

## Free Press Viewpoint

# Bit by bit we drift toward police state

Bit by bit, America drifts and slides toward becoming a high-tech police state.

Bit by bit, freedoms slip away.

And it always sounds like a good idea.

There is no enemy on the left – or on the right. The threat comes from the bureaucracy, the security apparat, from authoritarian thinkers on either side of the aisle.

Think this is silly?

Then why are all the supposedly conservative Republicans in Topeka patting themselves on the back for passing a law forcing all Kansans to show a photo ID card before they can vote? Election fraud's never been a problem here.

What's next?

Roving checkpoints where police ask for our citizenship papers, as in some communist dictatorship from the Cold War?

Oh, we call those drunk-driver check points. Hunting license checkpoints. Drug interdiction lanes.

If you think our liberties are not fading, try to get on an airplane without your ID.

If you're stopped for some traffic infraction, notice that the officer is likely to chat you up. He may ask where you've been or where you're going. If your answer is hesitant, he might ask if you'd mind him searching the car.

It's loads of fun, having your car unpacked and dismantled while you sit beside the road.

The other day, Homeland Security agents swept in and took over the train depot in Savannah, Ga. They stopped and searched anyone who entered, whether they intended to board a train or not.

Who knows if the Transportation Security Administration has that authority. But rail security sounds like a good idea.

Government computers track your movements, your bank accounts, your life. And the government can access private computers – at the phone company, bank, credit-card company, airlines, a hundred other firms – and track the rest of your ways.

All of this is done for the best reasons. For our own good.

Airport security is vital in the age of terrorism. Transportation Security agents, someone points out, have never caught a terrorist. They have "caught" thousands of people for minor criminal offenses, however.

Isn't election security "vital to democracy?" How did we ever get by without it for two centuries. Still, it sounds like "a good idea." Same for "enhanced" border security, tracking not only the comings and goings of foreigners, but of Americans.

Your bank is under orders to track your finances, especially any cash you might come across, and report if you exceed limits. You might be a criminal, drug dealer or tax evader.

And we all want them caught, right?

But when does "enhanced" security impinge on our rights, especially to privacy? When is enough way too much?

Will we wake up one morning and find out that, instead of the government serving us, with all those computers, cameras, records and files, that we must serve the government?

If that day comes, when it comes, it will be far too late to complain. Records will be made; action taken.

No, the time to defend liberty, as always, is today. Each policy, from the grossly misnamed "Patriot Act," to the latest "voter security" laws, needs to be questioned.

The best level of government involvement in our lives is the least possible. We need to avoid the point where ever-tighter security of all kinds becomes a straightjacket for America.

Ask questions today, not tomorrow. – Steve Haynes

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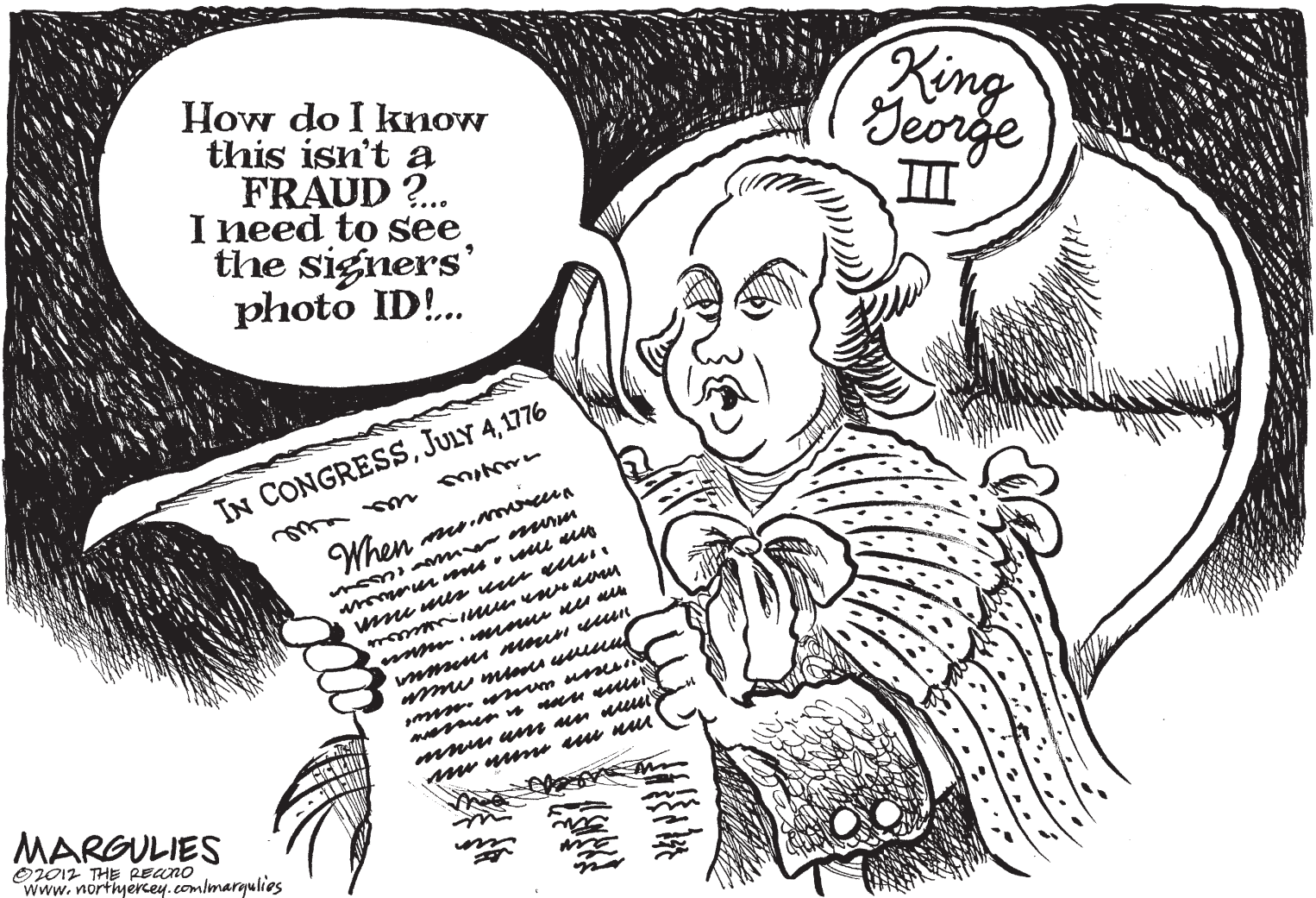
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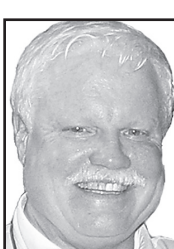
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# Sweet tea divides country

