

Same Priorities, Different Perspectives: Tom Ridge and Michael Chertoff on Homeland Security

Thomas Ridge with Lary Bloom. *The Test of Our Times: America Under Siege...And How We Can Be Safe Again*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2009.

Michael Chertoff. *Homeland Security: Assessing the First Five Years*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

Reviewed by Stephanie Cooper Blum

INTRODUCTION

On November 25, 2002, Congress passed the *Homeland Security Act of 2002*,¹ which created the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), bringing together twenty-two governmental agencies. DHS became operational in March 2003. The White House described DHS as “the most significant transition of the U.S. government in over a half-century by largely transforming and realigning the current confusing patchwork of government activities into a single department whose primary mission is to protect our homeland.”²

In 2010, as the third homeland security secretary begins her second year leading DHS, and as DHS analyzes the results from its first Quadrennial Homeland Security Review,³ it is clear that the department as an organization and homeland security as a concept are still, relatively speaking, in their infancy. Against this backdrop, former DHS Secretaries Tom Ridge and Michael Chertoff have each published historical retrospectives on homeland security and their experiences leading the government's newest department. Both books should be read together as they each complement the other. Ridge's *The Test of Our Times: America Under Siege . . . and How we Can be Safe Again* focuses on the politics of homeland security, the department's creation, and its initial obstacles.⁴ Chertoff's *Homeland Security: Assessing the First Five Years* places Islamic terrorism in historical context and provides a road map of homeland security priorities.⁵ After reading both books, one greatly appreciates the sheer magnitude of standing up the department in 2003 and the challenges and continuing evolution of homeland security where failure is unforgettable and success is often invisible.

Both former secretaries focus on risk management and information sharing as integral components in reducing America's vulnerability to terrorism and natural disasters; both describe the importance of gaining the cooperation of moderate Muslims in winning a war of ideas; both stress the symbiotic relationship between economic prosperity and security; both emphasize the need for international cooperation; and both urge comprehensive immigration reform, enhanced cyber security, stronger identification using biometrics, and improved public health surveillance. Most significantly, both lament the consequences of complacency, which they contend is one of America's biggest risks to undermining what has been achieved in the last seven years. Yet, there are meaningful differences between their books – not so much in substance, as their priorities for homeland security are almost identical – but in their unique perspectives and the resulting assessment of the last seven years.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Ridge's book is a poignant memoir depicting his personal experiences – both successes and frustrations – as head of the White House Office of Homeland Security (OHS) after 9/11, which evolved into the Department of Homeland Security in 2003. While his book delves into the substance of homeland security, its insight lies in candidly discussing the “intersection of politics, fear, credibility, and security” (p. 239). By providing an honest assessment of his agreements and disagreements with the Bush administration and various officials, Ridge provides the reader with a behind-the-scene look at the politics of homeland security from the department's creation to the forging of its mission. Ridge also provides a unique perspective as a former governor, especially when it comes to vertical information sharing and unfunded mandates. After reading Ridge's book, one better understands, as he describes it, the “almost undoable” task of balancing transparency and disclosure with needed secrecy and creating a governmental entity capable of generating the confidence and trust of the American public (p. 74).

In contrast, Chertoff's book is not a personal memoir but instead consists of various substantive chapters on homeland security, each one previously published by various journals, and stitched together to make a compelling book. Whereas Ridge's book is sensitive to state and local perspectives, Chertoff's book is written from a decidedly federal perspective. This difference should not come as a surprise since Ridge is a former governor while Chertoff is a former federal prosecutor and former federal judge. While both perspectives have their own unique advantages, one consequence of Chertoff's federal perspective is that his book only promotes the policies of the Bush administration, appearing to completely ignore policies that undermined homeland security or at least served as distractions.

