For the National Security Program, 2011 was a momentous time: The U.S. marked ten years since September 11, revolutions coursed through the Arab world, and Iran accelerated its nuclear aims. The program exposed evolving risks to the nation from terrorism, advanced legislation to fulfill the 9/11 Commission recommendations, recommended ways to stabilize failed states, proposed policies to strengthen U.S.-Russian relations, and offered realistic options to prevent a nuclear Iran. It’s easy to see why the program’s mission—tackling complex national security and foreign policy issues—is so vital.

The National Security Program has two major projects:

The Homeland Security Project is a bipartisan group of former executive branch and congressional leaders as well as national security professionals who carry on the work of the 9/11 Commission at BPC and monitor the implementation of its recommendations, including intelligence reform. As the terrorist threat becomes more complicated, the project tackles cutting-edge counterterrorism issues like cyber security, the radicalization of Islamist extremists in the U.S., and the balance between counterterrorism technologies and privacy. Recognizing the growing frequency and sophistication of online attacks, in 2011 the project launched a Cyber Security Task Force with a formidable array of top experts in the field.

The Foreign Policy Project turned its attention to the Arab Awakening in 2011. The Foreign Policy Project examined the uprisings and released groundbreaking reports on stabilizing at-risk states and creating economic and diplomatic mandates for democracy. The project also maintained laser focus on Iran’s nuclear ambitions while promoting a triple-track Iran policy of diplomacy, sanctions, and credible military readiness. Additionally, the project analyzed the benefits of Russia’s World Trade Organization membership and granting it permanent normal trade-relations status.
Homeland Security Project Accomplishments

Radical Concept
Threats to the U.S. do not come solely from abroad. In the last few years there has been an unprecedented spike in the number of radicalized American terrorists. The Homeland Security Project issued a report in June 2011, Preventing Violent Radicalization in America, providing concrete policy recommendations to quell extremism, including designating lead federal agencies for counter-radicalization outreach, information sharing, and training.

★ Project members met with key executive branch officials about the report’s recommendations and testified before the House Intelligence Committee.

★ Several of the report’s recommendations—such as having lead agencies for counter-radicalization—were included in the administration’s strategy on countering violent extremism.

The 21st-Century Battlefield
The next terrorist strike may not occur in towers or subways, but in the complex world of cyberspace, where just a laptop and an Internet connection can spur destruction. As BPC’s 9/11 Commission report card pointed out, the nation lacks true cyber-security awareness: “This is not science fiction. It is possible to take down cyber systems and trigger cascading disruptions and damage.” For the project, taking this threat seriously meant launching a Cyber Security Task Force—co-chaired by former Director of the National Security Agency and the CIA General (ret.) Michael Hayden and CEO of Boston Properties Mort Zuckerman.
Media Highlights

“National Security is too important to become a partisan issue. We believe that in matters of national security, our priority should be to figure out what went wrong and how to fix it.”
— Homeland Security Project co-chairs Tom Kean and Lee Hamilton, USA Today

“This is no time to rest in our efforts to improve the nation’s security. We have damaged our enemy, but the ideology of violent Islamist extremism is alive and attracting new adherents, including recruitment of those within our own borders.”

“When the Bipartisan Policy Center recently released its report, Preventing Violent Radicalization in America, I thought it important to hold a hearing in an open setting so that members, others in the government, and the American public could hear the views of some of the foremost non-government experts on this topic. This is especially important and timely considering our government is developing a national counter-radicalization strategy as we speak.”
— Representative Sue Myrick (R-NC), Hearing of House Subcommittee on Terrorism, HUMINT, Analysis, and Counterintelligence

Looking Ahead

In 2012, the Homeland Security Project will:

★ Focus on developing concrete recommendations from the Cyber Security Task Force—including legal reforms, incentives and best practices—to encourage collaboration and information sharing among government agencies and between the private sector and the government, to improve the cyber security of critical infrastructure.

