

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR
May 20, 2002

TO ALL EMPLOYEES:

Since my arrival at the FBI, I have been working to define FBI priorities--priorities that will shape our operations and the deployment of our resources. These reflect input from several SAC conferences, from meetings with the Advisory Groups, from many of you as I have traveled around the country, from other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, from Congress, and from many others, and I greatly appreciate the many constructive suggestions I have received throughout this process.

In my own mind, I wanted these priorities to be simple and clear--a list of our top challenges that we all agree on and will work toward. There are no surprises on the list, but each will require changes in the way we do business.

Here are the ten:

1. Protect the United States from terrorist attacks
2. Protect the United States against foreign intelligence operations and espionage.
3. Protect the United States against cyber-based attacks and high technology crimes.
4. Combat public corruption at all levels.
5. Protect civil rights.
6. Combat transnational and national criminal organizations and enterprises.
7. Combat major white-collar crime.
8. Combat significant violent crime.
9. Support federal, state, county, municipal, and international partners.
10. Upgrade technology to successfully perform the FBI's mission.

Let me take them from the top.

The first three are our most critical challenges. They are not new priorities, but they are different in 2002 because the world has changed--and each requires new ways of thinking and doing.

- Our goal in counterterrorism is prevention. It is not, as in the past, reacting to attacks with excellence and bringing terrorists to justice. Our goal is prevention. That does not mean that prosecution is not important. Prosecution is an absolutely critical element of prevention. But making clear that the goal is prevention rather than prosecution will mean less focus on traditional law enforcement operations and much more on intelligence and analysis. Also counterterrorism is the top priority of every single field office and of every component of headquarters that supports these efforts in any way. This means a constant need to reassess--and as necessary shift--resources to address counterterrorism. We will need to be more flexible and agile in addressing the constantly shifting terrorism threat. Our enemy is not static and we must not be either.

- Likewise, I expect our counterintelligence functions to be transformed: elevated in importance, controlled on a national level, and given a profoundly changed strategy and focus--not simply trying to keep a close eye on those trying to steal the secrets as we have done in the past; but rather working to build walls around our Nation's secrets and most

valuable assets. We must openly acknowledge that we have had recent failures in this area and we must learn from them. Like counterterrorism, the costs of even a single successful "attack" can be devastating.

- Our cyber program must both protect against cyber attacks and also investigate high-technology frauds and other crimes. It is going to require resources and energy to get us to the cutting edge in these areas, but we must do it. In this area - as in everything we do-- our goal must be to be the very best in the world.

The next five priorities are traditional areas of responsibility: public corruption, civil rights, national and international organized crime groups and enterprises, white-collar crime, and violent crime. All are extremely important to our mission and to the safety of the American people. But we will closely focus our resources on major crimes in the areas of white-collar, organized, and violent crime, where we are able to make unique law enforcement contributions. Even with the abundant new resources Congress has provided us, we must be more sharply focused to ensure we always are giving our top priorities every necessary resource. The stakes are too high to do otherwise.

The final two priorities are not programs, but rather the crucial infrastructure for all our investigative operations. Without federal, state, county, municipal, and International cooperation, our relatively small numbers of investigators cannot possibly begin to gather sufficient intelligence or evidence in any of our priority programs -- we have about 28,000 employees and there are over 600,000 state and local law enforcement officers in this country alone. Obviously we cannot begin to do the job alone. Without technology upgrades, we cannot communicate; we cannot share information; we cannot begin to make sense of the intelligence and evidence that we do collect. We are working hard to get you the technology you need to do your jobs. I know many of you are assisting in that effort-- helping us design the right system. Unfortunately, this will take some time. But we are absolutely committed to getting this done and done right and Congress is providing the money to enable us to do so.

I am satisfied that these ten priorities capture what we must do to achieve our mission and to protect the United States from attack and Americans from harm. They will require reorganizing and retooling and, above all, continued flexibility and innovation by all of us. Some of the changes will be difficult. They will require changes in how each of us does our job. But the FBI is the finest law enforcement organization in the world and the reason for that is you--its employees. We must all continue to hold ourselves to the standard of excellence--ceaselessly working to do our jobs even better so that we will be the best in the world at whatever we do. Never before has the country depended on us so heavily. I know that we are up to the challenge.

Robert S. Mueller, III
Director