

# POLICYHOLDER ADVOCATE

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## The Homeland Axis of Evil

If the unthinkable happens, you will meet the new faces of evil

POA exclusive

To even contemplate war being waged on American soil was almost unimaginable five years ago. Today, however, it is not farfetched in light of promulgations by countries like Iran and North Korea, and hatred spawned by ever growing popular movements like Hezbollah and Al-Quaida.

When a member of POA pitched us on playing out, in an article, what would happen to individual property owners if the unthinkable happened (war breaking out on American soil) we interviewed a number of high ranking government officials and sought out the legal expertise necessary to paint the likely scenario for every homeowner. It's not pretty.

### The Theatre of War

First, let's set the stage for this exercise. A series of dirty bombs are detonated, simultaneously, in cities and towns across America. The U.S. government immediately declares war and retaliates against three countries - Syria, Iran and Lebanon - who have hosted and funded the terrorist group behind the bombings. The usual suspects line up on either side (pro and con the U.S.) and the war quickly becomes a war against Islam in general, not just Islamic radicals. Instead of bringing the war to them, they bring the war to us. Many American cities and towns resemble post war Beirut.

The draft is reinstated. The entire U.S. economy is paralyzed. U.S. resources are stretched to the limit causing rations of gas, drinking water, electricity, food and other bare necessities. Urban areas have been destroyed by bombs and/or are not habitable because of radiation levels, causing millions to be homeless and penniless.

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## Axis of Evil

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### The Fine Print

There is an exclusion in almost every homeowner policy that excludes damage caused by things like war (nuclear or other), rioting, and civil unrest. Commercial property owners in a post 9/11 world are given options to expand their coverage to include acts of war and/or terrorism. Homeowners are given no such option.

Joe K. Longley, the Austin, Texas policyholder mega-attorney, explained a worst-case scenario for homeowners and other policyholders if war ravaged homes. “Even if the exclusion for war or terrorism wasn’t completely spelled out in the policy but offered insurers even the slightest wiggle room for a coverage argument, insurance companies would make the most of it just as they have done with the “wind versus flood” argument after Katrina. Likewise, insurers would use the resulting civil chaos to delay any claim or lawsuit in the judicial system, just as they have done in New Orleans because of non-functional courts.”

Longley continued, “Once order is finally semi-restored, the industry would then petition Congress to enact a Victims Compensation Fund to compensate victims conditioned on the timely filing of a government claims form which might result in a taxpayer-funded payment. Such payment, of course, would be conditioned on the victim giving a full release to all possible indemnifying entities including the government; insurance companies; workers comp funds, and the like.”

A high ranking FEMA official speaking to POA on the condition of anonymity agreed however stated that given the stretched financial resources of the U.S. government under our scenario, it is highly unlikely that government would be able to help private citizens rebuild their homes. He said it’s far more likely that all displaced people would be herded like cattle to tent cities and would remain there for years. Civil war between the “haves” and “have nots” would ensue making the previous Civil War look like child’s play.

### When the Smoke Clears

Longley puts the final punctuation on this presumed catastrophic

event, “Finally, the industry would then do what it always does in the face of such an opportunity—reduce coverage; increase deductibles and skyrocket premiums for those who are lucky enough to have something left to insure.”

Perhaps it’s time for our leaders to give thought to this scenario. The unthinkable happened on September 11, 2001 and experts agree it’s not a question of “if” but “when” more terrorism occurs on U.S. soil. Given the volatility of the world and growing hatred for Americans by Islamic fundamentalists, war on American soil is not as implausible as it was a few years ago. Under these circumstances, it is not too far-fetched to imagine a new axis of evil—one of a more “homegrown” variety—claiming to be your “Good Neighbor”; “On Your Side” and putting you “In Good Hands”.



Joe Longley in front of TX capitol.

