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# Frontiersman

*Facing the truth, however great the cost.*

April 2010

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## Another Big Theory

Sam Aurelius Milam III

*The History Channel* presents some interesting material. It also presents some stupid things. On Tuesday, February 2, 2010, I saw one of the stupid things. I call it the Big Pull Theory. It isn't

as stupid as the Big Bang Theory<sup>1</sup> but it's still pretty stupid.

I was watching an episode of *How The Earth Was Made*. They were talking about the Marianas Trench and tectonic plates, in particular the Pacific Plate. The Pacific Plate is adjacent to various other geological features but, primarily, it's bounded on its west edge by the Marianas Trench and on its east edge by the East Pacific Rise. I don't know its size in miles but it's very large. It's the bottom of a large part of the Pacific Ocean between the vicinities of New Zealand, Japan, the Aleutian Islands, and the west coast of the American continents. That's a lot of rock and ooze.

The Pacific Plate moves at about two inches per year. That motion is what has caused the Hawaiian Island volcanoes to be a linear arrangement of separate volcanoes. The Pacific Plate moves over the stationary hot spot that causes the volcanoes. The Pacific Plate is being subducted at its interface with various other plates, primarily (apparently) the Filipino Plate. The subduction at the Filipino Plate is what forms the Marianas Trench. The stupid part of the program was a theory that was proposed as the reason for why the Pacific Plate moves. The theory is that the weight of the part of the Pacific Plate that's being subducted under the Filipino Plate (and maybe some other plates as well, I'm not sure) is pulling the Pacific Plate in uniform motion. According to that theory, the entire enormous mass of the Pacific Plate is being pulled across the mantle, under tension, without breaking, by the weight of its subducting edge.

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<sup>1</sup> *Cosmology and the Law of Parsimony*, Thursday, April 13, 1995, Sam Aurelius Milam III

The Pacific Plate is very heavy. In addition to its own weight, it bears the weight of the water that rests on top of it. Even if its coefficient of friction with the mantle is low, the frictional resistance to relative motion will still be very high. The force that would be required to pull the Pacific Plate across the mantle is enormous. The tensile strength that the Pacific Plate would have to possess in order to be pulled without breaking would be nearly infinite. I doubt if there's a material anywhere on Earth with such a high tensile strength. There might not be such a material anywhere in the universe. The theory that the Pacific Plate is being pulled across the mantle, under tension, without breaking, is a stupid theory.

An alternate stupid theory was also proposed on the program. That theory is that the Pacific Plate is being pushed across the mantle by material that is being forced upward at the East Pacific Rise. The Pacific Plate is large and thin, somewhat on the proportions of an egg shell. Material being pushed upward at its eastern edge would be more likely to buckle it than to move it. Big pieces of the plate might break off at the East Pacific Rise and pile up, forming a long, narrow island off of the west coast of the American continents. The only thing that's likely to move the Pacific Plate without breaking it is a magma current in the upper mantle. The Pacific Plate is probably drifting on just such a current.

I expect that the fault (no pun intended) lies not with the people who produced the program but with the scientists who they interviewed. I expect that the people who produced the program just reported what the scientists told them. After all, there's a long and well established tradition among allegedly educated scientists, who ought to know better, of proposing stupid theories. They're the same bunch of people who brought us the Big Bang Theory so the Big Pull Theory ought not to be a surprise. As I've noted before, getting a higher education often consists of learning more and more about less and less while understanding less and less about more and more.

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## Bicycle Dreams

Sam Aurelius Milam III

I first posted this idea on my personal website back in June of 2007. I've elaborated on the idea here far beyond what I originally posted on the website. Eventually, I'll update the material on the website with this presentation of the idea, or with something similar. The idea is just as relevant now as it was then.

I believe that there should be a coast-to-coast network of paved bicycle paths. The paths should be physically arranged in such a way as to discourage motorized traffic on them. They should be arranged with appropriate tunnels, bridges, and fences so that a bicyclist would never (or seldom) have to cross paths with motorized traffic. A good place for some of them would be alongside of the railroads. The grade of a railroad is seldom greater than 2%. Bicyclists would find it easy to get through mountainous regions on such paths.

