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updates on the insane world of money and power

*'Just the Facts—Ma'am'*

*Joe Friday*, in the 50s cop show (Dragnet), spoke my article title—often

I have to give a shout-out to my friend Phil. I've been using AI to get facts for my articles but Phil reminded me that not all facts are facts. I was asking AI about memories of the 50s/60s, a different time for gun culture, then I asked whether or not pharmaceutical drugs played a prominent role in school shootings. I found good information about the gun culture but my question about drugs indicated (surprisingly), that drugs were not a factor.

Phil reminded me that *facts* are heavily influenced by political/economic propaganda (seems I would have known that). Consider how many dollars are allotted by Big Pharma to assure that drugs are not focused-on in school slaughter. Granted, students who mow-down their classmates are troubled individuals, but is it made worse by Pharma downplaying its role? I'm back to my previous suspicion: Pharma is likely heavily involved.

Putting the present gun culture together with pharmaceuticals, the difference between the late 1950's and now, is mind-bending. The 1950s/early 60s was a different time in the way the public viewed firearms. Rifles and shotguns in pickup trucks, or on school bus gun racks in rural routes, was widely accepted for legitimate reasons: hunting and farm protection. Mass

shootings, particularly at schools, were practically unheard of. Firearms were viewed as practical tools rather than symbols of mass violence.

Rates of accidental shootings and gun-related injuries were more common. Because hunting and firearm handling was widespread, there were many preventable accidents.

We hear that guns deaths are a result of the internet, but that's not statistically true. School shootings in the 1950s/60s were virtually nonexistent, and overall violent crime rates in the US was actually much lower in 1960 than it is today. Violent crime surged after the 1960s and peaked in 1991 (before the coming of the internet). Since the 1990s, the national violent crime rate has plummeted. We are safer from violent crime post the internet.

Kids who brought guns to school were usually headed out to hunt or shoot after class. The intent behind carrying weapons was vastly different, and communities shared a respect for gun safety/ownership responsibilities. But today's 24/7 news cycle brings violence and threat assessments instantly to our attention. This constant awareness, combined with the tragic rise of high-profile mass shootings, has fundamentally altered public perception and led to zero tolerance/Gun-Free School Zone policies.

Unlike the perpetuated perception, guns are not the problem. Had it been that guns were the problem, they'd have always been the problem, especially in 1960, where bloody fights at my high school were a daily occurrence.

In the late 50s/early 60s, it was not uncommon for high schools to have shooting clubs, and students frequently brought rifles to school to participate in school-sponsored shooting sports after class. Where did we store our firearms at school? In unlocked pickup trucks. If you didn't have a pickup, your rifle was in your locker. Also, many rural school-buses had gun racks.

Some schools had indoor shooting ranges in basements or in the main

building, for practicing. Gun safety education and hunter safety courses were standard in school curriculums, often taught in partnership with the National Rifle Association. Unlike today, most males I respected and admired were lifelong NRA members. It was a different world—in a better time.

I was a battalion commander in high school ROTC. This one time, I hitchhiked (in my fatigue uniform), to Hesperia, 75 miles from home. The CHP slowed down to check me out but didn't bother stopping. The Christmas before, when I was 12, my dad gave me a Remington clip-fed 22, that I'd take to the range on a city bus—not in a gun bag. A few glances—nothing more.

Putting it down on paper, it was such a different time, different culture, safer culture, best described as a different planet. Now, madness abounds.

These practices were the cultural norm in much of the country during my high school years, but the landscape of the culture did a 180. Tonight, watching the NBA finals with my family, when they panned across the faces of NY celebrities court-side, my son commented those tickets cost \$5/10 thousand dollars. I took him back to the 50's when sports didn't equate with wealth. When hockey greats whose names are still known today retired, sponsors would wheel a new refrigerator onto the ice as a parting gift. A time when SF 49ers worked a Disneyland paddleboat during off the season.

I would go to Maple Leaf Gardens (Toronto), on the bus when I was 12, and there I would buy a standing room ticket for \$1. Because I was a kid, I was allowed down the concrete steps to sit with my chin of the boards. No plastic shields between me and my heroes—just the game and the ice.

My son asked how they might offer cheap tickets now—would it be done by lottery? He doesn't get that the whole thing needs brought to heel. Only the young can make a change through what they buy and refuse to buy—support and refuse to support—forcing things back where they used to

be. There's no middle class until the wealthy and poverty ends of the spectrum are purged. Not just cheap, nose-bleed lottery seats—it's everything.

I remember when I first heard about mail-in ballots—it sounded like a good idea. But it's not. There can't be 50K last minute votes without mail-in fraud. It has to go back to the old way when old volunteers met you at the polling place, checked your ID off on the list, gave you a paper ballot and pencil. You went behind the curtain, then came out to deposit your ballot.

There is no other way. If mail-in allows fraud—that's what you get. If machines can be tampered with—that's what you get. If there could be one remedy for our ills, take it back 75 years, and take a look at how things were done—and then go about pulling-back and simplify every aspect of life.

A parting shot on the economy. If you bought bitcoin not long ago, you've lost half. If you bought silver at \$120, you've lost half. But silver will come back. Bitcoin might not. Consider copper and lead that sat in doldrums for decades—then broke out. You know what didn't break out? Silver. Silver is under pressure and all its erstwhile friends/pundits are predicting its demise back into the doldrums. It better happen fast because the world is re-setting. Resetting in commodities where silver (poor man's industrial gold), will rule.

What an I going to write about from here? The Constitution/Bill of Rights is not being followed. A water-ed down War Powers Act, pretty much allowing Trump to devastate the world at a whim needs to be constantly addressed.

And, today Samantha Power on Musk/Trump cancelling USAID. Her rationale: Iran War cost more than than the USAID budget. But Sam, that budget is each year. Where does the Constitution mandate unconstitutional taxpayer dollars to be used for a huge bureaucracy—supporting equity?

Get my articles by email with a request, comment, or just say hello: erik@neverhadaboss.com. And thank you for your kind words and support.