

Inventing the Terrorist Threat

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Terrorism](#)

Virginia is for lovers, but there's a terrorist behind every dogwood. Or so you might gather from the "2009 Virginia Terrorism Threat Assessment" by the "Commonwealth of Virginia Department of State Police Virginia Fusion Center" which is part federal and therefore not Virginian and part private and therefore not commonwealth. The motto of the fusion center on the cover of the report reads "Scientia Est Potentia," but they forgot to add that a little bit of scientia can be dangerous.

The ACLU and [Raw Story](#) have been criticizing this report and others by other fusion centers for their tendency to advocate tossing out the Bill of Rights in order to spy on people associated with organizations whose names almost rhyme with those of other organizations once frequented by someone whose cousin had heard first-hand a story about a real live terrorist.

One of the most horrifying threats revealed in this latest report is that someone might hack into road signs as [done](#) in Austin:



I feel so terrorized already I'd almost be willing to let my government leave Iraq and Afghanistan. Oh, what the heck, all right, I agree: end the wars.

There are, of course, real predictors of terrorism in the world, like the occupation of people's countries, and predictable targets in Virginia, like the Pentagon. Sadly, energy that could go into improving foreign relations is going into profiling and spying on active citizens, the very people who might help improve the situation.

"While there is no intelligence that indicates terrorists are planning attacks in Virginia," the fusion center tells us, "the abundance of potential targets provides terrorists with many possibilities and opportunities throughout the Commonwealth." But ...

"Spanning 39,598 square miles, Virginia has a population of almost 7.5 million residents. Roughly half of these residents are concentrated in the northern Virginia, central Virginia, and Hampton Roads regions. All three of these regions feature ethnically diverse populations with cultural ties to the Middle East, the horn of Africa, Southeast Asia, and other areas heavily impacted by terrorist activities. While the vast majority of these individuals are law-abiding, this ethnic diversity also affords terrorist operatives the opportunity to assimilate easily into society, without arousing suspicion."

The vast majority? Meaning 100 percent, since there is "no intelligence that indicates terrorists are planning attacks in Virginia"? When terrorists easily assimilated prior to 9-11

there were FBI reports about them that Washington DC wasn't able to assimilate, although its former director has assimilated well as hired attorney for Prince Bandar. But, wait! Guess where these proponents of Scienta see danger lurking next:

“Virginia’s network of colleges and universities also represent a potential avenue of entry for terrorist operatives and a possible forum for recruitment of sympathizers.”

There being no evidence of any planned attacks, clearly young people must be being recruited to those nonexistent causes in those hotbeds of heresy where opinions deviate dangerously from the ones ordered by superior officers: colleges.

“A wide variety of terror or extremist groups have links to Division 1.”

Extremist groups too? Guess we'd better spy on them. What if they started registering voters or something?

“Richmond’s history as the capital city of the Confederacy, combined with the city’s current demographic concentration of African-American residents, contributes to the continued presence of race-based extremist groups. This area is also the site of several community colleges and urban universities that attract a diverse range of domestic and international students and professors; two area universities are designated as Historically Black Colleges and Universities. While the majority of individuals associated with educational institutions do not engage in activities of interest to the VFC, it is important to note that University-based students groups are recognized as a radicalization node for almost every type of extremist group. A small number of Division 1 area college students also align themselves with anarchist or animal and/or environmental groups.”

Not environmental groups! What if they should put up a solar panel or turn off a lamp? I'm s-c-a-r-e-d, officer, please protect me! And the “majority” of such people don't engage in activities that interest you? What about the minority who are not planning terrorism but do manage to interest you? Are some of them so extremist as to be BLACK?

“... Richmond is also home to several large commercial facilities, including a major NASCAR track.”

In fact, I visited that track last year for a Sarah Palin rally, where I filmed these [peculiar people](#), one of whom was dead set on putting bullets into a great many human beings, but he only had in mind Iraqis, so that wasn't terrorism. However, this decrepit dump of an arena for our bread and circuses did strike me as a prime target for terrorism, especially if every other nonresidential structure on earth had already been destroyed.

#yiv1113679001 p.p1 {margin:0.0px 0.0px 12.0px 0.0px;font:12.0px Times;}

#yiv1113679001 p.p2 {margin:0.0px 0.0px 12.0px 0.0px;font:12.0px Times;min-height:14.0px;}

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Presidency and Forming a More Perfect Union” by Seven Stories Press and of the introduction to “The 35 Articles of Impeachment and the Case for Prosecuting George W. Bush” published by Feral House and available at Amazon.com. Swanson holds a master’s degree in philosophy from the University of Virginia. He has worked as a newspaper reporter and as a communications director, with jobs including press secretary for Dennis Kucinich’s 2004 presidential campaign, media coordinator for the International Labor Communications Association, and three years as communications coordinator for ACORN, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now. Swanson is Co-Founder of AfterDowningStreet.org, creator of ProsecuteBushCheney.org and Washington Director of Democrats.com, a board member of Progressive Democrats of America, the Backbone Campaign, and Voters for Peace, a convenor of the legislative working group of United for Peace and Justice, and chair of the accountability and prosecution working group of United for Peace and Justice.

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