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Security - at what cost?

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It was only a few days after the tragedy in Toronto where a lone nutjob used a van as a weapon that calls came out for more security on city streets.

One person on a radio station suggested sidewalk and street barriers like they have in her native Israel.

However, this isn't Israel, we are not at war, have no enemies at our borders, and the actions of a single person should not shake us into a new era of added security.

There's an old adage that locks are only for honest people.

An honest person will reach for a doorknob, find it locked, and continue on realizing they aren't supposed to enter that room. A dishonest person will find a way to get past that lock.
It's the same thing with people who commit acts of atrocity. You can barricade the streets but a person intent on doing damage will find another way.

We already have security in place. Police departments enforce existing laws and do what they can to prevent other crimes from happening. The RCMP provides counter-terrorism and domestic security functions. CSIS provides intelligence on national security both within the country and abroad.

For the most part they do a pretty job of keeping on top of different threats.

All of these agencies will most likely tell you that the worst kind of threat comes from the lone-nut type of person who has a plan in the head and tells no one else about it. Some things just can't be stopped.

Some argue that ?added security' will protect the public ? but from what?

At what point does security take over your life and you become a prisoner?

After the events of September 11, 2001, precautions were taken to an extreme level. Maybe at the time it was needed for a while to ensure there was no additional threat, but common sense went completely out the window.

I know an 80-year-old grandmother who boarded a flight from Florida after a vacation and had a nail clipper confiscated because it was a ?weapon.'

Common sense tells you an octogenarian carrying a nail clipper is a threat to no one, but at the time, rules were rules.

A few years ago I was called for jury duty. When I entered the courthouse in Barrie there was a metal detector and armed guards. After emptying my pockets and putting my keys and coins on a tray before going through the metal detector, the officer pointed to a small penknife attached to my key chain and said it was a weapon.

The knife had a blade of maybe one inch.

I felt like pointing out that it was less dangerous than any of the pens or pencils in the courthouse offices or that the empty chair in the hallway would do more damage in the hands of a dangerous person than my tiny little knife, but of course I just complied and disposed of the offending weaponry.

Freedom is a fragile thing. Your freedom to move about, walk down a city street, go for a drive in the country, or play a round of golf when you feel like it, shouldn't be taken for granted.

Added security, when taken to the tenth degree, will limit those freedoms you now consider a normal part of life. To give that up because one person committed an act of terror would be surrendering to that terror.

Any government that tries to legislate any type of increased ?security' in the guise of protecting its citizens should be considered more a threat on your freedom rather than a security measure. Thankfully, this has not been suggested at any government level and I certainly hope it isn't even being considered.

Security means protection from a threat. Armed guards randomly stopping people on the streets is not security, it's a police state.

Our current level of national and local security is working fine.

This act of insanity in Toronto was perpetrated by single individual for reasons not really yet known, and probably never will be. Even this nutjob will not be able to explain his actions with any reasonable clarity.

The best security is common sense ? not reactionary solutions to a temporary problem.