

U.S.BORDER CONTROL

'Smuggling plastic explosives is clearly a job Americans won't do,' quips father of 9/11 victim after DHS alert warns of Mexicans crossing border to sell explosives

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A Department of Homeland Security dated January 12 said that law enforcement officials were seeking five Mexican nationals suspected of bringing explosives into the United States. Issued by the Office of Border Patrol, the alert stated that the Mexican nationals were heading to San Francisco to sell the explosives.

But Department of Homeland Security spokesman Russ Knocke said the department passes on information to state and local authorities anytime there is specific or credible information. 'The intelligence, however, would be provided to state and local authorities through a completely different channel,' he said.

The alert stated that 'five individuals would attempt entry by foot with an unknown quantity of plastic explosives hidden in the soles of their shoes.' The report indicated the group's final destination is San Francisco. 'Once in the city, they are to sell the explosives to an unknown Iraqi national,' it stated.

Officials with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, which is part of the Department of Homeland Security, would not comment on the documents, and the FBI's San Francisco field office could neither confirm nor deny that it had received the alert.

Border agents interviewed said security is so lax along Mexico's frontier that almost anybody can get through. 'The alert is highly detailed, and it shows that our borders are not as safe as the government wants us to believe,' said a border agent speaking on condition of anonymity.

Peter Gadiel, whose son James Gadiel, 23, died in the World Trade Center terrorist attack on Sept. 11, 2001, said 'The president has said that only migrants are coming over the border to do jobs Americans won't do,' Gadiel said.

'Smuggling plastic explosives is clearly a job Americans won't do. The situation is so far beyond being absurd, and it looks like it won't change until more American lives are lost.'

Gadiel, who testified before the 9/11 commission, said he wants no other family to suffer what he has and that Mexico's border must be secured. 'The loss of my son, I can't put that into words,' the Connecticut man said. 'You simply can't have a border where anybody can cross and expect to have a secure country.'

Border-watch activists say they are angry that security has been so lax since the 2001 attacks.

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