

History Impacts of 9/11

On Tuesday morning of September 11, 2001, the United States was attacked. Nineteen militants associated with the Islamic extremist group Al-Qaeda hijacked four airliners and carried out a series of suicidal attacks on the American soil. Two of the planes hit the towers of World Trade Centre in New York. Another attacked the Pentagon while the remaining crashed in a field in Pennsylvania (Bram, 2002). Often referred to as the 9/11, this was one of the worst attacks on the U.S soil in the 21st century. The casualties and property destructions were massive. It is estimated that 3,000 Americans died including more than 400 police officers. At least 6,000 people were injured (Bram, 2002). The United States lost at least \$10 billion in property and infrastructure damages. It is also estimated that the attack cost the United States more than \$3 trillion.

After the attack, the United States took drastic and brutal measures to bring justice to the lives lost. A few hours after the attack, the by then President of the United States, George Bush, addressed the nation consoling the families of those who perished during the attack. In his speech, President Bush termed that attack as an evil, despicable acts of terror (Bram, 2002). However, everything did not end with the speech that was themed with sorrow and a moaning nation. Since then, history has changed. America fought wars that it did not officially take part in about twenty years ago. The number of deportation has doubled; various agencies have been put into a task force to man the security of the nation and not forgetting the friendly-ish skies and the increased surveillance all across the United States. In this case, we will take a look at how the United State things have changed in the United States after the September 11, 2001, attack.

Barely a month after the 9/11 attack, the United States invaded Afghanistan with the aim of dismantling the Islamic extremist group, the Al-Qaeda (Landau, 2004). Before, the attack, the United States had lived a longer period of peace without taking part in any official war. When they finally invaded Afghanistan in 2001 to remove the Taliban government, which was accused of harboring the Al-Qaeda, from power, things totally changed. It was until in 2011 that the United States withdrew some of its troops from Afghanistan with some still remaining in Iraq. The impact of the invasion was massive. Many civilians and the U.S marines lost their lives. Apart from lives lost, the war dented the face of the United States among the countries in the Middle East (Landau, 2004). Some positivity, however, were noted during the invasion. On May 2, 2011, the United States seal group killed the 9/11 mastermind, Osama Bin Laden. Bin Laden was linked to a series of attacks against the Americans both in America and outside the country. The death of Bin Laden meant a big blow to the Al-Qaeda and the world of terrorism.

A year after the attack, the Department of Homeland Security was formed (Golash-Boza, 2015). The September 11, attack found the United States disaster management plan on its flat foot. The United States is the world superpower meaning that it must be the world's safest place to be. Therefore, an attack on its soil was a step backward. To deal with the situation, the United States came with an agency that would regulate everything from border security to natural disaster management. The Department of Homeland Security on its establishment absorbed 22 existing agencies that dealt with domestic safety, law enforcement, and immigration. The Department of Homeland Security since its establishment in 2002 has ensured that the borders of the United States are safe (Golash-Boza, 2015). The department has also taken a number of

measures to make sure that no one gets into the United States without following the recommended procedures.

Before the 9/11 attack, people used to walk scot-free in the malls and the airports. These institutions hired private agencies to deal with their security issues and no one was forced to remove their shoes to walk through a metal scan in the airport or malls. However, after the 9/11 attack, things took the opposite direction. After the Congress approved of warrantless searches as a disaster management plan, airports, malls, and schools have seen an increased number of police officers walking around these premises regularly (Blunk, 2006). Warrantless searches including pat-downs, some of which include sensitive body parts, scan and log of the facial features on Americans of all ages can now be performed. Regulations such as removing shoes and other personal belongings before walking through the metal scan are now mandatory according to the National Transport Administration in major terminus within the airports. In fact, people no longer get into the planes with personal drinks, something Americans enjoyed doing many years before the attack. There are also some extra security protocols where a passenger could be selected randomly for body searches. Apart from the searches that the passenger must undergo before they board any plane, the transport department has also ensured safety once the plane is air bound (Blunk, 2006). For instance, every large U.S passenger aircraft have been fitted with stronger cockpit doors that keep the passengers from accessing the area. Additionally, thousand federal air marshals now guard the aircraft against any terrorist attack.

