

# The Little Engine That Could, But Chose Not To

There once was a Little Engine.

It wasn't the biggest or the strongest engine, but it was a good little engine. It loved being useful and it loved helping when it could. This didn't pay well, and the Little Engine often ran short of fuel.

The Little Engine was told about a job for which a train was needed. A job that paid well. A job that was said to be helpful; hauling government troops and their equipment over a steep mountain to their next destination.

It wouldn't be an easy job but would push the Little Engine to its limits.

All its friends encouraged the Little Engine to do what they knew it was capable of. They knew it could get that job hauling troops over the mountain, even though the mountain was very steep, and usually only much more powerful engines did the job. They knew the Little Engine had heart, and a reserve of strength. The engine's friends kept saying "*We know you can do it! It's a respectable job; supporting the troops! It pays well! You can do it! You can do it!*"

But the little engine knew that the troops were armed government employees, used to impose the opinions of political bullies on others, by breaking things and killing people in places they have no right to be. The little engine knew that the troops were paid by a type of theft called "taxation", and that the pay for hauling the troops over the mountain would be obtained the same way.

The Little Engine had ethics and principles.

The Little Engine knew it *could*, but knew it *shouldn't*.

The Little Engine refused the job and was shut down by the federal government for being a suspected terrorist sympathizer.

The End.

Paraphrased from *Jurassic Park's* Dr. Ian Malcolm: "*Humans were so preoccupied with whether or not they **could**, they didn't stop to think if they **should**.*"