Assessment

Your Name (First M. Last)

School or Institution Name (University at Place or Town, State)

**Assessment**

**Part A**

The Patriot Act is an acronym which stands for Uniting and strengthening citizens of America by Offering Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism the legislation was passed to combat and prevent terrorist activity and attacks aimed at the sovereignty of the nation. Since the detrimental attack of 9/11, combating terrorism became the utmost priority of the United States. As per George W Bush, the legislation was aimed at enhancing penalties which will curb terrorists and their facilitators. For instance, it offers the law enforcement essential tools which are required to protect the state and civil liberties of citizens of America. The department of justice explains the law to be an extension of tools which were already being used to confront organized crime and drug dealers. Most of the provisions of the act were set to expire in 2005. In spite of privacy concerns and civil liberties, President Bush promulgated the USA Patriot and Terrorism Reauthorization Act on March 9, 2006 (“The Patriot Act - Constitutional Rights Foundation,” n.d.).

Moreover, a critical debate has been advanced on whether or not the law has essentially prevented terrorism. A report published by conservative Heritage Foundation in 202 stipulates 50 terrorist attacks have been curbed since the incident of 9/11 where 47 were the outcomes of the operations of intelligence agencies and law enforcement. It was claimed the Patriot Act was imperative to assist law enforcement to locate leads to prevent attacks. These instances are an explicit illustration of the effectiveness of the act but it is a contentious debate. A wide range of civil right groups has claimed it privileges the government to desecrate Constitutional rights of American citizens, search homes without permission and enhance the peril of ordinary citizens being charged with crimes without potential cause. To protect the fundamental rights of privacy of American citizens, President Obama promulgated the USA Freedom Act on Jue2, 2015. The act halted the massive collection of records under Section 215 of the previous act and seek enhanced transparency with information sharing between American citizens and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. However, outcomes of both the USA Freedom Act and Patriot Act pertinent to national security have irrefutably advanced to raise critical concerns to protect the privacy of citizens. These are not the only controversies associated with the Patriot Act. One of the most contentious aspects was the National Security Letter Programs that permitted the government to seek communication records and information from telecom companies without even asking surveillance for approval. Same is the case with the freedom Act which aimed at enhancing the transparency of the Patriotic Act. The act permits certain instances of surveillance that fall under Section 215. Cynics gave their recommendations as the best policy would have been to put an end to access the collection of phone records entirely. A replacement and review of the Patriot Act with the new bill fails to accomplish and preserve the privacy rights of citizens. Meanwhile, other advocates commend the act and justify it to be similar to other routes of accessing records which can be utilized by the government in case of a threat.

**Part B**

The primary aim of fusion centers is the construction of an efficient structure to exchange intelligence and information, streamline operations, maximize resources and strengthen the competency to fight terrorism and crime by cultivating data from diverse sources. The potential network of fusion centers was established after the detrimental attack of 9/11 to serve as a cornerstone for successful cooperation across different sectors, institutes law enforcement and jurisdictions. These fusion centers play an instrumental role to combat terrorism and crime activities to serve the state. Primarily, the United States’ Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is collaborating with a wide range of allies including both major urban and state areas fusion centers. DHS assumes a significant role to assist these fusion centers and accomplish mission and objectives to strengthen institutional collaboration, intelligence sharing and curbing terrorist activities. It is essential to assess and assimilate the fundamental operational activities of fusion centers. They are the key to establish a platform and network of sharing information with local and state’s stakeholders to help prioritize essential resources to mitigate perils and terrorist activities. Irrefutably, fusion centers have successfully advanced to deliver, strengthen the mechanism of sharing information and manifest successful operations in several instances. However, political experts and cynics have raised potential concerns pertaining to the operational structure of fusion centers. It is essential to shedding light on prominent controversies surrounding the establishment of fusion centers.

Besides, five overarching controversies are associated with fusion centers which highlight the manner domestic intelligence operations put civil liberties and privacy of American citizens at risk (“Fusion Centers,” n.d.). First, the potential loophole in their operational activity is an ambiguous multi-jurisdictional line of authority. It is a challenging task to determine and locate the agency which is responsible for overseeing activities of participants of fusion centers. Second, private sector participation is a common phenomenon in fusion centers. The incorporation of such communities in intelligence operations undermines privacy laws conceived to preserve the privacy of innocent citizens and further enhances the probability of data breach. Essentially, the aspect of excessive secrecy limits public oversight, impedes the tendency to accomplish a certain mission and distorts the competency to acquire key information. It collectively causes fusion centers to witness a drastic decline in their productivity. Political experts were found adamant to bash the integration of military personnel into key ranks of law enforcement through controversial ways. Lastly, the data mining in fusion centers encourages data manipulation and wholesale data collection which ultimately threatens and breaches the privacy of American citizens.

References

Fusion Centers. (n.d.). Retrieved June 20, 2019, from Council on Foreign Relations website: https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/fusion-centers

The Patriot Act - Constitutional Rights Foundation. (n.d.). Retrieved June 20, 2019, from https://www.crf-usa.org/america-responds-to-terrorism/the-patriot-act.html