



U.S. Department of Justice  
Federal Bureau of Investigation



# TERRORISM

in the United States

# 1997

COUNTERTERRORISM THREAT ASSESSMENT and WARNING UNIT  
NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION

INSIDE

WMD  
HOAXES  
pg. 18

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                             |                                                            |                                                     |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--|
| REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                             |                                                            | Form Approved<br>OMB No. 074-0188                   |  |
| Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503 |                                                             |                                                            |                                                     |  |
| 1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                             | 2. REPORT DATE<br>1/1/1997                                 | 3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED<br>Report 1/1/1997 |  |
| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE<br>Terrorism in the United States 1997                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                             |                                                            | 5. FUNDING NUMBERS                                  |  |
| 6. AUTHOR(S)<br>Counterterrorism Threat Assessment and Warning Unit<br>National Security Division                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                             |                                                            |                                                     |  |
| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)<br><br>Booz Allen & Hamilton<br>8283 Greensboro Drive<br>McLean, VA 22102                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                             |                                                            | 8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION<br>REPORT NUMBER         |  |
| 9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)<br><br>United States Department of<br>Justice Federal Bureau of<br>Investigation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                             |                                                            | 10. SPONSORING / MONITORING<br>AGENCY REPORT NUMBER |  |
| 11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                             |                                                            |                                                     |  |
| 12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT<br>Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                             |                                                            | 12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE<br><br>A                     |  |
| 13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 Words)<br><br>Stark images often link time and place as they fix acts of terror within te minds of those who witness them. The image of a masked gunman pacing the balcony of an athlete's dormitory will forever haunt the memory of the 1972 Munich Summer Olympic Games; a light snowfall mingling with heavy black smoke streaming from the windows of New York's World Trade Center mark the February 26, 1993, bomb attack that brought international terrorism to US soil.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                             |                                                            |                                                     |  |
| 14. SUBJECT TERMS<br>IATAC Collection, terrorism                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                             |                                                            | 15. NUMBER OF PAGES<br><br>28                       |  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                             |                                                            | 16. PRICE CODE                                      |  |
| 17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION<br>OF REPORT<br>UNCLASSIFIED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION<br>OF THIS PAGE<br>UNCLASSIFIED | 19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION<br>OF ABSTRACT<br>UNCLASSIFIED | 20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT<br><br>UNLIMITED         |  |



# TERR $\odot$ RISM

in the United States

# 1997

Counterterrorism Threat Assessment and Warning Unit  
National Security Division

In accordance with U.S. counterterrorism policy, the FBI considers terrorists to be criminals. The FBI investigates terrorists in the United States under the following guidelines:

- Domestic terrorism investigations are conducted in accordance with the *Attorney General Guidelines for General Crimes, Racketeering Enterprises, and Domestic Security/Terrorism Investigations*. These Guidelines set forth the predication threshold and limits for investigations of U.S. persons who reside in the United States, who are not acting on behalf of a foreign power, and who may be conducting criminal activities in support of terrorist objectives.

---

## FBI POLICY AND GUIDELINES

---

- International terrorism investigations are conducted in accordance with the *Attorney General Guidelines for FBI Foreign Intelligence Collection and Foreign Counterintelligence Investigation*. These Guidelines set forth the predication level and limits for investigating U.S. persons or foreign nationals in the United States who are targeting national security interests on behalf of a foreign power.

Although various Executive Orders, Presidential Decision Directives, and congressional statutes address the issue of terrorism, there is no single federal law specifically making terrorism a crime. Terrorists are arrested and convicted under existing criminal statutes. All suspected terrorists placed under arrest are provided access to legal counsel and normal judicial procedure, including Fifth Amendment guarantees.

## DEFINITIONS

There is no single, universally accepted, definition of terrorism. The U.S. Code and the FBI define terrorism as “...the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.”

The FBI further describes terrorism as either domestic or international, depending on the origin, base, and objectives of the terrorist organization. For the purpose of this report, the FBI will use the following definitions:

- Domestic terrorism is the unlawful use, or threatened use, of force or violence by a group or individual based and operating entirely within the United States or Puerto Rico without foreign direction and whose acts are directed at elements of the U.S. Government or its population, in the furtherance of political or social goals.
- International terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence committed by a group or individual, who has some connection to a foreign power or whose activities transcend national boundaries, against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.

### **THE FBI DIVIDES TERRORIST-RELATED ACTIVITY INTO THREE CATEGORIES:**

- A terrorist incident is a violent act or an act dangerous to human life in violation of the criminal laws of the United States, or of any state, to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof.
- A suspected terrorist incident is a potential act of terrorism to which responsibility cannot be attributed at the time to a known or suspected terrorist group or individual.
- A terrorism prevention is a documented instance in which a violent act by a known or suspected terrorist group or individual with the means and a proven propensity for violence is successfully interdicted through investigative activity.

---

## **NOTE**

*The FBI investigates terrorism-related matters without regard to race, religion, national origin, or gender. Reference to individual members of any political, ethnic, or religious group in this report is not meant to imply that all members of that group are terrorists. Terrorists represent a small criminal minority in any larger social context.*

---

Cover: Emergency response to WMD hoax at B'nai B'rith office in Washington, D.C., April 24, 1997.  
(Roger Richards/*The Washington Times*)

---

# TABLE of CONTENTS

---

1 INTRODUCTION: TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES: 1997

2 1997 IN REVIEW

2 TERRORIST INCIDENTS

3 SUSPECTED TERRORIST INCIDENTS

3 PREVENTIONS

6 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

11 IN-FOCUS

11 COMMON LAW COURTS

13 DESIGNATION OF 30 FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

14 THE LONG ARM OF THE LAW

16 SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS

18 THE IMPACT OF HOAXES

20 CONCLUSION

22 APPENDIX: CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF INCIDENTS IN THE  
UNITED STATES 1990-1997

Start images often link time and place as they fix acts of terror within the minds of those who witness them. The image of a masked gunman pacing the balcony of an athletes' dormitory will forever haunt the memory of the 1972 Munich Summer Olympic Games; a light snowfall mingling with heavy black smoke streaming from the windows of New York's World Trade Center mark the February 26, 1993, bomb attack that brought international terrorism to U.S. soil; the collapsed floors of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City persist in the nation's collective consciousness long after the site itself was cleared.

That no such images of terrorism on U.S. soil characterized 1997 is largely attributable to the enhanced counterterrorism capabilities of the U.S. intelligence and law enforcement communities. During calendar year 1997, the FBI recorded two terrorist incidents (neither of which resulted in injuries) and two suspected acts of terrorism on U.S. soil (both of which resulted in injuries). Within the same year, 21 potential acts of terrorism were prevented in the United States—the highest number of preventions recorded since 1985, when 23 planned acts of terrorism were prevented.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Government brought several high-profile terrorists to justice in 1997. On June 2, 1997, Timothy McVeigh was convicted of the April 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. On August 14, McVeigh was sentenced to death for carrying out the most deadly act of terrorism in U.S. history. McVeigh's accomplice in the attack, Terry Lynn Nichols, was convicted of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter on December 23, 1997, and as

of the end of the year was awaiting sentencing. On November 12, 1997, international terrorists Ramzi Ahmed Yousef and Eyad Mahmoud Ismail Najim were found guilty of conspiracy for their roles in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center. Both suspects had fled the United States shortly after the bombing, but were apprehended and returned to stand trial in the Southern District of New York.

