

litter barrels in parks, why we have smokers smoking in front of no smoking signs as if compelled to defy. That is why we have people looking on with indifference while authority figures such as police or teachers (two prime targets) wrestle with trying, even potentially dangerous, situations. That is why teachers are the main target in most cases when a student decides to carve a name for him or herself in a blaze of infamy.

It is that assault on society's core — the ability to censure proscribed behavior which indicates the initial glimmerings of trouble ahead. Any number of individuals or groups, social clubs, legal societies of one kind or another, to mention but a few are all busily trying to push back the bounds making formerly unacceptable behavior suddenly acceptable. Laws are challenged, occasionally in open defiance, and soon the Latin proverb of *Judicandum est legibus non exemplis* — "Judgement should be according to the laws, not the precedents" — has considerably less application. Soon the

perpetrator has more rights than the victim, and with that a noticeable drop in resolve becomes apparent. The ultimate victim? — the same one discussed by Hobbes, Rousseau and Locke — and encountered by every society — the problem of order.

Somehow society's members must be convinced that when laws and the ability to enforce them are assailed, so is society's legitimacy. The answer to the problem of order is law, with all the support for legitimate authority and all the legal institutions that go with it. Or was W.S. Gilbert, writing in 1880, more of a prophet than he envisioned when he said, "A policeman's lot (here include all authority figures) is not a happy one." Indeed!

J.C. Roenspies  
Publications Officer