

A History of Homeland Security

Chapter Outline

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 - Early History: 1776–1916
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Chapter Objectives

- Understand the context of 9-11 from a historical perspective
- Learn how domestic security has developed in the 20th century
- Understand the concepts of civil defense, emergency management, and homeland security and how they are similar/different

■ Introduction

On the morning of February 22, 1974, “a burly middle-aged man” by the name of Samuel Byck entered the Baltimore–Washington International (BWI) Airport with a briefcase in hand.¹ He walked to the front of the line at Gate C. The people in line were waiting to board Delta Flight 523 bound for Atlanta, Georgia. A security guard by the name of George Ramburg stood nearby, his back turned to the passenger line. Byck pulled a .22 caliber pistol from underneath his raincoat and fired twice into the security guard’s back, killing him instantly. As Ramburg’s body crumpled to the ground, people began screaming and running in all directions. Byck leaped over the security chain, ran down the boarding ramp, and boarded the airplane. Delta Flight 523 had just been hijacked, and its destination was the White House. Samuel Byck intended to use the plane as a missile, flying it into the White House, in order to assassinate the President, Richard M. Nixon.²

Samuel Byck was born on January 30, 1930 in South Philadelphia. His parents were poor, and Byck dropped out of high school in the ninth grade in order to help support the family. After a series of odd jobs, he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1954, and was honorably discharged 2 years later. He married and had four children, but he struggled with employment, attempting to start several businesses, all of which failed. While working as a tire salesman, he applied for a Small Business Administration loan to start yet another business, but was turned down. He became depressed and blamed his troubles on President Nixon.³

His depression led to marital troubles, which led to divorce, and finally he ended up in a psychiatric clinic. A year later, in 1973, he began plotting to assassinate President Nixon. Byck began a series of tape recordings threatening the president, which he mailed to various public officials. The Secret Service was notified and they investigated, but after speaking with Byck's psychiatrist, they determined he was harmless. By late 1973, Byck had formulated a plan to assassinate the president. Then, on February 20, 1974, he wrote his last will and testament, writing, "I will each of my children . . . the sum of one dollar each. They have each other and they deserve each other."⁴ Since he knew he would not be able to purchase a gun, he stole a .22 caliber pistol from a friend, and on the morning of February 22, 1974, he drove to BWI. Along the way, he tape recorded his complaints against President Nixon and explained that his plans were to hijack a plane, fly it into the White House, and assassinate the president. Byck even gave his mission a name: Operation Pandora's Box.

As Byck entered the plane, he fired one round inside the cabin of the plane and then entered the cockpit through the open door. He screamed at the pilot, "Fly this plane out of here!"⁵ The pilot, after regaining his composure, explained that he could not roll back from the gate until the ground crew removed the wheel blocks. Byck became enraged and shot the copilot in the stomach. He then turned back to the pilot and screamed, "The next one will be in the head."⁶ Byck then went into the passenger cabin and grabbed a female passenger, dragged her into the cockpit, telling her to help the pilot fly the plane. At this point, two shots from outside of the plane exploded through the windshield, causing Byck to shove the woman out of the cockpit. He then turned back into the cockpit and fired twice. One bullet struck the already wounded copilot in the eye, and the other entered the pilot's right shoulder.⁷

The pilot then radioed ground control: "Emergency, emergency, we're all shot . . . ah . . . can you get another pilot here to the airplane . . . ah . . . this fellow has shot us both."⁸ The pilot also asked that the wheel blocks be removed so the plane could taxi away from the gate. He then passed out.

His rage now growing, Byck grabbed another female passenger, dragged her into the cockpit, and ordered her to fly the plane. He then fired two more shots in anger, one into the copilot and another into the pilot. The woman became hysterical after seeing the two pilots shot and tried to flee the cockpit. Two more shots rang out and the cockpit windows again shattered, as two more bullets entered from outside of the plane. Byck began firing wildly at the windows, which made him more of a visible target to the snipers outside. They fired two more shots. The first one of these entered Byck's stomach, the second his chest. He fell to the floor.⁹

When Byck fell, he lost hold of his pistol. While on the floor, he frantically searched for the lost gun. He found it, sat up, and put the .22 pistol to his temple and fired. The carnage was over.

Police entered the airplane and found Byck dying. He only lived a few more minutes. They found the briefcase he had carried aboard the plane. Inside was an improvised gasoline bomb with an igniter.

The media reported on the hijacking, but did not disclose Byck's intent of flying the plane into the White House to assassinate President Nixon. They wanted to avoid any potential copycats. Apparently, no one had ever thought about hijacking an airplane and using it as a missile, and it was not something anyone wanted to share.

In 1987, an FAA Report titled *Troubled Passage: The Federal Aviation Administration During the Nixon–Ford Term 1973–1977*, revealed Byck's intent.¹⁰ It chillingly predicted, “though Byck lacked the skill and self-control to reach his target, he had provided a chilling reminder of the potential of violence against civil aviation. Under a more relaxed security system, his suicidal rampage might have begun when the airline was aloft.”¹¹

Fourteen years later, on September 11, 2001, Byck's suicidal intent was realized when the four airplanes were aloft. In the wake of the attacks that day, many remarked that no one had ever thought this possible.¹²

History knows better.