This edition of *Terrorism in the United States* chronicles significant terrorism-related events occurring within the United States during 1997. It also includes arti-

cles that span the broad range of issues related to the terrorist threat facing the United States. These articles focus on the growth of so-called Common Law Courts, the designation of 30 foreign terrorist organizations pursuant to provisions of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, and the technique of rendering terrorists from abroad. Focus articles also discuss the dangers posed by secondary explosive devices targeting first responders and the impact of hoaxes involving weapons of mass destruction.

In addition, this report provides statistical data relating to terrorism within the United States. This material has been drawn from FBI records to provide a historical framework for the discussion of terrorism presented in this report.

---

# TERRORISM IN THE UNITED STATES 1997

---

# The FBI recorded 2 terrorist incidents, 2 suspected terrorist incidents, and 21 terrorist preventions in the United States during 1997.

In addition, the United States apprehended and prosecuted a number of terrorists. This section of *Terrorism in the United States* summarizes each of these terrorism-related events. FBI designation of each case as being either domestic or international is noted in parentheses. (Please see classification definitions for domestic and international terrorism on page i.)

## TERRORIST INCIDENTS

---

# 1997 IN REVIEW

---

**JANUARY 2, 1997**

**Letterbombings:**

Washington, DC

Leavenworth, Kansas

(Two acts of International Terrorism)

In late December 1996, a total of 12 letterbombs were mailed to the United States in holiday greeting cards bearing Alexandria, Egypt, postmarks. On January 2, 1997, several of these letterbombs were discovered in the mailrooms of the federal prison in Leavenworth, Kansas, and the Washington, D.C., offices of the Saudi Arabian newspaper *Al-Hayat*. One of three greeting cards received at Leavenworth Federal Prison was opened but did not explode. A short time later on the same date in the Washington, D.C., *Al-Hayat* office, another of the letterbombs was opened but failed to explode. Several letterbombs mailed to the New York City offices of *Al-Hayat*, as well as additional letterbombs mailed to Leavenworth prison and the Washington, D.C., offices of *Al-Hayat*, were discovered after law enforcement was able to disseminate warnings concerning the first two incidents. The remaining 10 letterbombs were rendered safe by law enforcement.

The FBI immediately launched an investigation to identify the perpetrators of this act. The investigation was ongoing by the end of 1997. At the time of the attempted bombings, Leavenworth prison housed several international radical extremists convicted of terrorism-related crimes.



# SUSPECTED TERRORIST INCIDENTS

**JANUARY 16, 1997**

**Bombing:**

Atlanta, Georgia

*(Suspected incident of Domestic Terrorism)*

On January 16, 1997, a bomb exploded at a women's health facility in Atlanta, Georgia, causing significant damage to the clinic. Within an hour, a second time bomb exploded, wounding several law enforcement and emergency first responders. At year's end, an FBI investigation was ongoing.

**FEBRUARY 21, 1997**

**Bombing:**

Atlanta, Georgia

*(Suspected incident of Domestic Terrorism)*

On February 21, 1997, a bomb exploded at the Otherside Lounge, an Atlanta (Georgia) alternative lifestyle nightclub. The blast injured five people, one seriously. The explosion also badly damaged an exterior deck and bar area. A second explosive device was located by law enforcement and disarmed. Investigation revealed that the second device likely targeted law enforcement and emergency first responders. An FBI investigation was launched immediately, and as of the end of 1997, was ongoing.

# PREVENTIONS

**JANUARY 1997**

**Attempted Letterbombings:**

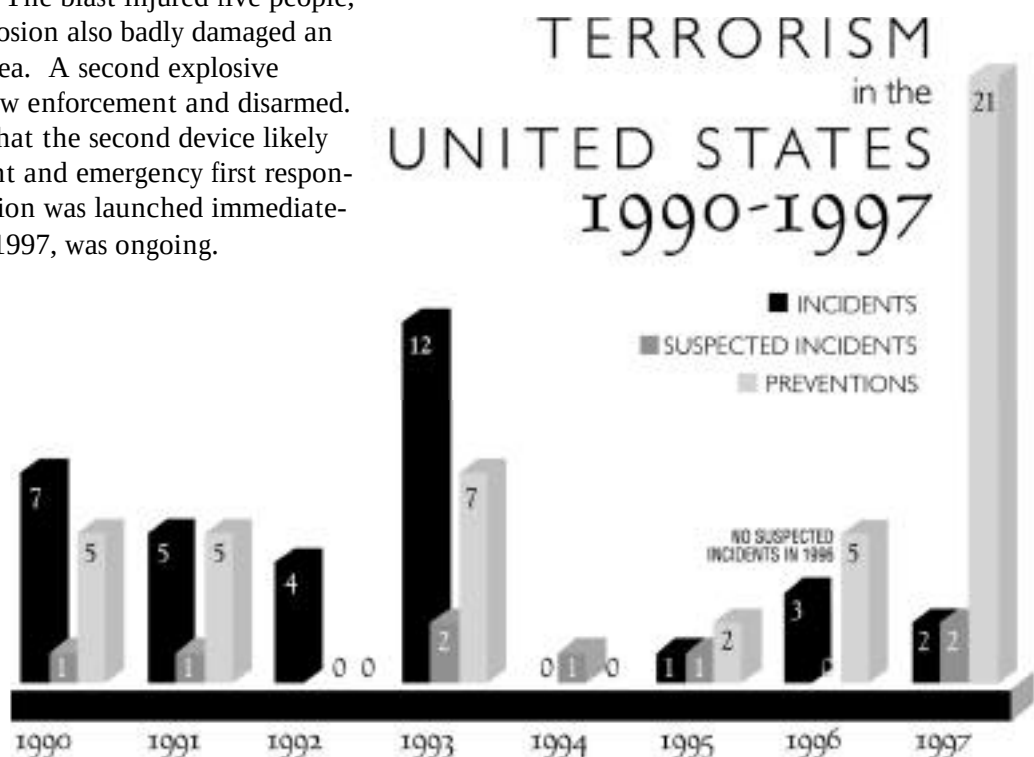
Leavenworth, Kansas

Washington, DC

New York, New York

*(Prevention of 10 incidents of International Terrorism)*

As discussed in the "Terrorist Incidents" section, on January 2, 1997, two letterbombs bearing Alexandria, Egypt, postmarks were opened by employees at Leavenworth Federal Prison (Kansas) and the Washington, D.C. offices of the *Al-Hayat* newspaper. Both letterbombs failed to explode. Law enforcement officials were quickly notified and disseminated warnings to the public. Within days, a total of 10 additional letterbombs were found at Leavenworth prison and the Washington, D.C., and New York City offices of *Al-Hayat*. Law enforcement subsequently rendered all of these bombs safe.



**FEBRUARY 21, 1997**

**Disarming of Secondary Explosive Device:**

**Atlanta, Georgia**

*(Prevention of one incident of Domestic Terrorism)*

As discussed in the “Suspected Terrorist Incidents” section, a bomb exploded at an Atlanta (Georgia) nightclub on the evening of February 21, 1997. A secondary explosive device was located, disarmed, and safely removed by law enforcement personnel. Subsequent investigation revealed that law enforcement and emergency first responders were the likely intended targets of the second bomb.

**APRIL 22, 1997**

**Planned Armored Car Robbery and Bombings:**

**Wise County, Texas**

*(Prevention of four incidents of Domestic Terrorism)*

On April 22, 1997, the North Texas Joint Terrorism Task Force (NT JTTF), in conjunction with the Wise County (Texas) Sheriff’s Office, executed multiple arrest and search warrants for four members of the True Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. The group had planned an elaborate scheme to rob two drug dealers of weapons and cash in order to outfit themselves for an armored car robbery. The armored car heist was to be preceded by the detonation of multiple diversionary bombs at a natural gas processing and storage facility, which could have caused the release of hydrogen sulfide into the air. The investigation also revealed that members of this group had detonated at least two “practice” explosive devices in preparation for the planned attack on the natural gas facility.

