

**Homeland Protection:
Needed Changes to Present Perceptions**

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Good Afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to address you.

I am here to urge you to look at your work here in a different light. You have accomplished a lot, and what you have accomplished is impressive, but it's still missing a vital element. The United States is more than it's government, more than the infrastructure. This nation consists of people. It is written into the Constitution, it is our bedrock.

I urge you too look at the mass of ordinary American citizens, and look critically at what information is available to them.

When I started looking for construction details on protective design, information to make home design more resistant to terrorist attacks, I found –after hundreds of hours of research-- was that there was a lot of information¹; but none of it was available to ordinary people².

In fact there are ways to make buildings safer from bombs, from biological or chemical attacks; very simple materials and techniques³ to protect people⁴. Despite clear, unmistakable recommendations in 1995, 1999, and 2002 that releasing unclassified information will save lives; nothing about protective building design has been leaked to the public⁵. I urge you assist getting this done.

I hope you remember that Americans are not all the same, and many are perceptive. Ordinary people realize that seat belts protect them, but don't make a person immortal. When protective information on chemical or biological terrorism from one branch of government is contradicted by another⁶, they may not have the truth, but they realize something is wrong. I urge you to promote the truth.

I urge you to look at the fact that no protection is absolute; but that some protection is better than none. That 5, 20, or 50 hours of EMS training is short of qualification, but far better than none at all. That reducing a threat in half is worthwhile. That vaccinations should be an option for those that want them, and not just some.

In any disaster, the first responders have always been people at the scene. Other countries rely on citizens to make preparations, assist government when needed, take shelter during declared emergencies, follow moderately complex instructions, and to act responsibly.⁷

From terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Centers, to California's earthquakes and Florida's hurricanes; ordinary citizens perform admirably under extreme conditions. Panic is often found in the media, but rarely on the ground⁸. In hundreds of studies of disasters, researchers found that ordinary, everyday people perform with awe-inspiring courage, generosity, and common sense.⁹ There is no reason to doubt American citizens will act even more effectively, and America better prepared, if people are provided with accurate and useful information.

Thank you for allowing me this time, and thank you for your commitment.

References

¹ TM 5-853 Security Engineering Design series, TM 5-855-1 Design & Analysis of Hardened Structures to Conventional Weapons Effects.

UFC 4-010-01, DOD Minimum Antiterrorism Standards for Buildings; DoD Directive 2000.12, "DoD Combating Terrorism Program", etc.

Department of Justice. Vulnerability Assessment of Federal Facilities. June 1995

General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service. Security Criteria. January 1997

² "WARNING: This document contains technical data that is restricted for export by the Arms Export Control Act (Title 22, U.S.C., Section 2751 et seq.) or the Export Administration Act of 1979, as amended, Title 50, U.S.C., App. 2401 et seq." "DISTRIBUTION: Distribution authorized to U.S. Government agencies and their contractors; Critical Technology, 1 August 1994. Approved for release to NATO and ABCA militarily aligned member countries." "This document contains information EXEMPT FROM MANDATORY DISCLOSURE under the FOIA. Exemption number 3 applies." (emphasis original)

"FOIA Guide, 2002 Edition" U.S. Department of Justice, in 'Exemption 3'

³ Oklahoma City Health Department (Mallonee et al., 1996) concluded that the primary cause of most nonfatal injuries were caused by blast-generated debris, mainly glass fragments. At Khobar Towers, both fatal and nonfatal injuries were attributed to blast induced debris, with glass fragments again a prominent cause of nonfatal injury (DoD).

⁴ "Upgrading Window For Blast Effects", Eve Hinman, Eng.Sc.D., P.E. Hinman Consulting Engineers, Inc.; UFGS 08581 Blast Resistant Tempered Glass Windows. DoD

TL 1110-3-501 Windows Retrofit Using Fragment Retention Film with Catcher Bar System 1999 (DoD)

"Specification for HEPA Filters used by DOE Contractors" U.S. Department of Energy

"Polymer Materials For Structural Retrofit" Air Force Research Laboratory, 2000. Documents that spray-on material intended for pickup truck beds significantly strengthens masonry walls against blasts.

There are hundreds of similar documents within the State Department and DoD.

⁵ "Protecting Buildings from Bomb Damage: Transfer of Blast-Effects Mitigation Technologies from Military to Civilian Applications" 1995

"Protecting People and Buildings from Terrorism: Technology Transfer for Blast-effects Mitigation" 1999

"Blast Mitigation for Structures: 1999 Status Report on the DTRA/TSWG Program" 2000

- The National Resource Council's Board on Infrastructure and the Constructed Environment

⁶ *Frequently Asked Questions: Bioterrorism Concerns after September 11*, Centers for Disease Control

Q: Should I purchase a gas mask as protection from any chemical agent release such as anthrax?

A: No, CDC does not recommend purchasing gas masks. The likelihood that you would be involved in a chemical attack is low, and YOUR PROTECTION IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STATE AND FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS. They are on high alert to ensure that such an event does not happen. In addition, CDC believes that purchasing a gas mask causes a false sense of security and can do more harm than good. Masks that aren't used properly or that do not fit well will not give you adequate protection. <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/anthrax/faq/exposure.asp> [emphasis added]

⁷ (Swiss) Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports (DDPS)
<http://www.vbs.admin.ch/internet/B/e/INDEX.HTM> accessed 27-Feb-03

Home Front Command, Israeli Defense Forces <http://www.idf.il/english/organization/homefront/index.stm>
accessed 27-Feb-03

Also see "Information on Civil Defense for the Family" Home Front Command publication, which details home preparation, food and water storage, gas masks, warning signals, and civic preparedness.

The Concept of Total Defence, Direktoratet for Sivilt Beredskap (Directorate for Civil Defence and Emergency Planning) Norway's civil preparedness includes a nationwide warning and shelter system, and stockpiled protective masks.

"The Armed Forces depend on a resilient civilian society and effective Civil Preparedness for support, infrastructure, essential goods and services for their supply in case of military operations. The Armed Forces in their turn support civilian society in times of natural disasters or catastrophes (e.g. during floods). Uniting resources is a key word in times of conflict and catastrophes."

⁸ *Bioterrorism and the People: How to Vaccinate a City against Panic*; Thomas A. Glass and Monica Schoch-Spana; Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, Maryland

Emergency Management in the 21st Century: Coping with Bill Gates, Osama bin-Laden, and Hurricane Mitch; Rubin, Claire B.; 2000; Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center, Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado

"The Public as an Asset, Not a Problem", moderated roundtable, February 3-4 2003, Johns Hopkins University on behalf of its Center for Civilian Biodefense Strategies.
<http://www.hopkins-biodefense.org/pages/events/peoplesrole/main.html> accessed 20 Apr 2003

⁹ The University of Delaware's Disaster Research Center's Resource Collection, Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado, and Johns Hopkins Center for Civilian Biodefense Strategies.