



Contrary to popular opinion;
STOP THE MONETARY HANDOUTS!

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“Who the Author of this Production is, is wholly unnecessary to the public, as the Object for Attention is the DOCTRINE ITSELF, not the MAN. Yet it may not be necessary to say, that he is unconnected with any Party, and under no sort of influence public or private, but the influence of reason and principle.” Thomas Paine, Feb.14th, 1776.

“The lessons of history, confirmed by the evidence before me, show conclusively that continued dependence upon relief induces a spiritual and moral disintegration fundamentally destructive to the national fiber. To dole out relief in this way is to administer a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit...” Franklin Delano Rossevelt

This issue of Common Sense is going to broach the sorely misnamed and misunderstood subject called homelessness. This label oversimplifies and sugar coats a much deeper and more serious problem, and that problem is drug and alcohol abuse. So when we speak of “homeless” we’re mostly speaking of drug and alcohol addicts. For perspective, Common Sense would like to offer a couple of examples of how this misnamed illusion works.

The first example is of a “homeless” woman. She sits in a wheelchair outside of a local coffee shop with a blanket and a beggars bowl in her lap. She positions herself quite prominently as to not go unnoticed. She displays a cardboard sign, childishly written in crayon that reads something like-“please help, I am homeless.” She wears a sad and pitiful expression on her face. She quietly implores passersby for handouts. She has become quite skilled at generating sympathy and money.

The second example is of an older street savvy guy that has by all appearances won over and is now coaching a couple of young runaway girls. They have also learned the fine art of cardboard signage. It reads-“we are homeless, please help feed our family.” They portray themselves as victims of some unfortunate circumstance and implore people to part from their spare change. They are not yet seasoned, but seem to be growing more and more comfortable with the degradations of pan-handling.

Innocent enough, wouldn't you say? These poor “homeless” and less fortunate people are in need of help to get back on their feet. No harm in giving them a few dollars for a good meal and a warm place to spend the night. It's the least any civic minded person could do, right?

Not so quick on the trigger! And Common Sense should tell you why. At the end of the day Lady Wheelchair can stand up and walk. There is physically nothing wrong with her legs. But, because she pretends to be a cripple, she actually has become one, even if it is in her own mind. The persona is too valuable to give up, it makes good money, much better than minimum wage. She unabashedly has used her imagined handicap to supplement her welfare check, her State Disability Insurance and food stamps. Her little illusion has become utterly real as it now supports her addiction to various pharmaceuticals and street drugs. Her State stipends are more than adequate to feed her, so do you see the misfortune of giving money?

What about the unfortunate “family”? In actuality they have no lack of places to go to get help. There are plenty of food kitchens and shelters to help them off the street. They have no functional reason to be sitting there begging. They too are receiving government assistance. So why are they playing the victim game? DRUGS, folks. That is the long and short of it. These kids I am referring to still look to be in fairly good shape, but handout money is feeding their drug habits not their bellies or their souls. With the street money they are getting, it is unlikely they will find a way out. They most likely will join the long-goners who are so strung out on heroin, meth, alcohol, psyche drugs or other dangerous substances that they are unable to pursue any avenue of help. Instead, they sleep in the street, urinate and

defecate in neighborhood parks, into city street drains or in the confines of Bay Area Rapid Transit stairwells.

It is a sad state of affairs, but Common Sense tells you that you would be doing them a much greater service if you did not give them monetary handouts. Your money is not helping. There are in reality very few truly “homeless” on the streets of America, it is a misnomer, most are drug and alcohol addicts. That’s how they got there. What you are doing is condoning and enabling their self-destruction. It is a very long and tough road back from the brink for these people. There are services and many caring professionals that do know the facts regarding “homelessness” and they do not beg-off and sympathize. Let these professionals do their job. It takes a will of steel to help them, not sympathy. Contrary to popular opinion; COMMON SENSE says: STOP THE HANDOUTS!

If you want or feel the need to help, Common Sense should lead you to give to organizations such as those that can truly make a difference. Give to an organization dedicated to feeding or housing these addicts. Many street addicts are ex-serviceman who acquired their addictions via psychiatric drugging and/or street drugs while serving in the military. Donate to a worthwhile Veterans group or drug rehabilitation program. That will help with eliminating “homelessness”, monetary hand outs will not.

Common Sense 2014, Richard Rensberry

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