still, both Games involved a comparable number of nations (92 and 82, respectively) and sports (21 and 15, respectively), and the main security operation for both Games was spread out over two cities (Montreal and Kingston in 1976, and Vancouver and Whistler in 2010). And, while Canada has never been the nexus of major geopolitical confrontation, both events occurred in the wake of major international terrorist incidents that had profound effects on how security for the events was conceived and delivered. Moreoever, that the events occurred within the same national context allows us to identify continuities and discontinuities in security responses within the context of a policing field over a period of four decades without having to control for differences in legal, institutional, social and geographic factors.

Our larger aim in comparing these events is to highlight broader shifts and transformations having to do with risk, insecurity and governance that have occurred in recent years. Primarily, we seek to address what Aradau and van Munster (2011) characterize as the 'politics of catastrophe'. This refers to how conceptions of risk and insecurity increasingly revolve around the question of

how to protect territories, populations and infrastructures from high-impact crises, emergencies and disasters that would radically disrupt contemporary life (see also Amoore and de Goede, 2008; Collier and Lakoff, 2008; Daase and Kessler, 2007; Mythen and Walklate, 2008). Fixation on worst-case scenarios is said to prompt ways of thinking and acting about future risks that supplement inherited frameworks of probabilistic thinking with non-probabilistic and conjectural forms of knowledge. This latter approach 'aspires to access the invisible and unknowable' (Aradau and van Munster, 2011: 7) and in turn informs a precautionary stance that seeks to govern potentially catastrophic futures through aggressive and preemptive security measures.

The Olympic Games provide fascinating insights into how authorities and institutions plan for imagined future catastrophes, as well as the outcomes of these efforts. Concerns that the global profile of the Olympics provides an ideal platform for catastrophic terrorism have generated a precautionary mind-set of 'high consequence aversion', where fixation on 'nightmare' and 'worst-case scenarios' (Hinds and Vlachou, 2007) drive increasingly expensive, expansive and militarized security apparatuses designed to protect the Games from all possible risks. Our data on the Montreal and Vancouver events illuminate the development of this institutional mind-set by revealing some of the processes at work in how planners tasked with securing the events grappled with the prospect of catastrophic risk. We focus in particular on how historical context informs the imagination of catastrophe, which refers to the types of worst-case scenarios that security planners believe they must anticipate, and how the imagination 'is mobilized in response to the problematization of the unknown' (Aradau and van Munster, 2011: 68) in the security exercises performed for the events. We also focus on the security measures established for each event and note the considerable continuities in the official security response across the two Games, including the focus on intelligence gathering, use of personnel and coalitions of security agencies. Before concluding, we discuss some of the lasting effects of each event in terms of their security legacies. While the two events shared a common tendency to downplay the role of new (relative to the time) technology, and consequently left comparatively modest legacies of technologically aided security and policing infrastructures, each event was perceived as contributing to Canada's capacity to govern potentially destabilizing mass crises, as well as broadening and deepening the imbrication of Canadian authorities in transnational policing networks. In highlighting the institutional processes behind these developments, our analysis will be of interest to the growing literature on mega-event security, as well as to scholarship on the implications of shifting modes of thinking about and acting upon risk in security governance.

Historical context

Context crucially shaped security planning for the Montreal and Vancouver Olympics. The RCMP were acutely aware in 1976 that the Montreal Olympics were taking place amid a heightened fear of international and domestic terrorism. Between 1970 and 1975, two dozen diplomats in various countries had been kidnapped (and six others assassinated). In 1971 and 1972 alone, there were 12 aircraft hijackings involving Canadian airlines (RCMP, 1973, 1976c). The Montreal Games were the first Olympics since the Munich massacre. Two years before Munich, Canada faced its own peacetime crisis when the Front de libération du Québec kidnapped a cabinet minister and a British diplomat in a series of events that has come to be known as the 'October Crisis'. The federal government invoked the War Measures Act, suspended civil liberties and eventually captured the kidnappers, but not before one hostage was murdered (Clément, 2008). As a result, when confronted with hosting the Olympics, the federal cabinet passed an order in council in 1973 that called for a strong security posture. The potential threat from international terrorism was reinforced only weeks before the opening ceremonies in Montreal when German and Palestinian terrorists hijacked an

Israeli plane at Entebbe airport in Uganda. Whereas Munich organizers had consciously (and disastrously) sought to have a 'light' security touch, which was common for Olympic events in the past, authorities in Montreal wanted a robust and highly visible security presence. Munich marked a new era for the Olympics.

The Vancouver Olympics were no less fraught with concerns surrounding international terrorism. The Games were the largest domestic event to occur in Canada in the post-9/11 period and the most complex peacetime security challenge ever faced by Canadian authorities (Zekulin, 2009). As in 1976, those responsible for the 2010 Games felt they were operating in a dramatically changed geopolitical environment and were sensitive to the threats this posed for the Games. Security was a primary concern from the outset of the planning process in Vancouver. But, whereas identifiable adversaries with known aims characterized the threats of the 1970s, the 9/11 attacks created a sense among security professionals that they were living in a time characterized by complex and amorphous threats posed by a difficult-to-identify adversary motivated by inscrutable ambitions (Daase and Kessler, 2007).

