

EDITORIALS

Freeway Fallacy

We all want to be free to make the decisions that govern our own lives--and the lives of others. This is a historical truism. Through the ages, laws have been created in an attempt to mold a visionary society through various means of indoctrination and coercion.

Big brother always knows what's best for us. For example, we are not allowed to gamble (but participation in government-sponsored lotteries is encouraged--as long as the government is coming out ahead). But big brother is also altruistic. He knows that seatbelts and crash helmets save lives. So you had better wear them whether you like it or not. One can only wonder when we will have condom laws.

A healthy diet and regular exercise also save lives. We can only assume that it is just a matter of time before daily doses of Grape Nuts and aerobics are mandated by law. Cigarettes, bacon, and eggs will have to go.

Frankly, how you decide to maintain your physical anatomy is nobody's business but yours. As an adult, one must be permitted to make the personal decisions that govern one's own life. This is not the role of government. Similarly, if you choose to end your life altogether, you must be granted that right as well. You are not obligated to live or avoid injuring yourself. The importance of your well-being to family and friends is not a valid argument. Divorce has similar emotional and financial effects on households, but this certainly should not mandate that one live in a miserable marriage until the other partner is satisfied that he or she no longer has any use for the miserable partner.

Your life is yours and yours alone--to use, or lose, as you choose.

We would admonish those who would attempt to regulate your life in a manner that they deem most appropriate for you. We would also lambaste those who would oppose such laws, but look the other way because they feel that the laws are unenforceable. The particulars should not supersede the principle. Furthermore, it should be noted that such laws are not made more justifiable by winning public approval in an election, just as rape would not be less loathsome if a majority of voters were to condone a ballot measure granting everyone unlimited sexual expression.

We fully support, however, existing laws against driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In such cases, one is directly threatening the person and property of others.

We also endorse the new 65 mph speed limit, simply because we believe that a competent driver operating a vehicle at 65 mph on a rural freeway does not pose a safety threat to others. However, if it were determined, by analyzing available accident statistics, that a significant danger exists for slower freeway drivers traveling alongside motorists traveling at a speed of 65 mph, we would execute an abrupt about face concerning this issue.

Finally, we present a question. What ever became of the notion that the only legitimate laws are those protecting the rights of individuals from infringement by others? Perhaps this is just another one of those naive ideals that we are expected to outgrow in college. --DD

There are some areas of life a majority should not control. There are some things a majority should not do to us no matter how democratically it decides to do them. These areas are properly left to individual freedom, and coercion by the majority in these aspects of life is tyranny.

--Judge Robert Bork