**JUNE 12, 1997**

**Planned Armored Car Robbery:**

**Jacksonville, Florida**

*(Prevention of one incident of Domestic Terrorism)*

On June 12, 1997, the Jacksonville (Florida) Office of the FBI, in conjunction with the Miami Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF), arrested Bradley James Orns (also known as Brad Ollis) for his planned robbery of an

armored car and the murder of its guards. His plan involved robbing \$20 million from a Jacksonville-based armored car company, dismembering three guards during the commission of the robbery, and killing any law enforcement officers who might impede his escape. Orns was arrested during the final planning stages of the robbery and was charged with violating the Hobbs Act. Investigation determined that Orns planned to use the proceeds from the robbery to finance militia groups and to aid them in staging violent confrontations with the U.S. Government.

**JULY 4-11, 1997**

**Planned Attack on Military Base:**

**Fort Hood, Texas**

*(Prevention of four incidents of Domestic Terrorism)*

Between July 4 and July 11, 1997, the FBI, in conjunction with state and local law enforcement agencies in Texas, Colorado, and Kansas, executed multiple arrest and search warrants for a group of individuals planning an engagement with “foreign troops” stationed at the U.S. Army base at Fort Hood, Texas.

In June 1997, the FBI was advised by undercover law enforcement officers that Bradley Glover, a self-proclaimed militia Brigadier General with a history of advocating the arrest of local law enforcement officers and members of the judiciary in Kansas, and an accomplice, Michael Dorsett, anticipated an “engagement” with United Nations troops who they believed were stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. On July 4, 1997, after tracking the illicit activities of the two men, FBI Special Agents and officers from the Texas Department of Public Safety arrested Glover and Dorsett at Colorado Bend State Park, approximately 40 miles southwest of Fort Hood. Glover was charged with various weapons violations; Dorsett with fleeing a felony warrant and a passport violation.

Warranted searches of Glover’s truck and Dorsett’s home revealed explosive devices and components, assault rifles, body armor, camouflage clothing, and militia-oriented literature. On July 5 a bail bondsman posted Glover’s bail on the state charges. The bondsman then drove Glover to his residence in Arlington, Texas, and then on to Denver, Colorado.

Investigation revealed that Kevin and Terry Hobeck had established a safe house for Glover and Dorsett at a campground near Creede, Colorado. Two other individuals with militia ties, Thomas and Kimberly Newman, arrived from Kansas and unwittingly supplied undercover law enforcement officers posing as militia associates with clothing, backpacks, automatic assault rifles, and 10 homemade pipe bombs packed with nails to be used against law enforcement officers.

Days later, when Glover contacted the undercover officers in Colorado, they determined that he was at the residence of Merlon "Butch" Lingenfelter, in Mondovi, Wisconsin. Explaining that the Colorado safe house had been compromised, Glover and Lingenfelter stated that they would "hunker down" at Lingenfelter's residence with the support of the Michigan Militia. Instead, Glover and Lingenfelter were arrested on July 10, the Hobecks and the Newmans on July 11.

Bradley Glover was indicted for Possession of an Illegal Firearm/Silencer and for converting two rifles into fully automatic mode. Trials were scheduled for spring 1998. Michael Dorsett, indicted for Possession of an Illegal Firearm/Silencer, indicated that he would enter a guilty plea.

Merlon Lingenfelter was indicted in Wisconsin on July 16 for Possession of Illegal Firearms. Kevin and Terry Hobeck were indicted on August 6 in Colorado for two counts of Possession of Illegal Firearms. In December 1997, Kevin Hobeck received a sentence of 21 months incarceration, with 3 years of supervised probation.

Thomas and Kimberly Newman were indicted on August 20, also in Colorado, for firearms violations. Thomas Newman was sentenced to 36 months incarceration and 3 years of supervised probation; Kimberly Newman received a sentence of 10 months incarceration (including 5 months of electronic home detention) and 3 years of supervised probation.

Although small-scale attacks on U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) facilities had been perpetrated by left-wing and special interest groups during the 1970s and 1980s, this incident marked the first planned attack against a DoD facility by a right-wing militia cell.

## **JULY 31, 1997**

### **Attack on New York Subway System Thwarted**

*(Prevention of one incident of International Terrorism)*

On July 31, 1997, a cooperating witness informed the New York City Police Department (NYPD) that a recent Palestinian immigrant to the United States was planning to rig a bomb to a trip wire on the "B-line" of the subway. The NYPD conducted a raid on an apartment in Brooklyn, New York. Two improvised explosive devices consisting of five pipe bombs were recovered by the NYPD bomb squad.

Upon entering the apartment, NYPD officers confronted two subjects: Gazi Ibrahim Abu Mezer and Lafi Khalil. Both men were shot by the officers as they tried to reach switches on the pipe bombs; they were subsequently taken to an area hospital.

Abu Mezer and Khalil were indicted on August 28, 1997, by a federal grand jury in the Eastern District of New York and charged with violating 18 U.S.C. § 2332A(A) (2) (conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction against persons in the United States) and §§ 924(O) and 3551 (conspiracy to use and carry a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence).

In addition, Abu Mezer was charged with violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 924 and 3553 (knowing and intentional use and carrying of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence), and Khalil with violating 18 U.S.C. §§ 1546 (A) and 3551 (knowing and intentionally possessing, obtaining, accepting and receiving a counterfeit alien registration card).

Both Abu Mezer and Khalil pled not guilty; their trial was scheduled to begin in summer 1998.

The arrests of Abu Mezer and Khalil came one day after suicide bombers in Jerusalem set off bombs in a marketplace, killing 15 people and wounding 150. Initially, it was thought that the incidents may have been linked, but the motives of the New York subjects remain unclear. Several days prior to their arrest, the subjects sent a letter to the U.S. Department of State warning that they would build more bombs and strike at Jewish institutions in the United States if six Arabs being held in U.S. and Israeli prisons were not released. By year's end, the FBI was unable to establish a direct nexus between the subjects and any terrorist organizations, including radical extremist groups.

# SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

**APRIL 29, 1997**

## **Atlanta Bombing Task Force Established**

On April 29, 1997, three separate investigations—those into the July 27, 1996, Centennial Park bombing at the Atlanta Summer Olympics, the January 16, 1997, bombing of the Atlanta Northside Planning Services facility, and the February 21, 1997, bombing of the Otherside Lounge (also in Atlanta)—were merged into the Atlanta Bombing Task Force (ABTF). The decision to form an integrated task force was based on evidence that strongly suggested the three bombings were the work of the same individual or individuals. The ABTF is comprised of agents from the FBI, BATF, and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

**MAY 2, 1997**

## **Arrest of Colorado First Light Infantry Members**

On May 2, 1997, Ron Cole, Kevin Terry, and Wallace Stanley—members of the Colorado First Light Infantry, an antigovernment militia—were arrested in Aurora, Colorado, for possession of numerous illegal weapons. A search of their shared residence revealed mortars, pipe bombs, ammunition, automatic weapons, grenades, and various explosive devices, as well as general plans for the disruption of the federal government through pipe-bombings and other violent acts.

**MAY 5, 1997**

## **Deportation of Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook**

On July 25, 1995, Mousa Abu Marzook was detained by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service as he attempted to re-enter the United States at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport. Subsequently, he was arrested by the FBI, and on October 5, 1995, the Government of Israel filed a formal request for his extradition on charges of conspiracy to commit murder and other charges related to a series of terrorist bombings in Israel during the previous 5 years.