■ History of Domestic Security

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, a recurring lament by the media was the fact that no one had imagined that a small group of men would be able to commandeer a passenger jet and use it as a missile to target American icons such as the World Trade Towers, the U.S. Capitol, the Pentagon, or the White House. In fact, even a number of government officials made the same statement, including the acting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time, Air Force General Richard Myers, who said, “You hate to admit it, but we hadn't thought about this.”¹³ The reality, however, as history will show, is very different. History demonstrates through the previous short vignette that the idea had already been considered by Samuel Byck in 1974. While it is recognized that the reasons for Byck's attack on the passenger airline that morning were concealed for some time from the public, the concept had been considered. Twenty years later, Frank Eugene Corder, a 38-year-old truck driver who faced mental and financial issues, and suffered from both alcohol and drug addictions, flew a Cessna 150 into the White House on September 12, 1994.¹⁴ Although he was only successful in killing himself, it highlighted the potential threat that an aircraft could have on the American government. It is also interesting to note that bestselling author Tom Clancy, 1 month prior to Corder's plane crash into the White House, released the book *Debt of Honor*, in which a plane is deliberately crashed into the U.S. Capitol during the State of the Union speech.

This chapter covers the history of homeland security. It does so by reaching further back into American history, both before the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and before the term **homeland security** entered the American lexicon. It does so to highlight the reality that homeland security was not created in a vacuum in the wake of 9-11, but rather developed across all of American history: from the early threats to American settlers and the quandary of what level of government was responsible for responding to natural disasters, through changes wrought by two world wars and the birth of the term **civil defense**, and into the

KEY TERMS

Homeland security—1) an effort to prevent, mitigate, respond, and recover from natural and man-made disasters, including terrorist attacks; 2) a department within the Federal Government focused on prevention, mitigation, responding to and recovering from both natural and man-made disasters.

KEY TERMS

Civil defense—an effort to protect the citizens of the United States from a military attack.

modern age when Americans saw the multi-decade Cold War come to end, only to be replaced by terroristic threats from both rogue nations and organizations. The focus of the chapter will remain on our federalist system, assessing how the national and state governments responded to threats and then dealt with both terrorism and natural disasters prior to 9-11.

■ Early History: 1776–1916

The Founding Fathers had to deal with issues of America’s defense, both foreign and domestic, from the very beginning. After declaring itself free of England, the new government was forced to deal with the British government while operating under the Articles of Confederation. After winning the Revolutionary War and settling into the new system of government, it became clear that the Articles were no longer

working, and a Constitutional Convention was convened in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787. While the right of the national government to deal with foreign enemies was readily accepted by all, an issue arose over how to deal with domestic insurrections. If there are internal threats, does that fall under the purview of the states or the national government? The question was an important one for Shays’ Rebellion (see Box 1.1) was still present on the minds of those in attendance that summer.¹⁵

In 1786, the U.S., still operating under the Articles of Confederation, was suffering a monetary crisis.¹⁶ Many farmers were grossly in debt, and more than 4,000 were being forced to enter debtors’ prisons until their debts could be paid. The rebellion started with petitions to the government for paper currency, lower taxes, and judicial reform. When this failed, the farmers in western Massachusetts united under the reluctant leadership of Daniel Shays, a bankrupt farmer and former captain in the Revolutionary War. Shays and his followers, many of whom were also veterans, donned their



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BOX 1.1 George Washington on Shays’ Rebellion

Letter to Henry Knox

.....
Mount Vernon, 25th Feb. 1787

. . . On the prospect of the happy termination of this insurrection I sincerely congratulate you; hoping that good may result from the cloud of evils which threatened not only the hemisphere of Massachusetts but by spreading its baneful influence, the tranquility of the Union. Surely Shays must be either a weak man—the dupe of some characters who are yet behind the curtain—or has been deceived by his followers.

Or which may yet be more likely, he did not conceive that there was energy enough in the Government to bring matters to the crisis to which they have been pushed. It is to be hoped the General Court of that State concurred in the report of the Committee that a rebellion did actually exist. This would be decisive, and the most likely means of putting the finishing stroke to the business . . .

.....
George Washington

old uniforms and began marching on Massachusetts courts to prevent them from holding session and throwing more of their own into prison. After 11 rebellion leaders were arrested and indicted on disorder charges, approximately 1,200 farmers went to the Springfield Court House to prevent the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court from holding session. These types of protests continued until January of 1787, when the protesters made their boldest move, seizing the federal arsenal in Springfield. Within 2 weeks, the governor of Massachusetts sent in the militia, some 4,000 strong, to rout the 2,000 members of Shays' Rebellion. Several were killed and the leadership, including Shays, was arrested. They were then tried and sentenced to death for treason. Two of these men, John Bly and Charles Rose, were hung, but with the election of a new governor, John Hancock, the rest were granted pardons.¹⁷

Shays' Rebellion was not unique, but its timing it the utmost importance. That summer, in Philadelphia, members of the Constitutional Convention considered the implications of Shays' Rebellion, for it "reminded everyone attending in Philadelphia that the Confederation, as it stood, was powerless to protect itself, or any of the states, from large-scale domestic violence, and that this absence of a central power was itself a limitation on state sovereignty."¹⁸ As a result, the framers, in Article 4, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution, would resolve this issue by stating that "the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence."¹⁹ This particular article and the concerns of the Constitutional Convention did not take long to make real the problems foreseen.

