

Cab Gab
by Abe Mittleman

No Left Turn?

This is really nuts! No doubt you have noticed a “No Left Turn Sign” for east bound motorists at the corner of 34th Street and 8th Avenue. This sign is in effect at all times day and night, all days of the week. So where is this traffic, most of which is east bound after exiting the Lincoln Tunnel supposed to go?

Of course you can still turn left on 10th Avenue or south on 9th Avenue. But, once you go across 9th Avenue you are trapped and cannot make any turns until you reach 5th Avenue. Not only does this create massive delays on 34th Street, it creates “Spill Back” across the intersection of 34th Street and 8th Avenue.

I don't know what genius made the decision to put this “No Left Turn” sign at this location. But it would have been much wiser to allow the traffic to turn with an arrow. I'm sure most would agree with this.

No Car Saturdays

The Mayor is calling it an experiment. Closing Lafayette Street north into Park Avenue from the Brooklyn Bridge to 72nd Street from traffic with limited places for traffic to cross is another hair brain idea.

Well, it's only on Saturday morning from 7am to 1pm. But, what scares me is that regardless of its outcome the mayor will call it a huge success and expand the program.

This will mean more frustration for taxi drivers. We will be limited in the routes we can take. We will be tied up in traffic that is created as a result of the street closings. This will cause us to lose valuable time, business and money. Our passengers will be inconvenienced and have to pay more that they should.

Here again, as with the restrictions on Broadway between 42nd Street and 34th Street, the redesign of 9th ave from 23rd Street south to 14th Street, our privilege that we pay for with “Motor Vehicle Tax,” to use all the roads for business is being infringed upon.

Taxis in China

Well if you think your privacy is being invaded with GPS, listen to what they have in China.

The Wall Street Journal reported that not only does the GPS in the taxis track a taxi where about, but hidden microphones can be remotely turned on by the authorities enabling them to listen to conversations. They can also remotely turn off the taxi's engine in order to stop the car.

The Chinese authorities say this is to protect against terrorism during the Olympics and to protect drivers. This may well be true. But just that this is possible is scary. How long will it be before they do this here? How long will it be before you have to keep your mouth shut so as not to say one profane word that will be detected?

The late George Carlin made us laugh with the seven words you cannot say on TV. Well perhaps there will be a time when if you say them anywhere, especially while driving a taxi, you're in big trouble.