

NEWS RELEASE

May 7, 2002

Director Larry Welch, Kansas Bureau of Investigation, after KBI staff conferred with state and federal law enforcement officials in Illinois, Iowa and Nebraska, Monday, May 6, issued a precautionary alert to Kansas law enforcement regarding the 15 pipe bombs located in rural mail boxes in those 3 states on Friday, May 3, and/or Saturday, May 4, respectively. An additional pipe bomb was located in Nebraska and one in Colorado, Monday. 6 injuries have been reported in Illinois and Iowa.

Noting that "No such pipe bombs have been located in Kansas and we have no information predicting any such activity in our state" and "There is no specific reason for concern in Kansas at this time", Welch pointed out in the teletype to Kansas law enforcement, however, that 2 of the pipe bombs in Nebraska were found in close proximity to the Kansas state line. Furthermore, threatening, anti-government letters accompanying the pipe bombs predicted more such "attention getters" in the future.

Director Welch also noted an apparent westerly progression with the pipe bombs, i.e., Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska. That observation was perhaps validated by the discovery of such a device southwest of Denver on Monday.

Welch recommended vigilance by Kansas law enforcement and citizens, especially in rural areas, regarding suspicious vehicles and unusual changes in rural, road-side mail boxes, i.e., wire, tape, etc. He advised that officials in the other states are recommending that, until further notice, rural residents keep their mail boxes open, rather than closed, perhaps even taping or wiring the doors open.

Welch concluded his observations with, "This may well be a domestic terrorism case solved eventually by an alert citizen or deputy."

Director Welch invites Kansans to view the pipe bomber's letter on the FBI Internet, www.fbi.gov, or the U.S. Postal Service web site at www.usps.com, with the hope a viewer might recognize the writing or rhetoric.

Any information should be reported to the nearest Kansas sheriff's office or to the KBI at 1-800-KS-CRIME.

Contact Person: Special Agent Kyle Smith, 785-296-8290