Another group of farmers, this time in western Pennsylvania during Washington's first term in office, protested the tax his administration imposed on whiskey.²⁰ The protests began in 1791 and reached a climax in July of 1794 when a U.S. Marshal came with warrants to arrest tax derelicts and was attacked, followed by an attack on the local tax assessor in his own home. As Pennsylvania could not get the rebellion under control, a request was made to President Washington for the national government to assist, who responded with 12,000 military soldiers. The Whiskey Rebellion quickly fell apart, but its legacy would be everlasting, for it demonstrated the centralized power of the new government to suppress not only foreign threats, but domestic threats as well (see **Box 1.2**).

While the national government's role in foreign threats was primary, and against domestic threats secondary, only after the state government (which includes local

BOX 1.2 Whiskey Rebellion Proclamation

By the President of the United States of America

.....
A Proclamation, August 7, 1794

I, George Washington, President of the United States, do hereby command all persons, being insurgents, as aforesaid, and all others whom it may concern, on or before the 1st day of September next to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes. And I do moreover warn all persons

whomsoever against aiding, abetting, or comforting the perpetrators of the aforesaid treasonable acts; and do require all officers and other citizens, according to their respective duties and the laws of the land, to exert their utmost endeavors to prevent and suppress such dangerous proceedings.

.....
G. Washington,
By the President, Edm. Randolph



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government) had exhausted its capabilities, what was unclear was the government's role in responding to natural disasters. The U.S. Constitution has no clause stating that it is the role of the government to assist states in recovery from natural disasters. In fact, the 9th and 10th amendments subsume this notion, meaning that since the power is not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, it would be reserved for the states. However, because it was not prohibited, it raised a reasonable question regarding the federal government's role in helping with recovery.

No less a man than the "Father of the Constitution" would, on several occasions, have the opportunity to address this particular issue. In 1794, while James Madison was serving in the U.S. House, Congress had appropriated \$15,000 in relief for French refugees who had fled from an insurrection in Santo Domingo to both Baltimore and Philadelphia. Madison voted against the bill and noted, "I cannot undertake to lay my finger on that article of the Constitution which

granted a right to Congress of expending, on objects of benevolence, the money of their constituents."²¹ While this was relief being granted to foreign refugees, the question raised was whether he would offer the same response when it was Americans. In 1803, when serving as Secretary of State, a bill came before Congress to provide relief for the victims of a major Christmas (1802) fire in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Madison railed against the idea, and Madison's replacement in the House of Representatives, William Giles, wrote that it was not the role of Congress to "attend to what generosity and humanity require, but to what the Constitution and their duty require."²² The legislation passed, allowing for the payment of local bonds to be delayed by 1 year.²³

Similar resolutions would arise occasionally throughout the 19th century, but they tended to be the exception and not the rule. One particular exception, however, was the American Civil War. After America split into the Union versus the Confederacy, many people remaining in the north were southern sympathizers. Realizing the dangers to the Union of subversive activity and sabotage, President Lincoln authorized the suspension of habeas corpus, meaning that people deemed a threat to the U.S. government could be arrested and kept in jail indefinitely without a hearing. Although the constitutionality of the suspension was challenged, it was not resolved until after the war, finding in the case *Ex Parte Milligan* (1866) that neither Congress nor the president had the right under the U.S. Constitution to impose martial law and suspend habeas corpus when civilian courts were functioning.

The Civil War also generated another issue regarding the powers of the national government and states in times of insurrection. After the Civil War, during Reconstruction, when the southern states were undergoing the process of rejoining the union, the states were often patrolled by the U.S. military. In part the issue had to do with the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and its acts of terrorism on southern blacks, but it also had to do with the national government using the military as a police force, which weighed against the U.S. Constitution.

After a compromise, the military was removed, and in order to prevent such future transgressions, the U.S. Congress passed the Posse Comitatus Act in 1878 (see **Box 1.3**). The act requires that any use of the military for purposes of local law enforcement or to maintain “law and order” must be “expressly authorized by the Constitution or act of Congress.”²⁴

Between the end of the Civil War (1865) and before the U.S. entry into World War I (1917), a number of natural disasters helped to shape America’s response to future events, both man-made and natural. One of the worst disasters in American history came on May 31, 1889, with the Johnstown Flood.²⁵ A catastrophic failure of a dam 14 miles above Johnstown, Pennsylvania, after several days of heavy rain swept down on the unsuspecting town and nearly wiped out the entire town. The estimated damages were \$17 million, and 2,209 people lost their lives. In the aftermath, a relatively new organization, the American Red Cross (see **Box 1.4**), led by its founder Clara Barton, descended upon Johnstown and handled the disaster recovery. The Red Cross was there for 5 months.

