

TERRORISM

AN INVESTIGATOR'S HANDBOOK



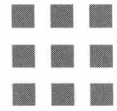
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Terrorism

An Investigator's Handbook

Fourth Edition

William E. Dyson



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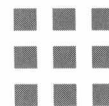
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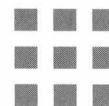


Dedication

Robert R. Glendon—The senior FBI Special Agent who mentored my early career and encouraged me to concentrate in the area of terrorism, and a dear friend who taught me the value of professionalism and dedication.

Dr. Richard H. Ward—Dean of the Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Sciences, University of New Haven, New Haven, Connecticut, a close friend who encouraged me to prepare this volume, and who assisted, advised, and counseled me along the way.

William Reed—President of the Institute for Intergovernmental Research (IIR) in Tallahassee, Florida, who encouraged me to stay in the field of terrorism after my retirement from the FBI, and who gave me advice and counsel. Sadly, my friend Bill died on July 16, 2000.



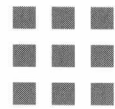
Foreword

The primary focus of this volume is in the area of domestic terrorism occurring in the United States. International terrorism will not be specifically addressed except for that happening inside the country. Much of what is covered in this volume would also be applicable to international terrorism investigations conducted in industrialized nations. This manuscript is intended to explore the best techniques that law enforcement can employ to conduct terrorism investigations in America. It takes the position that virtually all investigative techniques that law enforcement officers normally use in criminal investigations can also be applied to terrorism cases. However, it is argued that often these techniques must be used in a different manner with respect to terrorism. The author believes that terrorists are unique within the criminal world. Terrorists do not behave like the average criminals routinely encountered by authorities. The vast majority of the terrorist attacks that have occurred in the United States during the past 40 years, and especially those perpetrated during the twenty-first century, have been committed by homegrown domestic extremists. These attacks have occurred in just about every state and have been committed by right-wing, left-wing, and single-issue/special-interest militants. The attacks have involved vandalisms, arsons, and bombings—among other crimes intended to engender fear. Most have caused property damage with only a few intended to result in bodily harm. Some have been relatively minor, employing vandalism, including broken windows and acid damage to vehicles. Others, like the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, were designed to cause fatalities. The August 1, 2003, arson attack perpetrated by the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) in San Diego, California, was one of the most costly attacks in United States history, causing some \$50 million in damage. Multiple attacks also seemingly carried out by the ELF on August 22, 2003, resulted in millions of dollars in damage to vehicles at several California car dealerships and arson destruction of a Chevrolet dealer's warehouse. Just three days before the September 11, 2001, attacks the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) set a fire that completely destroyed a McDonald's restaurant in Tucson, Arizona. On April 1, 2001, likely anarchists caused approximately \$1 million in damage to sports utility vehicles at a Chevrolet dealership in Eugene, Oregon. The ELF claimed responsibility for burning three luxury homes in Washington state in March 2008, resulting in millions in damages. The ELF also claimed credit for knocking down two radio towers in Washington state in September 2009 disrupting the station involved and causing millions in damage.

Despite the fact that most terrorist attacks in the United States are carried out by domestic terrorists, the September 11, 2001, attacks and the February 26, 1993, bombing of the World Trade Center in New York clearly demonstrate that international terrorists represent a threat to the security of the United States. This was reinforced on Christmas Day 2009, when a foreign militant attempted to detonate an explosive device concealed in his underwear as

the airliner on which he was a passenger was approaching the airport in Detroit, Michigan. Had the device not failed to function, it is likely that the airliner would have crashed in Michigan resulting in hundreds of deaths. In June 2007, authorities announced the arrests of several members of an alleged Islamic extremist cell who were conspiring to bomb a jet fuel line at or in New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport. One of the conspirators was a foreign-born naturalized United States citizen, while the other plotters lived in foreign countries. In addition, there have been a number of recent arrests of individuals living in the United States who were allegedly conspiring to perpetrate terrorist attacks in the country on behalf of foreign ideologies. In May 2007, five men were arrested for allegedly conspiring to attack soldiers at the Fort Dix Army Base in New Jersey in connection with Islamic extremism. In separate cases in September 2009, men influenced by foreign extremist ideology attempted to detonate bombs in downtown Dallas, Texas, and Springfield, Illinois, that would have resulted in hundreds of deaths and injuries and multiple millions in damage. On May 1, 2010, a foreign born United States citizen who had received foreign terrorist training attempted to blow up a vehicle in crowded Times Square in New York City. Fortunately, the bomb malfunctioned. In November 2010, a man influenced by a foreign extremist ideology, was arrested after he attempted to detonate a van filled with what he believed were explosives at a ceremony in a crowded park in Portland, Oregon. On June 22, 2011 two men influenced by a foreign ideology, were arrested in Seattle, Washington on charges that they had taken possession of machine guns that they intended to use in an attack on a United States military processing center in Seattle. The techniques covered by this volume can be applied to investigations conducted against such foreign conspiracies in the United States.

