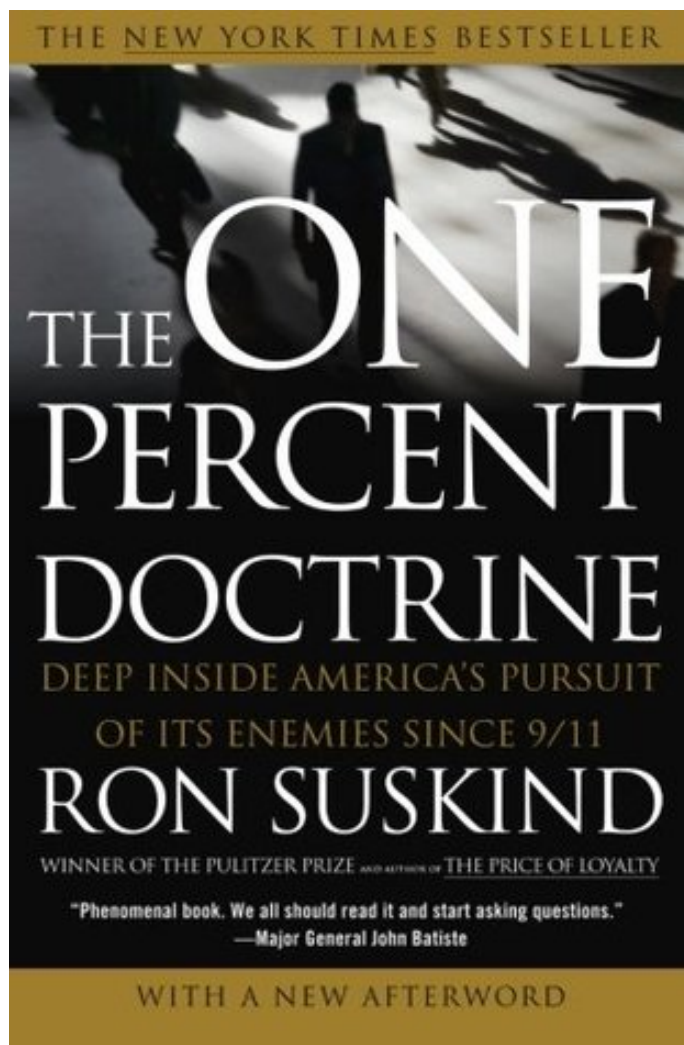

Ron Suskind

The One Percent Doctrine: Deep Inside America's Pursuit of Its Enemies Since 9/11



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Author: Ron Suskind

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Description

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and bestselling author Ron Suskind takes you deep inside America's real battles with violent, unrelenting terrorists -- a game of kill-or-be-killed, from the Oval Office to the streets of Karachi.

Insightful reviews

Jeremy:

"Bush listened, but not really. This was not where he wanted to be. He was marking time. 'Let's go for a drive,' he said to Abdullah, after a few minutes. 'Just you and me. I'll show you the ranch.' And they marched off, in midsentence, to Bush's pickup truck, leaving behind a phalanx of slack-jawed advisers with what one later called 'monarch blues' - a realization, as he described it, that 'ideals of representative government fade at moments like this into a feeling that things haven't changed all that much since foreign affairs were the affairs of kings - how they got along, or didn't, determined the fate of nations.'"

"In Oval Office meetings, the President would often call Iraq a 'game changer.' More specifically, the theory was that the United States - with a forceful action against Hussein - would change the rules of geopolitical analysis and action for countless other countries."

"The Egyptian listened. 'No problem,' he said. 'We'll get his brother, cut off his arm, and send it over.' 'No... Christ!' the agency man stammered. 'No, just a vial of his blood. A vial of blood's all we need.' The Egyptian sighed. 'Fine. Whatever you want. You want blood. We'll send blood.' "

"The illegitimacy of the Saudi regime was a favorite subject for bin Laden. His dream was that it, along with regimes in Egypt, Jordan, and countries across the region, would be overthrown, and that he would rule a restored Muslim empire, a caliphate, stretching from Tehran to Cairo, from the Gulf of the Atlantic."

"We cannot defend America and our friends by hoping for the best. We cannot put our faith in the word of tyrants, who solemnly sign non-proliferation treaties, and then systematically break them. If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long." George W. Bush

"[CIA director George Tenet's:] office is filled with an array of inspirational fare – from a large American flag, with burn marks, pulled from the World Trade Center's rubble and framed on Tenet's wall to a red helmet of the Oklahoma Sooners, signed by Coach Bob Stoops. One of the executives admired the helmet. 'A great guy,' Tenet said, 'a winner.' "

"Though the 'permanent government' has been widely reviled by politicians of all stripes, the long, consistent, year-to-year arc of major policy debates keeps the American ship of state from veering more than a few degrees in any direction – something of value when a sudden turn by the world's sole superpower can roil the globe."