Chertoff's book would appear more objective had he substantively addressed some of the Bush administration's more controversial policies that directly impacted homeland security (e.g., Guantanamo Bay, invading Iraq, Abu Ghraib, the Terrorist Surveillance Program). In this way, a more accurate title for Chertoff's book would perhaps be “promoting” as opposed to “assessing” the first five years. Nonetheless, the strength of Chertoff's book lies in his historical insight and his ability to take complex topics and reduce them to understandable and memorable policy statements with a clear account of what has been accomplished and a road map of what remains to be done.

In order to appreciate both books and their contribution to this new discipline of homeland security, the highlights of each book are discussed. In the end, it is only by reading these books together that one can truly grasp where we have been, where we are headed, and where our greatest challenges lie.

Michael Chertoff's *Homeland Security: Assessing the First Five Years*

Chertoff's book is a compilation of individual speeches and articles written for various journals in commemoration of the fifth anniversary of DHS. Each chapter discusses a separate homeland security topic, and his book progresses logically from describing the threat to prevention to reducing vulnerabilities to preparation and response, and concludes with international cooperation. While Ridge's book has a stream-of-consciousness feel as he depicts his personal struggles with creating and leading DHS, the strength of Chertoff's book lies in its organization and clarity. Furthermore, while

Ridge's background as a governor enabled him to appreciate the state and local perspective, Chertoff clearly wants to augment federal power. In fact, an underlying theme of his book is the power of the federal government to solve homeland security problems.

Chertoff's book begins in an insightful way by providing a detailed and informative description and analysis of the terrorism threat itself, which he characterizes as "ideological" in nature. Chertoff explains how violent Islamic extremists have "hijacked" for their own ends the religion of millions of peaceful Muslims (p. 13). Interestingly, Chertoff places terrorism in its historical context by showing a modern parallel between radical Islam and Western totalitarianism ideologies such as Marxism, communism, and fascism. While Chertoff acknowledges that the threat of the twentieth century was nuclear annihilation, he asserts that a common element of the threats of then and now is a "unified, underlying ideology and worldview" (p. 13). While Marxists, communists, and fascists sought control of nations, Islamic extremists seek host states in which to train and flourish and create platforms. Notably, he describes four similarities between Islamic terrorists and the extremists of the twentieth century: (1) use of similar rhetoric such as "revolution," "imperialist," "capitalist," and "establishment," as well as distortion of certain concepts such as jihad, which means spiritual struggle against sin or individual striving for self-improvement; (2) "indiscriminate violence," rejecting the distinction between combatant and non-combatant; (3) the "macabre celebration of death," as Osama Bin Laden said, "We love death. The U.S. loves life. That is the difference between us two;" and (4) the "rule of ideologically correct man over rule of law," which for Islamic extremists means ignoring divine law as interpreted by moderate scholars (pp. 23-26). By placing Islamic terrorism in its proper historical context, Chertoff demystifies the threat and shows how the threat posed by Islamic terrorists is not so different from other ideological threats the United States has confronted and defeated.

Chertoff also provides a strategy for countering Islamic extremists. As he describes, the "unending slaughter of innocent Muslims sows the potential seeds for Al Qaeda's failure. Simply stated, these acts of extremism are alienating the very pool of people terrorists wish to convert to their creed" (p. 15). Significantly, Chertoff concludes that this war will be lost or won in the "recruitment arena" and he advocates a strategy: in the short run, the United States must capture and kill terrorists as well as disrupt their finances, communication, travel, and plots. He emphasizes, however, that the long-term strategic objective is to win the allegiance of a critical mass of Muslims (p. 16).

While Chertoff's strategy is convincing, he fails to address anywhere in his book U.S. policies that could be seen as undermining this strategy by alienating the very moderate Muslims he argues the U.S. needs to win this war. For instance, in Chapter 2 he describes the White House's agenda as follows:

Following 9/11, President Bush took decisive action, striking back against Al Qaeda in Afghanistan, deploying our intelligence assets across the globe, capturing or killing terrorists on nearly every continent, and partnering with our allies on shared intelligence against this common menace. Without such steps, the United States would have doubtless faced other, equally devastating attacks over the past eight years. (p. 33)

In Chapter 4, reiterating the above, Chertoff confidently asserts that the United States is safer than before September 11 as Al Qaeda no longer has a state sponsor and is losing in Iraq. In Chapter 5, Chertoff proclaims:

When the United States ended Taliban control of Afghanistan, deposed Saddam Hussein in Iraq, and proved willing to stand up to Al Qaeda around the world, *countless Muslims were persuaded that the United States was committed to a policy that rejects both the hated status quo and the terrorists' grisly alternative*" (p. 66-67, emphasis added).

