

[Why bureaucratic diktat just doesn't work](#) [1]

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What we have here, with the bureaucrats trying to make rules for us, is analogous with the security problems faced by computing devices. Yes, we can have lots of very clever people trying to stop us do something, trying to guide us into the path of righteousness, but there are billions of us and we'll almost always find a way around the rules being imposed upon us.

Thus computers still get infected with viruses and you can still get a toy with your [Happy Meal](#) [3] in San Francisco. The background here is that the local politicians decided that having a toy with a hamburger meal was just tempting the little ones into having a hamburger. Naughty, tsk tsk.

So, they said you can no longer give away a toy with a hamburger meal.

The reaction has been that, OK, we won't give away a toy with a hamburger meal. You make a 10cent donation to charity alongside the purchase of a hamburger meal and you can have the toy. What a neat little solution you might think.

Except, it gets better than that. Previously, if you just wanted the toy and a salad (or something similarly defined as "healthy" for the little one) you could buy whatever food you wanted and also pay \$2,18 for the toy. Cheap at the price as anyone with young children can tell you. However, now, you cannot: you can only have the toy for that 10 cents plus the price of the greasy hamburger meal that comes with it. It is now toy plus unhealthy food as the only option.

This isn't what the bureaucrats wanted at all. But it is what they got. And of course there's more than a sneaking suspicion that the new system has been deliberately designed to thumb a nose at the bureaucrats.

But the basic lesson is that we are, all together, in aggregate, cleverer than the bureaucrats. And so we will always win over whatever rules they come up with. Which is why they really should leave their prejudices at home, stop making such rules and allow us to get on with it as we wish in the first place.

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