



Terrorism



Recognize the Warning Signs



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INTRODUCTION

The American public faces a more violent and sophisticated breed of terrorists who may either operate alone, as in the case of shoe-bomber Richard Reid, or may more likely operate in concert with a secret cell. Regardless, such terrorists are capable of bringing catastrophic destruction and death to Americans at a time and place we least expect it. While the police and FBI are doing all they can to prevent such attacks, an informed public – alert to suspicious indicators and global events – may prove a vital link to pre-empt an attack.

OVERVIEW

The terrorist attack on America of September 11, 2001 changed the world and life as we know it in the United States, and redefined our views on homeland security. In an instant, we came face to face with an enemy bent on the destruction of our way of life, capable of carrying out catastrophic attacks to achieve sadistic goals, and unscrupulous in their regard for the innocent. In turn, this new reality of terrorism on American soil requires a swift and drastic change to our understanding of what it means to secure America.

Our law enforcement and intelligence agencies quickly responded and are doing all they can to prevent future attacks and deny terrorists access to our shores. However, despite all they are doing we must recognize that homeland security does not begin and end at the doors of our FBI and our county police departments. Instead, homeland security must be a priority in every city, every neighborhood, and every home across America.

What can we – the public – do to help? Plenty. Our best defense in preventing a future terrorist attack is to have an informed public – aware of current global events and the danger signs of an attack.

For instance, maintain situational awareness of your surroundings, your neighborhood, and where you shop. Is there anything out of place or out of the ordinary? Is there an abandoned and suspicious package or an unattended briefcase? Do you even know who your neighbors are?

Analysis of past terrorist strikes indicate a pattern of activity – warning signs – exist and typically precede every incident. Typically, they include evidence of recruitment, training, logistics, propaganda, intelligence collection, financing, use of safe-houses, and preparatory operations.

These warning signs provide our public a powerful tool upon which to report suspicious activity to local law enforcement authorities and the FBI.

Remember, incidents do not occur in a vacuum. They are meticulously planned, organized, and carried out by individuals or groups sometimes over periods of weeks, months, and even years.

TERRORISM WARNING SIGNS

□ Surveillance

- ✓ Suspicious monitoring activities of a target – either fixed or mobile
- ✓ Unusual photography of targets, creation of maps and diagrams
- ✓ Attempts to obtain blue-prints of government buildings and utility facilities
- ✓ Targets could include financial institutions, government or military facilities, shopping malls, or critical infrastructure – power plants, reservoirs, ports, tunnels, bridges

□ Elicitation

- ✓ Attempts to gain restricted information about a place, person, or operation
- ✓ Attempts to place “key” people in sensitive work areas
- ✓ Efforts to find out strengths and weaknesses

□ Tests of Security

- ✓ Conducted by driving by the target, attempting to breach security to discover response times
- ✓ Efforts to gain legitimate employment to observe goings on at target
- ✓ Unexplained break-ins and tampering of security systems

□ Acquiring Supplies

- ✓ Purchasing or stealing explosives, ammunition, or weapons
- ✓ Unlawful storage of large quantities of chemicals such as nitrate fertilizers
- ✓ Unusual theft of law enforcement and aviation uniforms and identification badges

□ Suspicious People Who Don't Belong

- ✓ Focus on behaviors that just don't seem to fit within norms
- ✓ Persons in the workplace or neighborhood who don't fit because of demeanor, self-imposed seclusion, or anti-social behavior
- ✓ Presence of training manuals and anti-U.S. and anti-Israeli propaganda literature

❑ **Dry Runs**

- ✓ Practice sessions at or near target area to work out bugs and unanticipated problems
- ✓ May include mapping out routes, monitoring of police frequencies, and determining timing of traffic lights

❑ **Suicide Bomber Indicators – A.L.E.R.T.**

- ✓ A – Alone and nervous
- ✓ L – Loose and bulky clothing not compatible with weather conditions
- ✓ E – Exposed wires
- ✓ R – Rigid mid-section – caused by explosives belt or harness
- ✓ T – Tightened hands (may hold detonation device)

❑ **Truck Bomb Indicators**

- ✓ Purchases or theft of sizeable amount of explosives, fuses, blasting caps, and chemicals such as nitric acid, sulphuric acid, urea crystals, liquid nitromethane, and ammonium nitrate
- ✓ Rental of self-storage space to store the chemicals
- ✓ Unusual delivery of chemicals to residential or self-storage facilities
- ✓ Unusual toxic odors, rusted metal, or bright stains in apartments, motels, or self-storage units
- ✓ Rental, theft, or purchase of a truck or van with a minimum of 1 ton carrying capacity
- ✓ Test explosions in remote, rural areas
- ✓ Chemical burns and missing fingers on hands

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY OR BEHAVIOR:

❑ **Local Police - call 911**

❑ **Joint Terrorism Task Force Pacific - call 566-4300**