While such conclusions are debatable, Chertoff's failure to even mention any of the controversial policies or incidents that occurred during the Bush administration is a weakness in his otherwise solid book. For instance, nowhere does Chertoff substantively address Abu Ghraib, indefinite and incommunicado detention of enemy combatants, water boarding, rendition, the Terrorist Surveillance Program, Guantanamo Bay, or the consequences of invading Iraq. Rather, Chertoff argues that the United States must offer "alternative ideals of liberty and democracy" to defeat the terrorist agenda (p. 60-61). While Chertoff may believe the aforementioned policies did not undermine the U.S.'s long-term strategy of courting moderate Muslims, his book would appear more objective and more persuasive had he at least acknowledged these controversies and explained his reasoning for why he did or did not support them. Additionally, Chertoff argues that to defeat the terrorists' extremist ideology, the United States needs to "promot[e] the rule of law, not the rule of man" (p. 55). Yet critics of the Bush administration have argued that the White House bypassed the law to support its counterterrorism mission. While such arguments may be overstated and are certainly a matter of passionate debate, Chertoff's silence on such matters is deafening.

By comparison, Ridge is not shy about addressing these issues and explaining where he agreed and disagreed with the administration's approach. Like Chertoff, Ridge espouses the importance of having moderate Muslims reject dogma and repudiate terrorism and extremism. As Ridge too observes, most victims of terrorist attacks are Muslims. Yet, Ridge explicitly notes that "torture and indefinite detention without some form of due process are unacceptable practices" that undermine our moral authority (p. 276). While Ridge supported Guantanamo Bay at the beginning, he began to have concerns when "it became clear no plan existed other than indefinite if not permanent imprisonment" (p. 145). Ridge further states that he agreed with the 2006 National Intelligence Estimate that concluded the Iraq war made the overall problem of terrorism worse and the "treatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo fueled anti-American feelings" (p. 152). Such incidents, he explains, "provided more grist for the propaganda mill" and served as "recruiting posters for terrorists-in-waiting" (p. 152). With respect to the Terrorist Surveillance Program – where the National Security Agency spied on U.S. citizens without obtaining traditional FISA warrants – Ridge explained that while he agreed with the substance of what Bush was doing, the way he handled it "presented an appearance of employing unauthorized power" (p. 110). Such criticism – or at least acknowledgment – is notably silent from Chertoff's book. The reader is left pondering whether Chertoff would support virtually limitless power to secure the nation.

A similar phenomenon occurs with Chertoff's discussion of Hurricane Katrina. While Chertoff devotes an entire chapter to the Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA), arguing how critical it is for FEMA to remain in DHS, he never once mentions FEMA's failure or responsibility during Hurricane Katrina. When Chertoff does discuss Katrina, it is in reference to the failure of New Orleans residents to construct a new gate for the 17th Street canal because of concerns that it would spoil the view or adversely affect the area's ecology. Chertoff fails to even acknowledge any failure by the federal government in the humanitarian crisis of Katrina. By contrast, Ridge discusses how FEMA failed to communicate with DHS, which then failed to communicate effectively with the White House. Ridge also explains how FEMA failed to use the National Response Plan in a timely manner. Again, wherever the truth lies with the crisis of Katrina, Chertoff's book would be stronger had he at least acknowledged the elephants in the room.