The following column, which originally ran in the Colby Free Press June 2, 2011, won first place for humorous columns in the National Newspaper Association's Better Newspapers Contest. The editorial at left, which first appeared April 27, 2011, won first place for editorial writing.



Steve Haynes

• Along the Sappa

This column is about lines that divide the country.

Not the Mason-Dixon line, which divides North from South back east. It's kinda irrelevant out here, except that in an accident of history, it also serves as (approximately) the border between Kansas and Nebraska. It runs just 13 miles from my house.

That's because Kansas was to have come into the Union as a slave state, part of a long-time compromise that kept an uneasy balance in the U.S. Senate for the first half of the 19th century.

Abolitionists from the North colonized and eventually controlled Kansas, however, leading to a decade of border warfare and eventually, 150 years ago, the Civil War. After Kansas was admitted as a free state, you see, the South could see the handwriting on the wall.

But that is dry, historical stuff. Today, we're going to talk about the Sweet Tea Line and the Green Chili Line. And if there's time, maybe the Firefly Line.

In Yankee states, even the more northern border states such as Missouri or Kentucky, you can go into a restaurant and order iced

tea and it will come unsweetened, maybe with some of those little sacks of sugar or sugar substitute.

In the South, diabetics fear ordering tea with lunch. In the South, they just assume you want sugar. My son-in-law, who lives in Georgia, likes "unsweet" tea, and he always orders it that way. He gets sweet tea half the time anyway.

The Sweet Tea Line, best I can figure out, is somewhere around the border between Tennessee and Kentucky, give or take a county or two. By the time you get to Texas and the Gulf States, best taste your tea first.

Then there is the Green Chili Line. It's been blurred a little in recent years, but generally it runs north and south through the High Plains. In New Mexico, Colorado, southern Wyoming, Arizona and west, no self-respecting Mexican restaurant would think of not serving green chili, that wonderful concoction of fresh chopped chilis, onion, garlic and (usually) pork, with (sometimes) potatoes or tomatoes thrown in.

Drive east from Colorado, and you'll have a

hard time finding anything but red chili, made with ripe, dried chilis, beef or pork, with or without tomatoes, and (shudder) maybe even beans.

Out west, by the way, traditionally, in the Southwest, you get a choice. The server will ask, "red or green." Or you can order "Christmas," by which they mean one color on half the plate and the other on the other. Yum.

Growing up in Kansas, I was innocent of green chili until we moved to southern Colorado some 31 years ago. I grew to love the green, which can be mild or hot, with varied ingredients as noted. But nearly always good.

In New Mexico, it's pretty much the state food.

And the Firefly Line? In most of Kansas, kids wait for warm summer nights when they can chase and capture those fascinating little glowing creatures. Not in Denver, or most of the mountain West.

The Firefly Line runs somewhere between Atwood and St. Francis, it seems. West of there, they are rare or wholly absent. Oberlin and Hoxie seem to have plenty, while Colby and Atwood have a few.

'Tis a pity children of the West are deprived of this simple pleasure, but they seem to find other things to do.

Like eat green chili and drink unsweet tea.

Steve Haynes is president of Nor'West Newspapers. When he has the time, he'd rather be reading a good book or casting a fly.

