

## What's Your Opinion?

Each of the following statements deals with an issue related to the tension that exists between two constitutional provisions. First, there is the constitutional responsibility of government in exercising its police powers to control crime and promote the general welfare of all citizens. Second, the Constitution provides for individual constitutional rights for citizens, including the right of persons accused of crimes to be free from government abuse. In each of the following situations the tension exists. Select the response that most closely reflects your opinion and be prepared to share your thoughts.

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>
1. Police should be given a free hand to apprehend those who commit criminal acts.			
2. Police officers should be able to stop motorists of certain racial or ethnic groups because officers believe that these groups are more likely than others to commit certain types of crime.			
3. It is okay for police to stop young drivers for no other reason than the fact the driver is young.			
4. In order to fight terrorism, law enforcement should be allowed to randomly stop people who may fit the profile of suspected terrorists.			
5. Our constitutional rights are our only protection against the unlimited power of the police and other government officials.			

**Q = What constitutional rights do we value most highly in our justice system?**

**Q = When do the government's constitutional duties outweigh these rights? Explain specific situations.**

**Q = Who should decide the delicate balance between these tensions? The public? The police? Elected officials? Courts?**

*Source: JoEllen Ambrose, social studies teacher, Champlin Park High School, Champlin, Minnesota*