★ Develop principles for balancing the use of counterterrorism technologies and civil liberties.

★ Continue to advocate for implementation of unfulfilled 9/11 Commission recommendations.
Foreign Policy Project Accomplishments

Trade Route

With Russia’s accession to the World Trade Organization, members of the Foreign Policy Project’s Russia Initiative, co-chaired by former Senator Charles Robb and former Commerce Secretary Don Evans, forged a hard-fought, substantive, and practical bipartisan template for Congress to capture the benefits of free trade with Russia while addressing continuing concerns about its lack of transparency, rule of law, and human rights.

- The project’s plan calls for replacing the Cold War-era Jackson-Vanik amendment to the Trade Act of 1974 with updated legislation addressing human rights in Russia. This was a unique compromise between two factions of the bipartisan task force, each with significantly different opinions on how to improve U.S.-Russian relations.
- The paper galvanized interest in the project’s initiative and spotlighted BPC as the only think tank to produce a report both on recommendations for Jackson-Vanik and on the economic benefits for the U.S. of extending permanent normal trade-relations status to Russia.

Existential Threat

The project’s Iran Initiative spent much of 2011 preparing its fourth Iran report, Meeting the Challenge: Stopping the Clock, and promoting its triple-track policy: diplomacy, sanctions, and a credible military option.

- Foreign Policy Project Director Michael Makovsky gave congressional and state-level testimony on Iran’s nuclear advances, and initiative members held individual meetings with policymaking.
- The initiative’s recommendations immediately reached high-profile audiences—including the White House—and have been incorporated in bipartisan legislation.
Media Highlights

“Despite the loss of centrifuges, Iran’s rate of enrichment is nearly double what it was in 2009, according to a study by the Bipartisan Policy Center. The center estimates that, should Iran decide on a ‘breakout’ strategy of rapidly producing the highly enriched uranium for a weapon, it could do so in as little as 62 days—and that by the end of next year that timeline could fall to 12 days, making it possible to produce the core material for a bomb between visits by international inspectors.”

— The Washington Post

“As America confronts these developments, renewed engagement with the political and personal aspirations of those in the developing world becomes more clearly in our interest. Engagement is likely the most ethical and economically efficient way for America to exert positive influence around the world while embracing our core values. Done right, this approach can diminish the potential for new military entanglements and reduce our long- and near-term commitments of money and lives.”

— BPC Senior Fellow General (ret.) James L. Jones, The Wall Street Journal

Looking Ahead

In 2012, the Foreign Policy Project will:

★ Continue its work on Iran, examining preparatory actions the U.S. can take to prevent and respond to the growing threat of Iran’s nuclear advances. The project will continue to push for the U.S. to adopt a triple-track strategy toward Iran that simultaneously pursues diplomacy, tough sanctions, and credible, visible military options.

★ Release the final report of its Russia Initiative, offering the administration and Congress a blueprint for moving toward a more constructive U.S.-Russian relations, which would promote vital U.S. strategic, economic, and political interests.

★ Produce a final report with constructive recommendations for ways policymaking can more closely integrate public diplomacy with foreign policy to advance U.S. strategic interests in a new media age as part of its Strategic Public Diplomacy Initiative.

★ Work with BPC’s Economic Policy Project on a new initiative to examine the nation’s defense strategy and budget in light of evolving security threats and constrained resources. This high-powered joint initiative—co-chaired by BPC Senior Fellows former Senator Pete Domenici, former Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, and General (ret.) James L. Jones—will issue a comprehensive report in June 2012 that will articulate a new defense strategy and a realistic budget that supports it.
Spotlight

Homeland Security Project

Ten Years After 9/11

On September 11, 2001, the world was forever changed. As the American public witnessed its attackers make bombs out of airplanes in New York, in Washington, and in Shanksville, all live on 24-hour cable news, we as a nation steeled ourselves. And we created an unprecedented conclave to ensure we would never be so vulnerable again: the 9/11 Commission.