On May 8, 1996, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York had ruled that Marzook, a leader of the Palestinian extremist group, the Islamic Resistance Movement, or HAMAS, could be removed from the United States. The ruling was upheld on October 9, 1996, by a U.S. District Judge. Marzook was ordered excluded and deported from the United States pursuant to sections 212(a)(3)(B)(I)(I) and (II) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, U.S.C. §§ 1182 (a)(3)(B)(I)(I) and (II). On May 5, 1997, Marzook was removed from the United States to Jordan.

**JUNE/AUGUST 1997**

## **Conviction and Sentencing of Timothy James McVeigh**

On April 19, 1995, at 9:02 a.m., the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, was destroyed by a bomb blast. The explosion killed 168 people, injured more than 500 others, and damaged or destroyed several neighboring buildings in downtown Oklahoma City.

Just over an hour after the blast, Timothy James McVeigh—traveling in a yellow Mercury Marquis, 80 miles north of Oklahoma City—was stopped by an Oklahoma State Trooper who observed that the car was missing a rear license plate.

McVeigh was ultimately taken into custody on a state gun charge. At the time of his arrest, McVeigh had earplugs in his pocket, a loaded handgun in a shoulder holster, and an envelope full of violent antigovernment writings. The FBI initiated an investigation. Two days later, Timothy McVeigh was formally charged with the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building.

Jury selection for the trial of Timothy McVeigh began on March 31, 1997. The trial was held in the federal court house in Denver, Colorado, due to concerns over the defendant's ability to



● TIMOTHY JAMES McVEIGH

receive a fair trial in Oklahoma City. On June 2, 1997, the jury found McVeigh guilty on all 11 counts listed in the indictment: two counts of conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction, one count of destruction by explosive, and eight counts of first-degree murder for the deaths of the federal agents killed in the blast, pursuant to the Federal Death Penalty Act of 1994, appearing in 18 U.S.C., Sections 3591 to 3596.

On June 13, 1997, the jury forwarded a unanimous decision recommending that McVeigh be sentenced to death. On August 14, 1997, the court sentenced Timothy McVeigh to death by lethal injection.

### **JUNE 17, 1997**

#### **Saudi National Questioned Concerning the Khobar Towers Bombing**

At approximately 3:00 p.m. (EDT) on June 25, 1996, an explosive device contained in a water truck detonated outside Building 131 at the Khobar Towers complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. The blast destroyed the building which was being used to house U.S. military personnel stationed in

Saudi Arabia, killing 19 American servicemen.

The FBI has dedicated a vast amount of resources to its investigation into the Khobar Towers bombing. Since the attack, the FBI has had as many as 100 employees in Saudi Arabia, including investigators and laboratory and evidence collection personnel.

On June 17, 1997, Saudi national Hani Abd al Rahim Al-Sayegh was ordered removed from Canada and subsequently turned over to U.S. authorities. A federal grand jury indictment unsealed one day later charged Al-Sayegh with promoting the use of violence against U.S. nationals and identified him as a member of a terrorist organization. These charges were not directly related to the Khobar Towers bombing.

The U.S. Department of Justice requested on September 10, 1997, that the criminal charges pending against Al-Sayegh be dropped. A federal court judge granted this request, and Al-Sayegh was remanded to the custody of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. By year's end, Al-Sayegh's status was pending as a federal court attempted to determine if he would be deported to Saudi Arabia or be sent to a country of his choice.



● KHOBAR TOWERS

## **FEBRUARY/JUNE 1997**

### **Conviction of Washington State Militia Members**

On July 27, 1996, the Seattle Division of the FBI arrested eight members of the Washington State Militia, a right-wing extremist group, for manufacturing and possessing explosive devices, transferring illegal weapons, and conspiracy. The subjects had discussed plans to bomb various targets, including a radio tower, a bridge, and a train tunnel while a train was inside.

During the five-week trial which ended in February 1997, four members of the group—John Pitner, Marlin Mack, Gary Kuehnoel, and John Kirk—were convicted of various charges.

At a subsequent trial, John Kirk was also found guilty of conspiracy to manufacture and possess explosive devices. Gary Kuehnoel pled guilty to weapons charges.

By year's end, John Pitner, Marlin Mack, Fred Fisher, and Tracy Brown were awaiting retrial on one count each of conspiracy to manufacture and possess explosive devices. The eighth defendant, Judy Kirk, was awaiting trial on a single count of delivery of an explosive device.

## **JULY 3, 1997**

### **Freemen Member Pleads Guilty**

On March 25, 1996, Leroy Schweitzer, Daniel Petersen, Jr., and Lavon Hanson were arrested, touching off an extended stand-off between law enforcement and the Freeman Organization that culminated with the peaceful surrender of the rest of the group 81 days later on June 13, 1996. Prior to the stand-off, investigation indicated that Schweitzer was aggressively pursuing plans to kidnap, try, and execute the Garfield County prosecutor and sheriff.

On July 3, 1997, Lavon Hanson pled guilty to charges of federal bank fraud. It was the first guilty plea entered by any of the Freeman antigovernment militants.

In court, Hanson admitted that in 1993 he submitted a fraudulent certified money order in the amount of \$428,000 to the Farm Credit Bank for payment of a debt owed by a neighbor whose property was being foreclosed.

During the early and mid-1990s, Leroy Schweitzer taught classes on how to produce bogus financial instruments. These instruments, many bearing Schweitzer's signature, have surfaced around the country.

The Freeman group denies the legitimacy of the government. Members called their compound, a cluster of houses and other buildings on a 960-acre wheat farm, "Justus Township" and insisted they had their own laws and their own courts.

The farm had been sold at a foreclosure auction in October 1995, but members of the Freeman remained there, keeping the new owners out, until they ultimately surrendered to the FBI on June 13, 1996. By the end of 1997, 23 other individuals were facing Freeman-related charges in Montana.

## **AUGUST 8, 1997**

### **Conviction of Mountaineer Militia Member**

On August 8, 1997, Floyd "Ray" Looker, self-proclaimed head of the Mountaineer Militia, was convicted of conspiring to manufacture and deal in explosives without a license. Looker also pled guilty to selling copies of blueprints of the FBI's fingerprint complex to an individual he believed was operating on behalf of a terrorist group that planned to blow up the center.

Looker actually sold the copies for \$50,000 to an undercover FBI agent posing as a middleman for a fictitious group of terrorists.

The plea came the day before Looker's second trial was to begin on charges related to the plot to blow up the FBI's Clarksburg (West Virginia) fingerprint complex.

Looker's co-defendants, Jack Phillips and Edward Moore, had previously pled guilty to explosives charges.

The 16-month investigation began in June 1995, two months after the Oklahoma City bombing, when the Mountaineer Militia allegedly discussed



● FLOYD RAYMOND "RAY" LOOKER

attacks on three targets, including the fingerprint complex.

In a separate trial, James “Rich” Rogers, a firefighter who gave the photographed blueprints of the FBI complex to Ray Looker, was also convicted of violating a 1994 federal antiterrorism law which makes it a crime to provide resources to anyone planning a terrorist attack.

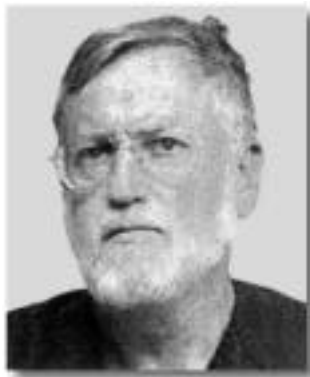
### **OCTOBER 27, 1997** **Conviction of Terry Coon**

On October 27, 1997, a federal jury in Wheeling, West Virginia, convicted Terry Coon for providing weapons and explosive materials to Floyd “Ray” Looker, who was plotting an attack on the FBI’s fingerprint facility in Clarksburg, West Virginia. With Coon’s conviction, five of the seven defendants arrested in connection to the plot were either convicted or pleaded guilty. Two Ohio men were acquitted of explosives charges earlier in the year. Coon’s sentencing was scheduled for early 1998.

