

who now, more than 50 years later, claim the mission was a mistake.

After all it was the Germans who started the war; who murdered

family places severe limitations on what that represents.

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It's Not About Smokers' Choices

The Montgomery County Council's recent ban on smoking in restaurants has been criticized repeatedly as paternalistic ["Montgomery Passes Smoking Ban," front page, March 3]. This criticism is fundamentally misconceived.

Council member Nancy Dacek, who voted against the ban, argued that the government ought not interfere with a smoker's choice for the smoker's own good, because once the government regulates self-destructive behavior there's no stopping point. The next ban might be on McDonald's Big Macs or Burger King Whoppers. In short, paternalism is hazardous to our liberty and privacy.

But the purpose of the ban is not to protect smokers from themselves. It is to protect nonsmokers

and restaurant workers.

To be paternalistic, the law would have to restrict smokers' liberty under circumstances where the only harm prevented would have befallen the smokers themselves. The dangers of secondhand smoke are beyond dispute. Smokers do not puff solely at their own peril but also at the peril of those seated at nearby stools and tables.

I agree that government should not restrict a citizen's liberty to act as she pleases when she harms only herself. I stand with John Stuart Mill and Nancy Dacek and oppose paternalistic government. But Montgomery County's smoking ban is not paternalistic because it doesn't just protect me from myself.

THADDEUS MASON POPE
Washington

... And Tax Cutting in D.C.

What they regarded as necessary legislation. A constitutional amendment could not be so easily evaded, though they would surely try, and turn adherence to the Constitution into an accounting exercise in the process. In the name of increasing fiscal responsibility, this proposal would far more likely achieve the opposite. The House should vote it down.

finances of Social Security or restructuring Medicare. The power could be used to achieve all manner of policy objectives having nothing to do with the tax burden. To score a political point, the sponsors would bend a balanced Constitution dangerously out of shape. The government faces a grave fiscal future that the current budget surplus masks. The

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