



AMERICAN SECURITY COUNCIL FOUNDATION

Peace through Strength®

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The Public and First Responders: It's Time to Acknowledge Our Sacred Trust

All across our nation law enforcement officers are talking about what happened in Watertown. Saturday night's coverage of the crowds cheering law enforcement on the streets of Watertown, Massachusetts, and the successful capture of the remaining suspect was an important moment for Americans and the world. Both the end of the week's violence, and sight of cheering crowds on Saturday night, and at Fenway, have been moving for police departments around the country. It plainly showed our resilience as a nation, our defiance in the face of terrorism, and our respect and love for our first responders. And that's what they saw on TV, and that's what many we know have been talking about. It was a "WOW" they get it kind of moment."

While stunning, the collaboration and ultimate success of the extraordinary team of law enforcement professionals in Boston this week can also be viewed as *business as usual for our first responders* – the result of leadership, preparedness, courage, training and selfless commitment. If you were lucky enough to hear the Watertown Police Chief, Edward Deveau, describe his department's work, you heard him say that they showed tremendous bravery and 'operated on instinct,' not allowing the cache of explosives to leave his city to do more harm.

On Sunday morning talk shows, on editorial pages, and talk radio...the question being asked was "Where Do We Stand Now on the War on Terror?" (1)

The bigger question, from where the ASCF stands, is what we, as average people, as American citizens, can do to protect our security and preserve our freedom? As the President and CEO & Chairman of the Board of the American Security Council Foundation, an organization that cares deeply about national security, we have witnessed this over the last 60 years of our careers and our perspective is this:



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We need to learn from this horrific strike on one our American cities.

We need to understand what we can take from Boston and to defend ourselves in what may sadly be, the new normal.

Here are 5 ways the public participated, valiantly:

1. They ran towards the bomb site, and helped the victims. In countless ways, the people of Boston extended themselves and showed the world what they are made of. In doing so, they made our country proud.
2. They sent in thousands of tips after the video of the suspects was released to the public, including sharing their cell phone videos and images.
3. They sensibly obeyed Governor Patrick's orders to stay inside.
4. They cooperated with Law Enforcement. They listened to, followed orders, and ultimately helped complete the investigation and manhunt.
5. One Watertown resident had the presence of mind to see something amiss, and to say something, and called in the final tip that brought the most successful terrorism attack since 9-11 to an end.

And then, they cheered.

The outpouring of appreciation, love and respect shown for the Watertown and Boston police, the National Guard, the FBI could be felt nationwide.

It's time to recognize the sacred trust that we enjoy and depend upon with our first responders – our police, our firefighters, our EMT's, our FBI, and our National Guard. They are always there when we need them.

Perhaps it's time, not just for us to honor them, but to find new ways to let them know that we not only need, but respect and cherish all they do for us, every day.



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Civic rituals must go on. We will not surrender our public occasions to fear. We can have vigilance without the fear. We can have peace through strength. That's what our first responders deliver, and in a sacred trust, we must support them.

(1) CBS Face the Nation, April 21: Guiliani & Ridge: War on terror is not over.

[http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=50145329n&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+cbsnews%2Ffeed+\(CBSNews.com\)](http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=50145329n&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+cbsnews%2Ffeed+(CBSNews.com))

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. Henry A. Fischer".

Dr. Henry A. Fischer
President & CEO
ASCF

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brig. Gen. Donald B. Smith".

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