Despite Chertoff's reluctance to criticize any policy of the federal government, the strength of Chertoff's book lies in his ability to take complex concepts and reduce them to understandable and succinct policy statements. For instance, one particularly insightful part of Chertoff's book is his explanation of why "Washington Won't Work." Chertoff asserts the government is hampered by three factors: (1) "anecdotalism," where individuals make decisions based on isolated and compelling stories instead of the complete data (such as someone having a bad experience at the border or during screening, which may be an isolated problem and not symptomatic of an underlying problem with the program); (2) parochialism (or the NIMBY – Not In My Back Yard – phenomenon) where measures designed to promote the general good are countered by a small but highly concentrated and organized set of activists focused on their own interests (such as residents on the Southern border opposing border security fences); and (3) "short-term-ism" – an unwillingness to pay a short-term cost in order to achieve a vastly greater long-term benefit (such as New Orleans failing to fix the structural problems with the levee wall before Hurricane Katrina). By breaking down complex problems into easy-to-remember and clever phrases, Chertoff enables the reader to better appreciate and grasp the challenges in securing the nation, even if one does not ultimately agree in the infallibility of the federal government.

One theme Chertoff touches on but does not explore in depth is the relationship between intelligence and inconvenience. In his chapter on how to handle improvised explosive devices (IED), Chertoff argues that, absent sufficient information and intelligence, the United States is forced to cast a wider security net, which can result in more inconvenience to passengers (i.e. inspecting passenger bags on mass transit). Better intelligence earlier on will result in less inconvenience to individuals downstream. As Chertoff notes, "Those who on privacy grounds seek to restrict our ability to obtain intelligence fail to take this into account" (p. 105). This is a particularly astute point and worthy of further exploration, yet Chertoff's treatment of this theme is underdeveloped.

Chertoff concludes his book by emphasizing how much the department has accomplished since 2003 and urging individual Americans, as well as businesses, to "become more educated consumers of information about national security" (p. 182). Chertoff's belief is that the more informed individuals and businesses become, the more likely they "will back sensible, risk-based security measures" (p. 183). As explored next, Ridge concludes his book with the same hope.

Tom Ridge's *The Test of Our Times: American Under Siege...And How We Can Be Safe Again*

While Ridge's book, like Chertoff's, discusses a range of homeland security topics, Ridge is most insightful when he discusses (1) the disagreements he had with the White House and various government officials and how he reconciled those differences, (2) the politics of homeland security, and (3) his distinct perspective as a former governor. These three themes permeate the book, providing the reader with an appreciation of the evolution of homeland security.

It is tempting to characterize Ridge's book as focused on the differences of opinion he had with the White House. It is fairer to state that Ridge does not shy away from discussing these differences but instead embraces them. And for good reason: it is through these differences of opinion – among individuals committed to homeland security – that we can better appreciate not only what emerged but what could have been and what still can be (as homeland security is very much a nascent field). As Ridge explains, the creation of DHS was a struggle between the White House, which initially did not want the department, and Congress, which ultimately concluded it needed more oversight over homeland security. In recounting its contentious creation, Ridge does not start with 9/11 but instead explains how creating a border-centric department to enhance homeland security had been contemplated since the Nixon administration. In fact, nineteen different government studies recommended such a department and all had been shelved.

Even the disaster of 9/11 did not result in DHS but rather the more limited Office of Homeland Security within the White House. While Ridge ostensibly had the president's ear on homeland security issues, Ridge recounts how he needed more authority and resources than could be provided in an Executive Order and wanted to “pull together a core group of government agencies that could focus upon and rally around homeland security as its primary mission” (p. 126). As Ridge describes, “OHS was an office that often had to rely on smoke and mirrors to undertake some of the most daunting tasks in the federal government” (p. 128).

