

The United States of America has never been a finished product; the country is constantly revising and reshaping its values and identity. With the institution of the Miranda Rights, then nation decided that potential criminals deserved to know the freedoms guaranteed to them by the Constitution. However, the threat of terrorism has muddied the waters of justice. President Obama felt secure in denying suspected terrorists knowledge of their Miranda Rights because the danger presented to the American public has spread fear and panic across the nation; the safety of the American people seemed more important than making sure a single miscreant knew they had the right to remain silent. Yet this denial of rights presents as much a threat to the American way of life as the suicide bombers that terrify the public.

The modern goal of terrorism, whether in the streets of Boston or the deserts of Syria, has been to destroy the existing way of life. The United States has been the target of brutal attacks because terrorist organizations detest American culture and ideals. The country presents itself, sometimes hypocritically, as the standard-bearer of freedom and democracy; it has no qualms about extending its influence to other countries in order to ensure that its views of liberty become a worldwide standard. The Miranda Rights represent the mindset that epitomizes the American ideal of freedom that the country wants to spread across the globe. By saying that even detestable criminals have a right to know the rules that protect them from incriminating themselves, America presents the idea that freedom is not selective; everyone, from an innocent child to a corrupt man, deserves protection from oppressive power. When President Obama denied this right to terrorism suspects, he told the world that when times get hard, democracy bows down to government control. Suspected terrorists deserve to know their rights not because this is the right thing to do, but because ensuring freedom to all means making sure all know what this freedom entails. Keeping them in the dark only suggests that the ideals the terrorists want to break will

crumble easily with a few well-placed bombs, or, even worse, that the ideals held by the terrorists are what will prevail when the going gets tough.

President Obama is well-intentioned; his goal in denying suspected terrorists knowledge of their Miranda Rights was to make America safer, not make it seem weaker. Unfortunately, the road to disaster is paved with good intentions. In order to prevail in the face of terrorism, America must be seen as strong, and democracy must be upheld to the furthest extent possible. America should inform terrorism suspects of their Miranda Rights to show that it is not afraid of being on a level playing field with its enemies; because, when the odds start to add up, they will always fall on the side of democracy, and America has no reason to fear giving terrorists a taste of the ideals they so despise.