It is not the purpose of this manuscript to present a history of terrorism or to describe past and current terrorist groups. An effort has been made to explore the development of terrorism as a concept, and to explain why this problem is so much greater today than at any other time in history. Efforts have been made to describe the various types of terrorism. However, the bulk of the book focuses on the area of investigation. It is intended to offer suggestions and advice with respect to the investigation of terrorist individuals and groups. It is hoped that law enforcement officers will be able to use the information contained in this volume to solve terrorist attacks and to place the offenders into custody. When applying suggestions in this volume, investigators must consider and follow the policies and procedures of their department and the laws and statutes of their city and state and of the federal government.



Preface

The attacks of September 11, 2001, changed the United States forever. Terrorism, once on the minds of a relative few in the population, immediately became the concern of the entire nation. Although the attacks occurred in New York City, the Washington, DC, area, and to a certain extent in Pennsylvania where one of the hijacked airplanes crashed, every American felt its impact. The attacks dominated all forms of the media, and, even a decade later, few Americans can go more than several days without finding something in the media relating to terrorism that probably would not have been found prior to that horrible day in 2001. Average Americans constantly see expressions of increased security that are in part a result of those attacks. They endure full-body searches and x-ray scans in order to fly on commercial aircraft. They hear of deficit spending, and know that much of it emanated from those fatal attacks and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that followed. They hear the president and members of Congress talking about the threat of terrorism.

Terrorism presents a greater threat to world security today than it has presented at any time in history. Modern technology has made it possible for a small group of dedicated individuals to perpetrate actions that could result in tens of millions of dollars in damage and the deaths of thousands of people. Prior to the 1940s, it would have required a military unit to create such carnage. The law enforcement community must at least be aware of the potential threat. Agencies operating in the most vulnerable areas must be prepared to respond rapidly to a terrorist attack. Considering the seriousness of the situation, prevention of the attack is far more desirable than having to respond to an attack. However, if the attack cannot be prevented, the response must be rapid, professional, and appropriate. Law enforcement agencies owe that to the community they serve, and the community will expect it from them.

Unlike common criminals with whom law enforcement deals on a regular basis, terrorists represent a true threat to the very nature and structure of the country. They do not intend to use the democratic process to achieve their ends. They want a change, and they will use extreme violence to get what they want. They may claim that they do not wish to harm innocent people; however, to many terrorists, the ends justify the means. Consequently, if innocent parties are harmed, that is acceptable. Terrorists are selfish and self-righteous. They know what they want, they are certain that they are correct, and they intend to get what they want regardless of who is harmed.

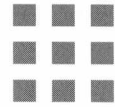
Although to many people, terrorism means violence perpetrated by foreigners, and more specifically by Islamic extremists, the fact is that terrorism in the modern world encompasses much more than this. Most of the "attacks" that have occurred in the twenty-first century inside the United States have been perpetrated by single-issue, special-interest extremists seeking to protect animals and the environment in accordance with their beliefs. Some of

their attacks have been relatively minor in nature, involving vandalism and related threats. However, others have been quite serious. The August 1, 2003, Earth Liberation Front (ELF)-claimed arson of a condominium complex under construction in San Diego, California, resulted in a loss of some \$50 million and would rank in financial terms as one of the worst terrorist attacks in United States history.

Advances in modern communication and transportation have made it possible for terrorists to attack anywhere. What this means is that no law enforcement agency can feel that it is immune from the terrorist threat. Attacks can happen in even the smallest hamlet or the most rural area. Political extremists can live and travel anywhere. Terrorism presents a challenge to all law enforcement officers.

This handbook introduces law enforcement professionals to the field of terrorism investigation. It describes how terrorists operate and how they differ from other criminals. It outlines how investigations should be conducted against terrorists. It warns law enforcement officers about the pitfalls that await them in conducting probes of terrorism. It offers suggestions that the officer can use to improve his or her investigation of a terrorist group. It helps the law enforcement profession to better prepare prosecutable cases against terrorists.

Law enforcement officers are likely to discover that a terrorism investigation will be among the most difficult they will ever experience. If they can master such a case—prevent a terrorist attack, solve a terrorist incident, apprehend a fugitive terrorist, help to convict a terrorist in court—they will have developed skills and knowledge that will enable them to be much better investigators than before. Any criminal investigator will benefit from the information contained in this handbook.



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