### **OCTOBER 30/DECEMBER 3, 1997** **Sentencing of the Spokane Bank Robbers**

On October 30, 1997, Verne Merrell, the leader of a small white separatist cell, was sentenced to two life terms in prison without parole for a string of bombings and bank robberies in Washington state.

Charles Barbee and Robert Berry were also sentenced to life terms for their participation in the July 12, 1996, crimes, as well as bombing an office of *The Spokesman-Review* newspaper and robbing and bombing a bank in April 1996.



● VERNE JAY MERRELL

On December 3, 1997, Brian Ratigan was sentenced to 55 years in prison. Ratigan was convicted in September of conspiracy, armed bank robbery, malicious destruction of a building, and two counts of using a firearm in a violent crime.

These men consider themselves “Phineas Priests,” virulently opposed to homosexuality, abortion, and mixed-race marriages. The suspects, who were driven by extreme religious beliefs, sought to effect social change by committing acts against banks and abortion services providers.

### **NOVEMBER 12, 1997** **Conviction of Ramzi Yousef and** **Eyad Ismoil Najim - World Trade Center Plotters**

In early February 1995, FBI Special Agents apprehended Ramzi Ahmed Yousef in Islamabad, Pakistan. Yousef was returned to the United States where he was arraigned in the Southern District of New York on charges relating to his alleged involvement in the bombing of the World Trade Center on February 26, 1993. Also in 1995, Yousef associate Eyad Mahmoud Ismail Najim was apprehended in Jordan and returned to the United States for trial.



● RAMZI AHMED YOUSEF

On November 12, 1997, Yousef and Ismail were found guilty in U.S. federal court of conspiracy, for their roles in the World Trade Center bombing. Yousef is believed to have masterminded the plot, which resulted in the deaths of 6 people and injured more than 1,000 others. Ismail was charged with driving the van that contained the bomb. Sentencing for both men was scheduled for early 1998. Yousef was also scheduled to be sentenced in 1998 for his role in the bombing of Philippine Airlines flight 434 on December 11, 1994, and a related plot to bomb several U.S. air carriers transiting the Far East.



● EYAD MAHMOUD ISMAIL NAJIM

## **NOVEMBER 14, 1997**

### **Conviction of Alleged Japanese Red Army Member**

On May 14, 1986, two projectiles containing a high explosive were fired from a rocket launcher toward the U.S. Embassy compound in Jakarta, Indonesia. The projectiles failed to explode when they landed on the roof and courtyard of the Embassy compound.



● TSUTOMU SHIROSAKI

Tsutomu Shirosaki, an alleged member of the Japanese Red Army, was charged by the U.S. Government for his role in the rocket attack. Shirosaki was taken into custody overseas and turned over to the FBI on September 21, 1996, for removal to the United States.

Shirosaki was arraigned in the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., on September 30, 1996. On November 14, 1997, he was convicted on all counts related to the attack. Shirosaki's sentencing was scheduled for early 1998.

## **NOVEMBER 18, 1997**

### **Suspension of TWA Flight 800 Criminal Investigation**

On July 17, 1996, TWA Flight 800 crashed off the coast of Long Island, New York, killing all 230 people aboard the plane. Following the crash, a criminal investigative team (composed of federal, state, and local officials), headed by the FBI, was formed to determine whether the crash was the result of a criminal act.

Following an exhaustive investigation, all claims of responsibility for the crash were found to be without credibility. A total of over 700 interviews were conducted as part of the investigation. The FBI Laboratory devoted 5,000 work hours to the crash investigation and performed 3,000 residue examinations. The bodies of all 230 victims were recovered and positively identified. Ninety-six percent of the aircraft was recovered.

On November 18, 1997, the Assistant

Director of the FBI's New York Field Office held a press conference to report the findings of the FBI's investigation. The probe yielded no evidence that the crash had been the result of a criminal or terrorist act.

## **DECEMBER 23, 1997**

### **Conviction of Terry Lynn Nichols**

The Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building was bombed on the morning of April 19, 1995. The blast killed 168 people, injured more than 500 others, and damaged or destroyed neighboring buildings in downtown Oklahoma City.

On April 21, 1995, federal authorities arrested Timothy McVeigh, hours before he was expected to make bail on a state firearms charge. A short time later, an associate of McVeigh's, Terry Lynn Nichols, surrendered in Herington, Kansas, after learning that he was being sought by the FBI.

On May 10, 1995, Nichols was formally charged in connection with the bombing. A federal court ordered that McVeigh and Nichols be granted separate trials, citing the possibility that their civil rights could be compromised by a joint trial. On August 10, 1995, a federal grand jury in Oklahoma City indicted McVeigh and Nichols on murder and conspiracy charges. After the indictment, the U.S. Department of Justice agreed to move the upcoming trial from Oklahoma City to another city. On February 20, 1996, the trial venue was changed to Denver, Colorado.



● TERRY LYNN NICHOLS

On June 2, 1997, Timothy McVeigh was found guilty on all 11 counts brought against him. On August 14, 1997, the judge accepted the trial jury's recommendation and sentenced McVeigh to death by lethal injection.

Jury selection for the trial of Terry Lynn Nichols began on September 29, 1997. On December 23, 1997, Nichols was convicted of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter but acquitted of weapons and explosives charges. His sentencing was set for mid-1998.



“The creation of Common Law Courts is a growing practice used by many who share the same values as those in the militia movement.”

## GROWTH OF COMMON LAW COURTS

So-called Common Law Courts represent a growing concern to state and local governments throughout the United States. Some private and state sources estimate there to be over 1,000 Common Law Courts currently operating in the country, providing an illicit judicial dimension to right-wing, separatist philosophy.

Common Law Courts openly defy the authority of legitimate courts, engage in “paper terrorism,” and commit financial institution fraud. For these and other reasons, they often come to the attention of law enforcement.

Today’s Common Law Courts grew out of the *Posse Comitatus* movement of the 1980s. For some adherents to right-wing philosophy, Common Law Courts provide an ideological justification to avoid federal and state laws and to engage in

such pseudo-legalistic activities as filing bogus liens, acquitting group members of legitimate criminal or civil charges, and trying political opponents.

These courts, which have no legitimate legal basis, are made up of self-appointed judges and juries and regularly issue nonbinding “indictments” or “warrants” against law enforcement and government officials who investigate or serve legal papers on them. Although a number of

bogus arrest warrants have been issued by these courts, to date, there have been no known attempts to effect any of the arrests.

The creation of Common Law Courts is a growing practice used by many who share the same values as those in the militia movement. These individuals consider themselves to be “Freemen,” who are emancipated from all responsibilities to the federal government. Freemen often refuse to pay taxes on earned income, purchase large quantities of gold and silver due to their belief that U.S. currency is “useless United Nations money,” financially defraud others, and hold trials in their own courts of law in order to target public officials.

---

IN FOCUS

---

Many Freemen adjudicate grievances against the government, its representatives, or targeted financial institutions and then attempt to defraud them by issuing bogus rulings or fines. These tribunals are held in settings, typically called "Supreme Courts," "Jural Societies," or "Justice Townships." Rulings are issued based on the groups' interpretation of Common Law. Many Common Law Courts recognize such documents as the Bible, the Magna Carta, the Articles of Confederation, and the Bill of Rights as their legal standard. Many advocates of Common Law Courts also subscribe to laws that have been repealed, which they nonetheless claim support their "legal" position. However, they disavow the decisions rendered by legitimate judicial bodies such as the U.S. Supreme Court.

