Freedom and Security

The U.S. government is an amazing thing that has stood the test of time. Being the first of its kind, the system was designed to protect certain rights of the nation’s citizens. To achieve that ability, the government would not only have to allow the people to have some freedom, but it would also have to provide certain levels of security to also protect the people from possible attackers. However, with the advancement of technology and the Internet in recent years, threats of terror have become more evident. In response, the government has cracked down on security, both physically and virtually, even to the point where the rights of some citizens are questioned. While some security is good, a republic must provide equal freedom and security to properly serve the people.

First, consider a bird in a cage. The bird has freedom to go wherever he wants to in the cage, but he cannot leave unless the owner lets him. The owner of the bird represents the government. By changing the size of the cage, the size of both the freedom and security will change, usually in opposite directions. So if the freedom was to increase, the security would likely decrease, and vice versa. Now, think about anarchy, total freedom, and dictatorship, total security. Neither of these ideas work, but there principles do, in certain measures. Too much freedom in a nation could bring about anarchy, while large security measures can develop a republic into a dictatorship. Both of the principles are extremely precious, but caution must be taken when deciding which is important.

The issue of security and liberty also occurs in the virtual world. The world today is run by information, whether it is history, science, or even math. Those with information can change that information to whatever they want, and the largest database in the world is the internet. However, sometimes information can be viewed without anyone else knowing, even by the government. Many times the feds will say that they are looking at the information of storing it up for security reasons. However, that action can be considered an invasion of privacy, which would impede on the rights of citizens, something the U.S. should not do according to the Constitution. So while they are trying to “protect” the American people, they would also be taking away their freedom.

While security is good, there must be a balance between protection and liberty for a republic to work best. Too much or too little of either priority can ruin the rights-based system. Even using information for security can be considered wrong in the eyes of citizens. In the Declaration of Independence, the founding fathers wrote that everyone had the rights of “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” The U.S. government was created to protect those rights, not to take them away for security reasons. It works, but it needs to be watched to make sure it works right.