Another major disaster, the Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of 1906, would also highlight America’s future, for, in this case, despite local response, the military unit located at the Presidio decided to take over the response (in violation of Posse Comitatus) to fight the fires, prevent looting, provide relief, and to police the streets.²⁶ In addition, the American Red Cross once again responded, serving alongside the army as a relief agency. In fact, as a result of the San Francisco Earthquake, the American Red Cross, now chartered by Congress, began to serve as the primary relief agency in catastrophic events, freeing the military to engage in those duties necessary to reestablish order—a symbiotic relationship that continues to this day.

BOX 1.3 The Posse Comitatus Act

Section 15 of chapter 263, of the Acts of the 2nd session of the 45th Congress.

Sec. 15. From and after the passage of this act it shall not be lawful to employ any part of the Army of the United States, as a posse comitatus, or otherwise, for the purpose of executing the laws, except in such cases and under such circumstances as such employment of said force may be expressly authorized by the Constitution or by act

of Congress; and no money appropriated by this act shall be used to pay any of the expenses incurred in the employment of any troops in violation of this section and any person willfully violating the provisions of this section shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction thereof shall be punished by fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars or imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or by both such fine and imprisonment.

BOX 1.4 American Red Cross Congressional Charter, 1905

To continue and carry on a system of national and international relief in time of peace and to apply the same in mitigating the sufferings caused by pestilence, famine, fire,

floods, and other great national calamities, and to devise and carry on measures for preventing the same.

■ Civil Defense and Two Hot Wars: 1917–1945

Prior to World War I, the United States was largely an isolationist country, protected by the great expanse of two great oceans. There was one occasion on American soil that raised the issue of America's defenses just prior to the war, and that was when Pancho Villa and his *Villistas* bandits crossed into the United States on March 9, 1916 and entered the town of Columbus, New Mexico.²⁷ They attacked the American 13th Cavalry, looted houses, and fought with civilians. Eight American soldiers and 10 civilians died, raising not only a military response but also a concern for establishing some form of civil defense along the U.S.–Mexico Border. General “Black Jack” Pershing was sent into Mexico to pursue Villa, while additional consideration was given to enhancing the mounted watchmen of the United States Immigration Service, although it was not until May 28, 1924 that this group would form into the United States Border Patrol.²⁸

At the time that Pancho Villa attacked the United States, the world had already been at war for several years. World War I began on July 28, 1914 and very quickly came to include all the major empires at the time, including the German, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, Russian, and British empires.²⁹ President Woodrow Wilson took a strong noninterventionist stance, and the United States remained on the sidelines trying to broker a peace settlement. After his reelection in 1916, the sinking of seven U.S. merchant ships and the interception of the famous Zimmerman telegram (where Germany encouraged Mexico to join the war as an ally against the United States³⁰), Wilson asked for a declaration of war. Congress deliberated for several months, but declared war on April 6, 1917. Pershing was recalled from his hunt for Pancho Villa and was established as the commander of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). America was about to step onto the world stage.

During this time, there was concern back home about the safety of the American people. While the United States did not have to fear the aerial bombardments that European citizens now suffered, there was a perceived need to protect the general public from future attacks. In fact, consideration had already been given to this possibility. Tucked into an army appropriations bill, on August 29, 1916 the federal government established the Council of National Defense.³¹ The council was a presidential advisory board that included the Secretaries of War, Navy, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and Labor, and assisted by an Advisory Committee appointed by the president. Its responsibilities included “coordinating resources and industries for national defense” and “stimulating civilian morale.”³²

When the United States declared war in 1917, the work of the council escalated. The federal government asked state governors to create their own councils in order to support the National Council's efforts. Every state responded by organizing its own state-level council of defense, and by the end of the war 182,000 local civil defense councils had been formed across the United States. These local councils conducted civil defense patrols, funded and deployed air raid sirens, and practiced safety drills. After the war ended on November 11, 1918, the National Council switched its focus to demobilization efforts until their operations were suspended in June of 1921. Although the National Council ceased operations, many of the local councils continued to operate over the next decade (see [FIGURE 1.1.](#)).

For that next decade, the federal government did little in regard to civil defense, but after Hitler came to power in 1933, the White House became concerned. That

