

There are two kinds of citizens in the world. One believes that laws are a hindrance and detests the mere thought of authority. The other enjoys restriction and has strong conviction in his government's choices. Who's right and who's wrong? Are laws enforced for the better or for the worse?

In Uganda, Africa, there has been civil unrest since the early 1980's. Ugandan government has sent their military against two rebel groups, the Lord's Resistance Army and the Allied Democratic Forces. Natives have been caught in the midst of the civil war. Men, women, and children have been abducted, slaughtered, and beaten. Their villages have been burned and their homes pillaged. These crimes have gone unpunished and there has been no compensation for the damages caused. Imagine a world without laws.

From 1922 to 1991, the Soviet Union was a ruling socialist state. Under the rule of Joseph Stalin, the government assumed control over existing businesses, collective farms were established, and the country developed a powerful industrial economy. The central communist party controlled every aspect of production. Millions died due to famines and political persecutions. Imagine a world controlled.

It seems to go from one extreme to another. Is there a happy medium? The answer is yes. In America, our system of checks and balances ensure that no branch of government receives too great of power and the rule of the people determines who is in office. Laws are passed and enforced to shield Americans from murder, rape, tyranny, theft, and fraud. There are also rules set that look after our well-being and health such as limits on child labor, alcohol consumption, and the purchasing of tobacco products. We have constitutional rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. In America, laws are created as an enhancement, not a restriction, to these rights.

The two kinds of citizens have a false sense of their government's place. The rule of law enables society to run in an ordered manner and protect those it is enforced upon. It is inhumane and unjust to control another human and it is just as wrong to not save those who suffer. A nation requires the balance of freedom and fair limitations to shelter their inhabitants. Lynn Beth Neylon once said, "You are a human being. You have rights inherent in that reality. You have dignity and worth that exist prior to law." That should never be forgotten.