

# ISSUE BRIEF

No. 3915 | APRIL 18, 2013

## Counterterrorism: Heritage Foundation Recommendations

*The Heritage Foundation*

In the aftermath of the act of terror in Boston and ricin-laced letters intercepted in Washington, D.C., the U.S. should rededicate itself to homeland security efforts. While the sources of these attacks are still unknown, there are several policies that the U.S. can and should pursue to secure the homeland from a wide spectrum of threats.

The Heritage Foundation has long been focused on developing homeland security policies that keep the U.S. safe and prosperous, as seen in the following reports.

### **Homeland Security 4.0: Overcoming Centralization, Complacency, and Politics**

By Matt A. Mayer, James Jay Carafano, PhD, and Jessica Zuckerman

*Special Report No. 97*

August 23, 2011

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/08/homeland-security-4-0-overcoming-centralization-complacency-and-politics>

Getting the national homeland security enterprise right is among the most difficult challenges in Washington because the problems in protecting the

homeland are rooted in overcentralization, pervasive complacency, and entrenched politics—problems that often cause Washington to not work properly. This report marks a path through this obstacle course.

### **A Counterterrorism Strategy for the “Next Wave”**

By The Heritage Foundation Counterterrorism Task Force

*Special Report No. 98*

August 24, 2011

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/08/a-counterterrorism-strategy-for-the-next-wave>

In June 2011, President Barack Obama released a new National Strategy for Counterterrorism. This document profoundly misreads the nature of the global transnational threat. Following this strategy for a few years would result in a resurgent threat as dangerous as that shortly after 9/11.

Dealing with the “next wave” of transnational terrorism will require a different course. The strategy for the next wave should regain the initiative that has been lost by this President, bring a successful end to the long war, and leave behind an enduring and sustainable counterterrorism enterprise that can adeptly respond to future emerging threats.

### **How Must America Balance Security and Liberty?**

By Charles Stimson and Andrew Grossman

*Understanding America Report No. 13*

December 9, 2011

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at <http://report.heritage.org/ib3915>

Produced by the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign Policy Studies

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<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2011/12/how-must-america-balance-security-and-liberty>

The United States was born into war with the Declaration of Independence, the most important statement of liberty and natural rights ever made. Since then, America has been the world's freest country and has become its most secure, with a military equal to any threat. America has avoided the fate of nations that have traded freedoms for promises of security, or security for unlimited freedom, and achieved neither. Yet the healthy fear that one or the other will disappear has been present in every era since the Founding. How must America balance security and civil liberties?

### **Fifty Terror Plots Foiled Since 9/11: The Homegrown Threat and the Long War on Terrorism**

By James Jay Carafano, PhD, Steven P. Bucci, PhD, and Jessica Zuckerman

*Backgrounder* No. 2682

April 25, 2012

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/04/fifty-terror-plots-foiled-since-9-11-the-homegrown-threat-and-the-long-war-on-terrorism>

In 2007, The Heritage Foundation became the first and only organization to track thwarted terrorist attacks against the U.S. That year, Heritage reported that at least 19 publicly known terrorist attacks against the U.S. had been foiled since 9/11. Today, that number stands at 50. The fact that the U.S. has not suffered a large-scale attack since 9/11 speaks to the country's counterterrorism successes.

But the long war on terrorism is far from over. Reviewing the terrorist plots that have been foiled since 9/11 can provide valuable information for understanding the nature of the threat, as well as best practices for preventing the next attack. The U.S. should also be ready to adapt its security strategies—such as to counter terrorist attacks by an increasing number of homegrown terrorists.

### **After Mumbai: Could It Happen Here? What to Do**

By James Jay Carafano, PhD

*WebMemo* No. 2147

November 28, 2008

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/>

[2008/11/after-mumbai-could-it-happen-here-what-to-do](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2008/11/after-mumbai-could-it-happen-here-what-to-do)

No Administration can guarantee it will stop every attack everywhere. But if America assumes the offensive, it can take the initiative away from the terrorists, lessen their chances of success, and mitigate the damage they cause.

### **Lessons from Mumbai: Assessing Armed Assault Threats to the United States**

By James Jay Carafano, PhD

*Backgrounder* No. 2219

December 10, 2008

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2008/12/lessons-from-mumbai-assessing-armed-assault-threats-to-the-united-states>

For three bloody days in November 2008, Indian police and military forces battled heavily armed and well-organized groups of terrorists who fanned out across the city of Mumbai. Armed terrorist assaults against populated areas will be neither an unprecedented nor a remote threat in the future, and Mumbai offers lessons for the U.S. in how to respond to such threats.

### **The Domestic Counterterrorism Enterprise: Time to Streamline**

By Michael P. Downing and Matt A. Mayer

*Issue Brief* No. 3748

October 3, 2012

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/10/domestic-counterterrorism-enterprise-time-to-streamline>

Over the past decade, the domestic counterterrorism enterprise in the U.S. has added a significant amount of much-needed capacity. With that being said, the domestic intelligence enterprise should base future improvements on the reality that governments at all levels are fiscally in crisis.

Rather than add additional components to the system, law enforcement officials should streamline the domestic counterterrorism enterprise by improving current capabilities, leveraging state and local law enforcement resources and authorities, and in some cases reducing components where the terrorist threat is not high and the financial support is too thin or could be allocated more effectively.

**BioWatch: Enhancing Biological Threat Detection**

By Steven P. Bucci, PhD

*Issue Brief* No. 3661

July 10, 2012

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/07/biowatch-enhancing-biological-threat-detection>

In 2001, just one week after 9/11, letters laced with anthrax were found in the U.S. mail system, addressed to offices on Capitol Hill and major media outlets. In response, the newly formed Department of Homeland Security (DHS) deployed the BioWatch

program, which seeks to detect the release of dangerous pathogens into the air, providing early warning to government and public health officials on the threat of a biological attack.

In the nearly 10 years since BioWatch's deployment, however, perceived false alarms and program shortfalls have led some to question continued investments in the next generation of the program. While the continued threat of bioterrorism proves enough of a threat to justify further spending, in moving forward, DHS should better address these continued challenges.