In addition to creatively re-interpreting the U.S. Constitution, Common Law Courts also attempt to justify their positions through claims of a "hidden history." They believe that the true history of the United States has been systematically kept from the American people by a massive conspiracy. Common Law Court adherents hope to expose the "truth" by searching through public archives and finding the "true laws" that have been erased.

Matters of Common Law Court-sponsored fraud against the federal government or financial institutions



have traditionally been investigated by the FBI as violations of banking statutes. However, due to close ties between members of the Common Law movement and many militia groups, this type of activity also has been identified as a threat to national security.

The criminal activity of Common Law Court members may precipitate future confrontations between antigovernment groups and law enforcement, given their close ties to others in the "patriot" and militia movements.

# DESIGNATION OF 30 TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

On April 24, 1996, President Bill Clinton signed the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (PL 104-132), which provides federal law enforcement with new tools in the fight against international terrorism. Two key provisions of the Act relate to a prohibition on international terrorist fundraising in the United States and modifications to existing legislation regarding terrorist and criminal alien removal and exclusion.

---

## DESIGNATED FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

*Under a provision of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, on October 8, 1997, the U.S. Department of State designated the following 30 organizations as "Foreign Terrorist Organizations."*

- ABU NIDAL ORGANIZATION
- ABU SAYYAF GROUP
- ARMED ISLAMIC GROUP
- AUM SHINRIKYO
- EUZKADI TA ASKATASUNA
- DEMOCRATIC FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE - HAWATMEH FACTION
- GAMA'A AL-ISLAMIYYA
- HAMAS
- HAKKAT UL-ANSAR
- HIZBALLAH
- JAPANESE RED ARMY
- AL-JIHAD
- KACH
- KAHANE CHI
- KHMER ROUGE
- KURDISTAN WORKER'S PARTY
- LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM
- MANUEL RODRIGUEZ PATRIOTIC FRONT DISSIDENTS
- MUJAHEDIN-E-KHALQ ORGANIZATION
- NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY
- PALESTINE ISLAMIC JIHAD - SHIQAQI FACTION
- PALESTINE LIBERATION FRONT - ABU ABBAS FACTION
- POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE
- POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE - GENERAL COMMAND
- REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA
- REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION 17 NOVEMBER
- REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S LIBERATION PARTY/FRONT
- REVOLUTIONARY PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE
- SHINING PATH
- TUPAC AMARU REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

Section 302 of the Act directs the U.S. Secretary of State, in conjunction with the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Treasury, to designate any organization that meets certain proscribed criteria as a foreign terrorist organization (FTO). To qualify for this designation an organization must: 1) be a foreign organization and 2) engage in terrorist activity that threatens the security of U.S. nationals or the national security of the United States. On October 8, 1997, Secretary of State Madeline Albright designated 30 international groups as foreign terrorist organizations (See list of designated foreign terrorist organizations).

Once a group is designated as an FTO, the Secretary of the Treasury may require U.S. financial institutions possessing or controlling assets of any foreign organization included in the notification to block all financial transactions involving those assets until further directive from either the Secretary of the Treasury, Act of Congress, or order of the court.

The second major provision under the 1996 law is creation of the Alien Terrorist Removal Court (ATRC). This court provides federal law enforcement with a mechanism to remove alien terrorists from the United States using classified material to be presented to the ATRC judge *ex parte* (with only one party represented—here, the prosecution) and *in camera* (in private).

Other provisions within the Act allow U.S. citizens to sue foreign nations in federal court for terrorist acts committed against U.S. nationals abroad and call for tougher measures to

---

insure the protection and control over nuclear, chemical, and biological material which could be used by terrorists.

# THE LONG ARM OF THE LAW

In its application of the long arm of the law, the United States has successfully returned a number of terrorists from other countries to stand trial for acts and planned acts of terrorism against U.S. citizens. There have been over 250 extraterritorial jurisdiction cases since laws were enacted in 1984 and 1986, expanding the FBI's extraterritorial jurisdiction. Since the mid-1980s, several high-profile international terrorists have been returned to the United States from foreign countries through use of a process known as irregular rendition.

For example, Omar Muhammed Ali Rezaq was arrested abroad in 1993 and brought to the United States to face trial for his role in the 1985 hijacking of EgyptAir Flight 648. World Trade Center bomber Ramzi Yousef was arrested by the FBI in Islamabad, Pakistan, in 1995 and returned to the United States to stand trial. Japanese Red Army member Tsutomu Shirosaki was taken into custody abroad and turned over to the FBI in 1996 to face trial for his role in a 1986 rocket attack on the U.S. Embassy compound in Jakarta, Indonesia.



In 1997, Mir Aimal Kansi was returned from overseas to stand trial in a Virginia court for the 1993 murders of two Central Intelligence Agency employees.



What is an irregular rendition and how does it differ from the more familiar process known as extradition? Extradition is a formal process through which a person is surrendered by one sovereign state to another by virtue of a treaty. The extradition process is usually initiated by a request transmitted through diplomatic channels. In the classic extradition model, an individual has been accused or convicted of an offense in one country, but is currently within the jurisdiction of another. Thus the government of the first country will make a request, following the guidelines established in a bilateral agreement with the government of the second, for the individual's return.

The general term rendition encompasses the formal process of extradition through a treaty. Irregular renditions, however, occur outside the parameters of extradition treaties. Frequently, the practice is borne of frustration at either the pace of the extradition process or the unwillingness of a country with whom the United States has a valid extradition treaty to render an individual to the United States to face trial. On some occasions, however, both governments will agree to bypass the formal extradition process to expedite an individual's removal to the United States to stand trial.

Irregular rendition devices fall into three categories: the abduction of an individual from one nation by agents of another nation, the informal surrender of an individual by one nation to another without formal or legal process, or the use of immigration laws to expel an accused or convicted criminal from a country.

Irregular rendition has deep historical roots. In the United States, the history of irregular rendition dates back further than that of extradition. Not surprisingly, many irregular renditions from early U.S. history involved the border countries of Canada and Mexico. However, not all did. A notable example involved the case of John Surratt. Surratt was accused of being a co-conspirator in the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. In 1866, the United States exercised extraterritorial jurisdiction over Surratt and returned him to the United States from Alexandria, Egypt, where he had fled.

For over 100 years, the U.S. Supreme Court has consistently approved of the irregular method of rendition. The Ker-Frisbie doctrine is the linchpin of judicial approval for the abduction method of irregular rendition. The doctrine, fashioned together by the holdings of two separate Supreme Court cases, states that forcible abductions as a method of arresting and returning fugitives from a foreign land will not bar U.S. courts from asserting jurisdiction when the accused finally appears before them. Despite its

potentially controversial premise, the Ker-Frisbie doctrine has been followed consistently by both state and federal courts.

The emergence of irregular rendition as a preferred method for returning accused and indicted criminals from abroad to stand trial in the United States stemmed from the rise in two categories of crime which presented unique and real dangers to U.S. national security beginning in the 1970s: terrorism and the trafficking of illegal narcotics. Despite the fact that extradition treaties were refined and expanded to keep pace with changing crime trends, the U.S. Government found itself stymied at times by an exception to extradition law known as the "political offense exception." This clause, included in all U.S. extradition treaties as well as most other extradition treaties currently in force, circumscribes extradition in cases involving politically motivated crimes and prosecutions. Unfortunately, the exception in its purest form makes no distinction between statesmen advocating change through words and terrorists inciting change through bombs.

