

# ATTACK

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sagging. Administration officials rejected the charge.

FBI Director Robert Mueller urged Americans to be vigilant and circulated photos of seven suspected al-Qaida associates, six of whose names and pictures previously had been released.

The seventh is a 25-year-old California man who converted to Islam in his teens, and, according to Mueller, trained in al-Qaida's Afghan camps and has served as a translator for the terrorists.

Adam Yahiyeh Gadahn and the six

others are "known to have a desire and the ability to undertake planning, facilitation and attack against the United States, whether it be within the United States itself or overseas," Mueller said. Authorities said they are unsure whether the seven are still here.

The FBI also has established a 2004 Threat Task Force that is coordinating intelligence collection and analysis, re-examining older intelligence and working with state and local law enforcement.

And the attorney general announced the resumption of an interview program designed to gather intelligence to disrupt terrorist plots. A previous interview program, which

targeted thousands of Iraqi men living in the United States in advance of the war, proved controversial and

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**John Ashcroft**  
U.S. Attorney General

some experts questioned its value.

Officials offered scant detail, saying interviews will be driven by intelligence needs. "We're not limiting our scope in terms of a pre-designated group of individuals," an FBI official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Government authorities are mindful that al-Qaida is seeking recruits who can pass as Europeans, recruiting Muslim converts inside target countries, and directing its operatives travel with family to lower their profile, Ashcroft said. "Al-Qaida is a resilient and adaptable organization known for altering tactics in the face of new security measures," he said.

Allies of Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts, the Democratic presidential candidate, questioned whether there was a political cast to Wednesday's grim announcement. In a conference call organized by the Kerry campaign, the heads of the International Association of Fire Fighters and International Brotherhood of Police Officers said the intelligence cited Wednesday had been known for weeks — an assertion acknowledged by White House spokesman Scott McClellan.

"I find it incredible that it's only now that it's going to be brought forth," said Harold Schaitberger, whose firefighter association has endorsed Kerry. "And I do find it awfully convenient and suspicious that it happened to be tied in right behind the president's recent message to the nation as well as his troubling, plummeting poll number."

Kerry and Democrats on Capitol Hill steered clear of a similar assertion but charged that the administration is underfunding homeland security efforts.

Ashcroft shrugged off the criticism. "I just don't think my job is to worry about what skeptics say," he said. "My job is to do everything I can to protect the American people and to help the American people protect themselves."

The concern about an attack during a political convention or other high-profile event may be overblown, a U.S. intelligence official said. Al-Qaida planners "are aware of holidays and symbolic events that have importance to the United States, no doubt about it, but they are going to strike when they feel they can achieve the most success," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "They are quite aware of security measures being stepped up."

Still, the official said the threat is real. "Certainly, there's no reason whatsoever to be less concerned, particularly as we approach the presidential election."

Even as officials issued their warnings, they sought to assure the public that security precautions have been taken.

Mueller said "extraordinary" steps have been taken for the political conventions and G-8 summit.

Police in New York, Los Angeles and Boston stressed that there was no credible information suggesting an imminent attack in their cities.

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## CAMPUS BUZZ

Thursday

- Faculty/Staff Fitness Walk, Turf Field, Student Recreation Center, noon-1 p.m. The first 100 registrants get a free gift.
- Senior Send-Off 2004, EMU Amphitheater, 2-4 p.m.
- Freeman Lecture entitled "Together-in-Difference: Beyond Diaspora, Into Hybridity," Browsing Room, Knight Library, 4 p.m.
- Choral Concert, Beall Concert Hall, 8 p.m.

### Today's crossword solution

S	P	U	R	A	L	I	V	E	F	E	S	S
N	A	S	A	R	E	O	I	L	E	S	T	E
A	P	E	D	D	A	N	C	E	M	U	S	I
P	A	R	A	D	E	S	E	V	I	D	E	N
		R	A	N				L	A	N	E	S
F	L	I	G	H	T	S	C	H	O	O	L	
R	A	O	U	L	T	S	A	R	S	A	M	A
A	T	T	N	R	A	P	I	D	G	R	I	N
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S	A	N	D		S	W	O	R	D		R	A

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