

COMMON SENSE

"We're Mad As Hell, And We're Not Going To Take It Anymore!"

Who are the real losers in the war on smoking? In fact, the biggest losers of America's anti-tobacco crusade aren't tobacco companies and smokers, but the American people who are incrementally giving up their **PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS**, which are guaranteed by the Constitution.

Let's briefly examine what private property is and why it is so important. Private property consists of those things you own, control and have ultimate responsibility for. Two obvious examples are your house and business. The reason for private property is equally obvious: it determines who gets to decide how property is used in what way. And, like it or not, private property rights necessarily include the right to exclude others from using one's property. So, how does the smoking issue take away our private property rights?

Advocates of smoking bans, like advocates of other government overreach, mistakenly believe that the United States is a majority-rule democracy and not a constitutional republic. Such thinking leads to a tyranny of the majority, something that

our founding fathers loathed and warned against. Under our form of government, smokers have rights, too. So, there's an obvious conflict. How can it be resolved?

The smoking ban advocate's solution to this conflict is to have government use brute force to decide whether there'll be smoking or no smoking on private property such as a business. This method is totalitarian in nature. The **LIBERTY**-oriented method resolves this conflict through the institution of private property. In fact, conflict resolution is the primary function of private property. It alone decides who gets to decide how what property is used in what way.

If an owner wishes their business to be smoke-free, it's their right. Whether a smoker is harmed or inconvenienced by not being allowed to smoke in a restaurant is simply irrelevant. Similarly, if a business owner wishes to permit smoking, it's their right, and whether a non-smoker is harmed or annoyed is also irrelevant. Totalitarian anti-smoking advocates might justify their actions by claiming that businesses deal with the public, thus the public should decide how they'll be used. That's

NONSENSE! Just because an establishment deals with the public doesn't make it public property. Like our parents used to say, when you're in someone else's house, you must play by their rules.

In summary, in America today the anti-tobacco campaign has become a template for conflict resolution via the forceful imposition of wills through the political system. It's part of a continuing trend of attacks on private property rights. Always remember, private property rights are the bulwark for liberty and should be jealously guarded and never sacrificed for the sake of expediency. The best and most sensible way to resolve this conflict is to respect private property, a method which all Americans should support. We must all always stand for both personal and economic freedom in all situations. Remember, evil flourishes when good people do nothing. **Take action by supporting independent candidates who are pro-Liberty!**

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