

# UK, FRANCE: REMEMBER THE ENTENTE CORDIALE SVP

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England and France, I command you to bury the hatchet. After all, what terrorist in his right mind target the public transport in London when there's a strike underway every other week?

Confusing news from the Terror front: citizens of Europe have been advised not to go anywhere, more or less. Just last week the **US State Department** and the **British Foreign Office** issued a warning for their citizens: **if you must tread ground in Transalpine territory**, and in Germany, beware: there is a high risk of terror attacks.

A few days later, out of kindred spirit (perhaps more of a kindergarten spirit, but that may just be me) **the French government advises its citizens not to go to the UK**, due to (go on, take a wild guess) a terror alert, and to exercise 'extreme vigilance' in British public transport and popular attractions. I must have not got the memo, is there an early-20th century revival going on? Are we partying like it's 1902?



Also, excuse my confusion, but be careful of what, exactly? Should I not use public transport? Or is the message in fact that we should be running at the sight of anyone who fits a particular description? (Arab thugs??!) Unless you're a national treasure like **Lilly Allen** or **Prince Harry** (NUMBER ONE TERRORIST TARGET, according to the highly reputable News of The World), do diplomats and government apparatchiks really expect us, even now, to salivate like Pavlov's dogs at the knoll of the 'terror alert' bell? Ugh, how trite. To quote Peter Griffin, that really grinds my gears.

## What lies beneath

I have a conspiracy theory of my own, of course. I think we should blame the transport lobby – they're the Svenaglis of the situation. Isn't it strange, after all, that in the spirit of a competitive market the Eurostar train is the only business connecting these two countries via the Channel Tunnel? Mind you, I wouldn't complain if the ticket prices weren't so expensive!



I say use explosives for a good reason, build another tunnel, another line that can connect the two signatories to the entente cordiale. Come on, we both get on – think of brunch! Everybody likes brunch.

Let me tell you something about travel alerts. We need not worry about terrorists; the real problem is that transport isn't working these days! After all, what terrorist in their right mind would bother targeting the public transport in London when there's a strike underway every other week? The RMT are doing a perfectly fine disruptive job on their behalf. Not to mention the tube closures caused by the re-structuring of the whole metropolis to favour Olympic circulation. It's all for the tourists, everybody loves tourists.

See? We have plenty of things in common!

But I digress.



## En fin de compte

Fellow cosmopolitans, in conclusion all I want to say is: keep calm and carry on. This is not 2005, please don't fall victim of the age-old scaremongering tactic and start distrusting based on any kind of veiled prompt profiling by our governments (did anyone say Arabs? Noo). There's a quote I'm quite fond of from Austin Powers: "there's two things I can't stand in this world. People who are intolerant of other people's cultures... and the Dutch".

What you should really watch out is bad transport. And for that, we must make sure the staff in both countries are paid well.

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