

on terrorism?" The United States needed some benchmarks by which to evaluate states' terrorist leanings.

"We need a small group, deputies and principals, to look at the next phase in the war on terror," she said.

"TRYING TO ANTICIPATE the Next Attack" was the title of the highly classified three-page paper that arrived in the president's inbox the morning of Tuesday, September 25. It was the report that Bush had requested several days earlier. It was distributed to him and a limited number of his key advisers with the President's Daily Brief (PDB), the most restricted document in Washington.

The report was put together by a "Red Cell" team that Tenet and McLaughlin had set up. The team of experienced CIA analysts and operatives saw all incoming intelligence on bin Laden, al Qaeda and other relevant international terrorism. Their job was to think like bin Laden and his lieutenants and say what the other side—what Bush and Tenet called "the Bad Guys"—might be thinking or doing.

A notation on the paper said that since Red Cell had been directed to think "unconventional" and "out of the box," their thoughts should not be taken as conclusive. The Red Cell had been tasked to consider the "limitless" number of possible terrorist targets, and then to attempt to narrow that down to the most likely future domestic targets given the past practices of al Qaeda. In other words, to place their bets.

The Red Cell had come up with nine categories:

1. Political centers—Washington, D.C., or federal offices anywhere
2. Infrastructure facilities—airports, roads, harbors, railroads, dams, tunnels, bridges
3. Economic systems—Wall Street, Chicago trading centers
4. Energy infrastructure—refineries, oil platforms

5. Military targets—areas of large troop concentrations, Army, Navy, Air Force or Marine bases, weapons storage sites
6. Global telecommunications—electronic communications transit points, Internet computer routing centers, banking nodes
7. Educational centers—Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the Boston area
8. Cultural centers—Hollywood, sports stadiums
9. Monuments and other symbols of national identity

“UBL tends to go back after targets they considered or previously attacked,” the paper said, noting that some possible targets have “multiple values.”

The White House had such multiple value as both a political center and a symbol of national identity. Bush was living and working at a designated Ground Zero.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY Council met again on Tuesday, September 25, at the White House. The president spoke first. “We can’t define the success or failure in terms of capturing UBL.”

Tenet reported on the Northern Alliance. “The people are ready to go. They are not Pashtuns, but they are anti-Taliban. We won’t be able to hold them back. They will hit both al Qaeda and Taliban targets, because they are all intermixed.” A CIA team was about to go in. “We will encourage them to go to the targets. They’ve got communications gear to give us intelligence. We’ll give them money. We will have to decide whether to pay for the Soviet weapons we’re going to be provided.”

The Northern Alliance controlled a part of the northeast quadrant of the country. “It is a potential base of operations,” Tenet said. “We want to push as much pressure from the north and from the south. We’ll have meetings with district leaders. We want to seal the borders and make sure the Arabs don’t flee.”