Foreword: the challenge of the new age

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For over 70 years, freedom-loving nations were opposed by a bloc of countries whose governments prohibited individual liberty, democracy and free enterprise. The communist world became aggressive after World War II, eventually engulfing all of Eastern Europe, China, and countries like Cuba, North Korea and Vietnam. The United States led the free world in opposing the Marxist–Leninist ideology of socialist despotism, military expansion and oppression.

Today, free nations are faced with a new enemy just as determined and potentially as dangerous as the earlier communist menace. Make no mistake: terrorists do not want to change our system; they want to destroy our political and economic system, and our free way of life. The end of the communist monolith may not have been the ‘end of history’ as Francis Fukuyama put it, but it certainly ended a long period of relative peace, albeit terribly expensive in its consumption of human and natural resources.

The Cold War’s fortunate demise opened a Pandora’s box of nationalist, cultural and civilizational conflicts. Will the freedom-loving nations unite as we did in earlier decades to overcome this new danger? Will the United States assume its natural role as the moral, political and military leader of this multinational effort? For the sake of all Americans, our friends abroad, and for future generations, I believe we must take on this challenge.

Terrorism is not the only challenge in the new millennium. We began this century with frantic efforts to correct the shortsightedness of technical planners who failed to incorporate the necessities brought on by a simple change of numerical dates – the crisis we called Y2K. We did what we had to do, and we suffered little disruption to the computer and telecommunications systems that support our modern lives. Soon thereafter came the ‘Tech Wreck’, when the dot.com bubble burst and the ‘new economy’ of internet start-up companies came crashing to a near halt.

The stock market ‘correction’ in 2000 caused the evaporation of trillions of dollars of investment capital. However, our capitalist system again demonstrated its amazing fundamental resilience. A decade later we barely remembered the huge stock portfolio losses that at the time seemed to threaten our standard of living and the Baby Boomers’ retirement prospects.

The 2000 stock market crash contributed to a worldwide recession beginning in 2001. For the first time since the end of World War II, global gross national product began to shrink. As the economy sickened, the worst enemy attack in US history occurred in our country’s economic and political capitals.

On 11 September 2001, the unthinkable happened. Radical Islamist terrorists used our own technology to attack our iconic places of industry and government. Within days, President George W. Bush initiated the War on Terrorism, and we went abroad to root out their places of training and hiding. The War on Terrorism is an international effort that includes countries on every continent and people of every faith, including moderate Muslim societies who disavow the inhuman and ungodly mandates of Islamic jihadists.

Businesses today in America and abroad must help governments and their agencies at all levels to pursue the goals of homeland security. Managerial greed and fraud must give way to selflessness that complements the investor-driven goals of return-on-investment and short-term financial performance. As President Coolidge said, 'The business of America is business'. It was true then, and it is now. Without a strong economy, our country cannot be politically or militarily strong. Without strength we cannot be safe, and without safety we cannot be free.

In order to succeed in supporting our standard of living and way of life, businesses must continue to make and sell their products and services. Continuity of business operations is essential, and business continuity depends on the protection of both private assets and public infrastructure in an environment of credible and predictable homeland security. How do we do this? We must prioritize who and what we protect and how we allocate limited resources in this effort. Wherever we can, we must protect ourselves and our property from terrorism, natural disasters, catastrophic accidents and pandemics. This is a mutual responsibility – it's everyone's job. Everybody will benefit from our success, or we will all suffer from our failure.

We must be smarter than the enemy. We have to understand their motives, their capabilities, and how much they are willing to sacrifice in order to defeat us. It may sound strange to apply this logic to hurricanes and diseases, but we must use our superior analytical abilities to find creative solutions to all of the threats to business continuity and to homeland security at federal, state and local levels. This book brings together an outstanding group of expert thinkers from various fields to pool their expertise in pursuit of answers – answers to the critical problems of the new millennium. Intelligence, determination and cooperation are the keys to our success.