

Operation TIPS



## VIGILANT NEIGHBORS

— OR —

## BIG BROTHER'S INFORMANTS?

The government has announced the creation of the TIPS program, a national system for concerned Americans to report to law enforcement officials suspicious activity that could be related to terrorism.

### PRO

Terrorism threatens our way of life and must be stopped. Operation TIPS provides an essential way for American workers in appropriate industries, such as truckers and others involved in transportation, to assist overburdened law enforcement agencies in detecting, preventing, and disrupting terrorist activity.

This is a voluntary program, involving the reporting of only publicly observable activities that would supplement block/neighborhood watch programs, which have been in place for many years without abuse or opposition.

A national system for receiving tips on possible terrorists would allow law enforcement officials to "connect the dots" and take quick and appropriate action on potentially terrorist-related incidents that are occurring simultaneously.

### CON

Operation TIPS would create a community of snoops like those in Iron Curtain countries during the Cold War, with little gain for our safety. Basic civil liberties will be undermined by creating a national database of unreliable reports and allegations accessible by a variety of government agencies.

Since Government officials admit that most tips will wash out, why needlessly invade the privacy of law-abiding citizens and divert attention from potentially more productive investigations?

Officials admit that many terrorist activities are indistinguishable from everyday, lawful activities. Therefore, the TIPS program may simply result in fostering ethnic or religious scapegoating and nothing more.

**There are at least two sides to every issue. Our democracy is built on the rule of law. We resolve differences of opinion through dialogue and debate. Disagreement is inevitable. Violence is not.**

American Bar Association



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