



The "Click It Or Ticket" Road to Fascism

by George Lunt

Introduction

Recently, while taking a walk in Chicago, I noticed police officers stopping the cars of anyone who was not wearing a seat belt and handing out traffic citations.

In the United States individual states are allowed to determine how seat belt laws are enforced. Currently there are 25 states that use primary enforcement. This means that police in these states can stop you and issue a citation for the seat belt violation alone. 24 other states use secondary enforcement. In these states the police can't stop you for not wearing a seat belt, but if you are stopped for any other traffic violation, you can also be cited for not buckling up. New Hampshire is the only state that doesn't have any seat belt laws.

Unfortunately, Illinois, where I live, uses the primary enforcement law. Road blocks for the sole purpose of ticketing seat belt violators are becoming more and more common.

Wearing seat belts has lately become a federal government policy. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) would like to eventually get all states to use primary enforcement.

To the people who value individual freedoms, this law is an insult. You as an individual are the only one that should be responsible for your life. So it should be up to you if you want to "risk" your life while driving and not wearing a seat belt. Laws such as this imply that you are too stupid to know what's good for you and need your benevolent "Uncle Sam" to do the thinking for you.

Rights and Privileges

When stopped for a primary seat belt violation, police will be quick to point out that driving is a privilege and not a right. Using this argument, seat belt laws have nothing to do with individual rights and are just extensions of the driving privilege.

Governments have a right to grant privileges to individuals only because the lack of such privileges will affect other community members adversely. For example, not everyone can practice medicine. A bad doctor can pose a danger to the community. We allow the government to grant some individuals the privilege of practicing medicine. In doing so, we feel that the government will adequately test and impose other necessary requirements to make sure that the medical student is fully qualified. The recipient of a medical license can, then, be trusted with the lives of his or her patients.

Similarly the driving privilege is granted to individuals only to make sure that someone lacking driving skills does not injure his or her fellow road warriors. If you are an adult, whether or not you wear a seat belt only concerns you and no one else. This should be a decision that only you should make and not a part of the driving privilege. States should not have the right to consider decisions that affect you alone as privileges.

Giving Up Our Rights

Many people are conditioned to go along with laws that take away our decision making. This is how leaders, who I call [corporate aliens](#), are grooming our society to allow them to do the thinking for us. They use emotion through the media to make these laws sound good and convince us to surrender our right to think for ourselves. This is what Hitler did in Nazi Germany. He once said: "I use emotion for the many and reserve reason for the few."

Little by little, more individual rights violations will creep in. Next some politician will insist that all drivers wear crash helmets. That can save lives. Soon someone will invent a velocity sensing device, that uses GPS to determine the road you're on and the speed limit for that location. This device will then sense your speed and use cellular technology to contact headquarters and issue a ticket whenever the speed limit is exceeded. It will be mandated that every car in America have this device installed as another means of saving lives. Driving in the future will become so complex that people may take to walking and public transportation in order to avoid all the government imposed regulations.

Unfortunately, laws like this are not confined to the traffic arena. They are branching into areas of food, medicine, schools, and any other phases of life that the government wishes to control.

Unintended Consequences

Many city and state governments are in fiscal crises. One way to obtain extra funds is to impose and collect fines from laws like the "click it or ticket" laws. Unfortunately, these fines annoy the middle class, already frustrated with taxes and other fees. Such annoyances can lead to psychological problems that eventually evolve into life threatening diseases. This is an unintended consequence of this law. Research should be done on the law's negative health effects.

Another very interesting unintended consequence is called the theory of "risk compensation." It is supported by [Professor John Adams](#) of University College London. The theory simply states that when wearing a seat belt, you psychologically feel safer, consequently, you are prone to drive more recklessly. Professor Adams has done extensive research on seat belt laws in Europe in the eighties and concluded that: "There is no country in the world that has passed a seat belt law that can demonstrate that it has saved lives." According to Adams, the belted driver is more dangerous, not only to other drivers, but also, to non drivers including pedestrians and bicyclists.

Governor John Corzine

The new poster boy for the NHTSA seatbelt safety push is New Jersey [Governor John Corzine](#). He made a video explaining how bad his injuries were because he wasn't wearing a seat belt during a recent accident. If you look further into the story, you'll find that his motorcade was going at 91 miles per hour in a 65 mile per hour zone at the time of his crash. He was rushing to a meeting with disgraced radio host Don Imus and the Rutgers women's basketball team. What a great reason to endanger the lives of fellow drivers! To top it all off, his state trooper driver was involved in four previous accidents and was probably responsible for the crash.

The crash would never have happened if Corzine's motorcade was not driving recklessly. It wouldn't matter whether he was wearing a seat belt or not if there was no accident. "Click it or ticket" supporters tend to concentrate on trying to force everyone to wear seat belts while ignoring the reason accidents happen in the first place. If anything, Corzine and his hotshot driver should make a video apologizing for endangering the lives of New Jersey motorists over a stupid media event.

Conclusion

To me, whether seat belts save lives or not is not the primary issue. The right to choose for yourself is automatically negated by the laws that are intended to "save our lives." If you think your life can be saved by wearing a seat belt, go ahead and buckle up, no one is stopping you! There is absolutely no reason to force everyone else to do the same.

As time goes on Americans are facing more and more laws that require us to relinquish some of our rights and part of our individuality. The situation is similar to that of Fascist Germany. Hitler was a lover of the law. Everything he did was legal. There were so many laws during his regime that it became impossible not to break one. The government could then legally pick up anyone for questioning any time they wanted. I see the "click it or ticket" law as just another step down America's road to Fascism.

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