Although Ridge was an early proponent of the creation of DHS, the White House initially was not supportive. As Ridge notes, President Bush's focus was on strengthening the power of the executive branch that he felt over the years “had been improperly ceded to Congress” (p. 126). Hence, the White House wanted a strong cabinet around it. The real impetus for the creation of DHS came from Congress, which was increasingly frustrated by the lack of oversight of the billions of dollars over which Ridge had influence (but no real power). After the White House refused to allow Ridge to testify before Congress about his homeland security priorities, and after the legacy INS sent two visas to dead 9/11 hijackers to attend flight training school in Florida, DHS became a political inevitability. As Ridge recounts, Congress wanted him “unmuzzle[d]” and the White House realized “[i]t would be better for the administration to be the architect of the new department rather than allowing Congress to take the lead” (pp. 127, 129).

Although the White House eventually supported the creation of DHS – and asked him to lead it – Ridge describes how his vision of homeland security and that of the administration differed. As Ridge observes, “the silly prolonged debate with the White House over the design of the new department's seal was as absurd as it was revealing”

(p. 71). The Bush administration wanted an eagle emblem to hold arrows in both talons as if to say the key to victory over terrorism was through aggression, forward-leaning military, and counterterrorism action. Ridge countered: “We thought differently. There was far more to defeating the enemy than military action” (p. 71). To his credit, Ridge discusses in detail what else his vision of homeland security entailed, which can be summed up as creating an environment of trust and credibility with the public. As he explains: “Only disclosure and transparency would generate the confidence and trust needed by our government as it waged its war domestically” (p. 72).

Throughout his book, Ridge emphasizes how he was very careful not to play politics as that would undermine the public trust. Ridge describes how “questions of credibility, turf, and the politics of terrorism would soon overtake Washington, adding to the confusion and anxiety that gripped the nation” (p. 42). Ridge describes how homeland security became politicized, during the creation of DHS, as Republicans accused Democrats of caring more about political security than national security when the latter pushed for unionization and worker protections for DHS employees. He further admits that members of his own party carried out “shameless character assassination” during the 2002 midterm elections by accusing Democrats of being soft on national defense (p. 112). Yet, his criticism goes both ways. Ridge recounts how the Democrats argued the White House and DHS were trying to scare the country into keeping Republicans in power whenever the DHS color-coded threat level was raised. And Ridge partly blames the media for the politicization of homeland security by resorting to “hyperbole and oversimplification” instead of presenting the complexity or the nuances of the issues (p. 112). Ridge ultimately created a test to help insulate decisions from accusations of politicization: “Will the new measure make us safer? Will it be consistent with constitution and law? Will it have good or bad economic consequences for our country?” (p. 109).

Despite his best efforts, Ridge admits that he himself unwittingly politicized homeland security by adding, at the last minute, certain words to a threat-level warning for the financial sector. On the recommendation of the White House, Ridge inserted that the “information available to us today is the result of the president’s leadership in the war against terror” (p. 233). As Ridge describes, for the next several weeks he was not dealing with the “specifics of the threat but with the meaning of the inserted words” (p. 234). Ridge explains how he regrets his rash decision and wished he had delivered the unembellished statement followed by an apology to the White House for an “oversight’ in failing to include those congratulatory words” (p. 234).

As alluded to above, one of the main areas of potential politicization of homeland security was the decision to raise the threat level of the DHS color-coded system. Ridge describes in detail the process for making this decision and the consequences of being wrong. As a preliminary matter, Ridge emphasizes how he was never directed to raise the threat level and instead a cabinet-member consensus of the Homeland Security Counsel drove the recommendation. Yet, importantly, he does acknowledge that DHS was the agency most reluctant to raise the threat level. As the leader of DHS, Ridge felt that the government needed to offer “more than a generic threat warning” lest the terrorists generate a broad psychological impact (p. 84). The crux of the problem was the level of specificity that could be provided with each warning. There was an inherent conflict between informing the public and holding information tightly so as not to

jeopardize the counterterrorism effort. Over time, Ridge developed a compromise: DHS could provide the reasons it felt the intelligence was credible (e.g. it was corroborated) without providing the specifics of the intelligence. Nonetheless, the color-coded system ended up as fodder for late-night comedians.

