**Terrorism**: the use of violence or threatened use of violence in order to achieve political or religious aim  
  
**9/11:**   
On September 11, 2001, a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks by al-Qaeda targeted symbolic U.S. landmarks. As a result of the attacks, the North and South towers of the World Trade Center complex in NYC collapsed when two passenger airliners crashed into them. A third plane crashed into the Pentagon. The fourth plane crashed into a field in Pennsylvania. The attacks claimed the lives of 2,996 people.   
  
The U.S. responded the attacks by launching the War on terror and invading Afghanistan to depose the Taliban, which harbored al-Qaeda. The country strengthened their anti-terrorism legislation and expanded the powers of law enforcement and intelligence agencies.   
  
Two months later, Congress passed the USA PATRIOT (United and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) Act. It strengthened security controls and surveillance powers. There has been great debate about the pros and cons of the Act. Supporters believe it has kept us safe and discouraged further terrorist attacks. Opponents argue that it is not lawful and violates civil liberties.

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| **Pros** | **Cons** |
| 1. Ease of Surveillance 2. Assists Law Enforcement 3. Speeds Up Investigations 4. Increases Security Measures 5. Expanded Intelligence Collection 6. Prevent Attacks More Quickly 7. Helps Save Funding Costs to Victims 8. Provides Safety to Citizens | 1. Lack of Proven Effectiveness 2. Waste of Vital Resources 3. Invasion of Privacy 4. Too Much Power to the Government 5. Unlawful Detainment and Imprisonment 6. Lack of Understanding 7. Not Clearly Defined 8. Leads to Fear and Hostility 9. Violates Freedoms |

**2015 San Bernardino Attack:**

From Wikipedia:  
On December 2, 2015, 14 people were killed and 22 were seriously injured at a San Bernardino County of Public Health training event and holiday party in a terrorist attack, which consisted of a mass shooting and an attempted bombing.

On February 16, 2016, a federal court judge ordered Apple to help FBI break the encryption of an iPhone belonging to one of the killers. This requires Apple to create a backdoor software to assist investigators. Apple has opposed the court order and issued a public letter.

Tim Cook stated,” In the wrong hands, this software – which does not exist today – would have the potential to unlock any iPhone…something we consider too dangerous to create…Opposing this order is not something we take lightly. We feel we must speak up in the face of what we see as an overreach by the U.S. government…While we believe the FBI’s intentions are good, it would be wrong for the government to force us to build a backdoor into our products. And ultimately, we fear that this demand would undermine the very freedoms and liberty our government is meant to protect.”