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Frontiersman

Facing the truth, however great the cost.
March 2002

Gone With The Gold

Sam Aurelius Milam III

I heard on the TV that the recently concluded Olympic Games cost two billion dollars. Two billion dollars? Maybe the report was wrong. Maybe not. I don't know for sure how much the Games cost, but I do know for sure that it was a lot and that it was misspent.

Imagine, if you will, all of the things that could have been done with so much money. Think of the toxic waste dumps that could have been cleaned. Think of what Habitat for Humanity could have built. Think of the Enron employees that could have been reimbursed. Consider the college scholarships that might have been granted. Think of the land mines and unexploded bombs that could have been removed in Afghanistan, the AIDS facilities that could have been built in sub-Saharan Africa, the flood damage that could have been repaired in Ethiopia. They could have rebuilt the pharmaceuticals plant in Khartoum. Watch the TV any day, and you will see situations on which the money could have been better spent. Instead, we spent it on a bread-and-circuses boondoggle that served only to distract people from the important issues, provide the government with yet another excuse to exercise it's growing police-state powers, leave behind another collection of unnecessary "venues", and fatten the wallets of people who probably already hire someone to carry their wallets.

You want Olympic Games? Fine. We can have Olympic Games, without the waste. All we need to do is build one or two permanent Olympic facilities, and have the Games in the same place each year. They don't move the UN after each session do they? Permanent Olympic facilities could be designed from scratch to provide all the advantages (permanent, trained workforce, "security", etc.) and avoid all of the disadvantages. What could be more logical?

Weapon of Choice

Sam Aurelius Milam III

For a long time now, concerns for children have provided an excuse for people with an agenda to increase the power of government. Does somebody want restrictions on what can be published?[1] Define "child pornography" and publishers no longer have a right to publish. They must be careful that what they're publishing doesn't violate the restriction. They have **permission** to publish whatever isn't prohibited. Does somebody want to regulate hiring practices? Define "child labor" and people no longer have a right to hire workers. They have **permission** to hire as permitted by regulations. Does somebody want to regulate who can buy a product? Impose an age limit on its use and customers no longer have a right to buy it. They must always be ready to demonstrate that they're qualified customers. They're **permitted** to buy as the authorities allow. The list seems endless, and it's all for the "good of the children".

Even though age limitations are entirely arbitrary, they might at least **seem** to avoid restricting adults, and impose restrictions only on children. However, they don't operate that way at all. The purchase of alcohol or tobacco is a good example. The reformers have enacted ID requirements as a prerequisite to such purchases, allegedly to prevent sales to children. Who has to show ID to buy alcohol or tobacco? Right. Adults do.

I'm tired of having children used as an excuse for the never-ending erosion of my liberty. I'm no longer willing to trade my liberty for the "good of the children". If the reformers can't find ways to protect children without stripping us of our liberty, then I say "don't protect the children". The liberty of the people is far more important than the well-being of the children.

[1] Remember, any restriction at all converts the right into a privilege.

Designing Nonsense

Sam Aurelius Milam III

When I was young, I was able to do most of the necessary maintenance and repairs on my car with a few simple hand tools. The occasions when I needed a "special" tool were scarce. I was largely independent of the licensed car repair institutions. My father claimed that, when he was young, he could often keep his car running with just bailing wire. They don't use bailing wire any more. It's plastic string now. It would surely melt if you tied it around an exhaust manifold. Of course, nowadays, you normally can't even see the exhaust manifold, much less tie anything around it.

The extraordinary complexity of automobile design today forces people to depend for car repairs and maintenance on professional auto mechanics. Most of the mechanics work for institutions that are licensed by the government. In addition to the loss of independence, there are other disadvantages. For example, in addition to repairing or maintaining your car, the people at those institutions just might report you to the authorities if they discover that you've been "tampering" with any of the mandated equipment. Of course, it's become so complex that you can't tamper with it anyway, so maybe that isn't much of a risk.

The reason for my annoyance at this particular time regarding the complexity of automotive design, which has been gradually escalating for decades, and the motivation for this particular article, is an advertisement that I saw recently. It was an advertisement for a new car, a BMW I believe. The back of the driver's seat has little air bags in it. There are detectors that sense steering wheel motion and lateral acceleration of the car. The detected information is used to inflate or deflate the little air bags, providing support for the driver, during turns.

Not only is the idea an outrageous overuse of technology, not only is it hideously overly complex (and thus overly inclined to failure), not only does it add unnecessarily to the already astronomical expense of the car, not only does it further increase the dependence of people on licensed repair facilities, it's a really stupid idea. If the driver is going around the corner so fast that he needs extra back support, then he's going around the corner way too fast. If he's not going around the corner that fast, then he doesn't need the extra back support. QED. Stupid idea.

Here's what I think. The automotive industry should declare a ten-year moratorium on all (or most) new car design activity. Except for alternative technologies, they should shut down their new car design facilities and just keep the current models in production for a while. Maybe, if we're lucky, they'd even resume production on some of those decades-old designs that were so easy to maintain. Meanwhile, they could send all the extra car designers to Afghanistan to figure out better ways to clear mine fields. They could tell them to figure out what to do about the world-wide problem of overpopulation, how to make fusion reactors work, how to make rail passenger service viable again, what to do about all those landfills, how to address the problem of resource depletion, what to do about global warming, or how to solve the problem of urban sprawl. There are thousands of better things that those designers could do instead of devising nonsense that is passed of as improvements in car design.

Teach Your Parents Well

Sam Aurelius Milam III

Reprint: This article appeared in the May 1994 issue.