A whole new commercial sector might develop along such bicycle paths. Every few miles, about as far apart as a bicyclist pulling a trailer could easily travel in one day, there might be bicycle hotels.<sup>1</sup> The bicycle hotels could cater to the needs of the bicyclists who used the paths.

<sup>1</sup> The word *motel* was originally formed from *motor* or *motorist* and *hotel*.

## Letters to the Editor

I really enjoyed the latest adventure of The Trickster & wonder why Amerika has to go through the "Dark Ages" again?? I do see people awakening & experience a jolt of hope that Freedom & Liberty are not dead yet, but then some stupid crisis happens & the Banks need more Bailouts! or whatever & it really confuses the hell out of me to think that maybe US Slaves are that dumb!!! Ah Well, —a prisoner

*I find it to be very depressing that the USA is a fascist police state and that Americans are too stupid to notice.*  
—editor

Hi Sam,

As to your free electricity idea, I'm not qualified to explain thoroughly the hole in your theory, but I am pretty sure there ain't no such thing as a free lunch. Hence any device such as an air conditioner that consumes electrical or any other kind of energy will certainly have to draw that energy from some external source.

—Steve; Mililani, Hawaii

Other benefits of such a network of bicycle paths might be more important than were the so-called benefits of the interstate highways. Those highways, allegedly for the sake of efficiency, made travel faster, more boring, more sterile, and more artificial. The bicycle paths might make travelling more pleasant, more interesting, more healthful, and more natural. People taking trips on bicycles instead of in cars would get some fresh air and some exercise. They'd get wet in the rain and tanned in the sunshine. They'd see the scenery. They'd hear the birds and smell the flowers. They'd meet the local people. They could travel without the onerous requirements of a driver's license or vehicle registration. They could avoid the expense of auto insurance. They'd wouldn't have to endure the insulting arrogance of the security thugs and the traffic thugs.

Such a network of bicycle paths wouldn't replace the interstate highways. It would be an alternative, another choice for long distance travel, relatively speaking. Such travel would be slow but, as Gandhi said, there's more to life than increasing its speed. Eventually, the network of bicycle paths might lead to the birth of a whole new culture. It might encourage a whole new way of life. It might lead to the re-birth of liberty, self-reliance, and hope for the future on this continent. ¶

## Stray Thoughts

Sam Aurelius Milam III

Urban Survivalist — The idea of camouflage is that it blends into the background. It isn't necessarily blotches of green and brown. An urban survivalist wears a suit and a tie, jeans and a T-shirt, jogging duds, or whatever else blends into the background. Few things are more obvious than camouflage clothes in town.

Separatism — The freedom of association must necessarily include the freedom to not associate, for any reason or for no reason at all. Otherwise, the freedom doesn't exist. ¶

## This Really Happened

Sam Aurelius Milam III

I went into a McDonald's Restaurant and asked for a Half Pounder. The kid at the cash register told me that they didn't sell Half Pounders.

"Oh," I said, hesitating, "then may I have a Double Quarter Pounder?"

"Sure," he replied. ¶

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## Cows and Politics

Original Source Unknown. Forwarded by Steve, of Mililani, Hawaii. This is kind of old, but still funny.

Christian Democrat: You have two cows. You keep one and give one to your neighbor. Then you covet your neighbor's cow.

Socialist: You have two cows. The government takes one and gives it to your neighbor. You form a cooperative to tell him how to manage his cow.

Democrat: You have two cows. Your neighbor doesn't have any cows. You feel guilty and vote people into office who tax your cows, forcing you to sell one to raise money to pay the tax. The people for whom you voted use the tax money to buy a cow to give to your neighbor. You feel righteous. Barbra Streisand sings for you.

Republican: You have two cows. Your neighbor doesn't have any cows. He's taxed and the money is given to you so that you can buy another cow.

Communist: You have two cows. The government seizes them and provides you with milk. You wait in line to get it for hours. It's expensive and sour.