The passing of the USA Patriot Act by the Congress a few months after the attack also changed the banking and money transfer activities within and outside the United States. This Act

amended many existing policies including the Bank Secrecy Act of 1970. This Act was meant to make it tough for the terrorists to launder and transfer money (Pyszczyński, 2003). The Act demanded that data must be shared between the banks and policing agencies once it was suspected that an individual was engaging in terrorism activities. Though this was a move that was deemed to watch money transfer intended for illegal activities, it was later realized that it compromised the privacy of most of the innocent Americans. The civil asset forfeiture policy, for instance, was widely rebuked when the people learned that the police can take a person's property if it is suspected that it involved in a criminal act. Today, the USA Patriot Act has changed the way people bank across the country. Important to mention, there are those who no longer trust banks. They think that the government will trace their wealth behind their knowledge.

The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act is another brainchild of the 9/11 attack. After the attack, the government noted that a lot of things were happening in their own backyard. The attack made the United States reconsider its surveillance policies and amend various acts. The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act was then affected to act as a global watchdog (Pyszczyński, 2003). Through this Act, the government of the United States could engage in wiretapping. They wanted to have a head start before they were found on their weak foot. However, even though this Act was supposed to keep surveillance on the terrorist activities within and outside the United States, innocent civilians in the United States have been victims of the same. The National Security Agency, which was supposed to spy on the foreign government and terrorist groups started to spy on its own people. It is assumed the NSA has spied on the

innocent people of the United States without their authority and consent. The privacy of American people has been highly hampered with after the 9/11 attacks.

Even after the formation of the Department of Homeland Security in 2002, the United States has not stopped in upping its border protection. One area that can never go unmentioned is the immigration department. Before the attack, the United States had policies that regulated the number of people from various countries from getting coming to the country. However, immediately after the attack, such policies changed in a bigger way. Only a decade after the 9/11 attack, deportation made by the U.S immigration agencies almost doubled. This move massively affected California. For instance, the U.S Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) reported that they had taken to custody 48,000 “convicted criminal aliens” (Golash-Boza, 2015). Even though this was a response to the increased number of undocumented immigrants in California, statistics indicates that most of those taken into custody were harmless immigrants some of which had non-criminal offenses on their names.

More drones are now in the American airspace than any other part of the world. It is estimated that more than 30,000 drones will be airborne in the United States before 2020 (Golash-Boza, 2015). This is a good way to identifying potential crimes since the law enforcers will be able to find a criminal before they even step into the American lands. The cost of the drones, however, has not just been in terms of money. Some of the airborne drones already in the United States are fitted with teasers, lasers, and facial scanners. Someone’s identity can be captured using the drones without even them having the knowledge that they have a camera on their face. Away from the privacy debate, the impact of installing drones in the air has been a

positive step by the law enforcement department since it has led to reduced crime rates.

Lawbreakers can be apprehended quickly and a wider area policed by the officers using just a single drone.

Finally, the aftermath of the 9/11 attack has seen a negative response and various forms of attack against the people of the Muslim religion. There are instances where people from Muslim community have been physically attacked and abused on the accounts that they are “terrorists.” The good relationship that they had with the people of America before the attack has deteriorated. In fact, President Donald Trump signed an executive order banning immigrants from some Muslim countries from coming to the United States. All these impacts are connected to the 9/11 attack. It is concluded that, even though most of the impacts are positive, some have compromised the basic rights of the people of the United States.

REFERENCES

- Blunk, S. S., Clark, D. E., & McGibany, J. M. (2006). Evaluating the long-run impacts of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on US domestic airline travel. *Applied economics*, 38(4), 363-370.
- Bram, J., Orr, J., & Rapaport, C. (2002). Measuring the effects of the September 11 attack on New York City.
- Golash-Boza, T. M. (2015). *Immigration nation: Raids, detentions, and deportations in post-9/11 America*. Routledge.
- Landau, M. J., Solomon, S., Greenberg, J., Cohen, F., Pyszczynski, T., Arndt, J., ... & Cook, A. (2004). Deliver us from evil: The effects of mortality salience and reminders of 9/11 on

support for President George W. Bush. *Personality and Social Psychology*

Bulletin, 30(9), 1136-1150.

Pyszczynski, T., Solomon, S., & Greenberg, J. (2003). *In the wake of 9/11: Rising above the terror*. American Psychological Association.