

# FBI to unveil reorganization, sharper focus on terrorism

By Mike Dorning  
Chicago Tribune

WASHINGTON — FBI Director Robert Mueller will announce a reorganization of the FBI today that envisions a major retreat from the agency's past commitment to fighting drug crime as it focuses on preventing future terrorist attacks, sources in the Justice Department and Congress said.

The shift, which includes moving 400 agents out of anti-drug work, is aimed at bolstering the bureau's counter-terrorism operations, including improving the agency's ability to analyze intelligence and the creation of "flying squads" of agents, who would be on call to pursue terrorism investigations around the world.

Mueller would use the agents freed by the redeployment to supplement new counterterrorism agents that Congress already has agreed to fund. Some 1,770 field agents would be permanently assigned to counter-terrorism duty, versus 1,151 before the Sept. 11 attacks.

The reorganization has been in the works for months, but the announcement comes as the FBI is under criticism that it should have paid more attention to clues that hinted at the Sept. 11 attacks. Those attacks occurred a week after Mueller took over as director.

According to officials in Congress and the Justice Department who have been briefed on the plan, the reorganization includes reassigning one of every five FBI agents from

drug enforcement and related activities. The plan also calls for a more modest reassignment of agents assigned to violent crime cases and white-collar crimes. The bureau has about 11,500 agents.

As a result, the burden of enforcing the nation's drug laws would fall more heavily on the Drug Enforcement Administration as well as state and local police agencies.

Since President Ronald Reagan recruited the FBI into the war on drugs 20 years ago, the number of agents devoted to the cause has swelled, standing at about one-fifth of the bureau's agents on the eve of Sept. 11. But in a reflection of how much the bureau's mission has changed, a list of 10 priorities for the reorganized FBI — presented to key members of Congress in advance of Wednesday's announcement — did not mention drugs.

The realignment could come at a cost of higher crime rates and, despite the focus on terrorism, presents some long-term political risks for the Bush administration, observers say.

Local police chiefs already complain that they are overwhelmed, and a drop in tax revenues from the economic slowdown has added to budget pressures on state and municipal governments. The DEA may need a large funding increase to take up the slack from the FBI's reduction in anti-drug work.

Drug-related crime has been a politically sensitive issue for some time, with candidates in the past

few decades frequently using public perceptions of out-of-control narcotics traffic to rally voters. In addition, the Clinton administration's highly visible focus on street crime helped nurture links in public opinion between the White House and the falling crime rates of the 1990s.

Still, Mueller's plan won initial praise from Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., whose committee oversees the FBI.