In discussing the controversial color-coded scheme, Ridge describes how at times he disagreed with former Attorney General Ashcroft and former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld about when the threat level should be raised. The main point of contention was the significance of the intelligence. At times Ashcroft felt the threat was big while DHS thought the attack plot was overstated. Ridge explains that when there was a disagreement between DOJ and DHS, DOJ prevailed. Nonetheless, Ridge emphasizes that Ashcroft believed he was doing the right thing and it was healthy for DHS to draw its own conclusions, as competitive intelligence should always be encouraged. And compromises could often be reached. For instance, after three-year-old tapes were found suggesting attacks on the financial sectors in New York, DHS limited the alert to just the financial sectors so as to prevent states and locals from having to incur unnecessary expense associated with a generic escalated threat level. As Ridge continually emphasizes, “credibility was always our goal while communicating to the public” (p. 233).

Yet disagreements about the color-coded system contributed to Ridge’s decision to withdraw as secretary after the 2004 elections. Right before the election, Osama bin Laden delivered a new videotaped message, and Ashcroft and Rumsfeld wanted the threat level raised. Ridge strongly disagreed, contending that a threatening message alone, from people who hate us, was not enough to raise the threat level; no additional intelligence justified it. Ridge pondered “*Is this about security or politics?*” (p. 237; italics in original). He believed raising the threat level could ultimately backfire as Democrats could argue Republicans were politicizing national security on the eve of the election. While Ridge ultimately won this specific battle (and the threat level was not raised), he felt he had spent his political capital and needed to follow through on resigning. As he left DHS in 2004, Ridge believed DHS had gained a “level of public trust that was significant but fragile” (p. 235).

Besides the politics of homeland security, another prominent theme in Ridge’s book arises from the unique perspective he brings as a former governor. One of the most compelling parts of Ridge’s book is the question of information sharing and how much information to share with the states and local governments. As a former governor, Ridge is particularly sensitive to this issue. He explains that he “viewed the states as our partners in the national efforts to combat terrorism” (p. 139) and was “determined to share as much information as possible with state and local officials” (p. 78). Yet finding the right balance of information to share was particularly challenging: if too much information is shared, the economy could be hurt; if too little information is shared, people could underestimate the threat and fall into complacency.

After much thought, Ridge implemented what he felt was an adequate compromise. DHS would provide detailed information about threats, “regardless of whether or not it could be actioned upon at the time,” to key officials at state and local governments but not to the general public (p. 75). This strategy backfired, however, when DHS shared uncorroborated general information about a possible plot against unnamed suspension bridges with western state governors. The plan had been to simply “inform the

appropriate state and local officials, sharing what we had learned, to foster a working relationship in the event that future information made action necessary” (p. 78). California Governor Gray Davis, however, alerted the general public to the threat with no specifics. As a result, people viewed the generic threat supported by no concrete information as being more about politics than security. While he concedes that Davis had the best of intentions, Ridge worried the public would become desensitized to actual threats. As Ridge observed, “we all had a lesson in the complexity of the issue” (p. 79).

Besides deciding how much information to share, another problem related to states and local governments was the question of unfunded mandates. Ridge was particularly sensitive to the states not having the same resources as the federal government. When the United States invaded Iraq, for instance, DHS implemented “Liberty Shield,” placing the nation on high-alert to prevent and respond to any retaliatory attacks on the homeland. This was a colossal unfunded mandate for the states. As Ridge explains, DHS should not expect governors to pay for Liberty Shield, which was a federal operation. In general, Ridge laments how the states and local governments were asked to respond to federal terror alerts with “inadequate information, inadequate staffing, inadequate training, and, significantly, no means to procure financial help from the federal government” (p. 76). DHS was asking the cities and states to “be our front lines in a ‘new war,’ but we were not equipping or funding them properly” (p. 76).

