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## **CIA vs. FBI: Interagency Cooperation or Immersion**

### **Introduction**

Terrorism, originally applied to governments that abused their own people, is a tactic used to acquire political goals through lethal violence by covert groups and individuals who target symbols (Crenshaw 2015). The CIA (2013: 1) defines terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents”, while it defines international terrorism as “terrorism involving the territory or the citizens of more than one country”. The FBI (1) defines domestic terrorism as “acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law, appear intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion, or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping and occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the U.S”. They define international terrorism as “violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that violate federal or state law, appear to be intended (i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping and occur primarily outside the territorial jurisdiction of the U.S., or transcend national boundaries in terms of the means by which they are accomplished, the persons they appear intended to intimidate or coerce, or the locale in which their perpetrators operate or seek asylum”. These United States agencies are supposedly fighting the same battle, but pursuing different targets according to their definitions of terrorism. Not only do their definitions of terrorism differ, their strategies for combating and

preventing terrorism are also diverse. If the agencies of the United States cannot agree on how terrorism should be deterred, then how can they work in a cohesive way to combat this problem? This paper will be looking at the development of the Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation, as well as the Department of Homeland Security, National Security Agency and National Counterterrorism Center, their policies on counterterrorism and their interactions with each other involving counterterrorism. After looking at this, the goal is to determine whether the current agencies, the CIA and FBI, would be more effective as they are now or whether there should be changes made to the United States counterterrorism protocols.

### **History of the Agencies**

Although all of the government agencies in the United States will actively participate in counter terrorism tactics as the situation is needed, there are three major agencies that are developing prominent programs in counter-terrorism. These are the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The Central Intelligence Agency, in 1942, was first coined the Office of Strategic Services. Its goal at the time was to gather and evaluate information before being shut down after World War II. As the Cold war became a growing threat to the United States a new act was put into place in 1947, the National Security Act. Among other things, the act established the new Central Intelligence Agency. It was given the mission of advising the National Security Council (NSC) and collecting and analyzing information that is sensitive to the security of the nation. Today it not only advises the United States' policy makers and the NSC, but it also has a large

role in the prevention of international terrorism and actions towards international counterterrorism for the United States (CIA 2014: 1).

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has been around for longer than the CIA and was made with a different idea in mind. It started in 1908 as an unnamed group of the most qualified agents who reported directly to the chief of the Secret Service. It was later dissolved into the Department of Justice and in 1909 was named the Bureau of Investigation. The early goals of the agency were to investigate federal crimes, which can be described as crimes that break congressional legislature, and were mostly focused on human trafficking and smuggling. In 1917 the agency's job description was increased to include espionage, selective service and sabotage acts against the United States. In 1935 the agency was renamed the Federal Bureau of Investigation and has remained that way since. The agency is not only tasked with investigating crimes, but also protecting the United States from domestic terrorist activities (FBI: 1).

The other major and youngest player in the world of counterterrorism for the United States is the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The DHS was created as a direct result of the 9/11 terrorist activities and was implemented in 2002. Its mission was to organize national tactics against the current threats to the United States as well as to handle any future threats. The purpose of this agency was meant to be a connecting point between state and federal governments. It was comprised of 22 different agencies, including departments from the FBI, and was run by the Director of the Office of Homeland Security. Over the years there have been a few changes and acts to the agency that have affected it, such as the SAFE Port Act (1-2) in 2006 which was implemented in order to stop threats from reaching the United States through the protection of ports and cargo being moved. These have reorganized the DHS some, but have not had too much of an affect on the agency (DHS 2015: 1).

The National Security Agency (NSA) is another large contributor to the collection of intelligence on counterterrorism. Created in 1952, the original motive behind the formation was to collect intelligence concerning the USSR during the Cold War through the use of code breaking (FAQ About the NSA 2009: 1). As a result of this origin the agency was not prepared for the new threat of Middle Eastern terrorism. Since terrorism has changed from the Cold War Era to the Modern Era the NSA has had to change its intelligence collection strategies. Currently the organization uses signals intelligence as a collections tool. This is the interception of signals in communication used to collect information and is an essential for the collection of intelligence involving counterterrorism (Bamford 2009).

These four agencies have some of the closest ties to the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), which was created in 2004 by the President through Executive Order 13354. The goal of the NCTC was to gather all of the information on terrorism and to join the agencies together in an effort against terrorism. Over 30 agencies report to the NCTC in an effort towards interagency cooperation. The NCTC creates strategies and assigns obligations to the different agencies that fall under its umbrella, but does not have an active role in the actions against terrorism (NCTC Overview: 1).

