

Editorial ? Where can we be safe?

This week, we saw yet another apparent act of terrorism perpetrated against innocent people.

It occurred Tuesday in New York City, not far from the memorial for the World Trade Centre and the thousands of people who died Sept. 11, 2001.

This time, a man apparently drove a rented pickup truck down a busy bike path which was packed with cyclists and pedestrians. According to the best information we have available at press time, eight people were killed, and another 11 were seriously injured. The mayor of New York has been quoted as calling this ?a particularly cowardly act of terror.?

It's also been reported that witnesses saw this man get out of the vehicle and shout ?Allahu Akbar!? which is Arabic for ?God is great.?

There are similarities between this attack Tuesday and the one 16 years ago. This week's incident happened in New York, which was one of (but not the only) targets of 9/11. As well, the victims were just ordinary people going about their daily business, with no warning or suspicion of what was to happen to them.

But there are some differences, and one of the main ones should make us all worry.

The attacks in 2001 were very well planned and organized. It's one thing to hijack an aircraft, but four were commandeered almost simultaneously, and those involved had to include people who knew roughly how to fly them into their targets, namely the twin towers of the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. The events of that dreadful day were the result of a lot of preparation and planning.

We have to wonder how much preparation went into Tuesday's attack.

Just about any of us could rent a pickup truck if we wanted to. Indeed, many of us have probably done so, several times. And targets for such attacks are certainly not hard to find.

That is something that should worry us all, but it is not something that should consume us with fear. We must be on our guard, as must the authorities who are responsible for dealing with such menaces, but we must also not change our routines and lifestyles because of the acts of terrorists. Once we do that, they have won.

If there was one break from Tuesday's incident, it is the alleged perpetrator was taken alive. That means it will be possible to confront him and get details behind why the attack took place.

The latest reports indicate this man was associated with ISIS, and was radicalized in the United States. Perhaps there is a chance here to get some useful indication on how and why this radicalization was accomplished.

In the weeks to come, we can expect plenty of speculation and second guessing as to what led up to this attack. But we can also be hopeful that actual facts will emerge. That will, alas, probably happen slowly, but it should happen. And that information will probably be useful in dealing with other people like this.

There is some hope.