

Apple vs. the FBI

- Korey Cohan

As we all know, the presidential debates have been grabbing the attention of almost everyone interested in the future of our country. Besides all the entertaining banter coming from popular candidates, such as Donald Trump and Marco Rubio, that is surrounding us on social media, one of the main reasons to listen to these debates is to hear the opinions of the candidates on important issues such as their economic plans and national security. Unfortunately, there has been a growing concern from the people who fear for our safety with terrorist groups, such as ISIS, becoming a bigger threat every day. A recent issue conflicting with the safety of our country and the privacy of our lives has been making headlines in the news for many weeks now. The terrorist attack in San Bernardino, which took place back on December 2, 2015, has sparked a conflict between one of the largest companies in the world, Apple, and the FBI.

In brief terms, the FBI believed that by resetting the iCloud password for the phone of one of the attackers, Syed Rizwan Farook, they would be able to obtain valuable information regarding any future attacks and the people involved. Unexpectedly, this plan backfired and locked them out completely. Now, the FBI needs Apple to grant them a “backdoor” into the phone, giving them access to this important information. According to FBI officials this information could include where the two attackers fled and with whom they came into contact with. Representative Jason Chaffetz, said, “The big question for our country is how much privacy are we going to give up in the name of security.” With the two sides arguing against one another, there is a major dispute to be settled on which side will win in court.

Both Republicans and Democrats have recognized the mistake made on the side of the FBI. According to Representative Jerrold Nadler, “If the F.B.I. hadn’t instructed San Bernardino County to change the password to the iCloud account, all this would have been unnecessary, and you would have had that information.” There has also been criticism from the Republican front runner, Donald Trump, who requested a boycott on Apple until they willingly helped the FBI maintain access to the phone. This boycott was called when the CEO of Apple, Tim Cook, resisted the order of a court judge to “build a backdoor to the iPhone” that could be used to access other users’ phones, not just Farook’s device. With this conflict on the rise, Manhattan prosecutors said that New York police and other prosecutors have been unable to gain access to over 175 Apple devices. In the following weeks we will see which side comes out “victorious” and whether national security oversees the privacy of our lives or vice versa.