In both cases, the global context and the threat of international terrorism forced Canadian authorities to strengthen their security and surveillance apparatus for the Games. As we detail later, this was a challenge in each case for a country that has historically relied on allies (i.e. Britain or the United States) for foreign intelligence and security (Whitaker et al., 2012) and has never possessed more than a modest security apparatus. Yet Canada now had to plan for massive security operations under intense international scrutiny. This scrunity was particularly pronounced in Montreal, where Canadian authorities were forced to be the first to address wider apprehensions regarding the vulnerability of the Games and the international call for strong security measures that burgeoned in the wake of the Munich Games. As a consequence, the Montreal Games forced authorities to think about planning for potentially catastrophic outcomes. In addressing this issue, the organization of the Montreal Olympics marked a key turning point in Olympic history, not only because it was the first highly visible security operation, which has since become the norm, but because it articulated some of the nascent elements of what has become a standard, if flexible and context-specific, template of 'lockdown security' (Coaffee et al., 2011) that subsequent Olympic hosts have built upon. The following sections chart some of the continuities and differences in how this template has been elaborated upon between 1976 and 2010, and in doing so highlight a series of broader shifts in governance related to risk, governance and the politics of catastrophe.

Imaginaries of disaster

A considerable amount of security planning for the Montreal and Vancouver Olympics involved identifying and collecting information on groups that might disrupt the Games. In Montreal, the Security Service placed the Palestine Liberation Organization at the top of a threat list populated by other national liberation groups. To address overseas threats, the RCMP established programmes such as Country Profiles, Overseas Liaison, Expansion of Foreign Liaison, Friendly Foreign Agency links, Quiet Diplomacy and Attaché Liaison. Each programme had its own specific objectives, but the overall goal was to use Canadian delegations, as well as foreign security and intelligence agencies, to collect security information (RCMP, 1976a: 9). The RCMP also intensified its already close ties with US and British foreign intelligence agencies to assist with identifying threats from abroad.

The Montreal documents reveal a police force with limited experience in large-scale security planning struggling to address an expansive spectrum of threats. Some of the vulnerabilities identified by the RCMP included hostage and hijacking scenarios, bomb threats or suspicious parcels, illegal interception of police radio signals, labour conflicts, riots and crowd control, natural

disasters, an attack on the Queen, viral epidemics, utility shutdowns, a disaster in the metro system, and a nuclear incident (Comité Principal de Sécurité Publique des Jeux Olympiques (CPSPJO), 1976: 37; RCMP, 1976b: 204).

Dozens of potential threats associated with domestic groups were also identified by 1976. Officials appear to have been especially concerned about Quebec separatists, Native extremists and black nationalists. In this way, security planning reflected the historical context: the 1960s and 1970s were defined by rising domestic and international activism, most notably national liberation movements like the Palestine Liberation Organization or the Front de libération du Québec. These organizations were linked with terrorist violence at home and abroad. To address domestic threats, the Security Service implemented several programmes that included Domestic Defusing, Expansion of Domestic Intelligence Links and Threats Assessments. These programmes were designed to collect and analyse information, produce threat assessments, and share information among federal, provincial and municipal agencies. The defusing programme, for example, was established in 1975 to 'defuse Canadian activist groups which might be a threat to the Games'. Towards that end, 'dissident groups and selected ethnic organizations were contacted by investigators across the country to solicit aid in keeping their militant elements under control during the Olympic period' (RCMP, 1976a: 46).

Despite having cooperated on several major events in the interim, by 2010 the RCMP was again ill equipped to handle an event of the magnitude of the Games. As the RCMP's Integrated Security Unit (ISU) put it in a 2010 report, the RCMP has 'no need and therefore no inherent capability to plan such a large and complex operation' (ISU, 2010: 9). The Canadian Forces played a more prominent role in the Vancouver Games than in Montreal, and they too found themselves operating in an unfamiliar environment. Referring to 'OP Podium', which was the codename for their Olympic operations group, the Canadian Forces concluded after the Games that 'the absence of adequate, or up-to-date, domestic operations doctrine and policies resulted in excessive debate and distracted from the real task of planning and executing Op Podium' (cited in Levitz, 2011). These institutional self-assessments confirm the experience from other major events in the post-9/11 period that the RCMP and the Canadian Forces lack the necessary mechanisms to fully integrate their planning and operations on major domestic events (Barr, 2003/2004).

As it was in Montreal, monitoring threats to the 2010 Games was an early priority for the RCMP. The specialized Joint Intelligence Group (JIG) was created within the ISU to monitor threats against the Games, and it cast a wide surveillance net in doing so. One rough measure of the scope of its activities is its prodigious output of reports. Together with the standing Integrated Threat Assessment Centre, the JIG published over 1000 reports between 2005 and 2010 on threats to the Games (ISU, 2010: 44–45). These briefs provide a window into a shifting amalgam of security anxieties associated with the Games (see Monaghan and Walby, 2011, for an extended analysis). Al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism remains a constant if vague threat throughout these documents. However, contrary to the view of other scholars (Vidalis, 2009; Zekulin, 2009), the ISU never perceived an acute threat from Al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism. Instead, a range of more prosaic but pressing threats were identified by the JIG, none of which had been considered serious in 1976. For example, organized corruption, collusion and bid-rigging in the multimillion-dollar market for venue construction and the attendant 'reputational risk' this posed for Canada's foreign investment interests was seen as the 'most probable and immediate security risk' in 2007 (JIG, 2007: 5). Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation by organized criminal groups was also noted in early reports, along with emotionally disturbed persons, information technology security and public health. The ISU also contemplated the security consequences of a contagious virus spread on the cruise ships chartered to accommodate seconded police.

