



Center for the Study of the Presidency
Issue Papers Series

10 “THINKING ANEW ON HOMELAND SECURITY”

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“The new Department of Homeland Security proposal is strong on analysis, gaming, and intelligence, and it realistically unifies these interactive components of our early warning system. CSP had proposed that anticipation, integration, and agility were keys to a new culture in organization and personnel. It is heartening that the Administration’s new proposals do just this and demonstrate they have learned the lessons of December 7, 1941 and September 11, 2001.”

IN ITS *REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT-ELECT 2000: TRIUMPHS AND TRAGEDIES OF THE MODERN PRESIDENCY*, THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESIDENCY ANALYZED PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP THROUGH THE LENS OF MORE THAN SEVENTY-SIX CASE STUDIES IN A RANGE OF SUBJECT AREAS. THE CENTER’S ISSUE PAPERS SERIES IS A FORWARD-LOOKING COMPLIMENTARY OF SHORT PAPERS THAT FRAME AND BRIEFLY ANALYZE ISSUES AND POLICIES THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD ADDRESS. VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THESE PAPERS ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHORS AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE POSITION OF THE CENTER.

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11 TERRORIST ATTACKS OFFERS A poignant moment to reflect on the reactions and actions of the U.S. government in the wake of the worst assault on the American homeland in more than half a century. As was the case with Pearl Harbor, the timing, scope, and ingenuity of last year's attack, combined with an overly compartmentalized intelligence system and lack of integrated policy analysis, surprised America. December 7, 1941 and September 11, 2001 both resulted from failures of imagination and agility, and an ability to think outside the box.

Before the September 11 attacks, the Bush Administration – like the Clinton Administration before it – had not reshaped our entire national and homeland security structures to confront the emerging asymmetrical threats heralded by the end of the Cold War. The Vice President was placed in charge of homeland security reforms in May 2001, and the President created the White House Office of Homeland Security only weeks after the terror attacks, but deep organizational reconfigurations had not been undertaken.

A number of studies and reports released before September 11 pointed to the need for an urgent restructuring of the U.S. government to meet emerging threats from terrorists and other potentially deadly asymmetrical actors on the global stage. The Hart-Rudman commission, for instance, published in early 2001 a report calling for establishment of a Homeland Security Agency, an idea embraced by influential politicians such as Senator Joe Lieberman.

CSP had also established its own group of twenty experts prior to the election. Our panel report urged a transformation of the nation's entire security structure, not just the Department of Defense. We also urged officials to undertake a new strategic net assessment, one that would define our vulnerabilities, provide greater analytical capabilities through synergized intelligence and gaming, and, above all, breakdown stultifying stovepipes.

We cited five-star General Dwight Eisenhower. When he became President, his security review included A, B, and C teams competitively debating future strategies. He also organized his NSC staff with a separate group for analysis and planning that looked beyond daily crises.

Anticipation and agility are again the watchwords of the new era, we argued, adding that compartmentalization is the enemy of better intelligence, anticipation, and wise investments in our security apparatus. Our group advocated the creation of a high-level White House outreach board in order to

bring the best thinking of the private sector into the government policymaking process, regardless of whether those practitioners were in science, technology, medicine, finance, or information-based fields. The private sector is generally ahead of government in producing innovative solutions.

Finally, we argued that officials needed to move from the culture of the Cold War and the “mind of the hedgehog,” focusing on one central opponent, to its exact opposite, the nimble “mind of the fox,” capable of dealing with the many risks and uncertainties of the post-Cold War. Because the level of asymmetric threats had grown exponentially, we called for an overall strategy dramatically different from that of the Cold War, the formation of which would involve both Congress and the Executive Branch.

Now the Administration deserves praise. Its proposal for a new Department of Homeland Security provides a blueprint for bridging the very compartmentalization that hindered us from connecting the dots before September 11. The Administration has published a national strategy for homeland security that will go hand in hand with the NSC’s forthcoming national strategy for combating terrorism.

The new Department of Homeland Security proposal is strong on analysis, gaming, and intelligence, and it realistically unifies these interactive components of our early warning system. CSP had proposed that anticipation, integration, and agility were keys to a new culture in organization and personnel. It is heartening that the Administration’s new proposals do just this and demonstrate they have learned the lessons of December 7, 1941 and September 11, 2001.

