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**DEFENDING AMERICA
REDEFINING THE CONCEPTUAL BORDERS
OF HOMELAND DEFENSE**

**A New US Strategy for Counter-Terrorism
and Asymmetric Warfare**

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1. We need to look beyond the immediate task at hand, even as we prepared to strike at those who attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and root out their networks, finances, and sources of state support. We must carry out a multidimensional struggle, with many aspects, that will play out over decades. We must:

- Carry out a diplomatic effort focused on the Arab and Islamic world that will show our targets are legitimate, that we will use the proper use of force, and that we will work closely with allies, friends, and nations.
- Create a focused diplomatic strategy to deal with key “problem” countries: Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, North Korea, Pakistan, and Syria. We must raise the diplomatic and economic costs of hosting terrorism and extremist movements and do everything possible to make the role of patron and host unacceptable.
- Protect against immediate follow-on attacks, which may well not be from aircraft or involve any cells directly involved in the strikes on the Pentagon and World Trade Center.
- Restructure our counterterrorism program. We must move away from broad labels and generic efforts to well-staffed efforts targeted on individual countries and movements, and towards changes in the powers of domestic law enforcement agencies, and in foreign intelligence-law enforcement cooperation, that make our programs more effective
- Develop a comprehensive Homeland defense program, fund it, and make it work over a period of years. Create effective programs and a well-balanced program budget to implement this strategy -- one that ties together DoD, intelligence, and some 17 domestic Departments and Agencies. This will be far more important than resolving the issue of who’s in charge, or trying to fix the issue from the top.
- Deal with the current financial crisis and reassess our broader financial and civil vulnerabilities. Find cost-effective ways to improve our financial system and reduce the overall vulnerabilities in our economy, critical infrastructure, and information systems.
- Reassess our proliferation program on a world-wide basis. We must move beyond “arms control” to a far more intensive effort to create an integrated program combining arms control, offensive and defensive counterproliferation, and Homeland defense efforts.
- Revitalize US intelligence, which will take over half a decade. Greatly strengthen the resources and capabilities of HUMINT, all forms of analysis, and operations. Sharply reduce the barriers to recruiting agents of any kind and ties to any type of organization. Reduce the barriers between law enforcement and intelligence. Rebuild intelligence capabilities to strike at terrorists and state sponsors.
- Restructure US military forces to strengthen their capability to conduct surveillance and targeting against terrorist leaders and cells, the leadership elites of nations that support terrorism, and determine what physical targets can be attacked that affect their behavior or deter them. Improve special forces capabilities, long range precision strike capabilities, and other “focused” capabilities to attack terrorism, improve training and military

organization for counter-terrorism. Improve these same capabilities to operate on a bilateral, regional, and alliance basis with our friends and allies.

2. At the same time, we must fight a short term-series of battles against the terrorists and leaders of any country involved in the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. To fight and call these battles “war” is better than using the term “counterterrorism”. We need a level of will, force, and determination far different from the past.

3. There are four key to success in this struggle: Leadership, persistence, focus, and lethality.

4. The Need for Leadership

- Leadership must be both domestic and international, and cannot afford to ride the public opinion polls or overreact to the media. It will take years of determination and a clear focus on the national interest, rather short-term than political gains or public opinion polls, to succeed.
- Leadership must focus on the task at hand. We cannot afford spasm-like, show piece strikes like those against Afghanistan and Sudan after the attacks on the World Trade Center. We also cannot afford to engage in sweeping adventures such as military efforts to achieve regime change, unless this is clearly justified by direct responsibility for the attack.

5. The Need for Persistence

- It will take months and years of effort to find the right operational “time windows” where we have a clearly guilty target in a vulnerable position and the proper tools to strike with, to find enough strike opportunities to finish the job.
- We need to persist in using all of the tools at hand and not just force. Our “weapons” include political, financial, information, and legal warfare, and containment in terms of movement and trade.
- There is only one valid answer to the question of “How long will it take? The answer is, “It will take as long as it takes.”