Domestic opposition groups emerged as the most pressing threat to the Vancouver Games, as they did for Montreal, though their grievances were rooted in issues of Aboriginal land rights, poverty and corporate globalization, rather than Quebec separatism and Cold War politics (O'Bonsawin, 2010). The Vancouver Games were controversial in the light of the city's deeply entrenched social problems and longstanding land-claim disputes with Indigenous populations. Rallying under the cry of 'No Olympics on stolen land', Indigenous groups in British Columbia called for the Games to be cancelled and for a boycott of all corporate sponsors (O'Bonsawin, 2010; Shaw, 2008). Others feared the Vancouver Games would be the vanguard of gentrification that would bring new pressures to the city's already depleted housing market and further displace vulnerable populations.

Many who shared these concerns assembled under the banner of the 'Anti-Olympic Convergence' and promised to protest against the Games, in some cases through direct action. Security forces referred to such coalitions as 'multi-issue extremism', a label that blurred the distinctions between activism, extremism and terrorism, and authorized the surveillance of a wide range of actors (Monaghan and Walby, 2011). Numerous reports emerged in the two years before the Games that the JIG was monitoring and attempting to infiltrate groups as far away as Ontario.

A centrepiece of preparations for the Vancouver Games was a series of exercises intended to test the readiness of the ISU command structure, its operational units, and the relationship of the ISU to external partners such as the Canadian Forces. The exercises were clustered in two main streams: the Pegasus Guardian series and the Milestone Series. The Pegasus Guardian series consisted of four exercises in total (PG, PG2, PG2.2 and PG3) that focused on decision-making procedures at the Gold Command level within the ISU, while the Milestone series, itself consisting of Exercise Bronze, Silver and Gold, focused on integrating the various operational units that comprised the ISU as a whole (ISU, 2010: 145). Exercise Gold was the largest; it included more than 140 agencies, 45 coordination centres and 2000 participants, and served as a 'confirmatory exercise to declare the security apparatus operationally ready' (ISU, 2006). Numerous smaller tabletop exercises were scheduled within various operational groups of the ISU. The Physical Security Group, for example, conducted exercises to test vehicle and pedestrian screening procedures, and the Marine Security Group scheduled its own set of drills pertaining to waterborne incursion. A number of provincial and federal exercises in areas such as mass transit safety already scheduled within Public Safety Canada's National Exercise Program were accelerated to coincide with preparations for the Games, and at the international level the Games provided the occasion for Operation Fabric Virgo, a joint North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD)/Royal Canadian Air Force exercise intended to simulate an airborne attack targeting the Games.

The exercises staged in Vancouver were not unlike those organized for the Montreal Games under Operation Stratacur – an acronym for 'Opération STRAtégiques et TACtiques d'Urgence' – by the RCMP's Security Service in 1975 and 1976, which consisted of seven mock 'conflict games' designed to train and coordinate personnel for the Montreal Olympics. Like Operation Stratacur, the exercises in Vancouver were seen as vital preparations designed to 'confirm and practice command, control and communications capabilities across all agencies contributing to the safety and security of the Olympic Games' (ISU, 2008: 4).

These exercises provide a window into the organizational imagination of catastrophe. Historical context clearly shapes how authorities imagine potential threats. In Montreal, Operation Stratacur was concerned primarily with hostage and hijack situations reminiscent of Munich. The Vancouver exercises included a hostage situation at the athletes' village that the ISU (2010: 48) described as 'extremely valuable for the testing [of standard operating procedures] of an integrated response in the resolution of a domestic terrorist attack with international hostages'. But, in addition to these more familiar concerns, the Vancouver exercises incorporated a much wider range of 'worst-case'

and 'catastrophic' scenarios (Plecas et al., 2010), particularly in the Pegasus Guardian series. These scenarios included simultaneous plane crashes, a chlorine spill, coordinated bomb attacks on the regional transit system and the dispersal of radioactive material through artificial snow-making equipment, the last of which featured role-playing victims and media personnel.

Diverse disaster scenarios are now a regular component of planning for and hosting the Olympic Games, and to the extent that these exercises incorporate increasingly destructive and improbable scenarios, a shift demonstrated when comparing Montreal's conceptions of catastrophe to Vancouver's indicates a much more expansive imagination of catastrophe today – one that emphasizes the unknown over the predictable and is therefore knowable in the service of preempting future catastrophes. It is also significant that the most spectacular of these exercises are deliberately staged for public consumption, involving various degrees of stylization, finesse and production value (Boyle and Haggerty, 2012). As operationalized enactments of imagined catastrophes, these performances shape how we respond to risk, not only by teaching participants what roles they should play in managing crises, but also in contouring the broader selection of risks we prepare for in the present and conditioning the nature of such eventualities (Armstrong, 2012). And, while it is impossible to actually plan for all worst-case scenarios, highly visible security exercises sustain the appearance of having contemplated all possible risks, and in doing so buttress confidence in the state's ability to provide security under conditions of radical uncertainty. The spectacle of security, much like the spectacle of punishment, is a 'performative action which exemplifies what absolute power is all about' (Garland, 1996: 461).

