

Secrecy and openness in the war on terrorism essay example

[Law](#), [Security](#)



In the 1950s and 1960s, the American government maintained high secrets on security information. The public never knew any information pertaining to government activities on security. The policy made it hard for enemies to attack the United States of America. It was not until after the Watergate hearing that new rules were released and the government activities of national security became open. However, after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack in America, the federal security agencies realized the importance of secrecy in issues associated with national security, especially on the fight against terrorism. The war on terrorism is a global problem affecting not only the United States but also other countries globally. Terrorism is a major threat to national security leading to debates on whether the federal government should maintain national security secrets or make them open to the public. When it comes to matters of democracy and politics, the nation becomes ungrounded and confusing (Brady 36). Understanding the importance of secrecy within the government requires a practical experience like the 2001 American Terror attack.

Most people including political analysts and security experts encourage greater government security after the 2001 terrorist attack. Arguments by these supporters are based on a number of facts. Firstly, terrorists rely on the information provided by the government about their security strategy to plan future attacks. The presence of security information on the internet and the federal government databases that are accessible to the public makes it possible for terrorists to attack without any prior notice by the intelligence service. On the other hand, the report by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) revealed that Al Qaeda easily planned the attack because they had access to

aviation information and major routes followed by aircrafts. The September 11, 2001 attack was the most successful in The United States (Federal Bureau of Investigation 33). Additionally, freedom of speech limited the Secret Service from tracking communication between planners of the attack. The presence of government secrecy makes it possible for security agencies to identify planners of terror attacks and act efficiently. America maintained high levels of secrecy on national security and it has never experienced another terror attack since then.

The above arguments by supporters have a lot of significances when it comes to fighting insecurity in the country. Gries claimed the American people have relied on Congressional hearings and investigations, speeches, and free elections in the name of democracy. In the presence of frequent terror threats and attacks in other countries, there is the need for the government to be prepared. Openness cannot help in fighting terrorism, but accelerates it. After the Second World War, the government learned the importance of keeping military plans a secret to prevent enemies from learning their planned attacks. Likewise, terrorists are worst enemies and should not be given a chance to learn government tactics and plans on fighting insecurity. Let take an example of countries frequently hit by terrorists, for example, Kenya and Nigeria. The two countries have no secrets to their national security strategies, which makes it possible for terrorists to attack and kill many people. In Kenya, freedom of speech allow people to share every information they want on the social media giving terrorists opportunity to learn their movements and ideas.

On the other hand, the above arguments are not politically motivated.

Terrorism is mostly associated with politics. Supporters of the government secrecy policy come from different political divides. The American leaders ignored their political differences and came together to fight terrorism. The intelligence works independently and decides on what information to release to the public and the information to protect (Gries 1).

Works Cited

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