### **Counterterrorism in Today's Society**

There are a few major differences between the CIA and the FBI regarding counterterrorism, but the most obvious is that the CIA is not permitted to operate within America, making it focused on international terrorism, while the FBI is a domestic agency that focuses on domestic terrorism. That being said, their counterterrorism tactics are different from each other in order to fit into their tasks.

The Central Intelligence Agency created, in response to the growing concern of terrorism, the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism in 2003. This focused on four specific areas of counterterrorism tactics: defeat, deny, diminish and defend. The first of these involves the goal to defeat the terrorist, but as this is not something that will come about plainly or all at once, it is important to then detect and identify terrorists and their organizations as a first step to defeating them. In order to do this, it was decided that there needs to be an increase in analysis and intelligence to gain the knowledge on specific and current threats, as well as knowledge of the intent and reasoning behind current and previous terrorist actions. It is also necessary to have cooperation between both the United States and other countries in order to bring about the downfall of the terrorist organizations. After, the removal of these terrorist organizations is the next, and most complicated step. This involves the next three areas, the first of which is to deny. This is in conjecture with denying the organizations funding, support and protection. In order to do this the agency will have to cooperate and compromise with other nations and states in order to create policies that do not tolerate terrorism, as well as create an atmosphere of trust and equality between the parties involved. Although this is important, it is also necessary to have contingency plans for the states that refuse or cannot control the influx of terrorism. The CIA proposes the use of the National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction, which would be in a worst-case scenario. The next step to the discontinuation of terrorism is to remove the opportunity for terrorist attacks. Although this is not altogether possible, there is an ability to limit the accessibility of high-risk places for terrorism through development of high-risk states. This is not nearly as important as the dissuasion of terrorism as an idea. In order to do this terrorism needs to be delegitimized and not tolerated. Unfortunately, this is not a change that can be acquired over night. It will take time and immense effort. The final factor in the fight against

terrorism is to defend the United State citizens and resources throughout the US and the world. The work of the National Strategy for Homeland Security is the first step the CIA proposes in order for protection. The next, and more important step is to be aware of what is happening, through the sharing of information between US agencies as well as between agencies from other nations. The CIA also makes a point of having plans to not only protect US citizens abroad, but to also have response plans in the event of an attack both domestically and abroad (NSCT 2003: 11-28).

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, as a result of 9/11, implemented new policies to make counterterrorism a top priority through an increasing of mobilization, centralization of integration intelligence and coordination. Mobilization was the first task of the agency and included an increase in special agents, intelligent analysts and translators. A few of the other changes in the mobilization include the expansion of the agencies abilities and includes the creation of counterterrorism watch, national joint terrorism task force and operation TRIPWIRE, which had the goal of recognizing foreign sleeper cells in the United States. The next major change in the organization was its increase in centralization of operational headquarters and staff. The entire counterterrorism program was reorganized into a more efficient system that allowed for a more comprehensive chain of command. This was completed in order to promote the sharing of information within the Bureau as well as interagency communication and clarity between the FBI and other agencies involved in counterterrorism. Another change to the FBI's counterterrorism includes an integration of intelligence, meaning that the agency combined its mission of stopping federal crimes in the United States with its second mission of gathering information that prevents future crimes. The US Patriot Act was a large part of this combination through the dismantling of blocks between agents involved in the intelligence and criminal

sectors. This has led to the sharing of information within the agency. The next step in integrating intelligence was to be able to disperse the information to the appropriate departments and agencies, and then to be able to act upon this information. The development from this has been a new hiring process in order to create ample opportunity for more analysts and special agents to work in the counterterrorism division. The final change to the program has been its coordination with other agencies. This has led to the creation of Joint Terrorism Task Forces between FBI agents and local law enforcement agencies. Another addition was the creation of the Terrorist Screening Center, which created a consolidation of information on terrorist watch lists between agencies. Overall, there have been steps towards the development of counterterrorism within the FBI, as well as a growth in desire to have information regarding counterterrorism shared between within and between agencies (FBI's Counterterrorism Program Since September 2001 2004: 12-45).