Securing the Games

Security for the Montreal and Vancouver Games obviously differed in size and scope. Nonetheless, there were several noteworthy continuities in the security plans for Montreal and Vancouver, including nested security centred on Olympic venues, themselves fortified within 'rings of steel' and other forms of defensible space; the securitization of critical infrastructure, transportation hubs and border crossings; the extensive monitoring of airspace and enforcement of temporary no-fly zones; strong accreditation and access-control procedures; a prominent role for military personnel and equipment; the embrace of technologically aided surveillance; and the establishment of integrated security and intelligence units specifically responsible for the event. These now-standard practices have emerged through successive iterations of the Games and have been promoted through transnational networks of policing and security agencies, as well as the International Olympic Committee's growing role as an international broker of security expertise, to become a standardized and globalized model of major-event security (Boyle, 2011; Fussey and Coaffee, 2012). Here, we provide insight into some of the processes and challenges encountered by the RCMP in devising security plans for Montreal and Vancouver.

The plan in Montreal was to make security obvious, but not intimidating. Towards that end, a 17,224-person security force was assigned to the Olympics. It consisted of 1606 Montreal Urban Community Police, 1376 RCMP and 1140 Sûreté du Québec. Security personnel also included officers from the Metropolitan Toronto Police, Ontario Province Police, National Harbours Board Police, Manpower and Immigration, Montreal Fire Department and 2910 private security guards hired by the Olympic committee (Comité Organisateur des Jeux Olympiques (COJO), 1978: 566). The largest single group of security personnel was the 8940 members of the Canadian Forces who performed a wide range of security roles. Because of concerns that military personnel might intimidate visitors, it was decided early on that members of the armed forces would have as little contact with the public as possible. Their primary role would be to support the police and provide security for several 'vital points'. These included the administrative offices of the Olympic committee, the

Montreal aqueduct, communications systems including Bell Canada and Radio Canada, transportation systems such as rail lines, and hydro and nuclear power plants (CPSPJO, 1976: 39). Combined, security personnel were responsible for security at the Olympic Village, 13 competition sites and 27 training sites. The RCMP conducted 94,147 security checks on athletes, dignitaries, employees, media personnel and concessionaires (RCMP, 1976a: 15), and provided security for foreign dignitaries, airports and border patrols, as well as the Royal Family and 121 VIPs (COJO, 1978: 567).

The National Security Plan for the Montreal Games included air security (restricted air space); entry control for ports of entry at land, air and sea; harbour security; postal security; and security briefings. Surveillance of side roads and rural areas was increased to prevent unauthorized entry into the country (RCMP, 1976b: 221–223). The federal government passed a one-page open-ended statute that empowered police and customs officials to refuse any visitors entry into the country (without right of appeal).[1] Local law enforcement was enhanced dramatically, including an expanded drug squad and a 24-officer pickpocket squad. The crime rate in Montreal dropped by more than 20% during the Olympics (COJO, 1978: 572).

The costs for all of these measures were surprisingly reasonable, particularly given that the Games themselves were outrageously expensive for the time, costing over C$1.5bn (plus interest) and creating a debt that took over 30 years to pay off. An initial federal security budget of C$14.3m was later increased to C$23m (equivalent to approximately C$93m when adjusted for inflation) (RCMP, 1976a: 23–24). In addition, the Department of National Defence estimated that it cost C$21m to provide security for the Olympics. These figures, however, do not account for the costs to the Montreal and Quebec police forces (the Olympic committee also paid C$1.8m from its own budget for security) (Howell, 2009). Most of the security budget was dedicated to salaries (including overtime), accommodation, travel, renting space for the operations centre, administrative support and equipment. By contemporary standards, these are modest security costs for such a venture.

In comparison, the security budget for the 2010 Vancouver Games was markedly more inflated and contentious than in Montreal. The 2010 Bid Committee initially estimated a security cost of C$175m, but the RCMP had little input in arriving at that figure. Indeed, the RCMP regarded this budget as ‘conceptual’ and ‘developed to meet the needs of the Bid Book submission to the International Olympic Committee’ rather than an actionable figure (ISU, 2005b: 3). In other words, it was an organizational fiction. An initial review revealed numerous financial assumptions not shared by the RCMP, such as using Vancouver’s existing emergency communications (E-COMM) centre as the RCMP’s command centre to save costs, something that was never a practicable option (ISU, 2005a: 3). Other underestimated costs included salaries and accommodation, accreditation, training and the assumption that officials could rely on existing communications equipment. Furthermore, the bid book for Vancouver originally identified 21 official venues to be secured by the ISU (compared to 26 in Montreal), but this mushroomed to over 100 once the Games were awarded, which contributed significantly to costs.

Publicly, the RCMP remained committed to the C$175m figure but was sensitive to the critical attention the issue received in the press. A 2006 email from the director of the Major Events Division to a senior communications strategist recommended that the RCMP ‘maintain a low profile on this issue’ and that it was ‘to our disadvantage to make references to potential inflation variations at this juncture’. Privately, the RCMP was confident it would receive the funds it needed. A briefing note from the ISU to the commissioner states: ‘In the end, we will spend as much as required’ (ISU, 2005a). This proved to be the case. In February 2009, five years after Vancouver won the Games and one year prior to the Games themselves, the government of Canada approved a revised budget, announcing that just over C$900m would be distributed

among nine federal agencies for Games security. Even the ISU's share of C$491.9m dwarfed the roughly C$90m (inflation adjusted) spent on the entire security operation for the Montreal Games.

