

# States on guard against terrorism

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attacks is on the rise. Such attacks on the civilian population bring attention to the message the terrorist groups want to deliver, without any consideration for loss of lives and property.

Biological and chemical weapons are suitable for terrorist attacks because they inflict immeasurable harm on a community and are often difficult to detect, according to the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency's training manual on chemical and biological attack.

That manual is used by the Lincoln-Lancaster Emergency Management office, which would be the central planning point for crisis management in the event of an attack.

Mike Burnett, an inter-agency liaison for the office, said the city and county are developing a local plan for response to a local attack involving chemical or biological weapons.

He said each local agency must know how to assess the situation in the event of a disaster and allocate the necessary personnel and resources.

If local officials estimate that sufficient capabilities are not available, they notify state agencies, such as NEMA and the State Patrol, who can call in the National Guard for extra assistance.

State agencies in turn are responsible for requesting the involvement of the Federal Emergency Management Agency if the added resources fall short of what is needed to coordinate a timely and appropri-

ate response to the crisis. The New York Times reported early this month that state representatives from across the nation view U.S. emergency planning as repetitive, messy and confusing.

Some state officials, the article reported, are confused by the large number of acronyms for federal agencies, including CBDCOM and the Federal Emergency Support Teams of the FBI, Department of State and Marines.

The group of state officials submitted a report to U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno calling on President Clinton to create a commission responsible for coordinating state and federal efforts.

## A step ahead

Tim Hergenrader, a spokesman for NEMA, said there are two aspects of preparedness: preventing a crisis and managing the consequences of an attack.

He said NEMA holds training courses designed for local officials from across the state designed especially for firefighters, health personnel and police officers, such as a weeklong seminar completed last week for handling radiological materials.

FBI spokesman Larry Holmquist said the FBI monitors the activity of potential domestic terrorist groups, as well as foreign groups, with the cooperation of the CIA.

The FBI not only watches over allegedly dangerous groups, but also

investigates groups' involvement in attacks that have already occurred and works with other agencies to coordinate an appropriate response, he said.

State Patrol Major Brian Tuma said the patrol is involved with monitoring terrorist activity, as well as providing personnel to manage the chaos after an attack.

But he and Holmquist said it is difficult, if not impossible, to predict an attack, such as the bombing of American embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.

According to statements by national leaders and terrorism experts, the United States is at greater risk than ever before because of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Adding to that risk is the increased motivation for terrorists to harm civilians to show their disapproval of U.S. domestic and international policy.

Greater risk coupled with lack of organization creates a relatively vulnerable situation for the United States, a country not accustomed to going to great lengths to defend its borders.

Meanwhile, prevention and preparedness have become important goals of administrators and public officials, who rely on each other to manage a crisis.

Holmquist said local, state and federal officials have identified the concern for terrorist attack and made plans to prevent an attack.

"We're getting geared up to stop tragedies from happening."

# Award named for professor's contribution

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studies to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln was much more of a challenge.

In 1969, the Stonewall riots sent shock waves across the country, Crompton said. The riots started when police raided the Stonewall bar, a gay bar in New York City.

"Patrons, instead of being intimidated, fought back," he said.

"Gays were coming out on campuses everywhere," Crompton said.

In 1970, just one year after the riots, he organized a course on gay issues, Homophile Studies, at UNL. The course was only the second in the nation dealing with homosexuality.

Crompton said the chancellor approved of the course. The course did not, however, receive as good a welcome from the state Legislature.

"It caused a political uproar," he said.

Then-State Sen. Terry Carpenter

was opposed to the course being offered on campus and wrote a bill to stop the class, Crompton said.

Crompton was called to appear in front of a legislative committee to give the names of the students who had signed up for the class so their parents could be notified, said George Wolf, associate professor of English.

He refused, and university lawyers backed him up, Wolf said.

The bill did not pass, Crompton said.

Although the first class in gay studies came to campus 28 years ago, Wolf said the university has not made much progress since then in expanding its offerings.

"Other departments have not done their job," Wolf said. "There are no gay and lesbian issue courses in political science; there are no gay and lesbian issue courses in sociology."

As gay and lesbian studies have evolved to spread across a variety of disciplines, Crompton said no one fol-

lowed his lead in establishing those types of classes.

"No one picked up the ball in other departments," Crompton said.

Wolf said Crompton was instrumental in bringing gay studies to campus, and he worked to make faculty members who came out as homosexuals feel comfortable.

"I think that (Crompton) set an example for all of us that it was possible to be out and work at the university," Wolf said. "Not too many people have followed his example."

"He is a very brave, courageous and conscientious man."

Nominated essays for the Crompton-Noll award must have been published between the summer of 1997 and the summer of 1998.

They can be sent to Professor David Roman, chairman of the Crompton-Noll Award; Department of English at the University of Southern California; Los Angeles, Calif. 90089-0354. The deadline is Thursday.



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