### **Interagency Relationships**

Prior to 9/11 there was a lack of communication and cooperation between the agencies involved in counterterrorism, as well as the fear of consequences from turf wars. One very important example of this was the lack of information sharing involving the CIA and FBI during 2000 Al-Qaeda sponsored meeting in Malaysia. During this time, two hijackers involved in 9/11 were present to discuss steps involving Al-Qaeda operations. The CIA and NSA had information about these terrorists being at the meeting and failed to inform the FBI of their involvement (Foxwell 2003: 190-192). As a result, the FBI did not have the knowledge that they were suspected terrorists and therefore did not place them on a watch list when they returned to San Diego in March (Crenshaw 2015). Consequently, in an effort to improve relations between

United State agencies, the Department of Homeland Security was created. It was formed to combine multiple agencies into one cohesive unit that could share information more easily. Unfortunately, it is not working as it was intended to because the CIA and FBI have their own separate intelligence services and are not required to report their data to the DHS (Crenshaw 2015). Therefore, much of the intelligence collected is not used to the full potential. One example of this is information collected in years leading up to 2001. The Central Intelligence Agency was listening to phone calls made from Osama Bin Laden in Yemen, while the National Security Agency was listening to phone calls from Al-Midhar and Al-Hazmi, two of the hijackers involved in 9/11. Put together, the phone calls would have created a comprehensive picture of what was being discussed and planned between Al-Qaeda head quarters and the hijackers, but the agencies would not share the information with each other because of turf wars (Bamford 2009).

Another major change made after 9/11 was the addition of the Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC). This center was created as a switchboard for intelligence information to be gathered from multiple sources, not only in the US, but also around the globe. After they are assessed and analyzed, the information is sent to the necessary agencies and a grand schematic of the threat is created (Foxwell 2003: 192). Regrettably information is still not being shared, but when it is shared it is being misrepresented and misinterpreted (Desouza 2005: 349-350). A cause of this barrier between agencies is security clearances and decisions on what is important (Roberts 2009:190-191). This leads to the context of the information being left out when intelligence is shared between agencies. The next obstacle is how different agencies collect information and the bureaucracy on how the information is used (Feinstein and Kaplan 2011: 294-295). For example, the CIA uses human intelligence the majority of the time, but they are



not permitted to operate within United State. The FBI also mainly uses human intelligence, but unlike the CIA it has the authority to use its collected intelligence while in the US. Consequently, if the CIA is running an operation, such as the operation in 1999 to track two Al-Qaeda terrorists, they are the agency that decides who is informed about the intelligence collected. So although the CIA could not act on the information acquired, they did not permit the FBI agents working with them to tell their own departments. Therefore, no one used the information and the terrorists were left to become assimilated into society, while the CIA lost track of them (Bamford 2009). This, combined with the lack information available due to outdated technology, underfunding and understaffing problems, leads to a lack of intelligence involving counterterrorism (Crenshaw 2015).

### **Connections with Society**

Similar to the way that agencies must limit what is told to each other based on clearance and necessity, they have to limit what is also told to the public. This is a necessary requirement of working with sensitive information, but it can have negative consequences when it involves the public. The public's opinion on the federal government are majorly negative, with 58% feeling frustrated with the government and 22% being angry with it. Many people believe that the federal government should have a larger role in protecting the United States from terrorism. According to surveys collected by the Pew Research Center 68% of Americans participating in the survey have a favorable opinion of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, while the Central Intelligence Agency was favorable with only 63% (Pew Research Center 2015: 4-6). Although these are mostly positive feelings, the survey also showed that the federal government is less favorably to American people than state or local governments. Not only are people being not

given information on the actions of the CIA and FBI, but also they are constantly being given the wrong information on the agencies.

Through media sources, such as movies, television shows and video games, intelligence agencies are portrayed as incapable of stopping terrorist attacks through acceptance of dissent, the illegitimacy of police forces and the use of anarchic conquests and seizures. Erikson (2007: 201-209) shows examples of these in television programs and movies that were popular after 9/11, such as *The X-Files* and *The Matrix Trilogy*. Both show how there is a continuous fear of occupation from outside forces through their use of alien and artificial intelligence. *The X-Files* approves of the dissention through their plot lines and character cooperation with the occupying alien forces. Another example of the negative portrayal is the illegitimacy of police forces through their biased motivations and illegal actions. *The Matrix Trilogy* shows federal agents breaking law and protocols throughout the movie. The show *24* also has characters throughout the political and legal systems that use criminal activities for their own personal goals. Next, Erikson discusses the use of violence in order to conquer and suppress nations through the examples of *Battlestar Galactica* when the humans are held captive by aliens. Another prime example is *V for Vendetta* when the government and police force were controlling the people of Britain, which is also similar to the idea of the secret police during USSR reign. Generally, these representations through media impact the way that society views and supports the CIA and FBI.