The Vancouver Games also posed the additional organizational challenge of coordinating security efforts with private companies. The information deficits introduced by private ownership of critical infrastructure in particular were described as a 'new dimension for security planners and for the RCMP' (ISU, 2010: 62). Critical infrastructure protection is not an inherently new problem. The Canadian Forces protected several key industrial sites for the 1976 Games, and more generally critical infrastructure protection is a longstanding problem of civil defence (Collier and Lakoff, 2008). What was new in 2010 was the 'unbundling' of critical infrastructure from state or private monopolies (or oligopolies) and their distribution among competitive firms – a hallmark of neoliberalism – and the concomitant problems of governance this posed (Graham and Marvin, 2001). From a security standpoint, the increased private ownership of critical infrastructure assets introduces unwelcome blind spots, because private actors are often reluctant to share information with government. This was the case for the ISU, which found it difficult to acquire knowledge about critical infrastructure from private owners across the Lower Mainland. To address this problem, the ISU's Critical Infrastructure Liaison Team developed a non-disclosure agreement that allowed the ISU to learn more about over 5500 critical infrastructure assets across the Lower Mainland. Not all or even many of these sites were directly secured by the ISU, but the agreements were seen as critical for 'building the relationships and trust' (ISU, 2010: 63) that facilitated comprehensive security planning.

Another obstacle more pronounced for the 2010 Olympics was that the ISU faced difficulties coordinating its activities with VANOC, the private business responsible for hosting the Games. Again, historical context is essential in understanding the dynamics of security planning. In the 1970s, Olympics bids were often local affairs. Mayor Jean Drapeau and the City of Montreal led the initiative for the 1976 Games with almost no participation from federal government or private partners. Consequently, security for Montreal was an afterthought, and not an integral part of the initial planning and bidding process. And while the Montreal Olympic committee had hired a small contingent of private security guards for their own modest operations, the RCMP ultimately 'took on the bulk of responsibility for planning the security of the Games' (RCMP, 1976a: 4). In contrast, security was a major preoccupation of the 2010 Games, and RCMP headquarters were involved in planning for the Games from the outset. At the same time, the RCMP had to coordinate security plans with VANOC, which shared security responsibilities with the RCMP at official venues. The relationship between public authorities and private organizing committees has occasionally been an issue at more recent Games owing to different views on the look, feel or emphasis given to security (Buntin, 2000). The ISU (2010: 194) expressed continuing frustrations with VANOC over issues such as late changes to venue configuration and on the whole its 'inability to provide timely information and deliver on required/promised infrastructure during the Games'. One gets an early sense of these strained relations from this 2006 ISU briefing note:

> VANOC is a private corporation running the Games. The RCMP is responsible to the federal government for providing security. The RCMP has an arm's length relationship to VANOC. The RCMP is not responsible to VANOC for security. The RCMP will provide security in spite of VANOC. (ISU, 2006)

Though the Vancouver Games were characterized as Canada's largest-ever peacetime security operation, fewer personnel were deployed in Vancouver than in Montreal. Where Montreal enlisted over 17,000 police and troops for the Games, Vancouver mobilized closer to 10,000 officers drawn from the RCMP (4000), the Canadian Forces (5000) and municipal police from

across the country (1700), supplemented by 4000 private security personnel. The most likely explanation is that fewer personnel were required in Vancouver because the Winter Games are smaller in scope, meaning there were half as many visitors and athletes as in Montreal. New technology and policing techniques also reduced the need for manpower. For example, in 1976, police still relied heavily on manpower for surveillance: the RCMP required three teams totalling 27 officers to track a single individual. However, the scope of the security operation was comparable in 1976 and 2010, with major operations in 2010 split into numerous subgroups such as Venue Security, Physical Security, Police Dog Services, Emergency Response Teams, Quick Response Teams, Aviation Security and International Protected Persons (IPP). The Marine Security Group, for example, patrolled the waterways and restricted waterside access to sensitive sites with submersible steel nets.

All of this occurred under an umbrella of sweeping surveillance and military control that far surpassed anything used in Montreal. Advance surveillance included police background checks on over 200,000 people and official accreditation for 143,917 people. And whereas only a dozen CCTV cameras were used in Montreal, over 900 temporary surveillance cameras were installed in or around Vancouver to monitor areas under the ISU's control, and dozens more were installed by municipal and provincial actors across the region. The Canadian Forces provided a security perimeter covering hundreds of kilometres of mountainous backcountry in Whistler and, in conjunction with Transport Canada and NORAD, the Canadian Forces provided situational awareness of the regional airspace with CF-18 Hornet aircraft, Griffin helicopters and two military frigates on standby.