As the 1970s gave way to the 1980s, federal law enforcement agents were faced with the difficult choice of either following the customary extradition process and taking the chance that terrorists and drug traffickers would avoid prosecution for their crimes, or bypassing traditional legal channels by obtaining physical custody of fugitives through means of irregular rendition.

U.S. law enforcement agents have exercised the irregular rendition method of fugitive capture in several different ways. They have worked directly with foreign agencies to apprehend fugitives abroad and transport them to the United States (sometimes via third countries); lured fugitives to U.S. territory, international waters, or to other countries from which their renditions can be more readily obtained; and have relied on private agents (such as bounty hunters and informants) to accomplish many of the same tasks.

# SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS

**D**uring 1997, two bombings in Atlanta, Georgia, included a disturbing feature that could pose new security concerns to law enforcement officers around the country. On January 16, two bombs exploded at the Atlanta Northside Planning Services facility where abortions are performed. One hour after detonation of the first bomb, which caused no injuries, a second explosive device detonated. The

---

## SECONDARY DEVICES: STRATEGIES FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

*The 1997 Atlanta bombings represented a change in terrorist tactics. The use of secondary explosive devices targeting emergency first responders requires developing new techniques for responding to bombing attacks.*

*To date, no fatalities have resulted from the use of secondary explosives. In order to prevent or minimize future casualties, the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Affairs (BJA), has administered a \$3 million program in first responders training.*

*As part of this program BJA produced a videotape entitled "Surviving the Secondary Device: The Rules Have Changed." This tape provides basic information to emergency first responders about the Atlanta bombings and suggests ways that first responders can effectively deal with bombing situations where a secondary explosive may be present. Over 65,000 copies of the tape have been sent to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. In addition, copies have been made available to fire chiefs and fire academies, as well as state emergency management agencies.*

*Public safety agencies interested in receiving a copy of the tape should call the U.S. Department of Justice at 1-800-421-6770. Agencies will be directed to submit a written request on agency letterhead, signed by a supervisor, stating that the tape is to be used to train public safety officials.*

---

resulting explosion injured six people, including two FBI Special Agents and one BATF agent.

On February 21, 1997, a bomb exploded in the Otherside Lounge, an alternative lifestyle bar, also in Atlanta. Five people were injured by this explosion. A second explosive device was located and safely detonated during render-safe procedures. Subsequent investigation determined that this second device was intended to injure emergency first responder personnel.

The active targeting of emergency first responders with secondary explosive devices poses new operational challenges to law enforcement. Use of this device in the Northside Planning Services and Otherside Lounge bombings represented the first documented application of this technique in the United States in 30 years. These incidents send a clear message to law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical personnel that they are intended targets for terrorists.

The use of secondary explosive devices also creates an added element of danger both real and psychological to all involved in a terrorist incident. First responders are prevented from immediately assisting those injured because of the need to search the area for additional explosive devices. Failure to secure the area could result, as in the January Atlanta bombings, in the injury and possible death of emergency first responders.

The Atlanta bombings have prompted emergency agencies throughout Georgia to review their techniques for handling bomb scenes. (See insert) Many law enforcement agencies in Georgia are now incorporating new training in order to better deal with the real possibility of being confronted with a secondary explosive device.

Following an examination of the forensic evidence at both of the Atlanta bombings in 1997 and the Centennial Park bombing on July 27, 1996, a strong possibility emerged that all three attacks were the work of the same individual or individuals. On April 29, 1997, the investigative personnel



● Secondary explosion in Atlanta, GA, injured several first responders, January 16, 1997.

working on these three cases were combined into the Atlanta Bombing Task Force (ABTF). The ABTF is comprised of agents from the FBI, BATF, and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

Following the bombing of the Otherside Lounge, letters were mailed to Reuters News Service, the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, the NBC News Bureau, and WSB Television. The handwritten letters claimed that “Units of the Army of God” were responsible for the bombing of the Northside Planning Services office and the Otherside Lounge. The letter included negative comments regarding abortion, homosexuals, and agents of the “so-called Federal Government, i.e ATF, FBI, Marshals etc.”

While these cases are currently under investigation, the possible link between the letter writer and the 1997 bombings indicates that the bomber(s) intended to target emergency first responders in addition to damaging the abortion clinic and targeting homosexuals who frequented the Otherside Lounge. Because terrorists often use previous incidents as case studies, the use of secondary explosive devices in Atlanta may point to a new trend that will be seen in future attacks.

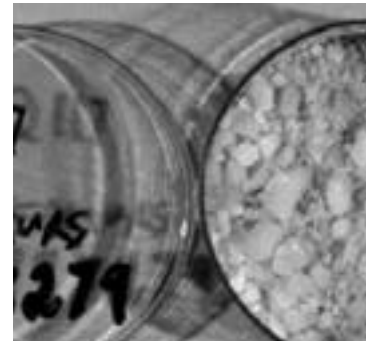
# WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION HOAXES: A GROWING CONCERN

Since its earliest days, law enforcement has had to deal with false reports and hoaxes. Within the realm of terrorism, the most common form of hoax traditionally involved threatened use of small bombs or other conventional explosives. However, in recent years, the FBI has identified a growing trend toward hoaxes involving weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Science and communications have made information relating to WMD technology available to an ever-widening audience, and it is being experimented with by terrorists, extortionists, and other would-be criminals.

The number of WMD-related investigations has grown during the past several years. In 1997, the FBI investigated 73 cases involving suspected WMD use. As in years past, the vast majority of these cases were found to be hoaxes. However, more than other types of hoaxes, false or fabricated threats involving WMD devices can have significant ramifications for targeted communities.

A particularly high-profile incident occurring in Washington, DC, in April 1997, demonstrated the potential impact of a WMD hoax. On April 24, 1997, a mail clerk at the national headquarters of the Jewish social service organization *B'nai B'rith* discovered a suspicious package and alerted the building's chief of security. After placing the manila envelope in a wastebasket and carrying it outside, the security chief notified the police. Once responding officers were confident that the package did not contain an explosive device, they opened it and found a shattered petri dish covered in plastic bubble wrapping. The small dish was labeled with a misspelled variation of the word "anthrax," a deadly bacterial toxin, and "yersina," the bacterium that causes bubonic plague. Officers also found a rambling two-page letter warning that the package contained a "chemical weapon."

The FBI forwarded the petri dish to the Naval Medical Research Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. During the next eight hours, as the contents of the petri dish were analyzed, office workers in the building, law enforcement and emergency responders, the news media, and people living and working in the nation's Capital were unsure if the package contained deadly bacterial toxins.



● example not original

This and similar incidents occurring across the country within the past several years offer important lessons for law enforcement. At a minimum, first responders at the *B'nai B'rith* incident learned they must control the scene, assess the potential dangers, minimize potential exposure to themselves and to citizens, and keep the media advised to contain public concerns. The *B'nai B'rith* incident also clearly demonstrated that a hoax may be as effective as an actual attack in achieving the desired terrorist objectives of fear, disruption, and panic.

There are indications that extremists are becoming more interested in the potential misuse of chemical and biological agents. Commercially available chemicals and biological agents could potentially be developed into weapons of mass destruction.



Unlike the *B'nai B'rith* incident, some WMD-related hoaxes do not involve any substance at all. On March 10 and 12, 1997, written threats involving anthrax were made to a bill collection agency and a car dealership, both located in Arizona. Upon investigation by law enforcement, each was determined to be a hoax. In the summer of 1997, a group of individuals in Florida issued a warning that the water supplies of 27 major cities would be poisoned at a later date. Upon investigation, law enforcement identified no capability or apparent intent by the individuals to commit the acts; the threat was assessed as a hoax. In December 1997, a retail store chain in Oklahoma was notified that ricin (a biological toxin) had been placed in and on items in a number of stores. The perpetrators requested \$75,000 in exchange for information on which items were contaminated. However, investigation revealed no evidence of ricin in the stores.

