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Frontiersman

The Truth Is Within You
September 1998

High Dictation Television

Sam Aurelius Milam III

I recently saw a news report¹ on the new High Definition Television (HDTV) system that the government is mandating for future use. The system is to be imposed by regulatory edict, using the authority of the FCC. The present plan is that all TV signals will be digital by the year 2006. You might wonder why the change is mandatory. Here's a clue. At that time, all remaining TV broadcasts using present technology will go off the air. The present frequencies will be "returned to the government" and auctioned. The government plans to get as much as five to six billion dollars for those frequencies. That revenue has already been included in the budget projections that forecast a balanced budget. It's just barely possible that the change might not be entirely for our benefit.

The new TV system looks good, technically. It might even be better than the present one, depending upon what you mean by "better". However, that's the question, isn't it? Video equipment utilizing present technology will not process the new signals. The old signals will be gone forever. It will be necessary for you to buy new equipment or you won't be able to watch the programs that are broadcast.

I remember when I was a child, my father used to complain about "planned obsolescence". Advertisers kept trying to persuade us to throw away perfectly adequate stuff and replace it with new stuff that we didn't really need. That must not have been sufficiently lucrative, because "forced obsolescence" was invented. The manufacturers refused to support previous equipment. When parts and service were no

longer available, we were forced to throw away otherwise perfectly adequate stuff and replace it with new stuff that we shouldn't have needed. Now, we're entering a whole new era, the age of "bureaucratically dictated obsolescence". The government mandates the replacement of entire systems of perfectly adequate stuff, and its replacement with whole new systems that we shouldn't be required to need.

Millions of televisions and tons of other equipment will be stuffed into the already over-stuffed dumps. Tons of resources and megawatts of energy, sorely needed for other, more important things, will be expended building the new system. The waste economy now has bureaucratic sanction. It has truly come of age.

On the other hand, the government could stay out of it. The broadcasters could decide what they want to broadcast. The viewers could decide whether or not we want to buy new televisions, and which kind we want to buy. Both types of signals could be available simultaneously, just like AM and FM radio signals are available simultaneously, and UHF and VHF television signals are available simultaneously. With all those channels and nothing to watch anyway, there are plenty of channels that can be converted without mandating the conversion of them all. Then, the people could decide and maybe, some day, everybody would decide to have a high definition television. On the other hand, maybe a lot of people would decide that what we have now is good enough. Of course, if they did that, then we might not have a balanced federal budget.

A Sign of the Times?

Sam Aurelius Milam III

While I was writing the article about HDTV, I discovered that my spelling checker has the word *megadeaths*, but not the word *megawatts*. Interesting.

¹ The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, Tuesday, August 11, 1998

Where Does The Truth Lie?

Sam Aurelius Milam III

I went into the local Wal-Mart a few weeks ago and asked for a can of two-stroke engine oil. The lady looked at me like I had just spoken to her in Martian. Then she suddenly brightened. “Oh!” she said, “You mean two **cycle** engine oil!”

“No,” I said, “There’s no such thing as a two cycle engine. They’re all one cycle engines.”

She started looking nervous, like maybe she was suddenly in the Twilight Zone, and hurried toward a shelf of lubricant. The containers were labeled (you guessed it) “two cycle engine oil”. She seemed relieved by the labels and anxious to get back to stocking the shelves. I let her leave, and stood there pondering the labels.

When I was a child, my father taught me about internal combustion piston engines. There’s no such thing as a two cycle engine or a four cycle engine. They’re both one cycle engines. A cycle has occurred when something starts in a certain condition, goes through a series of changes, and returns to the initial condition. In a four stroke engine, the cycle consists of an intake stroke, a compression stroke, an expansion stroke, and an exhaust stroke. A two stroke engine also has one cycle. It consists of a compression stroke and an expansion stroke. Such sloppy use of our language is so widespread that I wonder how people manage to make themselves understood.

A local food store in my area has a section of bulk food. One barrel is labeled “Black Eyed Beans”. There’s no such thing. They’re black eyed **peas**, *Vigna unguiculata*, a member of the pea family. I asked a lady who works there and

Specialist

Sam Aurelius Milam III

There are many improvements that could be made in the American school system. However, I can suggest one that I believe would be more beneficial than most of the others.