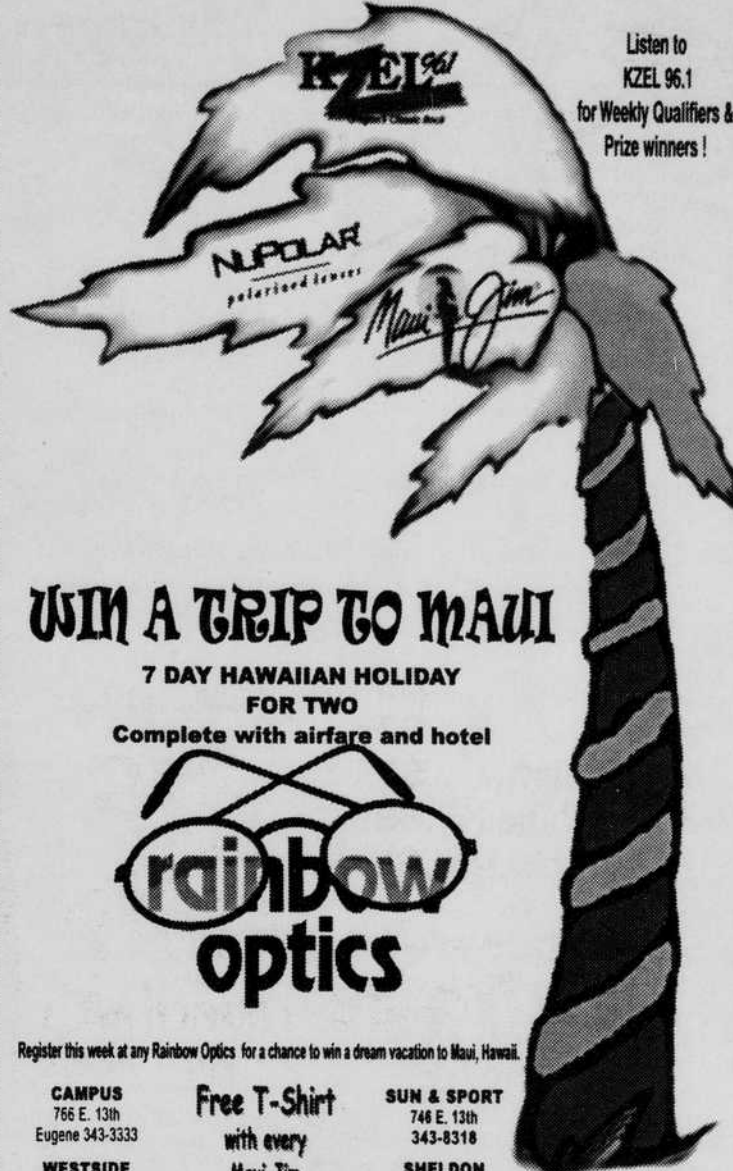
"The FBI cannot be all things to all people, and that means making some hard choices, and these should not and will not be the last of them," Leahy said. "The FBI needs to become agile enough to respond to the changing needs of the country."

The reorganized counterterrorism division would have closer links to the CIA and a new Office of Intelligence to improve the agency's ability to spot patterns of suspected terrorist activity from diffuse field reports.

In a separate development, The Washington Post said that Attorney General John Ashcroft is revising Justice Department guidelines to give FBI officials in the field authority to open terrorism investigations and undercover probes without clearance from headquarters. The changes, also scheduled to be announced Wednesday, are intended to place more decision-making power in the field.

©2002, Chicago Tribune. Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.

Listen to  
KZEL 96.1  
for Weekly Qualifiers &  
Prize winners!



## WIN A TRIP TO MAUI

**7 DAY HAWAIIAN HOLIDAY  
FOR TWO**  
Complete with airfare and hotel



Register this week at any Rainbow Optics for a chance to win a dream vacation to Maui, Hawaii.

<p><b>CAMPUS</b> 766 E. 13th Eugene 343-3333</p> <p><b>WESTSIDE</b> 1740 W. 18th Eugene 343-5555</p>	<p><b>Free T-Shirt</b> with every <b>Maui Jim</b> Sunglass Purchase!</p>	<p><b>SUN &amp; SPORT</b> 746 E. 13th 343-8318</p> <p><b>SHELDON</b> 2540 Willakenzie Eugene 484-9999</p>
--	--	---

\* TO ENTER YOU MUST BE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE. FINALISTS MUST BE PRESENT AT KEY DRAWING 11:15 AM 6-22-02

## ATROCITIES UNCOVERED: ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

Discussion of human rights violations, Israeli and Palestinian perspectives, and possible paths towards achieving peace



### Guest Speakers:

**Karen Kennedy**  
AMNESTY International

**Thomas Nelson**  
International Solidarity  
Movement

**Dr. Diane Baxter**  
U of O Anthropology  
Department

**Dr. Shaul Cohen**  
U of O Geography  
Department



**Date:** May 30, 2002  
**Time:** 6:00PM Reception (Middle Eastern refreshments served)  
6:30PM Slide Show  
6:45PM Speakers  
**Place:** 177 Lawrence

Sponsored by: Muslim Student Association  
Co-sponsored by: ASUO Women's Center, Eugene Middle East Peace Group