

Over the years, *Legal Times'* columnists have addressed the biggest stories. Evan Schultz warned against turning on all Arabs in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.

## Whatever It Takes?

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BY EVAN P. SCHULTZ

On Sept. 11, as terrorists assaulted the nation, America canceled its discussions on racial profiling. Literally. That morning in Washington, a previously scheduled White House meeting to discuss profiling of Arabs never took place. And in New Jersey, a convention of the state's police force—which in 1999 then-Gov. Christine Todd Whitman admitted was wrongly pulling over black drivers without cause—adjourned so that law enforcement officials could deal with the crisis.

Don't expect talks to resume any time soon. It has become an oft-repeated statement in these last few weeks that 100 percent of the fanatics who hijack passenger planes in America with mass-homicidal intent and results are Arabs. So it's no surprise to hear that Americans view Arabs suspiciously.

According to a Gallup Poll conducted after the attacks, "A majority of Americans favor having Arabs, even those who are U.S. citizens, being subjected to separate, more intensive security procedures at airports. About half of Americans favor requiring Arabs, even those who are citizens of the U.S., to carry special ID." ...

So the profiling has begun. There are already numerous reports of dark-skinned men forced by pilots and flight attendants to get off planes. Airport security guards have acknowledged treating people of apparently Middle Eastern descent differently from others.

People are scared. They are scared of Arabs. And they want to do "whatever it takes" to protect themselves.

But profiling isn't the answer. ...

None of this is to say that America should sit on its hands in the war against terrorism. We should all be very concerned about serious lapses in our airport and airplane security. By all means, increase it—quickly. Ban knives, arm pilots, add air marshals, secure cockpits, sniff, poke, prod, and scan. But do it to all of us. To increase safety for all, we should all be willing to shoulder the burden. ...

There is a story about how Denmark's King Christian X responded to Nazi Germany's demand to deport Danish Jews: He put on a yellow Jewish star himself and asked everyone else in the country to do the same. Unfortunately, the story is not true. But what is true is that, over a three-week period, Danes rallied together—in the face of a mortal threat to themselves and their country—to smuggle almost all of Denmark's Jews to safety in Sweden.

Similarly, it's been said that this is a time when Americans need to come together, draw on our collective strength, and share a collective burden. Does anyone really think profiling Arabs will help us do that?

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