There isn’t anything so specialized about high school subject matter as to prevent a reasonably intelligent and normally educated teacher from being able to teach any subject through the high school level. A good text book and some preparation, perhaps during the summer, is all that would be necessary to teach a new subject. A teacher could always call a technical specialist into the classroom, if that became necessary. However, the real subject of importance to a teacher shouldn’t be math, science, or literature. It should be the students. That being the

she said that she used to change the labels. They kept coming in wrong from the supplier. She eventually gave up.

I mentioned [last month](#) that ethnic cleansing isn’t what we see happening around the world. Cleansing happens when you remove some sort of contaminant. That’s what Hitler claimed to be doing when he killed the Jews — cleansing the human race of impurities. Why do we allow that same idea to slip back into our thinking now, when we see people being killed because of their “category”? There’s nothing “cleansing” about ethnic-based murder.

There are other examples, but these are sufficient to make the point. They all have in common a distortion or misrepresentation of the truth resulting from sloppy use of the language. A pea is called a bean. A stroke is called a cycle. Murder is redefined as a cleansing process. When people don’t notice the error, then the boundary between the error and the truth gradually disappears.

If this kind of thing can happen spontaneously, without anyone consciously intending a deception, imagine the deceptions that can be perpetrated by people intent upon deceiving us. Our language is diverse and adaptable. With it, we can convey truth, eloquence, and beauty. It’s also very well suited to the perpetration of lies and misinformation. Sloppy use of the language enhances this potential by promoting sloppy thinking, causing people to be vulnerable to deception and manipulation. We need to be more careful with our language. The inaccuracies and lies, if we say them long enough, will become indistinguishable from the truth. ¶

case, I believe that teachers ought to become experts not just in particular subject matter, but in their students.

I suggest an experiment. Some schools, instead of assigning teachers to specialties, rooms, or grade levels, should assign them to groups of students. A teacher should start out with a group of students in the first grade and remain the teacher of those students throughout their entire course of study, through high school graduation. Obviously, there would be students leaving and joining the group throughout its existence, but it would be the same group. The continuity, stability, and trust provided by the arrangement might prevent many of the problems with children that occur today. The education, in my opinion, would be superior to what we have today. ¶

Reprint from the Shenandoah Newsletter

Scan doe Lalihwisaks (He Who Looks For News)

The Occupation Forces taught me, when I was in their high school, that our people came across the Bering Strait approximately 10,000 years ago. I graduated from their high school 41 years ago.

Now they are finding evidence from their own studies that our ancestors were here 25,000 to 30,000 years ago.

Actually, we have been here for over 100,000 years, or as long as man has been man. And the reason the Occupation Forces attempt to make it very recent is to justify their stealing of our land and resources.

Genetic information taken from the remains of our ancestors does not agree with them, nor does the structure of our languages.

There is no question that the Native Peoples in the northern areas, called Eskimos, traveled back and forth with the peoples on the other lands, just as there is no question of international mingling and traveling at all the different levels of latitude, north and south of the dividing line called the equator.

Western Civilization, which includes the Occupation Forces of our lands, the English, French, Spanish, Jews and Egypt is very young, less than 7,000 years old, actually much less than a child in the time of human existence on Mother Earth. ∞

Letters to the Editor

My Friend Sam

Thanks for the good words in your little but very substantive publication. Many thoughts of yours are perfectly echoing my own views. Keep this up!....
—Peter; Vankleek Hill, Ontario

Dear Sam:

The [comments on rights](#) in the August issue are interesting. "Right" is a name often given to people's wishes or opinions. We often hear the phrases "God given right," "Human rights," "I know my rights," "right to (health care, subsistence or whatever)." Meanwhile, the argument as to what our rights really are or ought to be remains mired in a semantic swamp.

To paraphrase a portion of my Webster's 9th New Collegiate Dictionary, a right is the power or privilege to which one has just claim or is justly entitled--The property interest possessed under custom or law and agreement--Something that one may properly claim is due.

