

**MUIR REPORT:****WHO NEEDS PEOPLE?  
I'M STAYING OPTIMISTIC...**

**If youth is wasted** on the young, surely wealth is wasted on the rich.

Case in point, we now have a convertible sports car hurtling toward Mars, top down and driven by an ersatz spaceman, with a trunk full of Isaac Asimov novels, not that I have a problem with the trunk contents but I would have preferred Mark Twain's writings on "**The Damn Human Race.**" The rich and the reckless, have struck again.

**Oh to be back in the old days** when you could count the billionaires on the fingers of one hand and they spent their spare time trying to fly hot air balloons the farthest. What will Zuckerberg do to top this? We know Bezos will try to buy the space program and Disney will make a crappy movie with lots of special effects. The search for the new messiah is in full swing. Elon Musk fired the first shot, hurling his personal nativity scene into space. In the final analysis, they will fuck up this planet and move on to the next one, not soon enough....

**Demonstrations this month** against the deportations of workers have the palpable odor of fear about them. Jeff Sessions came to Sacramento to chastise Oakland Mayor Libby Shaaf for sending out the alarm that ICE agents were to soon descend upon them. Libby started her career as a law and order candidate concerned with property values and a strong police force. In less than two years, she has morphed into an unabashed supporter of hard working, poor people. This metamorphosis was not politically motivated, but came from the heart. Kudos to Da Mayor. **Estelle Fennel might want to use Shaaf as a role model.**

**International Women's Day marches** were sparsely attended. The reality that marching isn't doing shit is finally sinking in. The student's gun control march seemed to be a horse of a different color, plenty of new energy to go around, new, young, fresh faces speaking from the heart, retiring the usual clichés and pandering.



**McDonalds reversed their giant M** to look like a giant W to show us they support women, but only if they eat meat and are willing to work for low wages and no health care. On the same day, they trotted out their new burger flipping robot, designed to get rid of all those pesky workers, begging the question, "who's left to buy all those burgers if no one is working and making any money?"

**I'm sure** one of our billionaires will come up with a plan to build "consuming" robots designed to eat and use all the products their robot cousins are making. Who needs people? Although the question is, why are we trying to make life like robots that look and act exactly like people when we have 6 billion of us here now? Wouldn't it be simpler to just drug us or starve us into doing what we're told?

**The anti-gun protest was big.** There were the usual cast of suspects, old people, with well worn t-shirts extolling their longevity at protesting, people with expensive motion picture cameras trying to be the next Zapruda and limelight baskers, getting selfies with people who were carrying clever signs.

**The difference was** there were finally tons of young people in attendance, a rare sight in San Francisco protests, where the motto used to be, "if every grey hair could turn into a bullet, look out." Full of exuberance, rapping on stage, as if it were a try out for "Hamilton" and handing out petitions against gun violence, the new replacements strutted their stuff, while we, the wily veterans, battered and torn, watched as they took our place on the front lines. The passing of the torch was complete. Now as Chris Matthews pointed out, "*let's see how enthusiastic they are 5 years from now when nothing has changed*".

**I'm staying optimistic. This is the first generation raised on complete lies and half truths. They have been raised on mendacity and can recognize it like a cow recognizes a lost calf. There is hope, now that we're all on the same page...**

**- Muir Walker**

**THE 2ND AMENDMENT PRESERVED SLAVERY**

The real reason the Second Amendment was ratified, and why it says "State" instead of "Country" (the framers knew the difference -- see the 10th Amendment), was to preserve the slave patrol militias in the southern states, which was necessary to get Virginia's vote. Founders Patrick Henry, George Mason and James Madison were totally clear on that... and we all should be too.

In the beginning, there were the militias. In the South, they were also called the "slave patrols," and they were regulated by the states.

In Georgia, for example, a generation before the American Revolution, laws were passed in 1755 and 1757 that required all plantation owners or their male white employees to be members of the Georgia Militia, and for those armed militia members to make monthly inspections of the quarters of all slaves in the state. The law defined which counties had which armed militias and even required armed militia members to keep a keen eye out for slaves who may be planning uprisings.

And slave rebellions were keeping the slave patrols busy.

By the time the US Constitution was ratified, hundreds of substantial slave uprisings had occurred across the South. Blacks outnumbered whites in large areas, and the state militias were used to both prevent and to put down slave uprisings.

Slavery can only exist in the context of a police state, and the enforcement of that police state was the explicit job of the militias.

If the anti-slavery folks in the North had figured out a way to disband -- or even move out of the state -- those southern militias, the police state of the South would collapse. And, similarly, if the North were to invite into military service the slaves of the South, then they could be emancipated, which would collapse the institution of slavery, and the southern economic and social systems, altogether.

These two possibilities worried southerners like James Monroe, George Mason (who owned more than 300 slaves) and the southern Christian evangelical, Patrick Henry (who opposed slavery on principle, but also opposed freeing slaves).

Their main concern was that Article 1, Section 8 of the newly-proposed US Constitution, which gave the federal government the power to raise and supervise a militia, could also allow that federal militia to subsume their state militias and change them from slavery-enforcing institutions into something that could even, one day, free the slaves.

This was not an imagined threat. Famously, 12 years earlier, during the lead-up to the Revolutionary War, Lord Dunsmore offered freedom to slaves who could escape and join his forces. "**Liberty to Slaves**" was stitched onto their jacket pocket flaps. During the war, British General Henry Clinton extended the practice in 1779. Numerous freed slaves served in General Washington's army.

Thus, southern legislators and plantation owners lived not just in fear of their own slaves rebelling, but also in fear that their slaves could be emancipated through military service.

Madison, who had (at Jefferson's insistence) already begun to prepare proposed amendments to the US Constitution, changed his first draft of one that addressed the militia issue to make sure it was unambiguous that the southern states could maintain their slave patrol militias.

His first draft for what became the Second Amendment had said: "The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed; a well armed, and well regulated militia being the best security of a free **country** [*emphasis mine*]: but no person religiously scrupulous of bearing arms, shall be compelled to render military service in person."

But Henry, Mason and others wanted southern states to preserve their slave-patrol militias independent of the federal government. So Madison changed the word "country" to the word "state," and redrafted the Second Amendment into today's form:

"A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free **State** [*emphasis mine*], the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Little did Madison realize that one day in the future weapons-manufacturing corporations, newly defined as "persons" by a Supreme Court some have called dysfunctional, would use his slave patrol militia amendment to protect their "right" to manufacture and sell assault weapons used to murder schoolchildren.

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