

The Absurdity of Government Trying to be your Parent?

Have you seen the movie *Minority Report*? It came out in 2002, directed by Stephen Spielberg and starred Tom Cruise. It was kind of a film-noir science fiction movie that was based on a justice system where criminals were caught before they committed the crime. They then locked them up before the crime could be committed. The determination was done by psychics. It seems that many in our society think that the government has psychics working for them, and that enforcement of justice should be done pre-emptively.

Real law is based on harm being caused, like murder, rape, assault and theft. Government statutes and regulation that mostly just supports the bureaucratic system, and implements another form of taxation, is usually based on “safety” premises and is intended to keep terrible incidents from happening in the first place. Some examples of these bad statutes deal with mandatory seat belts, mandatory helmets, not mixing spices in your place of business, having life preservers in your boat or the latest topic: texting while driving.

The problem is that there is no way for the government to know that these terrible things will actually happen from violations of these statutes; in fact, most of the time they never do. It is an extremely small percentage that actually end up as an accident or other calamity. The vast majority of the time, nobody gets contamination from mixing spices outside of an industrial kitchen. Most all people who have texted while driving haven’t had an accident because of it. They are regulations that just give the government a way to raise more money, a way to harass citizens who haven’t committed a real crime (see 2nd paragraph); while they justify it by saying they are protecting us from ourselves.

An additional aspect of the problem, that is much worse than the money stolen, is that it trains people to think that they don’t have to be responsible, that the government is going to take care of them. As those who have kids know, at some point you have to start giving them increasing responsibility, so they’ll learn how to be responsible adults. It works the other way around also; as you take responsibilities from someone, they stop being responsible for themselves, since there is no need to be. These types of laws just treat grown men and women as children, liking making a kid use a safety cup so he won’t spill his milk, or slapping a small kid’s hand when he tries to play with the oven. The government that implements these types of regulation is just training society to never grow up and take responsibility for their actions.

The next point is the absurdity of the premise, as shown by the method of *Reductio ad absurdum*. The proponents of these regulations will say stuff like, “if even one life’s saved it’s worth it”, but follow that through. Every year people die in car accidents because they have someone in the car distracting them, should we stop allowing passengers in vehicles? Should we stop allowing driving all together since it is one of the main causes of death in the United States? Maybe we should just stop allowing boating since people die while boating every year. In the end, there is always one more regulation that can be made to protect you. At what point do we require people to be responsible for their own lives and look out for themselves?

Finally, there is a huge cost to businesses, and therefore like all costs to business, a cost to the consumer. Every single regulation has a cost, and as those regulations have been incrementally added over time, the cost of doing business has gone up. A lot of businesses don’t even get started because of the huge capital costs involved. This is actually the main reason that large corporations are dominating more and more; because they can spread those costs over their whole operation, while the small business has to cover (i.e. pass on to his customers) those costs. The main thing holding back economic development in our Borough, State and Country is the ever-increasing regulation. In an article in the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner¹, Paul Manuel was quoted as saying, “When I first got my mining license, you paid \$25 for your license and they said, ‘Don’t worry, we’ll get it to you by September. You’re fine.’ Now you have to deal with 32 different government agencies.”

America thrived for hundreds of years without these regulations and statutes, because individuals took responsibility for their actions, and justice was served on those who crossed a real line, not one psychically determined by some government official playing God. It was not any less of a dangerous time then when America was a wilderness being civilized than it is now. Technology may change, but it never completely eliminates the dangers of life. A concept that defines conservatism is that individuals are responsible for their own actions. In this coming election year, please be cognizant of which candidates think they need to be your parents, and which will let you be responsible for the decisions in your life.

¹ Mowry, Tim. “‘Fed Up’ Fairbanksans Voice Concerns at Rally.” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* 28 Apr. 2011. [Http://www.newsminer.com](http://www.newsminer.com).