# Can states opt out? Ask Arizona

The U.S. Constitution requires that states remain republics and gives the federal government authorization to mandate that, in Article IV, section 4, but does it work the other way?

Can the states require that the federal government remain a republic and not turn into a socialist state? With the Affordable Care Act, one-seventh of the economy is turned over to the federal government.

Such is the question posed by Arizona in a new initiative that just qualified for the November ballot. If passed it would give Arizonians two ways of ignoring federal law that exceeds the constitutional powers of the federal government as identified in the U.S. Constitution – either by vote of the Arizona Legislature with the signature of the governor, or by the people through a ballot measure.

All other powers "are reserved to the States, or to the people," as noted in Amendment 10 of the Constitution. Arizona acknowledges the U.S. Constitution as "the supreme law of the land" but will add to her state constitution language prohibiting the U.S. Constitution from being violated by any government, including the federal government.

One of the reasons that the states took three years to ratify the Constitution, as submitted by the Constitutional Convention in 1787, was their paranoia of big government. Having expelled British tyranny, the last thing they wanted was to have it return in an American form. They wanted a list of "thou shalt nots" – things that the federal government could never do to them under any circumstances. They called it a Bill of Rights.

In the 10th Amendment, they made it clear that all power not listed belonged to the states, so the "Arizona take" is clearly constitutionally implied. The federal government is to act

## Other Opinions

• Harold Pease  
Liberty Under Fire

only in the 17 areas listed in the Constitution. The word health, or anything like it, is absent, so is clearly a state issue.

Regardless of the Supreme Court ruling and Justice John Robert's judicial legislation, the federal government has stolen state authority and in doing so has violated the Constitution.

Both democracy and socialism are hostile to the basic elements of a republic, which is decidedly weighted toward limited government, based upon natural inalienable rights, and favoring individual differences rather than absolute equality in its philosophical orientation.

How far into socialism we have traveled and at what point we are no longer a republic no one can say. At what point does gray become black or pink become red? Certainly one law turning over a seventh of the economy to the federal government is a giant step from a republic and should concern all. It does Arizona.

It isn't just the one issue of health care where Arizona is concerned, but the pattern of the never-ending enlargement of the powers of the federal government, at the expense of state prerogatives, and the 10th Amendment, that is transforming the federal government from a republic, as understood by the founders, into something else.

It is constitutional defilement to them; the use of Amendment 10 is central to the restora-

tion of freedom from government and the return of checks and balances – of which state jurisdiction is an essential element – before all power is housed at the federal level and we are no longer free.

Examples of federal overreach are everywhere. Proponents of this change in the Arizona Constitution cite federal speed limits and the federal ban on incandescent light bulbs as examples of other intrusions into state power ("Arizona's Secession-lite plan," by Alex Seitz-Wald, July 6, 2012) but they could list dozens more.

This has to stop, they contend, and with an overreaching compliant court, they are rightfully using the 10th Amendment tool to do so. Certainly in upholding the 10th Amendment to the Constitution other states should join them.

Dr. Harold Pease has dedicated his career to studying the writings of the founding fathers and applying them to current events. He teaches history and political science at Taft College. To read more of his articles, go to [www.LibertyUnderFire.org](http://www.LibertyUnderFire.org).

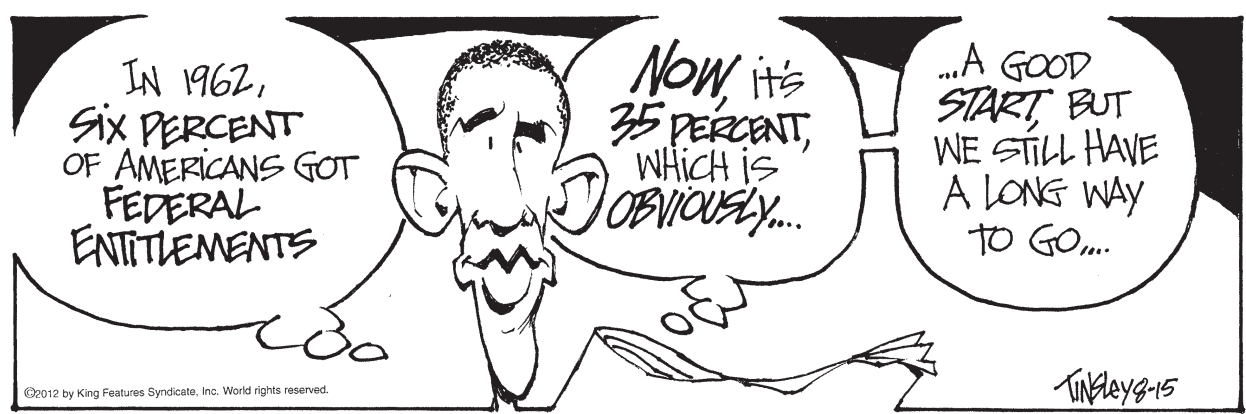
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## Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley



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