“Jemaah Islamiyah is the affiliate of al Qaeda in Southeast Asia – though some call it a peer – an organization with goals to unify the large Muslim populations of countries from Indonesia – with nearly 220 million Muslims in a population of 250 million – to Malaysia and the Philippines under a caliphate of theocratic rule.”

“Is it better to know? Or not to know? What does knowing get you? Fear. Isn't that what the terrorists want? Does that fear begin to settle, in the quotidian passage of pedestrian time, into a resigned awareness and, maybe, vigilance?”

"Deuteronomy 16:20 reads: 'Justice, Justice, This you must pursue.' Justice - an overused word these days - is not mentioned twice, however, for added emphasis. Here Hebrew scholars agree - and they don't agree on much - that it's once for the ends, and once for the means. Fight well. And God bless."

Will Byrnes: Dick Cheney established the core of US policy regarding terrorism. If there is even a one percent possibility of an event happening, we must presume that it is a certainty and act accordingly. Thus has our foreign policy become driven purely by fear and suspicion, a marked separation from a history of basing our actions on knowledge and fact.

The president is interested in action only, almost never on analysis. Thus, instead of pushing his agencies to get the best understanding of the hows and whys of events, he looks solely at actions to be done, regardless of whether they are ultimately useful or not.

Suskind speaks much about people he refers to as the “Invisibles.” The people who are out of the public eye, the men and women who perform intelligence and operations services for our country, folks who try to find the reality of what is going on out there and bring that to our rulers. And he shows how these committed professionals are being driven from national service by an administration that sees all government agencies as tools for their personal political gain.

Regarding recent revelations in the NY Times, LA times and Wall Street journal about the secret acquisition of financial intelligence by the government, it is very clear that revelation of this program is of absolutely no impact on current intelligence gathering capabilities. The information gathered through that program has completely dried up as the very adaptable al Qaeda operatives have long since shifted to means that are not trackable.

Suskind has gained access to much of the inner workings of not only the White House, but of the CIA and other agencies. It is clear that he has spoken at length with Tenet and McLaughlin (Tenet's successor). And we know from his last work that he has corroboration from Paul O'Neill. There is much detail here, sometimes dizzyingly so.

Among items of interest:

Abu Zubaydah was an early capture. But he was not a significant one. In fact, he was characterized by insiders as the equivalent of a Wal-Mart greeter. He was also mentally unstable. (p 111) the United States would torture a mentally disturbed man and then leap, screaming, at every word he uttered.”

(p 214) The “different way” of Cheney’s doctrine was an audacious challenge to international legalities. Where once a discernible act of aggression against America or its national interest was the threshold for a U.S. military response, now even proof of threat is too constraining a standard.

Bush was kept out of the information loop as a matter of strategy:

(p 174) The thinking of several former Nixon administration officials, including Cheney, was not that the break-in and similar actions were the problem. The problem was that the President should have been “protected from” knowledge of such activities.

A president, in this model, can even say, in a general way, that he’d be happy if something were to occur—and have his subordinates execute such wishes—and still retain what, during the Reagan administration, was termed “plausible deniability.” That was what Ronald Reagan essentially did by telling advisers that he wouldn’t mind if they found a way to get around congressional bans on aid to the anti-communist rebels in Nicaragua, but then, when later questioned in a videotaped deposition, saying that he hadn’t “any inkling” of what they actually did.

For some presidents, like the first President Bush, this didn’t work. He demanded to know everything pertinent in making decisions, so he wouldn’t make mistakes. Presidents generally don’t like being surprised, or ending up on a “need to know” basis. The idea of being in-explicitly briefed to water down accountability, or of using oft-reviled inefficiencies of government “Process” to counteract the heightened transparency of the media age, is repugnant to them.

With this new George W. Bush presidency, however, Cheney was able to shape his protective strategy in a particularly proactive way. Keeping certain knowledge from Bush—much of it shrouded, as well, by classification—meant that the President, whose each word circles the globe, could advance serious strategies by saying whatever was needed.