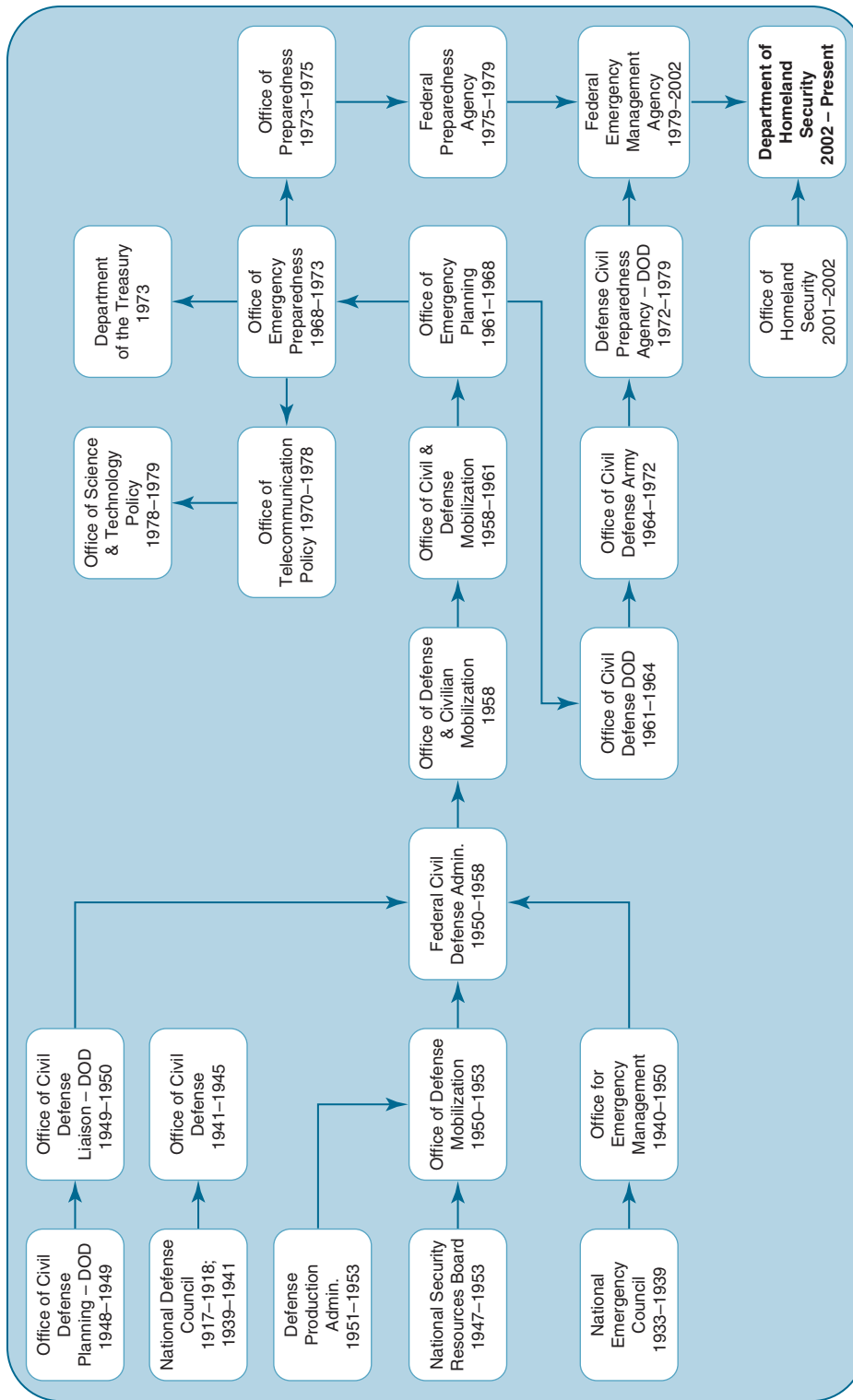
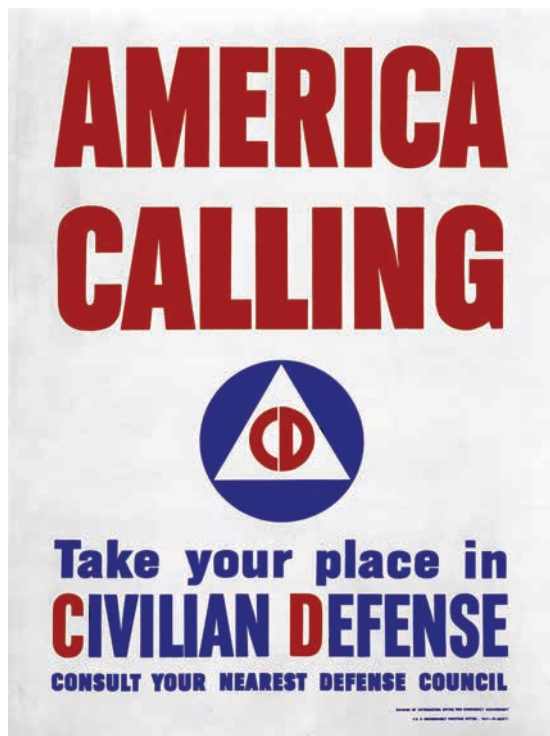


FIGURE 1.1 Flowchart of Civil Defense, Emergency Management, & Homeland Security

Data from: Defense Civil Preparedness Agency. (1975). Significant Events in United States Civil Defense History. Washington, D.C.: Defense Civil Preparedness Agency; Homeland Security National Preparedness Task Force. (2006). Civil Defense and Homeland Security: A Short History of National Preparedness Efforts. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Homeland Security.



