

The US Patriot Act of 2001 and the Homeland Security Act of 2002

HCA-450

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Introduction:

On September 11, Of 2014 a horrific tragedy struck the nation when terrorist attacks of extremists altered the future of the United States of America. This group by the name of Al Qaeda unleashed destruction and mayhem on the World Trade Center towers in New York City and brought them down to rubble and ashes (History, 2014). In addition to this, another plane hit the Pentagon and as a result of these terrorists actions over 3,000 people died and forever changed the lives of Americans across the country. The way US citizens lived their lives would never be the same. As a result, the US Patriot Act was created to combat terrorism to prevent anything of this magnitude from occurring again.

The US Patriot Act of 2001:

The US Patriot Act of 2001 was signed into effect by the former president George Bush to aid in fighting against terrorism (Justice.gov, 2014). The purpose of this act was to give law enforcement more power and tools to aid in monitoring, and preventing future acts of terrorism to prevent that sort of tragedy from occurring again. The law enables law enforcement to act on any instances that they deem suspicious. This may appear to be justified, however the vagueness of this act allowed the enforcers of the law a lot of room to decide what they deem suspicious. As a result many civilians not committing criminal activity may be unjustly monitored by police or government officials when it is not warranted. This is considered a violation of privacy and often times ones civil rights and has become a nuisance to some citizens.

Unfortunately, the Patriot Act did not come without consequences even to the average US citizen. As a sort of side effect of this act, citizens are not subject to intrusive and now standard procedures, like searches at airports, monitoring private phone calls and emails as well. Many

challenge the depths of how far the intrusion goes as the public generally feel as though the Patriot Act oversteps its boundaries rather than protect the best interest of the country. Many innocent citizens have been subject to a great deal of delays, and flight denials for the wrong reason. There have been times that public opinion has been divided on the subject of The Patriot act, and this is understandable.

The Homeland Security Act:

The Homeland Security Act of 2002, is quite similar in its agenda in that it is geared toward thwarting terrorist attacks on United States soil with the added benefit of reducing the vulnerably level of the country as well (DHS.gov, 2012). This Act is also designed to support and investigations necessary in preventing attacks against this country. That would include obtaining personal health information on those suspected of having plans to commit terroristic acts. This caused confusion in the healthcare arena for many healthcare providers receiving requests for PII on suspects were concerned that they were violating HIPAA laws by doing so. As a result an amendment had to be enacted to justify the release of this information, letting healthcare providers off the hook and assuring them that this was not a violation of privacy laws (AHIMA, 2014).

This act also supports the rebuilding of areas that have been affected by terrorist acts such as the World Trade Center. While the twin towers were not restored to their original architecture, they were rebuilt to commemorate and honor those who lost their lives during the tragedy. In addition to innocent civilians, many law enforcement and fire and rescue personnel have lost their lives as well. Although these laws were enacted to protect the citizens of the United States, the rights of others are in fact violated to protect these rights. The irony of this scenario is not

lost, for it appears that the law decides who is and is not protected and therefore justified in violation ones rights to protect those of another.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the US Patriot Act of 2001, and the Homeland Security Act of 2002 both go hand in hand with one another and were designed to aid in protecting the borders of this country. While citizens have protested the lengths of intrusion and have expressed discomfort at many of the inconveniences that have accompanied these acts, the majority of the country largely supports the necessity of making a safer land. The mindset that the ends justifies the means allows US citizens to sleep at night, over the reality that the privacy rights of all have been taken away, as well as the human rights of those placed under the suspicion of being terrorist.

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