

# State security and peoples liberty: the us policy

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## RUNNING HEAD: STATE SECURITY AND PEOPLE'S LIBERTY: THE US POLICY

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## 9/11 Overview

The terrorist attacks upon the sovereignty of the United States on September 11, 2001 has opened the eyes of the government on its vulnerability despite being a world power politically, economically and militarily. Although it had received some sort of military intelligence about the attacks, its officials ignored the reports. And that, the government was caught unaware or unprepared with the type of attacks perpetrated that day - the use of hijacked airplanes. This is an unprecedented approach, which may be the first and also the last time in the history of terrorism. As a result of this occurrence, the US Department of Homeland Security, the agency in charge of the security of the US, border patrol, counter-terrorism planning and implementation, as well as the other agencies of the government had to review and overhaul the intelligence system and strategies so that same or similar attacks would not happen again.

## Article Review

Erik J. Dahl, professor in national security affairs (at Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey and Center for Homeland Defense and Security), discussed in his article " Domestic Intelligence Today: More Security but Less Liberty?" the need for a new intelligence system and entity that would function differently from its current setup (Dahl, 2011). It was suggested that the type of intelligence entity should be one such as the MI-5 of United Kingdom. At present, advocates of the idea said that only the US government has no such type of organization around the world. The creation of a new entity would be an additional cost to the government and merely duplicates <https://assignbuster.com/state-security-and-peoples-liberty-the-us-policy/>

the functions. On the other hand, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is still on the way to reforming itself into such an intelligence agency. The government then, instead of forming a single effective intelligence agency, has created other units that include the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) among others.

The general consensus among observers is that no new organization is needed by the government. The various domestic intelligence units have been successful in foiling planned terrorism attacks, but these units are mostly without oversight that sees to it that they comply with human rights requirements. However, along with the heightened intelligence efforts, the right to liberty of the people is affected and restricted.

Making FBI into an intelligence agency would veer away from its law enforcement functions, and it would present a risk to the civil rights of the people. On the other hand, it is the most viable organization capable of conducting intelligence gathering without too much reorganization. The other viewpoint suggests the creation of the Security Intelligence Service under the Department of Homeland Security. The suggested MI-5 model would not have police power but only intelligence-gathering functions. However, such a model would not work out in the US since its situation is different from UK (more centralized control, lesser police force). The US, on the other hand, has numerous local police forces and sheriffs.

Utilization of domestic intelligence units, such as those used in Australia, France or Germany (Burch, 2009, as cited in Dahl, 2011) has not received much support in the US. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) was suggested to be the most appropriate model for the US, but it has committed violations of the civil rights of the people. In the study by RAND <https://assignbuster.com/state-security-and-peoples-liberty-the-us-policy/>

as commissioned by DHS, the result revealed that creation of new domestic agencies is not considered as viable, while reorganization would not be effective either. The RAND study also pointed out that the various agencies of the government, the FBI, Department of Defense, the Homeland Security, various police forces, etc. comprise a very complex enterprise which actions are uncoordinated. The Washington Post research, on the other hand, had revealed that around 854, 000 persons possess top-secret security clearances, while more than 263 agencies were created or underwent reorganization after the 9/11 attacks. Such security clearances imply that the information cannot be accessed by other agencies.

Intensification of intelligence and security efforts should not curtail the civil liberties of the people. However, there were times that certain rights must be curtailed during emergencies and times of crisis to protect the country and to attain peace. The intrusive arm of the government is visible in airports and other border terminals. But after 10 years, critics say that the balance between security and liberty has not been attained, with security being given more priority than civil rights.

#### Conclusion and Recommendation

The success of the 9/11 attacks is attributed to the lapse in intelligence gathering of the US government. As a result, the US heightened FBI's intelligence efforts as well as the creation of other intelligence agencies (Dahl, 2011). At present, the US government already has enough intelligence agencies and units from the federal government and local governments. Thus, there is no need to establish additional agencies. The present FBI setup must be reorganized through the passage of appropriate laws so that it can have units under it to assume specific counter-terrorism and

intelligence functions.

Reorganization of existing agencies and structures must be implemented to eliminate the complexity in intelligence structures that have not lead to effective intelligence gathering. Increased collaboration and communication among these agencies should also be strengthened, along with the strengthening of oversight agencies to see to it that the rights of the people are duly protected. The article by Prof. Erik J. Dahl is a recommended reading on security matters and upholding of civil rights. More details on the security and intelligence concerns and complexion can be gained from reading the article.

#### References

Dahl, E. J. (2011). Domestic intelligence today: More security but less liberty? The 9/11 Essays (September 2011). Homeland Security Affairs, 7. Retrieved 7 September 2011, from <http://www.hsaj.org/?article=7.2.8>