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year, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the National Emergency Council by executive order. The focus of the council was essentially war preparation without calling it that, and only one aspect of its mission was the coordination of emergency programs among all agencies involved in national preparedness.³³ Once World War II ignited in Europe, Roosevelt resurrected the National Defense Council in 1939, and shortly after in 1940, converted the National Emergency Council into the Office of Emergency Management.³⁴

An issue of federalism quickly arose between the national government and the states. The federal funding for civil defense was only for dealing with attacks such as the bombing of civilians in Europe. The states and many of the large metropolitan cities were concerned with nonattack disaster preparedness. New York City Mayor Fiorello La Guardia wrote to Roosevelt and argued, “there is a need for a strong Federal Department to coordinate activities, and not only to coordinate but to initiate and get things done. Please bear in mind that up to this war and never in our history, has the civilian population been exposed to attack. The new technique of war has created the necessity for developing new techniques of civilian defense.”³⁵ President Roosevelt agreed and responded with the creation of the Office of Civilian Defense (OCD) within the Office for Emergency Management, and he named Mayor La Guardia as the Director.³⁶ The OCD coordinated attack preparedness between the federal and state governments and established

defense councils at the local level. Some of the more renowned initiatives related to the OCD included the creation of civil defense plans, air raid drills, urban blackouts, and sand bag stockpiling. As World War II came to a close in 1945, so too did the Office of Civilian Defense.

■ Civil Defense and the Cold War: 1946–1991

Immediately after the end of World War II, the Truman administration began bringing troops home and drawing down the military. Civil defense was no longer deemed an important issue. That was the case until the beginning of the Cold War, when the Soviet Union turned hostile toward the United States and began developing the atomic bomb. The War Department’s Civil Defense Board reviewed the issue of civil defense and deemed it a local issue, but did note that the majority of the necessary resources could be provided by the federal government. In 1947, Congress passed the National Security Act, which, in addition to creating the Central Intelligence Agency, created the National Security Resources Board (NSRB). The NSRB was tasked with mobilizing civilian and military support and maintaining adequate supplies for use in the event of a war, specifically a nuclear attack on the United States. In addition, the following year Truman created the Office of Civil Defense Planning within the newly restructured Department of Defense (also created by the National Security Act of 1947).

At this point, the Truman administration had a hodgepodge of organizations focused on civil defense, state and local governments demanding more assistance, and a public growing ever more concerned with national security. The NSRB was

tasked with coming up with a plan that was finally released in 1950 and became known as the *Blue Book*.³⁷ The overall recommendation was to create one agency to deal with coordinating civil defense in America. In response, Congress enacted the Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950, which placed most of the civil defense burden on the states and created the Federal Civil Defense Administration (FCDA) as the one agency to formulate national policy to guide the states' efforts.³⁸ The FCDA throughout the 1950s led shelter-building programs, sought to improve federal and state coordination, established an attack warning system, stockpiled supplies, and started a well-known national civic education campaign, which included Bert the Turtle in "Duck and Cover."³⁹

In 1953, when former World War II General Dwight D. Eisenhower was sworn in as President of the United States, the new president realized that civil defense would be an expensive venture on the part of the federal government, and so he minimized the responsibility and requested less funding for the FCDA.⁴⁰ Then, in 1958, to highlight the diminished role the federal administration would play in Eisenhower's second term, the FCDA was downgraded to the Office of Defense and Civilian Mobilization. Then, as if to highlight the greater emphasis on *civil* defense, the name of the office was changed again to the Office of Civil Defense and Mobilization.

In 1961, when President John F. Kennedy took office, he had a different approach and embraced federal involvement in emergency planning. He proposed a "nation-wide long-range program of identifying present fallout shelter capacity and providing shelter in new and existing structures."⁴¹ To accomplish these goals, Kennedy issued Executive Order 10952 on July 20, 1961, which divided the Office of Civil Defense and Mobilization into two new organizations: The Office of Emergency Planning (OEP) and the Office of Civil Defense (OCD). OEP was part of the president's Executive Office and tasked with advising and assisting the president in determining policy for all nonmilitary emergency preparedness, including civil defense. OCD was part of the Office of the Secretary of Defense and was tasked with overseeing the nation's civil defense program. Although the creation of fall-out shelters was initiated during the Kennedy administration, adequate funding began to dwindle during the Johnson administration due to funding needs for both his Great Society programs and the Vietnam War. The influence of civil defense and emergency planning had been greatly diminished.

In 1969, President Richard M. Nixon entered office, and shortly thereafter a series of natural disasters struck, with the most devastating coming from Hurricane Camille.⁴² Nixon charged the Office of Emergency Planning to conduct a review, which released its results in 1970. As a result, several new federal agencies arose. The Office of Civil Defense would fold into the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency under the Department of Defense. This agency was responsible for a military response to natural and man-made disasters. The Office of Emergency Planning became the Office of Emergency Preparedness, which was to handle the civilian side of these events. However, a number of tasks were given to other agencies, including the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Department of the Treasury, and the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration under Housing and Urban Development (HUD). While the decentralization of the planning did allow each agency to concentrate on its area of expertise, coordination between these agencies was lacking and there was an inordinate amount of overlap, leading to wasteful spending.⁴³