### **Conclusions and Opinions**

In the aftermath of September 11th there has been an increased need for counterterrorism in intelligence agencies and the mostly likely organizations to step up are the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security.

Unfortunately, even after a number of major reforms and acts such as the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction and National Strategy for Homeland Security, there is a lack of cooperation between agencies that results in unused intelligence (NSCT 2003: 11-28). Not only are there already separate agencies collecting information, but they are also not required to share what is being collected. This leads to information being ignored or idle because of bureaucratic laws stopping the actions of some agencies, while others are unaware (Foxwell 2003: 190-192). The reasons behind failures are a lack of interagency cooperation from turf wars, a lack of funding and a lack of human resources (Bamford 2009). Consequently, the actions, or lack thereof, of the intelligence agencies have resulted in a negative perception by society. Although many Americans are not openly hostile towards the federal government, there is an overwhelming sense of frustration by United States citizens. This is caused by a lack of information supplied by the agencies, as well as a lack of understanding and incorrect facts (Pew Research Center 2015: 4-6). Another factor towards the negative connotation of the CIA and FBI is how the agencies are portrayed through media. In multiple television shows, movies and video games these organizations are shown to be incapable of stopping terrorist threats because of a tolerance for rebellion, illegitimization of policing agencies and a use of aggressive force in order to confiscate and occupy property (Erikson 2007: 201-209). All of these lead to the negative perceptions of the CIA and FBI, which in turn leads to a lack of human resources and therefore a deficiency in intelligence analysis.

In order to have the most effective and efficient intelligent agencies there needs to be changes made throughout the system. I propose that we start making these changes by implementing policies that enforce cooperation and intelligence sharing between agencies. One way to accomplish this is by removing the stand-alone intelligence departments within the

Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation. Another option would be to hold these separate departments accountable to share information through the use of policies and directors. The next change that needs to be made involves how agencies collect and use information. Agencies need to share resources that are used to collect information, not only as a way to save money and have access to the most up-to-date technology, but also to help promote interagency cooperation. In accordance with this, it is important to not only rely on technology, such as artificial intelligence in computers that track specific words and phrases, but to keep job opportunities for humans. This is necessary because artificial intelligence can only work so far when searching through documents. For example, if communications between terrorists are using code words, such as potatoes to represent the word bombs, artificial intelligence in a computer cannot detect these changes. It will only be able to identify the words that humans tell it to. Because of this analysts will still be necessary in immediate future, securing jobs in the intelligence agencies. The next modification that needs to be made is regarding clearing-house agencies. These are agencies that collect all of the intelligence from the surrounding federal agencies and then analyze it in order to see the most comprehensive picture available. The Department of Homeland Security and the National Counterterrorism Center were originally suppose to fulfill this role, but have not lived up to these standards. I suggest that a comprehensive intelligence analysis agency be made to specifically collect intelligence involving counterterrorism, sift through the information to decide what is accurate and useful and to then distribute the most complete version of the intelligence to the necessary agencies. Aligned with this will need to be the re-evaluation of laws preventing and allowing agencies to act on the information that is acquired. It will be necessary to make changes to this in order to actually accomplish the tasks that are being set out in front of the CIA and FBI. All of these are necessary

in order to stop the large, pre-planned terrorism, but in order to stop the smaller, more likely terrorist attacks people will need to have trust in the intelligence agencies that are protecting them. One very important way that this needs to happen is through more accurate representations of the CIA and FBI. I believe that television shows need to either inform viewers of their inaccuracies or they need to change their programs to become more accurate. It will also be necessary to make changes towards the way that the agencies use the media. There needs to be more representatives from the agencies that speak with news sources in order to limit the flow of inaccurate information and increase the public's awareness of what is happening around them. Not only will this help the image of the agencies, but it will also help stop the "lone wolf" terror attacks through the use of public observation and responsiveness. Finally, and most importantly, the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation need to be held accountable for not only their previous actions, but also their future actions regarding counterterrorism. Even though the need for security has increased since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 there still needs to be checks and balances in order to limit the power of these organizations.

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