For over 200 hundred years, America has been feuding over the importance of the proper balance between national security and civil liberties. In America we consider our civil liberties to have come from the 1st Amendment, which allows people to speak, think, assemble, organize, worship, or petition without government interference. However, our civil rights have been violated for the sake of national security for hundreds of years.

In certain instances national security and civil liberties can be thrown out of balance. When these two are unequal it can cause conflict. An example is the steps the government took shortly after the Boston bombings that occurred in early 2013. Shortly after the bombings, *The* *Guardian,* a British newspaper,released information that the US government, specifically the NSA, had obtained millions of Verizon wireless telephone records. It was understood at the time that only a select few had a hand in the bombings, yet the NSA still took millions of these records. It’s unknown if the Boston bombings played a key role in the FISA granting the NSA permission to obtain these records, but nonetheless the NSA may have taken their liberties too far. Even though they weren’t granted access to actual phone conversations, they did obtain key personal information about duration, location, time of day, and to whom calls were made, for millions of Verizon customers. The Obama administration released a statement not verifying *The Guardian*, but stating that these, “… types of records are critical to protect the country.” Yet, US citizens quickly started to question if their constitutional rights had been revoked. Because the NSA’s focus is on people inside the US who may be engaged in terrorist activities, these citizens’ records obtained by the NSA were possibly irrelevant. Because this was such a wide overview of data, it is hard to believe that millions of US citizens were being targeted as possible terrorists.

The fourth amendment to the US constitution states that citizens’ protections from, “… unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause …” In the evens after the Boston bombing, the seizure of the Verizon phone records showed how much power the NSA had in obtaining those records. *The Guardian* stated the US government may have been doing this for years without the citizens’ consent or knowledge.

These seizures were “unreasonable” to the US citizens’ and this is a contradiction to the US constitutions fourth amendment. We may have come a long way from the Alien and Sedition Act, but this still shows how privacy can be intruded upon by NSA and the US government .