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"Freedom of the Press belongs to those who own one."

A. J. Liebling of the New Yorker

November 27, 2001



Conservative Hypocrisy

Commentary

While I voted for President Bush, and really support his efforts against terrorism and in many other areas, there are some activities of his administration that are troubling. As an example, I give you the effort of the U.S. Justice Department to act against the voters of California in the medical marijuana proposition and the Aid in Suicide proposition passed by the Oregon voters.

I understand that President Bush and his handpicked Attorney General John Ashcroft have personal moral and religious problems with the use of marijuana, even if it is used only to ease the suffering of cancer patients. Similarly, Oregonians voted to permit terminal patients to ease their death through a medical and legal system, but the Attorney General has acted to overturn the will of the local voters.

Conservative voters have justifiably screamed when the Feds (Judicial or Justice Department) moved to stall or overturn the vote of Californians to institute a ban on racial quotas, and Prop. 187 that placed limits on public services available to illegal immigrants, and many other examples.

Now that conservatives have nominal control of the Justice Department they are doing exactly the same thing they deplored in the Clinton administration - using the power of the federal government to overturn



the wishes of the voters of a state.

This is a good example of my contention that neither conservatives nor liberals are friends of the individual – each will use the power of the government to overturn the wishes of the people with which they disagree.

Personally, although I favor the right of a woman to abort a fetus until the date at which a fetus develops a cognitive brain wave, I believe that the Supreme Court overstepped its boundaries in deciding Roe vs. Wade...that decision should have gone to the states under the 10th Amendment to the Constitution.

(“The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”)

Conservatives, who demanded more attention to the 10th Amendment during the Clinton administration, now silently turn their backs when they are in charge and THEIR policies are to be imposed by the federal government. So much for the Conservative philosophy of Thomas Jefferson, “That Country governs best which governs least” that Conservatives are so prone to spout.

Can you say, “Hypocrisy?”

Some states will ban abortion, some will not, but the “Right to Privacy” (which does not exist anywhere in the Constitution) was invented out of whole cloth to devise a federal right to abortions that does not exist. Some states will permit physician-assisted suicide, and some states will ban it – but a citizen has the right to move to states that comport with their philosophy.

I had hopes that a President, who had been the Governor of a state, would be more sensitive to the 10th Amendment, but I was obviously mistaken. There is more and more evidence that Potomac fever has a negative impact on conservative and liberal governors alike.

We need to have as many moral experiments competing in our culture as we do economic ones. Different states have different views on how to tax business, so business moves to and from states as the business climate changes in a state – there is no reason why individuals should not also seek cultures that are favorable to their life beliefs. States do not pass punitive tax laws because they know businesses are free to move, and States will not pass punitive social laws for the same reason.

Ours is a pluralistic society with a common culture, but with vastly different

politics. The politics of Vermont and Wisconsin do not comport with those of Alabama in any way, shape, manner, fashion or form. You can bet that unless we are absolutely certain that all of our living standards are so perfect that we can impose them on others through the barrel of a gun, then options should be given.

Our country has many ideas that are commonly shared, but we have a number of ideas that are closely contested in society and the voting booth. We have solved all of the really easy problems with common laws against murder, robbery, rape, and other problems...we now must solve those problems where our culture is evenly split.

It should not be asking too much in what we like to think of as a free society, to permit states to try experiments without unnecessary interference from the far away federal government.

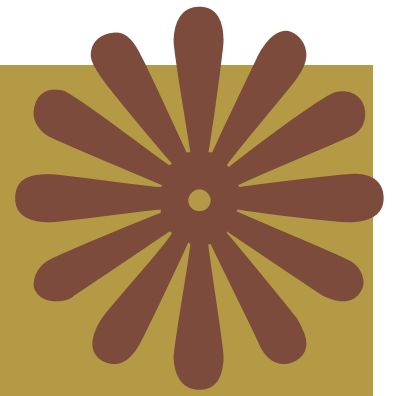
Both the California medical marijuana and the Oregon doctor-assisted suicide laws are designed to ease the pain of terminal people.

Is easing pain of the dying too much to ask? It is for some moralistic Conservatives who wish to impose their morals on those who do not share them.

Liberals know what is good for you, and intend to impose their concept of goodness. Conservatives know what is bad for you and intend to force you to avoid what they consider bad.

A pox on both their houses.

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“Absurdity,
n.: A
statement
or belief
manifestly
inconsistent
with one’s
own
opinion.”

—
Ambrose
Bierce