Fascist: You have two cows. The government seizes them and sells you milk. You join the underground and start a campaign of sabotage to blow up the cows.

Capitalism, American Style: You have two cows. You sell one, buy a bull, and build a herd.

Democracy, American Style: You have two cows. The government taxes you so much that you have to sell them to support a man in a foreign country who has only one cow, which was a gift from your government.

An American Corporation: You have two cows. You sell one, lease it back to yourself, and do an IPO on it. You force the two cows to produce the milk of four cows. You are surprised when one cow drops dead. You spin an announcement to the analysts that you have reduced your expenses. Your stock goes up.

A French Corporation: You have two cows. You go on strike because you want three cows. You go to lunch. Life is good.

A Japanese Corporation: You have two cows. You redesign them so that they are one-tenth of the size of an ordinary cow and produce twenty times as much milk. They learn to travel on crowded trains. Most of them are at

the tops of their classes at cow school.

A German Corporation: You have two cows. You reengineer them so that they're all blond, drink lots of beer, give excellent quality milk, and run a hundred miles an hour. They all demand 13 weeks of vacation per year.

An Italian Corporation: You have two cows but you don't know where they are. While ambling around, you see a beautiful woman. You break for lunch. Life is good.

A Russian Corporation: You have two cows. You count them and learn that you have five cows. You have some more vodka. You count them again and learn that you have 42 cows. You count them again and learn that you have 12 cows. You stop counting them and open another bottle of vodka. You produce your 10th 5-year plan in the last 3 months. The Mafia shows up and takes over however many cows you really have.

A Swiss Corporation: You have 5000 cows, none of which are yours. You charge for keeping them. If they give milk, you tell no one.

A Taliban Corporation: You have all of the cows in Afghanistan, which is two. You don't milk them because you cannot touch any creature's private parts. At night, when no one is looking, you milk both of them. Then you kill them and claim that a U.S. bomb blew them up while they were in the hospital.

A Florida Corporation: You have a black cow and a brown cow. Everyone votes for the best looking cow. Some people who like the brown one vote for the black one. Some people vote for both. Some people vote for neither. Some people can't figure out how to vote. Finally, a bunch of guys from out-of-state tell you which one you voted for.

Enron Venture Capitalism: You have two cows. You sell three of them to your publicly listed company, using letters of credit opened by your brother-in-law at the bank, then execute a debt/equity swap with an associated general offer so that you get all four cows back, with a tax exemption for five cows. The milk rights of the six cows are transferred via an intermediary to a Cayman Island company secretly owned by the majority shareholder who sells the rights to all seven cows back to your listed company. The annual report says that the company owns eight cows, with an option on one more. ∞

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Nation in Distress

Foreign aid might be defined as a transfer of money from poor people in rich countries to rich people in poor countries.

—Douglas Casey

Classmate of Bill Clinton at Georgetown University

### Acknowledgments

My thanks to the following: SantaClara Bob; Lady Jan the Voluptuous; my mother; and Dewey and Betty.

—editor

### Court Quotes

From *Humor in the Court* and *More Humor in the Court*, by Mary Louise Gilman, editor of the *National Shorthand Reporter*. Forwarded by Don G.

Q: So the date of conception of (the baby) was August 8th?

A: Yes.

Q: And what were you doing at that time?

A: I resent that question.

∞

### Strange Language

Original Source Unknown. Forwarded by Don G.

- After a number of Novocain injections, my jaw got number.
- At the Army base, a bass was painted on the head of a bass drum.

∞

### Funny Quotations

Original Source Unknown. Forwarded by Millie, of Baltimore, Maryland.

Last week, I stated that this woman was the ugliest woman I had ever seen. I have since been visited by her sister, and now wish to withdraw that statement.

—Mark Twain

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible.

—George Burns

Santa Claus has the right idea. Visit people only once a year.

—Victor Borge

By all means, marry. If you get a good wife, you'll become happy; if you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher.

—Socrates

I was married by a judge. I should have asked for a jury.

—Groucho Marx

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—Sam Aurelius Milam III, editor

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