



Outlawed But Unmoved

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He plied his trade without shame. Through the years, he was again and again officially rebuked for his conduct. He went ahead full throttle anyway, laughing in the face of danger.

Once, enforcers even tossed him in jail for a night to deter him from his dastardly deeds, deeds that were so galling and offensive to . . . well, to competitors in the same business who had decades of regulatory tyranny on their side.

On the *Liberty* website, Bruce Ramsey [recalls the story](#). Born Michael Patrick Shanks, Mike officially changed his name to Mike the Mover.

Why? For the advertising value.

Maybe also the annoyance value.

His job was helping people move. Illegal, because the state of Washington doled out a strictly limited number of professional licenses. And for half a century it was virtually impossible to get one.

“Mike had started in 1981 with one truck,” says Ramsey. “When he painted his name on his trucks his competitors noticed him and complained. In 1987 the state cited him. In 1992 it hit him with a cease-and-desist order. In 1993 it slapped him with a court injunction. . . . He ignored them all. [State] enforcers wrote 89 tickets, each a gross misdemeanor, for operating without a license.”

Where Mike the Mover led, others followed. Finally, the regulators eased up and began licensing many more people to move for a living.

Not Mike the Mover. When he was finally offered a license, “I told them to shove it.”

Thanks, Mike.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.