Whether Cheney’s innovations were tailored to match Bush’s inclinations, or vice versa, is almost immaterial. It was a firm fit. Under this strategic model, reading the entire NIE [National Intelligence Estimate, which contained much that cautioned against concluding that WMD were extant in Iraq] would be problematic for Bush: it could hem in the President’s rhetoric, a key weapon in the march to war. He would know too much

A revealing tale of Bush as a young man regarding his view that the way to make people do what you want is to go after them relentlessly:

(p 215) At Harvard Business School, Bush, according to interviews with a dozen classmates, was short on academic skill, but long on bravado and cornball charisma. He distinguished himself in intramural sports and became de facto captain of his class’s winning basketball team, which played against a winning team from the class below, the class of 1976. The game was tight. The other team’s captain, Gary Engle—a mirror image of Bush, athletic, same size, headlong, crafty, mild attention deficit disorder—went up for a shot. Bush slugged him—an elbow

to the mouth, knocking him to the parquet. “What the hell are you doing?” Engle remembers saying. “What, do you want to get into a fistfight and both of us end up in the fucking emergency room?” Bush just smiled.

Moments later, at the opposite end of the court, Engle went up high for a rebound and felt someone chop his legs out from under him. Bush again. Engle jumped up and threw the ball in Bush’s face. The two went at it until two teams of future business leaders leapt on their captains, pulling them apart. Engle, angry and vexed by what had happened, began wondering why the hell Bush would have done what he did. He lost his composure, and his team lost its leader.

A few years later, Engle, who was fast making a fortune in Florida real estate, bumped into Jeb Bush. It was 1980 and the young Bush was working with Armando Cordina, a Miami businessman who was the chairman of George H. W. Bush’s Florida campaign for the Republican presidential nomination. Engle, a Republican contributor, had thought from time to time about his game against George. Nothing like that had happened to him before or since. This was his chance to get a little insight about it. He told the story. Jeb kind of laughed, Engle recalled. “In Texas, they call guys like George ‘a hard case.’ It wasn’t easy being his brother either. He truly enjoys getting people to knuckle under.”

An interesting source of information might be publications by one of the Al-Qaeda operatives, Yusef al-Ayeri. He was (p235) behind a web site, al-Nida, that U.S. investigators had long felt carried some of the most specialized analysis and coded directives about al Qaeda’s motives and plans. He was also the anonymous author of two extraordinary pieces of writing—short books, really, that had recently moved through cyberspace, about Al Qaeda’s underlying strategies. The Future if Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula After the Fall of Baghdad, written as the United States prepared its attack, said that an American invasion of Iraq would be the best possible outcome for al Qaeda, stoking extremism throughout the Persian gulf and south Asia, and achieving precisely the radicalizing quagmire that bin Laden hoped would occur in Afghanistan. A second book, Crusaders’ War, outlined a tactical model for fighting the American forces in Iraq, including “assassination and poisoning the enemy’s food and drink,” remotely triggered explosives, suicide bombings, and lightning strike ambushes. It was the playbook.

(P 302) Inside the analytical shops at CIA and NSC, the Madrid bombings and swift follow-up investigation flowed neatly into another growing consensus—a conclusion that was the last thing anyone in the White House wanted publicized: al Qaeda might not, at this point, actually want to attack America.

Following text points out that it was al Qaeda strategy to isolate the US from its allies (see the Madrid Bombing) and thereby increase its burden by forcing the withdrawal of those allies. (p 304) “What we understood inside CIA is that al Qaeda just doesn’t act out of bloodlust, or pathological rage. Though their tactics are horrific, they’re not homicidal maniacs. They do what they do to carry forward specific strategic goals,” said a senior CIA official involved in highest-level debates over bin Laden and Zawahiri...”Clearly, they had the capability to attack us in about a hundred different ways. They didn’t. The question was, why?”

(p 334) ...at CIA headquarters, [after the installation of Porter Goss] the five o'clock meetings [daily updates on anti-terror actions and intelligence] were becoming irregular.

Goss's people, called "the Gosslings," were running loyalty tests. Goss made it clear to top brass what he would alter right in an all-agency memo: that the CIA is there to support the policies of the administration. Period.

(P 337) [In late October, 2004, bin Laden had released one of his occasional statements] At the five o'clock meeting, once various reports on latest threats were delivered, John McLaughlin opened the issue with the consensus view: "Bin Laden certainly did a nice favor today for the President." [It was clear to these people that it served bin Laden well to have George W. Bush in the White House for another four years.]

(p 339) Each moment that passes in which they survive to speak the dream of jihad, and we live with fearful regard and cramped liberties, is a moment of victory on their ledger. Those moments will add up.

Leslie Stein: The best clear explanation for why we're in the mess we are in. Tells the story clearly with a feeling of sympathy for decision makers with out absolving them of responsibility.