■ Emergency Management: 1979–2001

President Jimmy Carter entered office in 1977 with the goal of reining in federal government bureaucracy by making it more efficient. Carter ordered a review of civil defense agencies and programs, and the review found an enormous amount of duplication of effort and wasteful spending. The recommendation was to consolidate all civil defense spending under one agency in order to better coordinate the federal response to natural disasters. The result was Executive Order 12148, dated July 20, 1979, which created the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the lead agency for coordinating federal disaster relief. FEMA also absorbed a number of agencies such as the Federal Insurance Administration, the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration, and the National Weather Service Community Preparedness Program. At the time, the creation of FEMA represented the single largest consolidation of civil defense efforts in U.S. history.⁴⁴

KEY TERMS

Emergency management—the preparation for and the carrying out of all emergency functions, other than functions for which military forces are primarily responsible, to minimize injury and repair damage resulting from emergencies or disasters caused by enemy attack, sabotage or other hostile action, by fire, flood, earthquake, storm or other natural causes, or by technological or man-made catastrophes.

Although civil defense had now given way to **emergency management** under the Carter administration, the sole purpose of FEMA was to respond to natural disasters, not man-made attacks. When President Ronald Reagan entered office, he changed that and made FEMA a dual-use agency, enabling all future emergency management funds to be used for natural disasters as well as attacks on the homeland.⁴⁵ FEMA then began working toward the development of a full all-hazard preparedness plan at the federal level known as the Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS). Despite all of the efforts by FEMA to launch this all-hazards plan, Congress would not fund the system and the idea was shelved.



Courtesy of Jocelyn Augustino/FEMA.

After President George H.W. Bush (Bush I) took office in 1989, a number of disasters occurred that once again galvanized the emergency management community. The *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, Hurricane Hugo (which struck the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and South Carolina), and the Loma Prieta earthquake (which hit southern California) all struck in 1989, and the federal response was criticized as poor. FEMA dusted off the IEMS plan and developed the Federal Response Plan (FRP) as a means of improving performance. Drawing from the Incident Command System and Incident Management System Framework, the FRP defined how 27 federal agencies and the American Red Cross would respond to the needs of state and local governments when they were overwhelmed by a disaster. The national government now had an all-hazards plan.

Just prior to the 1992 presidential election, Hurricane Andrew struck South Florida and once again highlighted the poor performance of the government in its response. As one report noted, “government at all levels was slow to comprehend the scope of the disaster.”⁴⁶ Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton won the election and entered office in 1993. Clinton brought with him from Arkansas James Lee Witt, who had been the Director of Emergency Management for the State of Arkansas (see **Box 1.5**). He was really the first appointee to the position who had an emergency management background. He created three functional directorates corresponding to the major phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, and response and recovery. These three directorates were all then focused on creating and implementing an all-hazards plan.

BOX 1.5 James Lee Witt Biography

Courtesy of FEMA News Photo.

James Lee Witt is founder and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Witt Associates, a public safety and crisis management consulting firm based in Washington, D.C. Witt Associates provides disaster recovery and mitigation management services to state and local governments,

educational institutions, the international community, and corporations.

Mr. Witt most recently served as a special advisor to the state of Louisiana, assisting with the nation's largest long-term recovery effort in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

In 2003–2006, Mr. Witt served as the Chief Executive Officer of the International Code Council (ICC), a 50,000-member association dedicated to building safety by developing the codes used to construct residential and commercial buildings, including homes and schools. The majority of U.S. cities, counties, and states that adopt codes, choose building and fire safety codes developed by the ICC.

James Lee Witt has over 25 years of disaster management experience, culminating in his appointment as the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, where he served from 1993–2001. In this capacity, he is credited with turning FEMA from an unsuccessful bureaucratic agency to an internationally lauded, all-hazards disaster management agency. His leadership abilities have been praised by nationally recognized organizations, including the Council for Excellence in Government, Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, and the National Association of Broadcasters.

Mr. Witt was appointed by President Clinton and confirmed by the U.S. Senate as Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in April 1993. In February 1996, President Clinton elevated Mr. Witt to cabinet status, a first for a FEMA director. As FEMA director, Mr. Witt coordinated federal disaster relief on behalf of President Clinton, including

the response and recovery activities of 28 federal agencies and departments, the American Red Cross, and other volunteer agencies. He also oversaw the National Flood Insurance Program, the U.S. Fire Administration, and other proactive mitigation activities that help reduce loss of life and property from all types of hazards. Mr. Witt directed 2,500 employees located in Washington, D.C. and 10 regional offices.

From 1993 to 2000, Mr. Witt oversaw more than 350 disasters. More importantly, he was responsible for response and recovery operations for some of the most devastating disasters of all time, including the most costly flood disaster in the nation's history, the most costly earthquake, and a dozen highly destructive hurricanes.

As Director of FEMA, Mr. Witt was the architect of national government programs related to emergency preparedness and mitigation, response, and recovery. In addition to his experience in emergency management on the state and local level, Mr. Witt has expertise integrating community-based disaster management with national emergency management strategy. He initiated Project Impact, the innovative disaster prevention program implemented in over 240 communities to make communities disaster resistant at the local level.