6. The Need for Focus

- Persistence must be supported by a careful focus on those whom we can show to be truly guilty, and we must act in ways that carefully consider the post-attack political impact of each action.
- We face major constraints that reinforce the need for both focus and persistence:
 - Unless we are lucky, diplomacy cannot force the transfer of key terrorists to the US.
 - Military efforts to “compel” the Taliban to turnover the terrorists may fail, and will probably have only partial success.
 - Most targets can easily disperse and hide and have no vital physical assets.

- The proper level of response will vary according to the target and the role of the Taliban and any other regime:
 - Larger scale use of force against the leadership and power elite of the nations that harbored and encouraged such terrorists may be required to force them to transfer these terrorists to the US. This compellence may or may not succeed, however, and more direct military action may be needed against both the terrorists and the elements of the Taliban that support and encourage terrorism.
 - Our primary objective must be those terrorist directly involved in the attacks, and any cells and organizations associate with them. We must strike at the people in these cells, and not at physical locations and facilities.
 - Until we are certain that no other government is involved, we must prepare for the risk that the leaders of other states played a direct role in planning and executing such attacks. We must, however, do so as quietly and discretely as possible and be certain of their guilt before we act. We must build regional coalitions with our allies that can deal with such targets using carefully tailored mixes of force, diplomacy, and economic pressure to focus on regimes and actual terrorists, and not peoples, nations, or religions
 - Invasions and efforts at regime change are a last resort. We must avoid military adventures and reacting to special interests. These include “lobbies” calling for regime change in Afghanistan and Iraq, others demanding we force an Arab-Israeli peace or adopt the Israeli view of terrorism, and still others that call for America to change entire regions or the world by making sudden changes in the structural causes of terrorism.
 - Nothing could be worse than sending major ground forces across hostile territory into the middle of nowhere in search of a dispersed and hidden enemy with no strategic objective other than to replace one bad regime with a fragmented one, and with the certainty of region-wide hostility and a long-term political backlash.
- We must always look at the strategic endgame: We must tailor our use of force to be decisive, but also to minimize the political backlash.

Lethality

- There will be many countries where will need tools other than force. Lethality is only an answer in dealing with enemies on hostile territory.
 - We do need to make use of legal means when we deal with allies and cooperative countries.
 - We should make a quiet effort to aid the Afghan coalition in the North and encourage divisions within the Taliban that would both put pressure on the Taliban and possibly create the conditions for regime change without overt US military action directed towards this end.
 - We do need to put steady, long-term diplomatic pressure on countries with extremist elements and that host terrorism, but nations that do not host those directly involved in this attack are not valid targets for a military response.

- We must, however, use lethal force against terrorists and their direct supporters in hostile countries. Lethality is ultimately the only effective tool in such cases unless coercion and compulsion can force host countries to halt support of the terrorists and turn them over to the US.
- No transfer to other countries or international courts is acceptable. We must minimize the number of showpiece trials in the US, and forums like Lockerbie Trial -- where intelligence evidence is suddenly forced into an open legal forum and action becomes a long debate -- are not effective. We must understand that even when convictions are possible, we simply end in creating martyrs and a reason for hostage taking.
- Destroying most of their physical facilities can serve a demonstrative or coercive purpose, but no set of such strikes can paralyze terrorist operations or root the terrorists out.
- When we cannot get physical access to those who are truly guilty, we must hunt them down and kill them.
- Some of this will be done in the context of open military strikes; but we need to develop a covert capability to hunt down and kill terrorists of this kind over a period of years, and we need to make it clear that those who associate with terrorists, and the families of terrorists, will often be casualties in the process.
- This is not the same as killing leaders in peacetime or “assassinations.” It means minimizing the overall use of force, and striking against proven enemies. We must create a structure in which no one who strikes with extreme violence can ever feel secure again.
- It does, however, mean quiet, discrete, and carefully planned strikes with a full assessment of the political costs -- not setting new rules or paradigms that ignore the circumstances.