Congress, too, has contributed proposals for the new Department that reflect constructive thinking. The House bill includes a feasible program to foster technology development aimed at bolstering homeland security. In the Senate, Joseph Lieberman has always led in encouraging both civilian and military science and technology innovation, resulting in outside-the-box breakthroughs. The Senate bill, reported recently out of Senator Lieberman’s committee, creates an S&T directorate, provides \$200 million dollars to invest in security technologies, and establishes a Security Advanced Research Projects Agency.

Other aspects of the Senate bill inhibit our theme of agility. For example, the Senate’s draft legislation would not give the president power to exempt parts of the Homeland Security Department from the Federal Management Relations

Act, as is done at the Department of Defense, CIA, and other agencies involved in intelligence and national security work. Clearly, the Department of Homeland Security must be viewed as vital to the defense of the nation. Our homeland is far more vulnerable than are our military forces.

Perhaps opponents of the President's proposal do not fully understand how counterproductive such alternatives would be to the new Department's agility and anticipation. No doubt their opposition stems from well-meaning efforts to protect unions and collective bargaining rights because the aging civil service badly needs to be protected and enhanced. But of the employees being transferred to the new Department that belong to unions – approximately 25% – all will retain that membership. In fact, the Administration's proposal preserves important safeguards including whistleblower protections and the Fair Labor Standards Act, among others.

The CSP report noted that a new agility is needed for personnel as well as for reorganization issues. Unfortunately, the current Senate bill does not permit small budget transfers currently within the authority of other national security agencies. Without this latitude, the new Secretary will have to navigate 22 different personnel systems, seriously defeating efforts to streamline the organization, eliminate duplicative and redundant responsibilities, and respond swiftly to emerging homeland security threats.

The Senate version hinders a unified analysis of threats and vulnerabilities by walling off this function into three distinct directorates. This is a mistake that ignores the lessons of December 7 and September 11. When I chaired a task force of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board in the early 1980's on intelligence analysis, I learned that the dynamic connection needed between the producer and user of intelligence had to be strengthened (not weakened) to wake up the policymaker to impending danger. The Administration's bill takes important steps to fortify that "user-producer" relationship.

Oddly, the Senate bill does not authorize money to finance the enormous transition of dozens of existing agencies into a unified cabinet department, thus requiring a second act of Congress to fund the new Department's start-up process. Having served on several corporate boards involved in acquisitions and mergers, I know that this process can distract management, diverting attention from sales, marketing, and competition.

Since we are in a real war, I worry that a poorly funded (and therefore poorly executed) transition would unnecessarily distract the new Department from its central task of “connecting the dots” and closing still-gaping homeland vulnerabilities, such as seaborne traffic, dirty bombs, and cyber attacks.

As this major reorganization effort continues, Congress has a critical counterpart role to play. Congressional leadership must consider how best to reorganize itself to provide an overarching committee structure devoted to homeland security. If the Executive Branch required reorganization with over 100 government entities responsible for homeland security, Congress, with more than 40 committees and sub-committees claiming oversight of homeland security-related activity, also must take initiative. Some members have been laying the groundwork for such an overhaul, and a guiding precedent exists. In the late 1940’s, Congress faced similar disarray with the complex developments surrounding atomic energy, and wisely decided to form the bipartisan Joint Atomic Energy Committee. Authorization and appropriation were interrelated, and should be today in a new committee.

We, as a nation have been slow to reorganize our national security apparatus. Retaining Cold War rigidities has cost us dearly. As Lincoln once said, “We must think anew and act anew.” There is very intelligent leadership on both sides of the aisle in the Senate and the nation, and the President and the Congress need to come together on this critical issue so that we all can have an agile, synergized, anticipatory Department of Homeland Security and an overarching joint Congressional committee to oversee it. In unity is victory, and in disunity certain defeat. That bell tolls for both the Executive and Legislative Branches.

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The Center for the Study of the Presidency

Best Practices and Technologies for U.S. Global Communications List of Participants, September 25th

**Denotes Confirmed Participation*

***Denotes Conference Call Participation*

***Ms. Mary Catherine Andrews**

Deputy Director, Office of Global Communications
The White House

Dr. Geoffrey Cowan

Dean
Annenberg School for Communications
Former Head, VOA

***Col. Mike Furlong**

Senior Adviser
Department of Defense

***Ms. Julia Pitner**

Vice President and Managing Director
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****Mr. Jeremy Goldberg**

Director of Corporate Relations
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***Mr. John B. Higginbotham**

Chairman and CEO
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***Mr. Mark Holmes**

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Editor & COO, *Deseret News*
Chairman of the Committee on the Future
of International Broadcasting
Former Head, VOA

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Radio Sawa

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Former Ambassador to Canada