Since Munich, the International Olympic Committee has insisted that security should be comprehensive yet unobtrusive (Thompson, 1999), and members of the ISU constantly repeated the refrain that they were eager to ensure the Games were a 'sporting event, not a security event'. Consequently, security during the Vancouver Games was remarkably low-key. Uniformed police were ubiquitous, but there were few overt shows of force of the kind that have characterized some previous Olympics. Aside from ceremonial and public relations duties, the presence of military personnel was limited to 'backstage' activities such as monitoring the Whistler backcountry. In this way, the principle of restricting the visibility of security personnel that was implemented in Montreal remained the practice in Canada in 2010.

The Montreal and Vancouver Olympics passed without any major crises. Only 15 incidents were reported during the Montreal Games, most of them as trivial as a journalist crossing security lines during the Queen's visit, protestors distributing pamphlets and one man charged with 'being found naked in a public place' during the closing ceremonies (CPSPJO, 1976: 227–230; Howell, 2009). Security incidents during the Vancouver Games were also minimal and consisted of vandalism targeting Olympic sponsors and an individual determined later to have mental health issues who inadvertently came too close to US Vice-President Joe Biden. Though the ISU had planned for catastrophe, 'the prediction that 90% of the work would be done at the venues turned out to be true, resulting in a sense of redundancy at Gold Theatre Command and to a lesser extent Silver Area Command' (Plecas et al., 2010: 7).

The security legacies

The International Olympic Committee now seeks to justify the enormous public costs of hosting its private sporting/commercial event by emphasizing the diverse positive legacies that the Games might produce in commerce, tourism and national pride. Whether such legacies are borne out is much debated, and as Giulianotti and Brownell (2012: 212) note, 'the issue of the "legacy" of sport

mega-events is an area where there is a need for rigorous sociological research'. Here we address the security legacies of the Olympic Games in Montreal and Vancouver.

The 1976 Games did not leave a transformative policing legacy for Montreal or the RCMP. A number of social and political factors can be identified to account for this 'lack of legacy' (Eick, 2011). In part, a new philosophy was spreading throughout Canadian society in the 1970s, with social movements such as the New Left challenging authority rather than embracing Cold War conformity. Canadians were also increasingly rights-conscious: a new human rights movement was emerging, the first human rights and privacy laws were passed, and the political issue of the decade was a Constitutional Bill of Rights (Clément, 2008, 2014). Moreover, the RCMP's security service was coming under increasing scrutiny. A Royal Commission made a recommendation in 1968 to 'civilianize' the service, and there were growing concerns that authorities had overreacted to the 1970 October Crisis. The security service in Canada expanded exponentially between 1950 and 1970, but it lacked the expertise and resources of security services in countries such as the United Kingdom or the United States (in fact, the security service was considered an inferior posting among RCMP officers). Producing a large-scale and technologically sophisticated surveillance state was never part of the security service's vision during this period (Whitaker et al., 2012). Moreover, in 1976 the aim of catalyzing security legacies was not yet a prominent part of the discursive framing of the Games (Boyle and Haggerty, 2009).

Nevertheless, the Montreal Games had a series of lingering security consequences. In terms of technology, Montreal's security apparatus lacked the large-scale investments in new equipment that are now common. The most expensive security device in Montreal was a computer system called COILS, which produced microfiche cards for security personnel at airports. Canada introduced disembarkation cards in 1976, and these became a permanent feature of Canadian air travel. These cards required air travellers to provide identification information, such as their name and social insurance number, which were used to cross-reference with the COILS microfiche cards. The COILS system contained information on individuals who, because they were security threats or had outstanding warrants (the list included lost or stolen passports), were not to be allowed into the country. It identified over 16,000 'undesirables', and another 1000 individuals were added to international terrorist watch lists (RCMP, 1976a: 51–52).

The Montreal Games depended on manpower and local knowledge rather than advanced technology. The RCMP and local police did, however, secure some new tools, including high-speed fax machines, advanced sniper rifles, communication devices (e.g. 600 radios), special communication and surveillance vans, Cessna surveillance aircraft and portable video transmitters (CPSPJO, 1976: 44, 105–106). Montreal also marked the noteworthy introduction of closed-circuit television (CCTV) at an Olympics. One report suggested that these new devices 'will be absorbed within the Force and put to immediate use' (RCMP, 1976a: 27). It was thought that such technology would 'undoubtedly pay big dividends in combating crime…. [Technology] should provide a new means of combating violent crimes such as hostage situations, snipers and hijackings that have become more prevalent in the world during the 70s' (RCMP, 1976a: 27). The RCMP's Security Service concluded in its final report that, 'as a result of the Olympic Games, the Force has obtained some of the most up-to-date equipment available in the world today' (RCMP, 1976a: 12). This assessment may have been exaggerated. The COILS system proved to be too unwieldy and costly; the RCMP abandoned the system after the Games. And while the force kept its new equipment, technology such as CCTV cameras never became pervasive in Canada (Hier, 2010). While technology played an important role in Montreal, the effects were hardly transformative.

Perhaps the most lasting outcome of the Montreal Games – albeit the most difficult to demonstrate empirically – was the tacit 'know-how' and informal connections gained by security personnel through networking with local, national and international security agencies. Newly trained

specialists joined the ranks of the RCMP and local police, allowing authorities to acquire experience with a large security operation. The Security Service compiled detailed dossiers on vulnerable areas as well as domestic and international threats, and security policies were established on a national scale. This included security screening as well as the new disembarkation cards. There was also now a template for special legislation to allow immigration authorities to refuse admittance to visitors from abroad. Advanced computer technology for security screening had been tested, along with new programmes for intelligence gathering and diffusing information. As noted in the Security Service's final report, 'the Olympics provided a definite rationale for using defusing, but its success suggests that, depending on the circumstances, it might have a broader use in continuing operational tactics' (RCMP, 1976a: 47–48).