Ridge’s experience as a governor also greatly impacted his strategic vision for DHS. He wanted DHS to have regional offices instead of being so centralized and to “position a portion of this massive bureaucracy to the state and local governments” to achieve the department’s goals (p. 213). Regional offices would facilitate a national network of security by “establishing an institutional presence at the regional level to build relationships, share information, and prepare for such emergencies” (p. 217). While the White House was initially supportive, it ultimately made an “about-face” and rejected the idea (p. 218). Ridge boldly asserts that his idea for regional offices, such as the one he had proposed for New Orleans, could have mitigated the humanitarian crisis with Hurricane Katrina. In the conclusion of his book, he implores Congress to consider reorganizing the department along regional lines to “improve its operational effectiveness” and its “ability to accomplish its mission.” He confidently argues that a “regional office and director would provide a single focus for state and local, public and private, interaction with the department” (p. 261).

While Ridge provides an honest and at times frustrated account of establishing DHS, his book ends on a philosophical note. After quoting theater critic Brooks Atkinson as stating “The most fatal illusion is a settled point of view,” Ridge asserts that this “is where danger finds easy sanctuary” (p. 277). As Ridge compellingly argues, security must change with the times. While Ridge thinks we will never celebrate a victory over terrorism or extremist foes (as terrorism is just a tactic), and there are financial and philosophical limits to how far we as a nation will go to protect ourselves, he concludes that we need to accept risk and get on with our lives. As he ponders whether Americans will truly accept a certain level of risk of future attacks, one has to wonder whether that lingering question is what motivated him to write the book. As he continually emphasizes throughout, expecting the government to create a “fail-safe, risk-free environment” is not realistic (p. 270). In the end, no matter where one stands

on any specific homeland security issue, one can appreciate the contribution Tom Ridge made to the creation of DHS and the mission of homeland security.

CONCLUSION

These books by Ridge and Chertoff each tackle this new discipline of homeland security with passion and insight and provide differing perspectives. Ridge focuses on the politics of homeland security, his own internal struggles, and the state and local perspective; Chertoff focuses on placing Islamic terrorism in its proper historical context and the seeming invincibility of the federal government to solve homeland security problems. For all their differences in perspective and style, however, they both recognize the necessity of avoiding the extremes of hysteria and complacency, they both clamor for more information sharing, and they both repeatedly emphasize the significance of risk management over risk elimination. In the end, it is these similarities in homeland security priorities, rather than the differences, that stay with the reader. And in the end it is probably the similarities of her predecessors' views that will provide the most insight to Secretary Napolitano as she confronts the never-ending and constantly evolving challenge of homeland security.

Stephanie Cooper Blum is an attorney for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) where she advises on civil rights and civil liberties issues. She previously served as a member to the Department of Justice's Task Force on Detention Policy, worked as an employment litigator for the Transportation Security Administration, and served as a law clerk to three federal judges. Ms. Blum is the author of The Necessary Evil of Preventive Detention in the War on Terror: A Plan for a More Moderate and Sustainable Solution, published in 2008. She holds a master's degree in security studies from the Naval Postgraduate School, a J.D. from University of Chicago Law School and a bachelor's degree in political science from Yale University. Ms. Blum has written various articles on homeland security issues and is an instructor at Michigan State University's Criminal Justice School. Ms. Blum can be reached at scooper@aya.yale.edu.

The views in this article are the author's and do not necessarily represent the views of the United States government and the Department of Homeland Security.

¹ United States Congress, *Homeland Security Act of 2002*, Public Law No. 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135 (Washington, DC: Nov. 25, 2002).

² President George W. Bush, *Department of Homeland Security* (Washington, DC: June 2002) <http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/gwbush/hmlndsecjuno2prbush.pdf>.

³ The Quadrennial Homeland Security Review is a top-to-bottom review of homeland security policies and priorities that will guide DHS and the nation for the next four years. It sought input from homeland security stakeholders as well as government employees from the federal, state, and local levels.

⁴ Thomas Ridge with Lary Bloom, *The Test of Our Times: America Under Siege...And How We Can Be Safe Again* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2009).

⁵ Michael Chertoff, *Homeland Security: Assessing the First Five Years* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).