This is about where we tell the government to *!$% off isn't it? Right off? [1]

Written by | Sunday 25 August 2013

All will know that I am a very peaceful, calm and contented sort of chap. So it is with a certain sense of betraying that peaceful persona that I now need to tell you that I've entirely blown my top. It's not that the specific design of mobile phones that we are allowed to purchase or not legally is all that much of a concern to liberty and freedom. Rather, it's the entirely insufferable assumptions behind this mooted ban on certain models [2]:

> UK officials are considering banning the sale of small mobile phones designed to resemble car key fobs. A government spokesman told the BBC that it was discussing the issue with the National Trading Standards Board and the Serious Organised Crime Agency. In the meantime the NTSB has asked retailers to stop selling the products.

It is an offence to have a mobile phone in a prison. So yes, I can understand that the prison authorities aren't all that happy with the idea that easily concealable mobile phones are available out here in the free world for they might be so concealed and thus smuggled into the prisons where to have one is an offence. But that is where it should end: with the prison authorities being unhappy that they've now got to check people more intensively (and invasively) to ensure that these phones are not so smuggled. Even the thought that we should all be denied a fun little trinket because the prison authorities cannot stop smuggling is an outrage. An outrage that certainly I think that people should be fired for having even dared utter.

For this is entirely the point of this whole prison thing: it's not just that they inside them are not free it's that we outside them are indeed free. Free and at liberty to purchase any damn fool model of mobile phone, gadetry or tchotchke that our little hearts might desire. And it's most certainly not the job of those policing that dividing line between free and unfree to deprive us on the outside of our freedoms in order to make their lives easier.

I'm sure it's an offence to be out of your cell after locking up time too: but we've not got the bureaucrats roaming the country insisting that all of us go to bed at 9 pm do we? We are not denied cake because files can be hidden in it.

This attempt should be greeted with a very British flick of two fingers at whichever and whatever employee of the State you happen to meet next.

The only saving grace is that these fools are still ignorant of the Streisand Effect [3]. The tech publications [4] and boards are full of people who have only just found out about these mobiles and are buying them by the bucketful. And by morning there won't be a family member or associate of a prisoner who also doesn't know about them.

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