Security is about protecting our country and its citizens. Liberty is about our freedoms and our personal rights. There has always been tension between them throughout our country’s history. This is even more of an issue now because of the internet and other digital media.

When a government gives citizens a lot of freedom, it is vulnerable. Without enforced laws and regulations, people can take advantage and hurt themselves or others. So we agree that on occasion the government may have to sacrifice freedom and liberty for security. However, it should only be on an as needed basis and should only limit freedom not take it away. For example, after the September 11th attacks we gave up some of our freedoms at the airport. We now have to go through many more security checks, but we gladly do it for our safety. The government made our freedom to travel more difficult but did not take it away.

When a government has the power to take away freedoms, there is always a possibility that it can abuse its power. To prevent this abuse, citizens can vote for or remove officials. According to our Constitution, “we the people” are the source of power in the United States and we expect government officials to speak up for us. Our nation is founded on our rights and freedoms so it is important to protect them. Checks are done within the United States government to keep a balance. As such, the rights which are inviolable are those rights which give the people their check on the government. These include many of our First Amendment rights including the power of speech and the power of the press. Speech allows us to speak out against government wrongs and the press is important in keeping us informed about what the government is doing.

There have always been people who want to attack our government and with the increased use of computers and the internet there are now more areas vulnerable to attack. Hackers can hack into our financial records, crash our utilities, or even possibly steal identities. As such, we again recognize that the government needs to have protections from a cyber-attack in place, but again we do not think that means they can do whatever they want with private information.

There needs to be limits on what the government can do without us knowing. We recognize that the internet is not completely private and can easily be monitored by the government. However, before monitoring our activities, officials should have to obtain a warrant and there need s to be limits on what they can do with the information they learn. It should be used for security purposes only. Finally, there should be another part of the government that is responsible for monitoring what is being watched on the internet and how it is being used. Again, the invasion of our rights should be limited and only on and as needed basis.