The Montreal Urban Community Police described its collaboration with other security agencies as 'without precedent' (CPSPJO, 1976: 139). For the Sûreté du Québec, the Games allowed each agency to benefit from learning the diverse methods employed by other agencies and reinforced the principle of collaboration among police forces. The Ontario Province Police believed that the coordination among agencies was essential to the operation's success, a sentiment that was shared by the Canadian Forces (CPSPJO, 1976: 186). The RCMP's Security Service, although it was severely limited throughout the planning process by its lack of bilingual staff, was equally sanguine. The Metropolitan Toronto Police noted in its final report that the Games created a unique opportunity for police officers to learn the planning and operational strategies of other agencies, as well as to develop potentially long-term ties that would, among other things, facilitate sharing resources in emergencies (CPSPJO, 1976: 202). In fact, only the Department of National Defence's planning coordinator offered mild reservations, noting: 'There are still areas for improvement to overcome the lingering elements of distrust between forces' (RCMP, 1976d).

Montreal also marked the nascent emergence of what has become a global network of information sharing about mega-event security (Bowling and Sheptycki, 2012; Boyle, 2011). The RCMP's security service initiated numerous programmes, noted above, to work with international agencies and foreign governments to identify threats. In its assessment of the Attaché programme, the Security Service concluded that 'we reached our objectives and may have pioneered a new, more open contact between Security Service in the different political spheres around the world. Acts of terrorism have given the Security Community a common meeting ground' (RCMP, 1976a: 10). Still, Canada was at best only peripherally connected with a global network at this time; cooperation with foreign agencies did not merit a single mention in hundreds of pages of post-Games assessments. The 1976 Montreal Olympic Games may have marked a move towards Canada's future integration into a more global network of security planning, but it was still in its infancy at this time.

Like Montreal, the 2010 Vancouver Games resulted in several tangible legacies for police, public safety and emergency management agencies in the region. The city's Office of Emergency Management retained approximately 70 surveillance cameras obtained with federal and provincial money made available for the Games. Transportation Canada spent C$15m on security upgrades on regional rail, ferry and airport systems to coincide with the Games, including a state-of-the-art monitoring facility for BC Ferries. The Richmond RCMP detachment leased the offices used by the ISU once it had decamped, and the Vancouver Police Department now occupies VANOC's old premises, a move that the chief constable described as a 'valuable and cost efficient legacy of the 2010 Winter Games' (City of Vancouver, 2010).

On the whole, however, the 2010 Games did not leave the type of sweeping legacy of change for the city as has been apparent in other host cities in the post-9/11 period. The Vancouver Police did acquire a 'long-range sonic acoustic device' (LRAD), but few new technologies were introduced in Vancouver. Indeed, the ISU seemed sceptical of anything too new, warning in 2006 that

'no new technologies [are] to be employed during the Olympics. This is not a show-case for new stuff' (ISU, 2006: 1). Much of the physical footprint of the security plan was an overlay of existing structures that was simply removed after the event, sold or distributed for other uses within the force. A legacy of intensive security and surveillance did not materialize. Likewise, no new legislation was passed for the 2010 Games save for the Olympic and Paralympic Marks Act, which governed the use of Olympic-related trademarks and expired on the last day of 2010.

But, as was the case in Montreal, the RCMP in Vancouver did learn a great deal about hosting major events that was seen to be applicable to any event or crisis requiring interagency collaboration (Boyle, 2012). Police officers acquired practical experience in operational areas such as crowd control, police dog services and watercraft policing, and the JIG provided the setting for training for numerous intelligence analysts. Officers from nearly 120 municipal departments across the country completed the RCMP's major-event security course, and 150 operating procedures were written and validated through the Milestone and Pegasus Guardian exercise programmes.

For the RCMP, the single most important outcome for the 2010 Games was the development of the multi-agency institutional structure of the ISU and the JIG. Though the RCMP had a rudimentary organizational template for major events prior to 2010, the Games were identified early on as an opportunity to develop this template for such future events, particularly once it was announced that the G-8/G-20 meetings would be hosted in Ontario later in the same year. The ISU/JIG structure is described as the RCMP's 'cornerstone' for future events (ISU, 2010: 9). The ISU also recommended that the Major Events and Protective Services Unit (ME&PS) should act as a 'centre of expertise' within the RCMP so that future major events could build upon this experience. It would serve as a repository of resources and information to 'facilitate the transfer and diffusion of innovative practices' (Dupont, 2004: 80) within the institutional network of the RCMP.

More broadly, the Games were approached as an opportunity to enhance the overall readiness of Canadian authorities to handle matters of national security. Gold commanders, for example, received training 'predominantly tailored for the military, but applied with an Olympic theme and with law enforcement participation' (ISU, 2010: 178). This allowed them, among other things, to become versed in the plans and procedures employed by NORAD for air incidents that would serve not only future major events, but also any critical incident rising to the level of the RCMP National Operations Centre. Similarly, the Pegasus Guardian series of exercises allowed senior RCMP officials to rehearse the procedures of the National Counter Terrorism Plan and the process of 'fusing domestic, international and technical intelligence' (ISU, 2010: 48) required for responding to critical incidents of national concern.

