

~~CONFIDENTIAL PERSONAL~~  
**DECLASSIFIED**



*reference with this entirely - I should prepare a note for a meeting next week*

PRIME MINISTER

From: Jonathan Powell  
Date: 15 November 2001  
cc: David Manning  
Alastair Campbell

### THE WAR: WHAT COMES NEXT?

If we are successful in Afghanistan over the next days and weeks there is a real danger that we will part company with the Americans on what comes next. The right wing of the Republican Party will want to carry on by bombing Iraq and Somalia. Bush's natural tendency would be to support them unless presented with an alternative. David has commissioned some work by the FCO on this, but I think it needs some lateral political thinking about what would provide an attractive - and effective - alternative strategy.

I think the first thing is to persuade the Americans that rather than repeating what we have done in Afghanistan elsewhere we need to use the leverage that our success in Afghanistan provides to achieve our aims elsewhere. That means:

- a) urgent pressure on Syria and Iran to crack down on terrorists as a quid pro quo for a warmer relationship with the West and getting a Middle East peace process going - with the unstated threat that risk becoming the next target for military action if they do not co-operate (the good cop, bad cop routine).
- b)
- c) far greater international effort to roll up the Al Qaida networks wherever they are, financially, judicially etc. Those countries that do not co-operate should be subject to sanctions,
- d) assistance to those governments that are fighting terrorists, eg Columbia and the Philippines.

**DECLASSIFIED**

~~CONFIDENTIAL PERSONAL~~  
**DECLASSIFIED**



Next I think we need a new policy for Iraq. I do not believe that a warmed over UN Security Council Resolution re-inserting arms inspectors and changing sanctions is likely to cut any ice with the Americans let alone the Russians and French. And I think the approaches \_\_\_\_\_ are interesting. I think we need a completely fresh look at our policy starting from our objectives. It seems to me that our over-riding objective is the removal of Saddam not the insertion of arms inspectors. It is only with a new regime that we can be sure of an end to CBRN proliferation and an end to hostile intent towards his neighbours plus his support for terrorism. We need to make a far greater effort to bring him down - \_\_\_\_\_, with proper backing for internal opposition (rather than the external \_\_\_\_\_). There will be a military role, but bombing Baghdad is not the most obvious route to changing regime.

Third we need to stop the martyrdom of UBL setting him up as a beacon and inspiration to another wave of suicide bombers. This can partly be tackled by a thorough policy of unwinding his networks. But this will not be enough by itself. We also need an information campaign to present him and his brand of Islam in the correct light and win hearts and minds. We should not wind up the information effort just because we have finished fighting in Afghanistan.

And we need a medium to long term strategy of changing the educational systems in Muslim countries and encourage the regimes in the direction of becoming more democratically accountable. We need other Arab/Muslim heroes on T shirts instead of UBL.

Fourth we need to address the political causes that you have been banging on about. Most importantly that means persuading the Americans to take the MEPP seriously. It is possible that although they are launching the speech and the envoy without much hope of progress and

we may be able to use these steps to create a bit of momentum. If we can ever get the two sides into negotiating about almost anything, however small, we have a process. Above all we should not back off the MEPP now.

You should however re-build some of your credit on the Israeli side if an opportunity presents itself.

This all needs to be coupled with a much stronger domestic defence against future terrorist attacks and clear evidence that we are not turning our backs on Afghanistan once the fighting is over.

**DECLASSIFIED**

~~CONFIDENTIAL PERSONAL~~  
**DECLASSIFIED**



I think you should try to engage GWB on all this next week, and perhaps send him another note setting out the way forward before the Pentagon tries to take him off on another tangent.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JP' followed by a flourish.

**JONATHAN POWELL**

**DECLASSIFIED**