On Tuesday, April 12, 1994, the MacNeil/Lehrer NEWSHOUR presented a segment comparing Toronto and Detroit, vis-à-vis the prevalence of crime. During the segment, Grace Fouche (of Detroit) expressed perplexity that her son, Sala, while improperly handling a gun had inadvertently killed a close friend. If you think education is dangerous, try ignorance. The young man was ignorant, and the fault is entirely that of his mother. He was ignorant because (as she revealed by her own testimony) she failed to either teach him how to safely handle a gun or make sure that some competent instructor did so. It's really stupid to teach your children everything except for what they really need to know. Guns exist and they aren't going to go away. Most people will probably encounter a gun at least once during a normal lifetime. If the woman doesn't see to the proper training and education of her children, who will? Perplexity is a poor consolation for failure.

Letters to the Editor

Sam,

I enjoy your newsletter very much. But I must request that you remove my name and address from your mailing list.

You see, I've found you on the internet and wish to save you the cost of a USPS stamp every month!

Thanks and best wishes,

—John; San Jose, California

Thank you. —*editor*

To: <frontiersman@ida.net>

Re: February's lead article. It is my opinion, based upon the news items regarding the intercepted terrorist messages, that there was sufficient knowledge not only to stop the attack before it happened, but also to identify the perpetrators. I believe the only reason the information will never be made public is that it would confirm my opinion. —Sir James the Bold

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Dear Mr. Aurelius

... I have decided that the only way to really effect a change is through the pen. I want to kill them all, but we know it doesn't work that way. Ask McVeigh, Koresh, the victims of the Ruby Ridge incident, any devout Southern boy, the list goes on and on. My sense of fair play demands retribution, but it does not seem to work that way. One day, if it does, I will go that way. At any rate, how are property prices up in that area? How bout in the mountains. I must have mountains to live in, and I need out of this state. Too damn oppressive. What's next? Brown shirts? SS or what? Hitler youth? We could call them Bush Youth. Give them daggers with elephants on them and outfit them with oil money. Fuckin bastards. I guess I rant and rave too much, so I will sign off. Thank you for the sub and the other cool stuff. —Name withheld

Here are examples of property currently for sale in this area: 1 1/4 acres, $83,900; 6 acres, $124,900; 10 acres, $114,900. Each piece of land has a house of one sort or another. Please note, this is river bottom land, not mountains. —*editor*

Hi Sam — I always look forward to your newsletter. Although your ideas at times seem fanatical, I somehow often agree. However, in your last issue I was shocked by your headline: "The people should always be more heavily armed than the police." If you really feel this way, why do we even have police? I don't know how to use a gun and wouldn't want to learn, nor would I want my wife or children using a gun. We pay taxes so that the police will protect us, and so we can spend our time on more productive and more enjoyable activities. Call me lazy, but I disagree with you this time!

—Tom; Redwood Shores, California

I didn't intend to suggest that you should be required to own a gun. Indeed, if you don't know how to use one, then you're better off without it. Of course, you're even better off learning to use it. My intended meaning is that the people, as a population, should be more heavily armed than the police. I'll go even further than that. The population must be prepared to defend itself against ***any*** *armed force that the government might send against the people. Thus, if the government uses army tanks and armed helicopters to attack a civilian residence near Waco, the people should thereafter arm themselves with anti-tank rocket launchers and surface-to-air guided missiles. It's the only way to have any hope at all of protecting the rights of the people from the otherwise inevitable destruction of those rights by the government. In any case, every individual should be able to make his own choice regarding gun ownership. Nobody should be either required to own a gun or prohibited from owning one.*

You certainly should have the right to determine if your children will have access to guns. However, I think that you should at least make sure that they are taught how NOT to use guns. The chances are that, sometime during his life, anybody will encounter a gun and handle it. Ignorance can be fatal. I reported one such case in "Teach Your Parents Well", in the May 1994 issue. I've reprinted that article in this issue.

Finally, it's foolish to rely on the police for protection. Not only are they unable to protect you, they're more dangerous than the other, non government, criminals. —*editor*

Help me defend liberty.

- Make and distribute extra copies of the *Frontiersman*.
- Publicize Pharos: http://www.ida.net/users/pharos/
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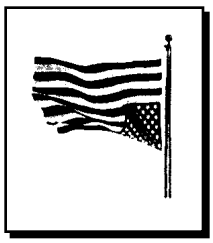

Nation in Distress

People will be much better protected by education than by regulation.

Buck Hunter Shoots Off His Mouth

Dear Buck

I'd like to look more sexy. Do you think Victoria's Secret might help? —Unsure

Dear Unsure

I don't know who she is. She hasn't told me her secret. I don't know if it will help you or not.

Acknowledgments

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• My thanks to Lady Helen the Gracious, Lady Shirley the Benevolent, Sir James the Bold, Sir John the Generous, Sir Donald the Elusive, and Eric, of Vacaville, California for their assistance. —editor

Newspaper Headlines in the Year 2035

Original source unknown. Forwarded by Steve, of Fremont, California

• Castro finally dies at age 112. Cuban cigars can now be imported legally but President Chelsea Clinton has banned all smoking.

• Spotted Owl plague threatens Western North America crops & livestock.

• Last remaining Fundamentalist Muslim dies in the American Territory of the Middle East (formerly known as Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon).

• Afghanistan still closed off. Physicists estimate it will take at least ten more years before radioactivity decreases to safe levels.

• George Z. Bush says he will run for President in 2036.

Frontiersman

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—Sam Aurelius Milam III, editor