

Counterterrorism vs civil liberties

[Society](#), [Terrorism](#)



The fall of Hussein's regime marked the dawn of the advocacy towards counterterrorism. The war between the United States and the former Iraqi government had really severed the relationship of the two states (Davis, 2002). The war ended with the US as the victor. Yet the true battle has not been started yet. There are still potential forces that are really capable of destroying the world order again. Osama Bin Laden and his Al Qaeda group are not yet captured. Hence, there are reasons for US not to take its eyes off on the possibility of another outbreak may be it in the Middle East or any place in the globe.

What Counterterrorism Is?

Counterterrorism pertains to the techniques and strategies that are geared against terrorism (Howard & Sawyer, 2005). Counterterrorism does not limit itself from solely being formed and employed by a particular government. It includes all groups and sectors of the society. It is impossible to make the advocacy towards counterterrorism without needing the help of other agencies such the business sector. Certainly, the citizens of the state must be well-informed about the scope and limitations of such campaigns so as to get their perspectives regarding it.

The campaign for counterterrorism starts with a plan. In the formulation of the plan, various strategies, tactics, and techniques are also developed to respond to terrorist attacks. The plan normally includes "special forces" and teams that are directly responsible for the implementation of particular strategies against the terrorists (Howard & Sawyer, 2005). In this contemporary period, campaigns for counterterrorism are becoming

prevalent not only in the Western regions but also in the Eastern and Southern regions.

The United States has started to solicit support from its allied countries to materialize its plan of combating terrorism.

US Policy on Counterterrorism

As mentioned in the introduction, the great efforts of the US to strengthen its position against terrorism started after the September 11 bombing which put the whole of US in big indignity. The US drafted a national as well as international policy against terrorism. The US Counterterrorism Policy states that it strongly espouses a war against terrorism and all other forms of it.

The policy stressed that the US shall vigorously act so as to defeat terrorist attacks against the state and the citizens (Naftali, 2005). According to the policy, the US government including all its major departments and agencies shall put great effort so in order to reduce the vulnerabilities of the US on terrorism (Naftali, 2005). All the departments and agencies mentioned in the policy shall see to it that the counterterrorism campaign of the state is given the highest priority. Such that it shall secure that all of their areas of responsibility are protected from terrorist attacks (Davis, 2002).

In addition, the policy states that its implementation shall be appropriately and effectively employed by all US departments and agencies by shouldering all the costs of its implementation as well as developing efficient and useful technologies that can really contribute in countering terrorism (Naftali, 2005). The US Counterterrorism Policy is not only limited in the state's national territory. In fact, its policy extends even outside US. It requires that

countries that house particular terrorist groups shall be able to cooperate with them.

It is clearly stated in the policy that the US government will be using all means to get terrorist groups from their host country no matter if the latter agrees or not. And those countries that refuse to do so would be labeled as advocates of terrorism thus they shall be treated as enemies of the state. Such is the scope of the US policy on counterterrorism (Howard & Sawyer, 2005).

Counterterrorism vs. Civil Liberties

The former or the traditional surveillance in the US has been developed into something that which is superior in terms of its strict implementation. Yet, as we all know, everything that exceeds the normal is evil.

In US, people are said to be more secured and protected against any forms of violence particularly by terrorism (Darmer & Baird, 2004). This is due to the fact that the US government gives priority to the enforcement of the anti-terrorism or counterterrorism policy. As consequences, people are confident enough of their safety wherever they are in the globe. However, such strictness in the counterterrorism policy implies the curtailment of certain civil liberties of its citizens. As mentioned earlier, all US departments and agencies have been instructed to do their very best and to prioritize the campaign against terrorism.

By doing so, people would not really be able do their thing as how they do it before. This means that they have to sacrifice their some of their freedom (i. e. privacy) just to ensure that the policy on counterterrorism is not being

obstructed by anyone or anything (Darmer & Baird, 2004). This seems to be problematic especially for those advocates of human rights. By implementing the policy, the government has given a direct authority over the citizen's life so as to secure that there are no threats of terrorism. It may seem beneficial to all because they are being protected by the state.

Yet people may also experience severe interference and intervention from the government (Howard & Sawyer, 2005). And these things are not really good for the government inflicts pointless suffering on its citizens. As reported, there are increasing numbers of human rights victims in the US whose grievances are caused by the policy on counterterrorism. Furthermore, it undermines the welfare of the people in the sense that it gives more priority (i. e. higher subsidy for military) to the campaign against terrorism than giving more funds for education, and social and health services (Darmer & Baird, 2004).

References

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