

Al-Qaida-trained Westerners worry FBI

by UPI

WASHINGTON - U.S. officials say they are worried the next attack on U.S. soil could be by Americans trained in terrorist tactics at al-Qaida safe havens in Pakistan. Counter-terrorism officials say recent arrests in Spain fuel their concern, CBS News reported Tuesday. More than a dozen trained suicide bombers -- including European citizens recently returning from Pakistan -- were arrested as they allegedly prepared to attack transit systems in Spain and four other countries. "They've realized that if they want to operate successfully, they need to have people who look like us, act like us and are very difficult to find," Philip Mudd, a high-ranking counter-terrorism official at the FBI, told CBS. Mudd said Western recruits have been tracked to small training centers in Pakistan's mountainous tribal region. Many of them are European citizens of Pakistani descent but there have been a few Americans, he said. "Whether it's Americans or whether it's people who can launch from Europe, because they have visas or passports that allow them to travel to the United States, they are looking for people who can operate in the West," Mudd said of al-Qaida's recruiting.

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