Marcus: it is a sturdy book, really easy to learn and engaging. It does a good task of appraising the Bush Administration's method of preserving the USA following 9/11. The ebook specializes in an strategy favourite by means of Former vice chairman Dick Cheney. His 1% doctrine that acknowledged if there's a a 1% probability of an occasion happening, we must always suppose it's a walk in the park and act accordingly. The booklet outlines a couple of threats the management feared and the way they attempted to maintain the USA safe. It covers a extensive variety of subject matters and other people with out going into element on anything. whereas the ebook does describe the wider battle on terror it fails to deal with why the management shifted from Bin Ladin to Sadam Hussein because the fundamental possibility to America. The e-book is either complementary and demanding of the administration, being rather harsh within the remedy of Rice. regardless of the recent threats defined within the book, the writer concludes that the United States turns out to have misplaced it is personal soul within the pursuit of it really is enemies.

Jim: If ever one doubted that vp Dick Cheney used to be the "eminence grise" in the back of President Bush (or probably a greater analogy is the "Darth Vagar" of the administration), this e-book is going far to debunking such doubt. The "One percentage Doctrine" was once Cheney's initiative: if there's even a one percentage probability that somebody or a few association goes to do something, then one takes action. Period! this can be how we received into the Iraq warfare to overthrow Saddam Hussein. was once there a one percentage probability that he had WMD? was once there a one percentage likelihood that he had hyperlinks to Al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden? Well, sure, who can say, logically that there's now not not less than a One

percentage chance? Ok, then. cross after him as though is a 100 percent certainty. it's all approximately "response," no longer analysis, now not evidence, Is there a one percentage probability that an Al Qaeda operative captured in Pakistan is familiar with the whereabouts of OSB and plans for an assault at the U.S.? If so, then torture is completely justified to get that information. The booklet is ready how the CIA bought marginalized via the Bush management and have become a device to fulfill the President's personal agenda, an schedule fueled by way of neoconservatism, fundamentalist Christian religion and intestine instinct. George guiding principle and the CIA turned the autumn men for permitting the kingdom to visit warfare with Iraq with no evidence of WMDs (although the 1st complete cupboard assembly of the Bush management addressed the necessity to in achieving regime swap in Iraq - lengthy earlier than 9/11); fall men for the President wrongly claiming that Iraq was once deciding to buy yellow cake in Niger for its nuclear guns program. This is a nerve-racking book. It has to be learn through americans way over it has been, i'm sure. It indicates to what lengths the Bush management went in its battle opposed to terrorism and the Iraq War. It exhibits the level to which the nature and the ethical criteria of our kingdom have been compromised in order that Cheney and Bush may perhaps pursue their agendas. it isn't an exquisite story.

Eric_W: between different issues I realized was once that the large to-do whilst Zubeta was once captured after a firefight and wounded used to be that the USA flew the simplest united states physicians to Pakistan to regard him. He most likely had the easiest treatment of someone on the planet so he should be thoroughly fit so that they may torture him (no kidding.) the matter was once that he was once a loopy man struggling with delusions. The CIA had all types of facts that he knew nothing, used to be now not a player, yet acted as type of the Al Qaeda shuttle agent for relatives members. Bush had made this type of titanic factor out of his capture, it positioned the complete intelligence group prompt to aim to justify the torture and fake his info had a few value. It additionally turned abundantly transparent early on, that the united states had facts (from an intercepted conversation) that Ben Laden's aim used to be to not overthrow the United States, yet fairly to destabilize the Arab world: Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, and others in hopes of creating a real fundamentalist theocracy. He used to be focusing on the Saudi family members and the oil fields to start with. to take action could thoroughly unhinge the world's economy, which runs on oil. (See additionally The Looming Tower for extra proof of Ben Laden's strategic goals. Bush, in a speech to West Point, in 2003 had already expressed the necessity for brand spanking new strategies to accommodate non-nation threats. it should require going after members instead of states and those members might circulate freely from one country to a different making their apprehension particularly difficult. (See my little essay on swarming as an excellent tactic in OpenSalon <http://open.salon.com/content.php?cid...>) The Cheney Doctrine, i.e. the One-Percent Rule that says if there's even a one-percent likelihood of a possibility it has to be dealt with, chilly have huge, immense implications for the USA since it additionally intended that we should always react in accordance with suspicion instead of proof for that reason the Bush Administration's throwing out the various Constitutional protections within the identify of possibility avoidance. How all it will play out sooner or later continues to be seen.

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