Each of these hoaxes triggered a large, well-coordinated response from local fire and police departments, the FBI, and other federal agencies. In WMD-suspected incidents, the initial response, mass decontamination, and cleanup is assigned to the Department of Defense Marine Corps Chemical/Biological Incident Response Force (CBIRF), the U.S. Army Technical Transport Unit, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides predisaster incident training and postdisaster management. The FBI conducts a criminal investigation of all incidents occurring in the United States.

Presidential Decision Directive 39, signed by President Clinton on June 21, 1995, designates the FBI as the lead federal agency for all operational responses to domestic terrorist incidents. The National Defense Authorization Act of 1996 provided funding for training federal, state, and local emergency response personnel in managing the consequences of WMD-related incidents. Under the authority of this Act (commonly referred to as the Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Act, after its sponsoring legislators), the FBI has undertaken several training initiatives, including nuclear, chemical, and biological incident contingency planning in communities around the United States.

Law enforcement and emergency first responders are trained to approach every threat as if it is real, thereby containing potentially dangerous incidents. For this reason hoaxes involving threatened use of chemical, biological, and radiological substances represent an especially disturbing challenge to public safety agencies. Given the magnitude of the federal response to a suspected WMD incident, first responders might be reluctant to initiate the mechanisms to set that response in motion. However, given the potential for loss of life stemming from even smallscale exposure to chemical, biological, or radiological substances, caution and prudence represent the most appropriate responses to incidents involving suspected WMD devices.

**T**errorism continued to pose a significant threat to the people of the United States in 1997. Both domestic and international terrorists attempted to carry out acts of violence on American soil during the year.

Due in large part to the enhanced capabilities of the U.S. intelligence and law enforcement communities to address the terrorist threat, none of these plots succeeded in killing or seriously injuring victims. The high volume of terrorist preventions recorded during the year, however, indicates that the terrorist threat has not diminished.

---

## CONCLUSION

---

In addition to preventing 21 planned terrorist attacks in 1997, the United States continued to take a strong stand against those who commit acts of terrorism. On June 2, 1997, Timothy McVeigh, the architect of the most deadly act of terrorism ever perpetrated on American soil, was found

guilty of the 1995 bombing that destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, claiming 168 lives. On August 14, 1997, Federal Judge Richard Matsch sentenced McVeigh to death. Federal prosecutors were also successful in showing that McVeigh's associate, Terry Lynn Nichols, participated in the plot. On December 23, 1997, Nichols was convicted of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter for his involvement in the Oklahoma City bombing. Nichols' sentencing was scheduled for mid-1998.

The U.S. Government also scored major successes against international terrorists in 1997. On November 12, Ramzi Yousef—the operational mastermind behind the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center—and a co-conspirator, Eyad Mahmoud Ismail Najim, were found guilty of conspiracy for their roles in the bombing. On November 14, Tsutomu Shiroasaki, an alleged member of the Japanese Red Army, was convicted in federal court of all charges related to a May 14, 1986, rocket attack on the U.S. Embassy compound in Jakarta, Indonesia.

In September 1996, the FBI had rendered Shirosaki from overseas so that he could be brought to trial in the United States.

Despite these successes, the United States continues to face a formidable terrorist threat. In 1997, there were 21 planned acts of terrorism prevented by law enforcement—the second highest number of terrorist preventions for a one-year period recorded by the FBI. As the third millennium

approaches, the potential for destructive activity on the part of domestic right-wing terrorists and extremist religious cults may increase. At the same time, the means of carrying out terrorist attacks continue to expand, as information related to weapons of mass destruction technology becomes further proliferated through such means as the World Wide Web. These factors underscore the need for continued vigilance against terrorism on the part of the U.S. Government, state and local law enforcement agencies, and the American public.



# CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF INCIDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES 1990-1997

| DATE     | LOCATION                     | INCIDENT TYPE                         | GROUP                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1-12-90  | Santurce, P.R.               | Pipe Bombing                          | Brigada Internacionalista<br>Eugenio Maria de Hostos de las<br>Fuerzas Revolucionarias<br>Pedro Albizu Campos<br>(Eugenio Maria de Hostos<br>International Brigade of the<br>Pedro Albizu Campos<br>Revolutionary Forces) |
| 1-12-90  | Carolina, P.R.               | Pipe Bombing                          | Brigada Internacionalista<br>Eugenio Maria de Hostos de<br>las Fuerzas Revolucionarias<br>Pedro Albizu Campos<br>(Eugenio Maria de Hostos<br>International Brigade of the<br>Pedro Albizu Campos<br>Revolutionary Forces) |
| 2-22-90  | Los Angeles, Calif.          | Bombing                               | Up the IRS, Inc.                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 4-22-90  | Santa Cruz County,<br>Calif. | Malicious Destruction<br>of Property  | Earth Night Action Group                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 5-27-90  | Mayaguez, P.R.               | Arson                                 | Unknown Puerto Rican Group                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 9-17-90  | Arecibo, P.R.                | Bombing                               | Pedro Albizu Group<br>Revolutionary Forces                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 9-17-90  | Vega Baja, P.R.              | Bombing                               | Pedro Albizu Group<br>Revolutionary Forces                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 2-3-91   | Mayaguez, P.R.               | Arson                                 | Popular Liberation Army (PLA)                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 2-18-91  | Sabana Grande, P.R.          | Arson                                 | Popular Liberation Army (PLA)                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 3-17-91  | Carolina, P.R.               | Arson                                 | Unknown Puerto Rican Group                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 4-1-91   | Fresno, Calif.               | Bombing                               | Popular Liberation Army (PLA)                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 7-6-91   | Punta Borinquen P.R.         | Bombing                               | Popular Liberation Army (PLA)                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 4-5-92   | New York, N.Y.               | Hostile Takeover                      | Mujahedin-E-Khalq (MEK)                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 11-19-92 | Urbana, Ill.                 | Attempted Firebombing                 | Mexican Revolutionary Movement                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 12-10-92 | Chicago, Ill.                | Car Fire and Attempted<br>Firebombing | Boricua Revolutionary Front<br>(two incidents)                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 2-26-93  | New York, N.Y.               | Car Bombing                           | International Radical Terrorists                                                                                                                                                                                          |

# CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF INCIDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES 1990-1997

| DATE                                         | LOCATION             | INCIDENT TYPE          | GROUP                                       |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 7-20-93                                      | Tacoma, Wash.        | Pipe Bombing           | American Front Skinheads                    |
| 7-22-93                                      | Tacoma, Wash.        | Bombing                | American Front Skinheads                    |
| 11-27/28/93                                  | Chicago, Ill.        | Firebombing            | Animal Liberation Front<br>(nine incidents) |
| THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS OF TERRORISM IN 1994 |                      |                        |                                             |
| 4-19-95                                      | Oklahoma City, Okla. | Truck Bombing          | Pending Investigation                       |
| 4-1-96                                       | Spokane, Wash.       | Pipe Bomb/Bank Robbery | Phineas Priesthood                          |
| 7-12-96                                      | Spokane, Wash.       | Pipe Bomb/Bank Robbery | Phineas Priesthood                          |
| 7-27-96                                      | Atlanta, Ga.         | Pipe Bomb              | Pending Investigation                       |
| 1-2-97                                       | Washington, D.C.     | Letterbomb             | Pending Investigation                       |
| 1-2-97                                       | Leavenworth, Kans.   | Letterbomb             | Pending Investigation                       |