



Until this year, the date of April 15th is the day most Americans recall as the dreaded day that if you owe more taxes to the government, they need to be collected.

This year, the date also marked Patriots Day - - a civic holiday commemorating the anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord. These were the first battles of the American Revolutionary War. Each year, Patriots Day is observed on the third Monday in April in Massachusetts.

Sadly, we were reminded again that enemies are at work, in our country. Domestic terrorism is a real threat. "Homegrown terrorists" blend in among everyone, but their tactics and training are fertilized abroad. Even if it's on the internet, these terrorists are actively seeking out ways to kill and destroy- in the name of a specific religion or cause.

A common definition of terrorism is the systematic use or threatened use of violence to intimidate a population or government and thereby effect political, religious, or ideological change.

Domestic Terrorism in the United States has been going on since we formed this county in 1776. The most unfortunate thing that occurs in the United States is hatred of the freedoms we have- and the open markets and free society we enjoy. Below are a couple of domestic terrorist examples that have occurred in the United States. They provide a grim reminder we are not exempt- even on our own soil.

Wall Street Bombing

The Wall Street bombing was a terrorist incident that occurred on September 16, 1920, in the Financial District of New York City. A horse-drawn wagon filled with 100 pounds (45 kg) of dynamite was stationed across the street from the headquarters of the J.P. Morgan Inc. bank. The explosion killed 38 and injured 400. Even though no one was found guilty, it is believed that the act was carried out by followers of Luigi Galleani.

Harvey's Hotel

Harvey's was originally opened in 1944, and operated by Sacramento meat wholesaler Harvey Gross and his wife Llewellyn. They opened the first high rise tower and a 12-story, 197-room hotel in 1961. The hotel suffered an explosion from a 1,000 pound bomb on August 27, 1980, that left a crater three stories deep when

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it was detonated by the FBI. (The area around the hotel had been cleared, and no one was injured.) The bomb was placed by John Birges, a heavily in-debt Fresno landscaper who had lost at least \$1 million at casinos in Stateline and was hoping to extort another \$3 million from the bomb threat. He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison, where he died from liver cancer in 1996.

Unabomber attacks

From 1978 to 1995, Harvard University graduate and former mathematics professor Theodore "Ted" Kaczynski – known by the codename "UNABOM" until his identification and arrest by the FBI – carried out a campaign of sending letter bombs to academics and various individuals particularly associated with modern technology. In 1996, his manifesto was published in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*,^[17] under the threat of more attacks. The bomb campaign ended with his capture.

Oklahoma City bombing

This truck bomb attack by Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols killed 168 people on April 19, 1995 – the deadliest domestic-based terrorist attack in US history and, before the September 11, 2001 attacks, the deadliest act of terrorism in US history. It inspired improvements to United States federal building security

Centennial Olympic Park bombing

The Centennial Olympic Park bombing was a terrorist bombing on July 27, 1996 in Atlanta, Georgia, United States during the 1996 Summer Olympics, the first of four committed by Eric Robert Rudolph, former explosives expert for the United States Army. Two people died, and 111 were injured.

Boston Marathon Bombing

Boston Marathon bombings: Two bombs detonated within seconds of each other near the finish line of the Boston Marathon, killing 3 and injuring more than 180 people Late in the evening of April 18 in Cambridge, Massachusetts an MIT campus police officer was shot and killed while sitting in his squad car.

Two suspects then carjacked an SUV and fled to nearby Watertown, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston. A massive police chase ensued, resulting in a shootout during which several IED's were thrown by the suspects. A Boston transit police officer

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was critically wounded and suspect Tamerlan Tsarnaev, a Russian immigrant of Chechen ethnicity, was killed. The second suspect, Tsarnaev's younger brother Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, escaped.

A "Shelter in place" order was given for Boston, Watertown, and the surrounding areas while house-to-house searches were conducted, but the suspect remained at large. Shortly after the search was called off Tsarnaev was discovered by a local resident hiding inside a boat parked in the resident's driveway less than three blocks from the scene of the shootout. He was taken into custody after another exchange of gunfire and taken to nearby Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, where he was treated for injuries received during his pursuit and capture.

Tsarnaev was arraigned on federal terrorism charges from his hospital bed on April 22, 2013. Preliminary questioning indicated the Tsarnaev brothers were motivated by Islamic extremism, but had no ties to a terrorist organization.

Foreign

Although we can take the history back to the beginning of the United States, we are always focused on the foreign terrorism we saw on 09/11/2001- with the hijacking of American Airlines and the killing of thousands Americans. This act of terrorism, although not domestic, brought the country into a decade long war in the Middle East to try and stop any further attacks on the US.

Clearly, terrorists are the new enemy the United States is addressing. The violence and destruction sparked from these types of events is brutal, and puts people like us, law enforcement, at an increased risk of danger.

We can scan people, search for explosives before an event, and increase security at large events- but, just as these two brothers did, we cannot stop the will of the terrorist from infiltrating our invisible boundaries. Unfortunately, that is the unpredictable element of terrorism.

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Fresno County Terrorism Ties

One act of domestic terrorism that can be traced back to Fresno County, is the Harvey's Hotel bombing (referenced above) in South Lake Tahoe in 1980. The suspect in the incident trained himself and used the area of Shepherd and DeWolf back in 1980 as a training ground to let bombs off in preparation of his plot.

Since Fresno County is over 6000 square miles, and a prime area for 'lunatics,' to come and test out what they intent to detonate. Demographics and geography allow people to blend in. Luckily, it hasn't happened recently, but the potential is always there.

I am going to leave you with the message I posted on the FDSA Facebook on April 15, 2013. The photograph captured the moment for me, as what law enforcement officers do everyday. This picture was printed on the cover of Sports Illustrated and the runner shown, was interviewed by Diane Sawyer. His graciousness and constant appreciation of those officers goes to show how true this photo really was.

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This picture depicts what a police officer is trained to do, mentally prepared for, and what is just a natural instinct. You either have it or you don't, and not all can do this job. Multiple explosions going off, the officer in the center protecting the fallen runner, shielding him from other potential danger. The officer to his left, gun out, and running INTO the danger. The officer over his right shoulder obviously coming to his aid. Such a tragic event in Boston, but a reminder that we never let our guard down as cops, nothing ever taken for granted as a 'typical day.' We pray for the families of the two killed and console those who are injured by the violent blasts. We have to remember too as cops, keep emotions in and remember justice will be served. We are all professionals.

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