Led by former Governor Tom Kean and former Representative Lee Hamilton, the 9/11 Commission undertook a nearly two-year investigation into the attacks, their ideological underpinnings, and the nation’s security weaknesses—ultimately outlining 41 proactive steps to improve U.S. homeland security. In 2011, on the tenth anniversary of the September 11 attacks, BPC’s Homeland Security Project—the successor to the 9/11 Commission, co-chaired by Kean and Hamilton—released a report on the commission’s unfulfilled recommendations, Tenth Anniversary Report Card: The Status of the 9/11 Commission Recommendations. The report card found that nine of the 41 recommendations were still unaddressed or needed further implementation.

With more than a dozen television outlets and scores of print media in attendance, seven of the ten 9/11 commissioners gathered at BPC for the report card rollout. “While substantial progress has been made in fulfilling many of the Commission’s recommendations, these nine unfinished recommendations demonstrate that we are not as secure as we could or should be,” said Governor Kean.

This was also a theme voiced by Representative Hamilton as he testified before the U.S. House Homeland Security Committee a few days before the anniversary: “While we have done much since the attacks ten years ago and are safer than we were that day, there is much more to do.”

The efforts of BPC’s Homeland Security Project have since helped lead to the implementation of a major unfulfilled 9/11 Commission recommendation: giving vastly improved communications to first-responders—a measure the leaders of the Homeland Security Project had been persistently urging Congress to implement for years. It was a major achievement for first-responders and the public they protect, but the project’s work is not done. As Representative Hamilton testified: “Political leadership from both parties and at all levels of government should renew their focus on completing implementation of the 9/11 Commission recommendations.”

“The report is a wake-up call for everyone reflecting on the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks. I urge my colleagues to join me and read this report card and rededicate themselves to getting this done.”
— Senator John D. Rockefeller (D-WV)
Foreign Policy Project

Revolutionary Ideas

In 2011, the Foreign Policy Project released an in-depth case study on Yemen as part of its larger Stabilizing Fragile States Initiative. The study identified the drivers of Yemen’s instability and highlighted the major challenges facing U.S. policy there. What’s more, the project did all of this before the Arab Awakening erupted and the Yemeni people rose against the 32-year rule of President Ali Abdullah Salah. In other words, the case study, Fragility and Extremism in Yemen, was not only one of the few comprehensive reports on this pivotal country pre-revolution, but it became an immediate blueprint for how the U.S. might proceed across the region after the Arab Awakening.

The initiative also released its comprehensive report, A Stitch in Time—a multiyear effort to improve governance and security in at-risk states—in 2011, just as the Arab world exploded in revolution. Being ahead of the curve on the Arab world also meant the Foreign Policy Project generated enormous press attention. Most important, initiative members briefed high-level officials at the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the National Security Council about the significance of neutralizing threats from failed states. The inability of failed states to carry out basic functions—securing borders, providing essential civil services, and maintaining the rule of law—can spark a range of crises that might undermine U.S. interests, including terrorism, crime, or the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Then in October, the project’s Strategic Public Diplomacy Initiative issued two groundbreaking papers on Egypt in the post-revolution state. The first, authored by former National Security Advisor and BPC Senior Fellow General (ret.) James L. Jones, assesses Egypt’s economic crisis and its impact on democratic development following prolonged sectarian unrest. The second, written by the initiative’s task force, analyzes U.S. public diplomacy toward Egypt over the past 15 years. Led by Ambassador Jim Glassman and Secretary BPC Senior Fellow Dan Glickman, the initiative’s well-timed papers also emphasized Egypt’s importance as a test case for examining the efficacy of U.S. public diplomacy—which the project sees as not fully aligned with overall U.S. strategic objectives.

“I commend this report and the Bipartisan Policy Center for emphasizing that the key to success in counter-radicalization is respect.”
—Representative Mike Thompson (D-CA)