

I have grave doubts whether I'll change any minds here. Too many of us have subjugated our alleged minds to the narratives of paid professional activists and their righteous social agenda(s). The truth is what they say it is and to disagree and oppose will certainly brand us as politically incorrect cretins. Unfortunately, far too many of our elected officials now march jack-booted behind these crusading "saints for the public good" all the while proclaiming their dedication to less government, personal liberty and responsibility; the general ideals of conservatism.

Our marchers are currently carrying a banner emblazoned with SB209. A statewide smoking ban. For those of you who haven't ventured out of house for 20 years; we already have a ban in 99% of public places listed for regulation in this legislation. This feat was accomplished by choice of owners, local ordinance or government edict in their own buildings. The problem at hand is that some municipal ordinances failed to pass through councils. Not that they are opposed to the existing 99% ban in public enclosures; they see no reason to ban in stand alone bars with no restaurant facilities. That's the intent here. 99% compliance is not sufficient, the marchers demand 100%. The goal was unattainable piecemeal and so they have fallen back on the blanket approach.

I can go with the 99% ideal. As a polite smoker, I don't want to discomfort those who don't smoke. But do I believe that my smoking is killing *them*? Absolutely not. That's the pretense that they've promulgated their agenda on. More specifically, a 1993 EPA study that was performed so unscientifically it was thrown out by a U.S. District Court in 1998. Our own Congressional Research Agency came along and upheld the ruling. The EPA study cited 3,000 deaths from second hand smoke, not the 53,000 these public provocateurs cite. Junk science and social engineering and I will never buy in.

Nobody has to come into my bar. It's your choice. Smokers are adults, not kids, and they deserve to have their informed choices respected by others. All my bartenders smoke as do 80-90% of my patrons. They are blue collar, working class folks that exactly mirror Nikiski's make-up. They enjoy coming in, having a beer or two, socializing and maybe even lighting up. Who are we harming?

Do I retain a choice in this matter? Well, I should but it seems that private property rights are irrelevant. This is a taking and make no mistake, I will be economically harmed by this action. This is Nikiski, not Anchorage or even Kenai or Soldotna, where loss of business could questionably be supplemented by white collar professionals and/or government workers. Will the marchers continue to make my payroll, pay my insurance, utility bills, and taxes when my margins are squeezed even further?

This legislation is arrogant and control based. The general public has no idea what we contend with by regulators and enforcers. So when Rep. Lindsey Holmes, the sponsor of the House side of this intrusion says "...we have no intent of doing stings", I feel reassured because the President said I could keep my insurance and doctor too. In other words, there are mechanical problems with enforcement that I guess they won't find out about till they pass it. This is quite simply, government over reach, bad public policy based on lousy science wrought with utter disregard of personal choice. Why can't we be left alone to enjoy ourselves in the last refuges for smokers in the state? There is no valid answer. There is only elitism.

Think they're just marching over me? Keep your eyes peeled. There's always a new banner to pick up and march forward.....toward you.

Gary Superman

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