Mr. Witt integrated flood mitigation, control, and protection into FEMA's policy. After the devastating Midwest floods of 1993, Mr. Witt pursued an aggressive flood-prone property acquisition and relocation program. By purchasing properties that were repeatedly flooded, he saved taxpayers millions of dollars when floods ravaged the same Midwest area again in 1995.

Mr. Witt's professional career includes the formation of Witt Construction, a commercial and residential construction company. After 12 years as a successful businessman and community leader, he was elected County Judge for Yell County, serving as the chief elected official for the county with judicial responsibilities for county and juvenile court. At age 34, he was the youngest elected county judge in Arkansas and was later honored for his accomplishments by the National Association of Counties. After being re-elected six times to the position, Mr. Witt was tapped by then-Governor Bill Clinton to assume leadership of the Arkansas Office of Emergency Services (OES). He served as the Director of the Arkansas OES for 4 years.

Mr. Witt and his wife, Lea Ellen, reside in Alexandria, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C., and Dardanelle, Arkansas.

The implementation of the plan would prove necessary for one bombing, and fortuitous in the wake of a second. The first bombing was of the World Trade Center by international terrorists on February 26, 1993, and the second was of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City by domestic terrorists on April 19, 1995. As a result of these two truck bombings in America, in 1996 Clinton elevated the FEMA directorship to Cabinet-level status, improving the line of communication between the director and the president. What then followed was a series of Congressional hearings, commissions, and recommended policies for dealing with domestic preparedness and national security.

One of the more influential commissions was formed by the Clinton administration and was known formally as the Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response Capabilities for Terrorism Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction. Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore was appointed as the commission chair, hence the commission became known more simply as the Gilmore Commission. It developed a series of five reports to the president and Congress, starting in 1999, which made numerous recommendations, including the creation of a fusion center to integrate and analyze all intelligence pertaining to terrorism and counter-terrorism and the creation of a civil liberties oversight board. In the commission's first several years, most of the recommendations were considered, but very few were acted upon.

Another influential commission was The U.S. Commission on National Security in the 21st century, chartered by the Department of Defense, and known as the Hart–Rudman Commission. It began a comprehensive re-examination of U.S. national security policies. One of the commission's recommendations was the creation of a Cabinet-level National Homeland Security Agency responsible for planning, coordinating, and integrating various U.S. government activities involved in “homeland security.” The commission defined homeland security as “the protection of the territory, critical infrastructures, and citizens of the United States by federal, state, and local government entities from the threat or use of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, cyber, or conventional weapons by military or other means.”⁴⁷ Legislation toward this end was actually introduced on March 29, 2001, but hearings continued through April of 2001 without the passage of any legislation.

Then came September 11, 2001, and the concept of emergency management in the United States would quickly give way to the concepts of homeland security.

■ Chapter Summary

Although the United States has always been concerned with securing the homeland, it is evident from the historical record that this effort has gone through many stages. Initially, it would appear that under the strict constructs of federalism, states were seen as being responsible for dealing with all natural disasters themselves, and that resources from the national government would only be applied when Article 4, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution was invoked (see **Box 1.6**). Two World Wars would subtly begin to change that mindset in the first half of the 20th century, when the national government embraced a cooperative, albeit limited, response in the name of civil defense. As the U.S. shifted to a Cold War in the fight against communism, a more cooperative response evolved with a division between civil and military responses. In 1979, a consolidated approach under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) saw civil defense evolve into emergency management, and eventually a dual response policy for responding to natural and man-made disasters. As emergency management

BOX 1.6 U.S. Constitution Article 4, Section 4

The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the

Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence.

evolved in the 1990s, its elevation to a Cabinet-level status marked its significant rise as a policy issue and the importance the federal government now paid to the issue.

Most of the evolution from civil defense to emergency management has been marked as a reactionary response to some natural or man-made disaster. World War I brought about civil defense. The World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombings brought about the elevation of FEMA to a Cabinet-level agency. Yet, it should also be noted that the ideas for these changes tended to exist prior to the events; it was only after the natural or man-made disasters that these changes came about. The ultimate evidence for this is the 21st-Century Commission's ideas about creating a "Cabinet-level National Homeland Security Agency," which did not come about until after September 11, 2001. And finally, it would seem that the federal government apparatus has waffled between strong centralization and consolidation, to a more decentralized and multi-agency response.

In brief, the evolution of the homeland security apparatus (call it also civil defense or emergency management) has generally resulted from disasters (natural and man-made) but was based on ideas that existed prior to these events.

■ Review/Discussion Questions

1. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001 it was said that no one had ever thought planes could be used as weapons. Why is this not the case?
2. Describe domestic security in the 18th and 19th centuries. Why was domestic security not so much an issue?
3. Detail the development of civil defense, especially describing the development during both World War I and World War II.
4. What is emergency management, how did it develop, and how is it different from civil defense?
5. What were the antecedents to the development of homeland security in America prior to the terrorist attacks on September 11?

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