Terrorism in London

It is doubtless, that London has always been a target for political crime and assassination, just like every other major city around the globe. But there were two major terror attacks that caused a lot of tragedy and discussion.

The first attacks are well-known as the "Guildford pub bombings". It was the starting shot of the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) bomb campaign. The two attacks occurred on the same day and were supposedly performed by the same four people who are known as the "The Guildford Four". It was 5th October in 1974 when the first bomb detonated at 8:30 pm in the pub "Horse and Groom" in Guildford which was very popular with military personnel. The bomb killed four soldiers and one civilian.
The first detonation caused the other pubs to evacuate, which was a life-saving step, because the second detonation was just 30 minutes later in the pub "Seven Stars". There were no injuries due to the evacuation.

Just one month passed to the next attack in Woolwich on 7th November in 1974 in the pub "Kings Arms". The bomb caused the death of two soldiers.
The police arrested four people who were convicted to be the committers of the bomb attacks (The Guildford Four). There was no evidence that those 4 persons were the committors and the police used torture methods to make the people confess the attacks.
But that was not the end of the bomb campaign.
27th January in 1975 was the last day of the bomb campaign. Seven time bombs were placed in London by the real four committers, the "Balcombe Street Gang". The seven bombs caused almost 30 death and hundreds of injured people. A coincidental control of the four suspects led to a car chase through London which found an end in the Balcome Street with taking of hostages in an appartment building. Six days later on 13th December in 1975 was the end of the hostage-taking. The committers gave up and released the hostages. The four real committers admitted the the bomb attacks and their membership in the IRA and stated the innocence of "The Guildford Four".

The reason for the bomb campaign was to resume and heat up the fight for a merging of the northern Irish part into the rest of Ireland to form a united Ireland.
In the end, the IRA was not able to merge the northern and southern parts of Ireland together. The northern part of Ireland is still a part of Great Brittain.

The 2nd major attack came from a different side in a different century from a different culture. On the morning of 7th July in 2005 four suicide bombers caused four massive explosions in the public transportation system of London. Three bombs detonated in three different trains while the other bomb detonated on a bus. The attack caused 56 deaths and more then 700 injured people. All train stations were evacuated and the public transportation system was completely stopped until evening. Streets were closed and people were told not to go into London as everyone was afraid of further attacks.

The target of the attack was the public transportation system. The terrorists aim was to shock Great Brittain and cause massive destruction and human victims.
Mohammad Sadique Khan, one of the suicide terrorists, pleaded himself and his small terror organization guilty of the attacks. He named the British society and Tony Blairs regime as reasons for the attack and said that his organization wanted to conduct a war against British society.

There was another alert just two weeks later. Four bombs were supposed to detonate, but all of them failed, so that nobody got hurt or died. Just one week after the attempt, all of the alleged terrorists were caught. From that day on, there was never a sign of Khans terror organization again. The alleged terrorists were imprisoned for 40 years and more.
All those attacks on the inhabitants of London caused massive discussion. People often ask and hear the questions "Do you feel safe in London?" and "What does London do to prevent terrorism?".

That exactly is the problem. It is not possible for a city in itself to "prevent" terrorism, especially when the city is like London with a huge diversity, a large amount of inhabitants and thousands of people that use public transportation devices every day. An increase of control would mean a huge slow-down. It is not possible to check everyone who uses public transportation when there are thousands of people rushing for trains and connections to their destination. Controlling potential suspects would lead to discussions of racism and prejudices. Terrorism is a crime as every other crime is as well. Terrorism seems to be a threat that everyone has to live with.

Quellen: wikipedia.com
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