Thus, the legislature, the courts and the bureaucracy can all grant rights by law, custom or

Remedy

Sam Aurelius Milam III

I don't believe that the despicable actions of my white ancestors against the ancestors of today's red men cause white men alive today to owe a remedy to the red men alive today. The white men who committed those acts, and the red men who suffered them, are dead and gone.

However, the institutions are not dead and gone. The U.S. government that violated its agreements with the tribes is the same U.S. government that exists today. Those tribes are the same ones that exist today. Obligations between and among governments and institutions are just as real as obligations between and among natural human beings. I believe that the U.S. government has an obligation to provide restitution to the tribes. U.S. citizens might acquire an obligation by virtue of their citizenship. Tribal members might expect to share in the remedy that becomes available through their tribes.

The violations by the U.S. government are such that there might not be any adequate remedy. At the very least, I suggest that all federal land outside of Washington, D.C. should be returned to the native tribes. Hopefully, the very first act by the tribes will be the destruction of the stone carvings at Mt. Rushmore. They are, in my opinion, an arrogant desecration of sacred lands. They add insult to injury. ☞

regulation, even at the expense of others, however wrong. They do so, and are wrong much too often. We refuse to recognize the unjust rights of the privileged at our own peril. "It isn't fair" is no defense. The cliché that "might makes right" is true. If Liberty and freedom are our high priorities, the trick is to prevent some from gaining rights at other's expense and to grant only justly entitled rights--that is, earned rights or rights that do not obligate others. The Constitution and Bill of Rights made a start, but stopped far short of providing an adequate body of law in this regard.

Keep up the good work.

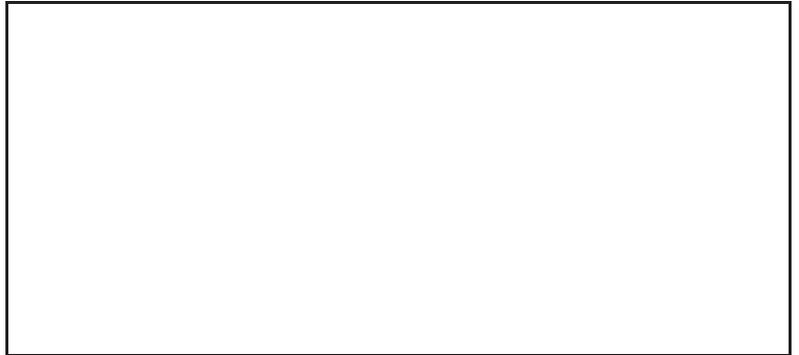
—Bob; Murphys, California

*If a legislature or a court has jurisdiction over a behavior, then you can engage in that behavior only when and as permitted by that court or legislature. That isn't a right. It's a privilege. A right is something that is within your ability, for which you **don't need permission**, and which will be customarily tolerated. Neither courts nor legislatures have the power to grant rights. They have the power to grant privileges.*
—editor



Nation in Distress

Parents will teach their children more by example than by instruction.



Buck Hunter Shoots Off His Mouth

Dear Buck

My wife and I would like to take a second honeymoon for our 50th wedding anniversary. Where do you think we should go?

—Want To Do It Right

Dear Want To Do It Right

Viagra Falls.

Sesame Suite

Bernie: Hey Burt!

Burt: Oh, no! Are you back again?

Bernie: What's yellow and does the quarter mile in 4 seconds?

Burt: I don't want to know.

Bernie: A fuel injected banana!

Burt: That's really stupid.

Sesame Suite is a production of the Children's Tunnelvision Workshop

Frontiersman

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More Funny Headlines

Forwarded by Sir John the Generous. Supposedly, these headlines actually appeared in real publications.

- Panda Mating Fails; Veterinarian Takes Over
- British Left Waffles on Falkland Islands
- Soviet Virgin Lands Short of Goal Again
- Red Tape Holds Up New Bridge
- Eye Drops off Shelf

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—editor

ument or publication in which you reprint my material.

Submissions — I solicit letters, articles, and cartoons for the newsletter, but I don't pay for them. Short items are more likely to be printed. I suggest that letters and articles be shorter than 500 words, but that's flexible depending on space available and the content of the piece. I give credit for all items printed unless the author specifies otherwise.

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—Sam Aurelius Milam III, editor