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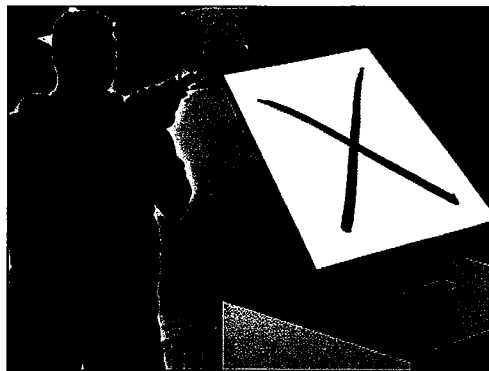
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FBI's Anti-Terror 'October Plan'

Operation Intended To Prevent Terror Attack Timed To Election

WASHINGTON, Sept. 17, 2004



(AP / CBS)

(CBS) Convinced that al Qaeda is still determined to disrupt the U.S. fall elections by an attack on the homeland, FBI officials here are preparing a massive counter-offensive of interrogations, surveillance and possible detentions they hope will disrupt the terrorist plans, reports CBS News Correspondent Jim Stewart.

FBI field offices and Homeland Security agencies will be advised of "extraordinary measures" that will go into place "beginning the first week of October through the elections."

An internal e-mail advisory to supervisory agents this week from the FBI's "04 Threat Task Force" said the purpose of the counter-offensive is "to foster the impression that law enforcement is focused on individuals who may be a threat."

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One element of the FBI plan calls for addressing what it fears could be a wave of protests from Arab-Americans and civil libertarians once the so-called "October Plan" kicks off.

Specifically, the plan calls for "aggressive - even obvious - surveillance" techniques to be used on a short list of people suspected of being terrorist sympathizers, but who have not committed a crime. Other "persons of interest," including their family members, may also be brought in for questioning, one source said.

All recent truck thefts, chemical thefts and suspicious cargo truck rentals will also be reviewed as part of the plan. Mosques will be revisited and members asked whether they've observed any suspicious behavior.

Throwing hundreds of agents on the street and conducting invasive surveillance has become a standard post-9/11 tactic for the bureau, which hopes at a minimum to force terrorists go back into hiding and re-think their plan.



changed America.

Some officials believe it was just such tactics that foiled the remainder of al Qaeda's New Year's bomb plot in January 2000 after agents arrested one operative, Ahmed Ressam, in Port Angeles, Wash., with a car trunk-full of explosive material.

The bureau also knows it can expect to be criticized for the strategy if it goes too far. One element of the plan calls for addressing what some officials fears could be a wave of protests from Arab-Americans and civil libertarians once the so-called "October Plan" kicks off.

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