



LA's New Crack Epidemic

By: Ed Driscoll – February 7, 2013

This is The City. And it's falling apart.

Linking to the above video from Reason TV, Glenn Reynolds writes, "Have you noticed that the more time and energy cities put into things like banning big sodas or plastic grocery bags, the worse jobs they do at things that used to be considered basic functions of government?"

Two years ago, when a mayor on the other side of the country was much more focused on eliminating trans fats and "global warming," rather than bedbugs and local snow removal in the midst of a massive blizzard, Victor Davis Hanson dubbed that sort of mystical worldview "The Bloomberg Syndrome."

It is a human trait to focus on cheap and lofty rhetoric rather than costly, earthy reality. It is a bureaucratic characteristic to rail against the trifling misdemeanor rather than address the often-dangerous felony. And it is political habit to mask one's own failures by lecturing others on their supposed shortcomings. Ambitious elected officials often manage to do all three.

The result in these hard times is that our elected sheriffs, mayors, and governors are loudly weighing in on national and global challenges that are quite often out of their own jurisdiction, while ignoring or failing to solve the very problems that they were elected to address.

Quite simply, the next time your elected local or state official holds a press conference about global warming, the Middle East, or the national political climate, expect to experience poor county law enforcement, bad municipal services, or regional insolvency.

As Walter Olson of the CATO Institute recently noted, there's been some talk that L.A.'s Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa might be replacing Ray LaHood as President Obama's transportation secretary. If tapped, I'm sure Villaraigosa would toil diligently to implement the same conditions nationwide that have made Los Angeles the city it is today.

Update: And speaking of the Bloomberg Syndrome, no sooner do I drop the hammer on this post, than I come across this item, currently atop *Hot Air*: "Loathsome nanny-state mayor now considering banning styrofoam." At the end of 2006, the *New York Post* rounded up what is very likely a partial list of items the New York City Council banned or considered banning. The newspaper viewed it as a warning to its readers; Mayor Mike sees it as a checklist to be completed before leaving office.

