DoD and WoW

Let me start by saying I don’t play computer games at all (I’m a console gamer), and I find this article strangely entertaining. I’ve heard how popular WoW is and I have some friends that would play it for hours. But, terrorist developing a real life plan in the virtual environment of an MMO sounds too farfetched to the point of it being something like a conspiracy theory. If they’re going to develop an elaborate plan to attack another important American landmark, don’t you think they would choose a method of communication that isn’t out there in an open network environment? The article states: “They imagine terrorists rehearsing attacks in these worlds, just like the U.S. military trains with commercial shoot-em-up games.” It seems as though it’s a situation where government officials are letting their imagination get the best of them. There is a valid point to it though; it would be hard to crack or decipher gamer lingo, if there was a slight possibility of terrorist groups utilizing that in-game feature to communicate.

I find the situation proposed by the article has a very small chance of being plausible. Even the possibility of terrorists augmenting such a plan seems very, very slim at best. What I find particularly amusing is the possibility of having secret government agents playing the game along with everyday players to monitor game banter. You could be fighting or chatting with a secret agent! Seriously, how far are we willing to go to maintain a safe and secure nation? Are we willing to reach a point where we can’t even talk freely in a computer game? There’s probably government monitoring of the more popular MMO games going at right now, but we won’t hear about it for at least a couple years. That’ll be when the government decides to tell the public what a pointless effort it was.

Ben Franklin said it best:

“Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety. “