

Civic Minds

Date: Friday, March 25, 2016

e-Edition Date: Wednesday, March 23, 2016

Article Title: ***Attacks in Brussels reveal how vulnerable Europe is***

Section: Main, A3

Vocabulary:

Look up the definition of ***forestall***. Please write the definition and create a new sentence, using your own words.

“Absent a military-style occupation, the threat from a well-established network with some degree of local complicity — evidently the case in Brussels, these operatives said — can never be completely ***forestalled***.”

Comprehension Questions

1. Since the November attacks in Paris, what have Belgian authorities carried out in order to root out jihadis?
2. Yet none of that evidently disrupted plans for the multiple attacks Tuesday in Brussels. Where did the attacks take place?
3. The new attacks underscored once again not only the weaknesses of Belgium’s security services in particular, but what else?
4. The attacks have set off a new round of soul-searching about what?
5. But despite its success in arresting Abdeslam, Belgium continues to present a special security problem to Europe. Why?
6. Those problems are now threatening not only lives in Belgium and elsewhere in Europe, but what other experiment?
7. Not least of Belgium’s problems is an apparent lack of capacity to pick up what?
8. Yet for weeks intelligence operatives have been warning that the next major terrorist attack on European soil was simply a matter of time. Tuesday’s blasts were seen by some of them as proof that Europe’s open societies, even under states of emergency, will never be _____.
9. Political and intelligence officials seemed initially divided over why the attacks happened. What did the article say in response to this?
10. Indeed, the presumed orchestrator of the Paris attacks, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, boasted to his cousin before he was killed that “_____” operatives were dormant, ready for another attack.
11. “The Belgian police are excellent,” said another former DGSE official, Alain Chouet. “The problems are _____.”

Class Discussion Questions and Essay Prompts:

“It seems that the clear targets of the attacks — an international airport, a metro station close to EU institutions — indicate that this terrorist attack is not aimed solely against Belgium but **against our freedom, freedom of movement, mobility and everyone in the EU**,” Germany’s interior minister, Thomas de Maizière, said at a news conference in Berlin.

- Do you agree or disagree with the statement above?

“This shows the limits of the actions you can undertake in a state of emergency,” said Philippe Hayez, a former official with the DGSE, the French external intelligence service.

“These are time-specific, superficial,” added Hayez, who has written extensively on Europe’s intelligence challenges. “But unless you occupy it militarily, you don’t hold a town just by circulating police cars. We’re talking about guerrilla terrorism. And there’s a population that’s complicit.”

- What is guerilla terrorism?
- Why do you think European countries are struggling with “intelligence” issues?

“That’s the only thing one can say,” he said. “We can easily see that Belgium has become a hub.” “So that when you arrest someone” — he referred to the arrest Friday of Abdeslam — “there will be a reaction,” Juillet noted.

- Why is Belgium a “hub” for this type of terrorist activity?
- Do you believe the bombings were in retaliation to his arrest on Friday? Why or why not?

Bernard Squarcini, the former head of French internal intelligence, predicted in an interview here several weeks ago that “there are already the people in place. There will be an even more serious attack.”

French President François Hollande said the attacks targeted all of Europe, and he warned of a long “war” ahead.

“Five years ago you didn’t think about it so much,” said Francesca Cervellini, a 20-year-old Italian tourist as she passed by the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm. “It didn’t happen so often before. Now it’s everyday life. It’s normal.”

“It could happen tomorrow or in a year or in five years,” said Dani Amouri, a 23-year-old Stockholm resident who left Lebanon five years ago. “In Sweden, Denmark, Germany, everywhere. There is no peace in the world anymore. Not even in Europe.”

- Do you think we’ll continue to see attacks in different countries? Why or why not?
- How does it make you feel when you hear that “there are already the people in place; there will be an even more serious attack.”
- Are these attacks becoming normal? Why or why not?
- Is there peace in the world today? Why or why not?

Essay

“We are in a situation of structural vulnerability,” Hayez said. “That’s what democracy is. It’s an open society. There will always be risk.”

- Do you agree or disagree with Hayez’ quote about democracy. Will we always live with a risk? Will things get better? Why or why not?

Newspaper-related CBA activity: U.S. Policy

How the United States government interacts with the world affects people across the globe. Analyze and evaluate the causes and effects of US foreign policy on people in the United States and across the world.

- Using The Seattle Times e-Edition, find an article from this week that deals with world politics or foreign policy.
- What are the main points of view from someone living in that particular country? How is that “view” similar and different than your own opinion, regarding the specific issue the article is discussing?
- Why is it important to study and learn about foreign policy? How does it help you understand the world we live in, using current issues and events?

Civic Minds in The Seattle Times is posted to the Web on Friday. Please share the NIE program with other teachers. To sign-up for the electronic edition of the newspaper please call 206/652-6290 or toll-free 1-888/775-2655.

Copyright © 2016 The Seattle Times Company