The 2010 Games also provided a catalyst for improved coordination between domestic and military forces in Canada. Indeed, for the Canadian Forces the Games were merely the 'initial context' for developing 'enhanced interagency coordination for continental and international security' (Canadian Forces, 2006: 1) with domestic and international partners. Speaking after the Games, a senior military officer in the ISU noted that 'the Games have created an evolutionary change in the [Canadian Forces] and RCMP in terms of how we work together. The results are permanent adaptations of collaborative and institutional policy and procedures that set the conditions for future domestic security events' (cited in Thomas, 2010).

Finally, the Winter Olympics prompted Canadian security officials to engage with the extensive global network of mega-event security expertise that had emerged in the years after the Montreal Games (Boyle, 2011). This allowed Canadian security officials to connect with their counterparts from other countries, notably the USA and the UK, as 'part of Canada's international policing obligations' (ISU, 2010: 198). For example, the ISU's International Police Visitation Program accommodated over 600 police from other countries in 69 separate visits to Vancouver, including

23 officers from the London Metropolitan Police who were embedded with venue commanders for up to three months, including the 17-day duration of the Games.

In sum, although the Olympics in 1976 and 2010 had trace material legacies that benefitted the police, these events did not necessarily transform policing and security practices in Canada. There was no real legacy in terms of infrastructure or technology in 1976 or 2010; rather, the primary legacy of the Games was gaining experience in hosting a major security operation and facilitating closer ties among domestic and international security forces. While in Montreal these outcomes were rationalized after the fact, authorities in Vancouver consciously looked to the 2010 Games as an opportunity to leverage these outcomes. And, while experience elsewhere suggests the possibility for a return to counterproductive and insular organizational practices after the event (Birkland, 2004), the Games did require authorities to complete a large and complex assignment under a definite timeline. They were, in this way, a forced experiment in interagency security governance that was viewed as an opportunity to change how major events are managed in Canada as well as a full-scale exercise for institutions and partnerships responsible for national security. Through its fusing of multiple levels of police, military, intelligence services and private actors into a single institutional assemblage, the most enduring outcome of the 2010 Games may be the organizational structure of the ISU/JIG. Though this structure will not eradicate the enduring issues of distrust and competitiveness that are a feature of institutional relations in policing/security, the Games did force some institutional changes and reveal the need for further institutional changes in the future.

Conclusion

Olympic security is no esoteric scholarly concern. With their massive investments of dollars and personnel, and ability to focus the combined energies of a dispersed network of influential security experts, the Olympics provide a glimpse into the most painstaking security planning outside of warfare. Moreover, these efforts provide empirical insight into broader discussions of transformation in risk and governance driven by the need to render catastrophes knowable and governable events (Aradau and van Munster, 2011). Mythen and Walklate (2008: 238) note that this field of enquiry 'remains an area ripe for cross-cultural empirical investigation', which we supplement with a detailed longitudinal analysis of two events separated by over three decades.

One contribution of this article is that it sheds light on security measures for the Montreal Games, which have not previously been the topic of scholarly analysis. Those Games have had a significant, albeit oblique, influence on subsequent Olympics and mega-events. Security planners for Montreal, conscious of the disaster at the Munich Games, established a template that, in its broad contours, has been used by a succession of Olympic security planners. This includes massive information gathering, security simulations, coalitions of security agencies and an attempt to balance a visible security presence against not wanting to alarm citizens and upset sponsors (Boyle and Haggerty, 2009). Still, it does not appear as though the lessons from the Montreal Games were used for Vancouver's security plans. This was undoubtedly a function of time, as most of the key players in Montreal had retired in the 34 years separating the two events. It is also a consequence of historical context: security planners in Vancouver had to contemplate a much wider and more amorphous threat environment post-9/11.

One of the most significant security differences between the two events concerned technology. The technological infrastructure for Montreal, for example, was rudimentary in comparison to the advanced informational and computational systems used in Vancouver. At the same time, whereas in recent years the Olympics have occasionally become a showcase for security technology (Samatas, 2007), Vancouver officials consciously sought to avoid the risks that come with using the latest 'hi-tech' devices. Assorted pre-Games upgrades created an enhanced informational infrastructure that the

police and emergency officials could rely on after the Games, but the Vancouver Games do not appear to have resulted in the type of urban militarization feared by many pre-Games commentators.

Vancouver also entailed a more conscious and complicated project of infrastructure protection. This was undoubtedly related to the more acute and expanded imaginary of disaster in the post-9/11 period. Hence, it is particularly interesting that, at the end of the day, in both Montreal and Vancouver it was the threat of domestic agitators that officials saw as the most concrete threat, not international terrorism.

Attending to Olympic-style exceptional security is now particularly pressing as this template becomes consistently less exceptional. Ever more sporting events and political summits are being viewed through the lens of high-risk aversion, meaning that the practices introduced and rehearsed at the Olympics are spreading into less prominent contexts. This further accentuates the need for ongoing consideration of the similarities and differences between such events, and the types of lingering security legacies they can produce.

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Note

1. See Statutes of Canada, 1976, Temporary Immigration Security Act, c.91.

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