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## FBI Issues Homeland Suicide Bomber Warning

By Elaine Shannon/Washington

The FBI is warning law enforcement agencies to be on the alert for the possibility that suicide bombers may attempt to strike inside the United States. A lightly classified intelligence bulletin circulated Thursday to 18,000 U.S. law enforcement bodies is headlined "Possible suicide bomber indicators," and was distributed via the Bureau's secure Law Enforcement Online (LEO) Intranet. It warns local badge-carriers to look for obvious signs of trouble — people wearing heavy, bulky jackets on warm days, smelling of chemicals, trailing wires from their jackets — as well, more subtle ones, such as tightly clenched fists. Someone who never shows his palms could be gripping a detonator rigged to go off when a button is released. "If you shoot him, you 're still not safe because his hands relax and the bomb explodes," says a counter-terrorism official.

The FBI bulletin also notes that suicide bombers may disguise themselves in stolen military, police or firefighter's garb, or even as pregnant women.

FBI sources say there's no hard intelligence warning of specific plans by terrorists to launch suicide attacks here like those wreaking havoc in Israel and Iraq. But, says one official, the circular was prompted by "a renewed concern" that fury at the U.S. for its occupation of Iraq or its support of Israel could move some extremists to attempt to bring the war to the American homeland. "At the end the day, it's probably one of the simplest forms of attack, and it's one of the hardest to detect," says one counter-terror veteran.

In fact, U.S. analysts are at a loss to explain why the homeland has thus far escaped such attacks, since a number of extremist groups, particularly Hamas, have a sizeable presence here. One factor, officials say, is that terror leaders still regard America as a cash cow, and don't want to antagonize moderate Muslim donors. Another reason, says one specialist, may simply be that while there seems to be an endless supply of fanatical youths willing to die for the cause in the Middle East, most of them simply can't get visas to the U.S.

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