



THE EFFECTS OF NATIONAL SECURITY ON SUPREME COURT CASE DECISIONS INVOLVING CIVIL LIBERTIES

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SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

This project analyzed the effects that war and the ideological leaning of the Supreme Court had on cases involving civil liberties. The hypotheses were formulated to reflect these aspects in respect to the research. Various laws and cases that occurred between the years of 1900-2008 were analyzed to study the affects that judicial and governmental action had on civil liberties. A longitudinal data collection using the U.S. Supreme Court Database determined the number of civil liberties cases that were heard and whether the court decided a case in a more conservative or liberal manner. The research question is as follows: “If the United States of America is in a time of heightened national security, is it more likely that an individual’s civil liberties will be infringed upon due to the government and the Supreme Court placing priority on national security over civil liberties in times of war?”



HIGHLIGHTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The research found that war had a significant impact on civil liberties regarding national security, but it is highly dependent on the circumstances of the case, war, or event, and not the political party or ideology of the Supreme Court. Cases in the early 20th Century were more likely to be ruled in favor of the government, and in the late 20th Century to early 21st Century, this shifted to civil liberties being more likely to be upheld by the court. The number of civil liberties cases throughout the years consistently increased. This is possibly due to a social, economic, or cultural shift that could be further examined. It was found that the Supreme Court relied heavily on strict scrutiny as well. The research suggests that as time has progressed, the Supreme Court and the importance of civil liberties has evolved.
