

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

FBI INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN no. 89
October 15, 2003

THREAT LEVEL: YELLOW (ELEVATED)

THE FBI INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN, DISSEMINATED ON A WEEKLY BASIS, PROVIDES LAW ENFORCEMENT WITH CURRENT, RELEVANT TERRORISM INFORMATION DEVELOPED FROM COUNTERTERRORISM INVESTIGATIONS AND ANALYSIS. THE INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN DOES NOT CONTAIN THREAT WARNING INFORMATION.

HANDLING NOTICE: Recipients are reminded that the Intelligence Bulletin is designated "Law Enforcement Sensitive" and should not be disseminated beyond law enforcement circles.

ITEM: TACTICS USED DURING PROTESTS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

On October 25, 2003, mass marches and rallies against the occupation in Iraq are scheduled to occur in Washington, D.C. and San Francisco, California. While the FBI possesses no information indicating that violent or terrorist activities are being planned as part of these protests, the possibility exists that elements of the activist community may attempt to engage in violent, destructive, or disruptive acts. Most protests are peaceful events; however, a number of demonstrations, including the biannual International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings, are more likely to be violent and disruptive and to require enhanced law enforcement security. Several effective and innovative strategies are commonly used by protestors prior to, during, and after demonstrations. The following tactics have been observed by U.S. and foreign law enforcement agencies while responding to criminal activities conducted during protests and demonstrations.

Protestors often use the internet to recruit, raise funds, and coordinate their activities prior to demonstrations. Activists may also make use of training camps to rehearse tactics and counter-strategies for dealing with the police and to resolve any logistical issues.

If a demonstration is going to take place in a secure facility, activists may seek to gain access to the site using false documentation. Surveillance of sites prior to demonstrations can allow activists to identify locations of command posts and law enforcement personnel in order to plan effective countermeasures.

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

Traditional demonstration tactics by which protestors draw attention to their causes include marches, banners, and forms of passive resistance such as sit-ins. Extremist elements may engage in more aggressive tactics that can include vandalism, physical harassment of delegates, trespassing, the formation of human chains or shields, makeshift barricades, devices used against mounted police units, and the use of weapons—such as projectiles and homemade bombs. Even the more peaceful techniques can create a climate of disorder, block access to a site, draw large numbers of police officers to a specific location in order to weaken security at other locations, obstruct traffic, and possibly intimidate people from attending the events being protested.

During the course of a demonstration, activists often communicate with one another using cell phones or radios to coordinate activities or to update colleagues about ongoing events. Other types of media equipment (video cameras, photographic equipment, audio tape recorders, microphones, and computer and radio equipment) may be used for documenting potential cases of police brutality and for distribution of information over the internet.

Extremists may be prepared to defend themselves against law enforcement officials during the course of a demonstration. Masks (gas masks, goggles, scarves, scuba masks, filter masks, and sunglasses) can serve to minimize the effects of tear gas and pepper spray as well as obscure one's identity. Extremists may also employ shields (trash can lids, sheets of plexiglass, truck tire inner tubes, etc.) and body protection equipment (layered clothing, hard hats and helmets, sporting equipment, life jackets, etc.) to protect themselves during marches. Activists may also use intimidation techniques such as videotaping and the swarming of police officers to hinder the arrest of other demonstrators.

After demonstrations, activists are usually reluctant to cooperate with law enforcement officials. They seldom carry any identification papers and often refuse to divulge any information about themselves or other protestors. Post-demonstration activities can include fundraising in support of the legal defense of accused protestors and demonstrations of solidarity calling for the release of the accused.

Law enforcement agencies should be alert to these possible indicators of protest activity and report any potentially illegal acts to the nearest FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force.

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE: LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE

Information contained in the FBI Intelligence Bulletin is Law Enforcement Sensitive and intended for official use only. No portion of this Bulletin should be released to the media, the general public or over non-secure Internet servers. Release of Law Enforcement Sensitive material could adversely affect or jeopardize investigative activities.

Departments are requested to contact the nearest FBI field office or resident agency in their area

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE

should additional information be developed related to the above matter. Questions regarding the content of these Bulletins should also be directed to the nearest FBI field office or resident agency. Specific comments or suggestions about the format or content can be provided to lesc@leo.gov.

LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE