

### Flagrant Violator

You, a tax-paying, law-abiding contribution to society, have a ten mile commute to work each day. You make this trip twice daily and have for years. You are a competent, compliant and conscientious driver but one day, evidently, you entered a speed-zone for a now vacant school—3mph above the restriction. Upon returning home from work that evening, evidently, you passed a car using your blinker but—100ft short of the required blinking distance for speed traveled. Still, had you known you'd violated two laws that day, you'd have dismissed them as trivial; obviously you aren't a flagrant violator and you certainly aren't some criminal! Laws are necessary for all those bad guys.

Ten days later and by way of registered letter, you were informed of these violations and told to appear for trial. Oh the anxiety! Company policy is clear: ***caught violating rules means you could lose the job you've had all these years!*** When flagged by big brother, your company does the penalizing because for some reason—*their safety program is interconnected*. These violations occurred over ten days ago and your memory is blank. It's like going to a gun fight armed with a make-believe knife. Besides, a memory is useless up against auto-scan downloads but you try to jog it just the same because you already know—*data can be skewed or flawed regardless of what authorities proclaim*. You also know your nearly impeccable record and all the years you've worked for this company isn't valued anymore. You'll be treated like someone who really is inept and unsafe because for some reason—*your company has become hostile to all workers*. You are now tagged; you'll be subjected to even more monitoring. Your indignation stews. You can't sleep and can hardly drive anywhere now without making silly errors. Oh what a vicious anxiety-ridden cycle! You wonder how seemingly civilized company men can even justify treating such loyal and competent workers this way; how they even sleep at night when by day—***they dish out rank disregard like its wholly acceptable and yet you know they damn sure wouldn't stand for what they themselves dole out.*** The do unto others rule of thumb just isn't the guideline management abides by anymore.

During your trail a light blinks on and you clearly remember, have proof of your own in fact; you had a doc-appointment that day so you didn't even drive your regular commute! This light blinked on another memory; because of your appointment you fell behind in your work and felt compelled to stay late to finish so you didn't even drive home until long after the proof-of-occurrence states you did. Eureka! Your spouse can verify the truth!

Nope. The truth doesn't matter. Your company claims auto-scans don't error so all other proof is immaterial; doc's have been way too helpful for workers and a spouse's credibility is nil. Besides, litigation has set the course—*no partiality*. Your company holds no regard for your long-standing stellar record and fires you because safety is of the utmost concern. After all—it was a school zone.

### Scenario Reality.

***What's a story without words - words that are never heard?*** ~JW. I'd thought to use this scenario at one of my trials to convey why auto-scans are plumass scary but also: *to portray just how intimidation and rank disregard would offend anyone's common sensibilities no matter what you drive*. This is the rail industry reality and I'm not embellishing.

For autos, OnStar-like technology is: *nonstop data-gathering cloaked in slide-it-right-in safety-hype*. Safety sells alright but the autonomous *Google* pushers use a more aggressive thrust. Straight to fear, they have no qualms declaring why their *it*—should be the one behind the wheel. Sure, technology makes roadways safer. There's no end to what technology can now do. *It's the trades that come with this Godsend of our era that must be carefully weighed.*

So, consider what's to be gained by deeming us inept/unsafe, and why these techno-shoves are being sold as not only necessary—but unstoppable. Then, consider the real cost of this trade once we're no longer the one behind the controls. *OnStar and Google* types create technologies to make money money money. Railroads just want to cut labor to make even more money money money. There's no doubt monitoring technologies are safety-beneficial. The price? ***A mobile society—now minutely monitored.*** And yes, data can be manipulated.

Autonomous driving technologies will probably get behind the wheel of every auto made sooner than later. Already, it's backing out of the driveway, parking and breaking for us. Pistono dreamily envisions a time when the party doesn't have to stop prematurely lest someone ends up driving inebriated. Maybe this will be okay—*later*. But for this slow-mo adapting species: *our job is right now which is to grapple with the techno-everything coming on at supersonic speed.* As it stands, we've yet to raise our cognizance about the all of this which means that *wisely* isn't how we are contending with this latest—***irreversible milestone.*** As it stands, this milestone will become just another marker pointing directly to that irresponsible era; *the one that gave the controls to someone else to decide when or even if their kids would ever get to go anywhere in their car.* And apparently, irresponsibly used technology comes with a long history. Rampant depravity might have been why Noah built a big damn boat but, the misuse of technology was the precursor to what ended up being solved—by completely starting over.

Like Pistono, techno-thrillers envision autonomous transport too; they just remember to insert fully entrenched control themes into their visions for real-fact reasons. Already, data is being compiled from everywhere this kind of technology goes and does. Already, it sits fingertip ready for whatever schemes come down the pike; schemes our wildest paranoia can't yet get us to believe possible. So aside from the fact that every paycheck-needful driver will be ejected from behind the controls, conjure a few what-ifs that go with schemes because my paranoia comes steeped in history lessons and—***transportation is how free societies move about.*** No safety-logic will ever lift these kinds of monitoring and replacement technologies from the invasive category. As for the rail industry—I've got a few things to say.

### **Corporations Rule the Day.**

Indeed. In this past decade, the rail industry began angling to whittle 2-men train crews down to one. In 2015, that concern finally hit the news. Because of this, I'm sitting here smack in the middle of summer plucking away, trying to finalize this installment while all that beckons me outside awaits. Crew whittling was one of the concerns I'd written about in that infamous letter I sent to my CEO years ago. A letter that started this whole hard-knock, learning to write endeavor. A letter I wanted to send *before* auto-scans dinged my nearly impeccable record and *before* I found myself running trains through the countryside alone. For that effort, I was rewarded numerous investigations and only blind luck has kept me employed.

My original ponderance about *where technology was headed*, soon got complicated because I wondered how we were going to trudge into this techno-future—*ethically or oppressed.* Two steps back again or not? Once asked, I knew corp/industries would show the way—*follow today's New World Order lead.* That's when I began to awaken to the realization that nearly every industry was busy investing billions into monitoring and replacement technologies. That's when a pall began to settle as I then knew—***we are all in big trouble.*** However, it was after reading Ray's *Singularity* when those unstoppable and overwhelmed senses hit me about the all of it. Just another naïve ponderance colliding with reality I guess. Still, it's very likely I'd have brushed Ray's teaching's to the recesses of my mind had it not been for the fact that I was actually experiencing firsthand—*what Ray was foretelling.*

Firsthand-indignation *is* what fueled me to reach for that mightier than a sword pen but it was Ray's teachings that fueled an anger strong enough to compel what has since become one unshakable conviction. Workforce replacement is but a mere stepping stone for a ravenous techno-wolf already at our door. *It is that self-replacement changes the whole scenery for a basking to an evermore responsible humanity. This is our own kid's chapter glaring wide open—right before us.*

My first-year writing stab can be found in today's telling. It was a *Newsweek My Turn Contribution*; a 500 word restriction. I never sent it. Because, if a firsthand taste of rank disregard wasn't enough to fuel me to stand for redirects—*the one actually experiencing it*, then what was a 500 word rant going to accomplish? To shout about decency ethos backsliding in one industry wasn't gonna cut it even if I succeeded in conveying that by allowing techno and ethical transgressions to set the pace in just one—it wouldn't stop there. So, my first stab bloated. Then, during the development of the 1<sup>st</sup> half of this series; basically reiterating what I'd learned, that bloating plumass ballooned because I began to see that it really didn't matter if I wrote 500 or 50,000 words unless I tackled—*the all of it*. When I did finally send *Newsweek* what had clearly bloated, I can only surmise that someone in the word-counting department wasn't fooled.

For years now, whenever I return to work on this installment, I struggle to find the words to *successfully* convey what's going on in today's work arenas. And successfully means giving ominous conditioning a tangible feel. Otherwise, we stand little chance to forestall one more distant techno-concern from becoming one more overnight reality. Well, what's ominous won't be obvious so my confidence keeps taking off. ***Just Breathe ~AN.*** So I have. That's how 10 years have gotten by and still—I sit plucking away.

### **Finding Ominous.**

I figure that if I creak open the doors to Baby-G's birth-chamber wide enough for you to peer inside, then maybe ominous will show itself. While peering, please consider how reckless—or possibly wise, the path is our powerhouse cronies have set us on. I vote for reckless endangerment on at least one count simply because viable job markets sustain our freer-than-ever existence dammit! Someone please hammer this dot so it connects! However, the second count; the one about machine versus man superiority—*runs shy of expert proof for added weight*. Voluminous studies have yet to hit the shelf about this but by the time indisputable proof gets here, then will be too late so, you're stuck with me.

Bless their hides, my own work arena keeps shoving in my face why I need to find some courage and just type. To convey ominous *successfully* matters not if I don't start somewhere. Guess my go-to courage-booster will console me if I fail. ***Hope isn't a conviction that things turn out well. Hope is a conviction to do what's right—regardless of how things turn out.*** I'll keep duct-taping my confidence back on and I'll quit counting how many pages this is gonna take. Faith is where I keep finding courage but—only you can decide if I found the right words.

### **Investigation Indisputable.** Here we go.

- A competitive marketplace has corp/industries replacing us with machines. Period.
  - Implemented policies driving monitoring and replacement wheels forward are derived from reasoning based on partially-painted factoids. Period.
  - Once billion dollar agendas get set in motion—it's for intended results. Period.
- So, are we that inept—*industries must replace us or else face an unrecoverable crippling?* Indeed, if replacement technology truly is superior, then an inevitable darkness will sooner

than later settle upon the very existence we enjoy. That is—*so long as we keep buying into this twisted, inept/unsafe sell. **That we really do deserve menial leftovers only.***

- When I began doing my own sleuthing, I discovered workers in any industry where machine replacement was coming on strong; where monitoring is used to build better replacement patterns, where safety is enforced to a nearly incapacitating absurdity, and where the valued output picture of workers is intentionally skewed—those workers feel at least one effect from all that's ominous. **We're exasperated.** So here's today's first footnote; it's a consolation prize. We aren't alone. *We're a bunch of little corners adding up and if we keep taking it—the all of this is only going to get exponentially worse.*

- By looking back on the past two decades, you will easily see why we're so damn exasperated. Those were the days when higher-thinking machines started barging through the front door; *the days when more and more thinking-outputs were relegated to paycheckless its.* Dysfunction increased, and continues to, because we aren't dealing with simple automation merely assisting us anymore. Based on programmed, best-case option criteria: Baby-G now dictates how and which outputs humans will do—**all without the benefit of common sense or concern!** Remember, *its* know not what they do and *its* aren't alone.

- During this same, 20-year race to re-cog, policymakers started drowning in massive floods of machine-derived data to the point where they too—know not what they do. **This too is indisputable.** Remember the bio-rate in which we adapt? Remember how info/intelligence affects that process? This means none of us—*powerhouse course-setters included*—have had enough adaptation time to adjust to the info-deluge we're experiencing. And though we may never know with certainty the degree to which this compounds newday dysfunction, we do know their chambers are chalked full of data-overload so we can speculate from there.

Truly, is it more than ironic that during these past two racing decades: *our insane lead now has us tapping in at \$21 incomprehensible trillions of staggering debt? That this amazing, freer-than-ever experience, is being shoved straight into a heavily monitored, controlled wall of existence? That in their infinite wisdom, corp/industries decided to whack off the hind leg to the very beast which pulls their damn commerce cart? **That humanity is being taken to the brink of one horrific transcending abyss and once there, Super-Goliath will rule what up til now has been this beast's glorious, ineffable planet?*** Ah to hell with ominous when obvious comes so fully exposed! If I don't succeed in exposing ominous, then at least keep these four indisputable facts in clear sight! In fact—paste them to your bathroom mirror!

- Of course monitoring is indisputable; **it's Baby-G's amniotic fluid tap.** Yet to differentiate between assistive technologies, which most of us can agree are quite handy, from their invasive counterparts of control and/or replacement ones, isn't cut and dried easy—they overlap. *This is why ominous conditioning gets such an easy-in pass.* And I'd guess it's pointless to try and pinpoint the crossover line now. Instead: *stare at every screen staring at you fully cognizant that every it now comes fully geared to compile absolutely every snippet crossing its path.*

- Invasive uses quickly overlapped assistive uses and became inextricably intermeshed when the *Big www* hit the scene. With that hit, an endless array of enterprises emerged. Enterprises nobody even fathomed a mere few decades ago. So in good ole' enterprising haste, any monitoring compiler; like every desktop, handheld or radio-controlled equipment, now purrs in finger touch mode—*ready to zing every snippet of data it holds to places where ever-better job-eliminating systems are built.* When those glaring right at us screens barged through the front door, it was the *Big www* that flung open the back door for replacement machines; those which slunk through only yesterday—now brazenly march right through today.

## Misplaced Emotions.

It's nothing new when a stagnate economy adds intensity to obscure replacement agendas. Oftentimes, older workers get pressured to retire early during times of overstaff; a push that on occasion comes with some kind of compensation packet even. Microsoft just announced their intention to lay off 18,000 employees; their forewarning comes with severance pay and an offering to relocate workers, but for the many industries re-cogging towards a techno-way to downsize, they won't easily reap their projected rewards if they also have to come up with mega-packages to pay entire workforces *not* to show up for work. *Billions have already been invested. Expensive schemes are on the line. Making room for paycheckless its needs to happen fast! There's no time for ethical considerations on this kind of grand replacement scale.* Besides, other than menial labor—where will we all relocate to? Dammit! Conditioning greasers need not bother duping us anymore about what's going on and now would be a really great time to get angry as that would help all of us find where we misplaced our rightful indignation!

**Monitoring is now entrenched in every mode of transportation.** It just sits there; ripe-n-ready for whatever schemes and absolutely every recession to come down the pike. When I wrote my course-setting CEO, I asked him to consider his responsibility more respectfully to all society with regards to invasive monitoring. Of course, I asked him to ask himself; *just because you can—should you?* Well, I'd guess that was the line that got me center-pinned in the firing-zone crosshairs but I don't care anymore. Powerheads must be called upon for their invasive uses of Monitoring. Period. *This resides at the heart of our very freedoms! Call 'em on their reckless replacement schemes too because this resides at the heart of our very existence!* What gives them the right to usher in such an epic replacement era into the realm of all humanity anyway?

Speaking of irresponsibly used technology—fingerprinting the workers of this nation's free society is the latest transgression and I'm not talking about fingerprinting 007 either. Guess when a free-for-all is going on, even corner store grocer's want in on it. Do you suppose terrorists typically moonlight as shelf-stockers? Wow. Time to start giving out annual, gravest of grave—*transgression acknowledgments*. Bottom line: ***exactly why are bosses treating us this way—really?*** Just because they can?

Personally, I think the primary reason we are meekly taking the sideline is cuz it's all hit us so fast, slow-mo adapting us still can't believe idiots are running the show. Yes idiots. They're the ones who think this country's oxen is a headache, of no value—***not worth keeping***. Well, maybe we're not so bright either as we're still thinking idiots are only replacing other idiots; those inept others, not us—*personally*. Okay, I'll stop saying idiot. These nitwits are at least clever enough to exploit this misconception because they haven't fully replaced us. They still need us. *They know their schemes won't easily slide in if we awaken to see we're all in the culling lineup.* Well, everybody's still smart enough to know our massive, tax-generating capitalistic wheels won't turn without paycheck-wielding consumers greasing them so for nitwits, I guess it just boils down to a matter of not being the last ones left holding a hefty employment bag when a sideline awakening finally does occur. Such reckless childishness—manning the helm of humanity's very existence.

## Rightful Indignation.

- Peer everywhere. Look at supervisory processes through an ethical lens. Does your company use proactive management for the entire workforce? This style; versus punitive/reactive, comes with documented success for over twenty years but yet many industries still don't use it. Why? When I wrote my CEO oh-so plucking at the keys long ago, I asked him why this ethical consideration wasn't extended to the entire workforce; a milieu I

was aware had been implemented within their glass house as he was silly enough to brag about it in the corporate rag.

- Look with wary eyes at safety programs. Though the idea to hold someone else accountable for absolutely anything is socio-driven rather than techno-driven, I suspect it triggered the backlash of litigation that tipped the replacement scale. So when newday technology began slinking into every industrial output, these *its* were hyped as assistive tools to do our jobs better, faster—*safer*. Turns out, that was the sell and we bought it. Soft-selling fear has become a runaway absurdity. For a glimpse, just notice all the day-glow attire workers and company autos now sport. *Every edict imagined is now shoved under the banner of safety to deter litigation.* And since we fear for our limbs and lives, we helped usher such absurdity right in oblivious to the fact that the only thing considered truly unsafe was us—*the output half that still needs a paycheck, some healthcare and as yet can still sue.*

So forget about the safety-hype and the rhetoric to provide better assistive tools. Just look to see whose job outputs are being monitored only look with rightful indignation at exactly why billions are being spent. Look at how measurable attributes are used to weigh workforce ineptness against machine shine. These exploitations can be evidenced at the reprimand stage—*the very process used to kick any and every paycheck-wielding headache right out the door.*

### **The Game.**

They invented it. However—*safety and fear plays both ways.* It wasn't long ago when plane and train cabs had five-man crews. Today, we're down to two. And when the air industry dabbled with less, it didn't take long to decide two pilots in the cockpit was a good thing; I suspect the elites making that decision looked up and thought about all the flying they do. Well, it's the public's what-if turn. Think about all the massive, hazardous quantities that roll through our cities and countryside. Think about how your own town's kids and dogs are forever drawn to the tracks. Imagine all the excess piles of wildlife and livestock carnage riddled along the right-of-ways and I'm certain you will conclude—*two sets of reactive eyes, ears and hands auto-connected to intuitive, compassionate, fear-driven brains are a good thing. There is no techno-programming that can possibly be accomplished to take in every variable which may occur to planes in an unlimited sky, any more than for trains in the limitless, thousands upon thousands of unfenced, right-of-way miles.* And yes, technology has glitches. However, as the cost and glitches of invasive technologies drop—so do our jobs.

Basically, when billions are at stake, quantified-data can partially paint whatever picture needs justified, and litigation is outright detestable, then an inept/unsafe workforce makes technology look exceedingly attractive! The tactics used to usher in this unprecedented way to re-cog are indisputably loaded with rank disregard and in-our-face hostility. This newday lead isn't wise or responsible, and it sure as hell isn't ethical! Now, this just about covers our indisputable investigation in a nutshell but if you need more—I've got it.

### **Wry Bumbling.**

TV's probably the biggest reason why everyone who's anyone gets polished and that includes their speech. Sure hope we'll have our fill of glossed nonsense real soon because voice mimicking Baby-G is already talkin' up a storm! Meantime, we await missteps and then pounce. So now, not only do politicians and corporate elites come all dolled-up with purr'fectly polished robotic-jargon but so do mid-level supervisors. Politicians want our vote, corporations don't want sued, and supervisors want to keep their jobs so the veneer comes compliments of our refined colleges. *Homogenized corporate verbiage sounds just like empty political rhetoric for a reason.* Basically, when obscure agendas get mixed with something we can't quite put a

finger on, we end up frustrated, offended—*exasperated*. This begins a sort of full-circle, wry bumbling of errors.

Our messiness then blurps out making replacement technology look even better! Corporate elites, frustrated cuz they're still having to deal with all those headaches while their techno-billions stagnate in a sluggish economy—head back to college. The same colleges that plaster veneer on everyone, then send their own highly-glossed expert armed with PowerPoint everything, to educate mid-management on uh—how to keep their jobs I think.

Today's mid-management has two looks. One, the fresh-face; beaming cuz a business degree and a few supervisory classes finally paid off. It'll take a bit before realizing she was hired cuz she knows how a damn computer works. Meanwhile, her education is just beginning. Supervising a seasoned workforce armed with little more than a business degree, scant life and less field experience, means rough waters await. Oh were the days when supervisors came from experience!

Second look, the older supervisor. Too late to get out now, nowhere to go. Yeah, he's older so wiser; he knows what the writing on the wall looks like even if fresh-faces haven't figured out they're in the culling lineup too. So, he attends the endless requisite PowerPoint classes and implements the best he can—whatever brand the slick-looking expert of the how-to is selling. Meanwhile, thoughts of vacation and retirement help him get through the day. There was a time when he felt he was an integral part of a company that actually went somewhere. *He muses about the days when he actually assisted the workforce*. But now, it's just a bunch of PowerPoint spiels, placating above and below, monitoring, of course remembering to keep his smartphone on at all times, and oh yeah—culling.

### **The Gauntlet.**

- Auto-scans *not* set to quantify what's good about human outputs; a fair-minded principle, makes human error one handy scapegoat. Every worker's reactive, intuitive, ethical and common sense decisions produced from every industry's overwhelming majority of conscientious, competent and compliant workforces, aren't painted any differently than those of the 3% nobody really wants to employ much less work with. In this, big brother has been way too helpful for transportation industries. The NTSB, FAA and FRA are just three government branches here to make sure the public is safe and I'm here to assure you it's true. During the past two decades of testing and monitoring—professional is certainly the degree of our skill! We are conscientious, competent and compliant and I'm making up my own acronym so I don't have to keep typing that. So when you read about pilots flying around miles from where they should be, or trains crashing because someone was pawing a techno-toy, it's because of those 3% headaches. The rest of us are CCC professionals and we have to keep reminding ourselves that because half-stroke painting doesn't include—***all that's everything***.

- The rail industries 10# rule book of ever-changing edicts simply means that by sheer magnitude alone—*our daily gauntlet is impossible to run without error regardless of targeting*. So when culling gets cranked-up, auto-scans get set to ding us for even the slightest of rule infractions. What programmers are told to flag, techies are told to monitor and field supervisors are told to test for. Years of integral work-ethic records aren't considered: ***no-partiality handily puts the kibosh on experience-value***. Talk about discrimination! Experience is a thorn in the side of today's policy-making management; those beaming faces of 20 years ago that still know how a computer works—still don't know how a railroad works.

- This wholly intimidating, punitive, offensive process has blindsided us. Minor missteps are treated like major crimes because auto-scans can't seem to differentiate between these distinctions and evidently—neither can supervisors. Make-room shoves come by way of auto-churned investigation notices sent via registered mail. These notices fly off the press

faster than field supervisors can hold trials of the absurd. Postponements are as common as the steady stream of registered-stamped, re-scheduling's. We are now the familiar faces at the post office. *Investigations aren't held to ascertain facts as stated on auto-churned notices. Investigations are brandings. We are seared with a scarlet S for the express purpose to cull us just as soon as they can catch us to sear on the final S.* I tell beleaguered new-hires *SS* just means we're super special! However, fresh-face supervisors don't appreciate wit. How this company screens to net such humorless faces escapes me. Well anyway, when *SS* branded *but have no personal injury record*, we can grovel and with luck, be afforded one last chance to run our gauntlet for three impossible years—all without misstep.

### **The New Normal.**

- When rail clerks were techno-replaced years ago, we were told we're moving into a paperless era! Now I don't know about other industries, but our one small trash can has been replaced with three large barrels and the regularity of the overflow has me thinking we need another barrel! Oh were the days when brain-equipped clerks efficiently handled all the paperwork. Back then, they gave crews a list called a wheel; the proper placement and destination of every car on every train, but now, higher-thinking machines run the press and these *its* spew erroneous wheel after wheel simply because—*its know not what its do*.
- Since most techies are young, they come limited in life experiences. Since most big wigs are older, they come limited in what computers can and can't do. So, the wigs think up what they want programmers to do, programmers think they're delivering, and I'm thinking this must be why so much is falling into some dysfunctional void! Today's seasoned programmer, now in his late thirties, seems to sense this void so to stay employed, we are now inundated with PowerPoint presentations, PowerPoint pie-charts, and all sorts of colorful PowerPoint flyers! The bosses are still in awe so it must still be working.
- If techies, programmers and fresh-face supervisors came with any field or a bit more life experience, they probably wouldn't conspire to write so many auto this-n-that which is becoming increasingly hard to manually override—though we try. We are the output half that runs on compelled thoughts to get the job done whereas our newday work-buddies run on kilowatts and kilowatts don't work that way. Its can't draw upon common sense to override nonsense and our common sense suddenly weighed in at irrelevant. So while techno-glitches get worked out, maybe we move freight, maybe we don't, but its all outta our hands now. ***You are the train I never should have caught ~P.***
- Rail workers are so PPE'd out (*personal protective equipment*), so suffocated by rules and so paranoid to move even if we could, efficiency is frustratingly, no longer our reality. Inefficiency frustrates the placaters too. They pull out their pocketed hands, throw 'em up in the air and mumble something about dragging feet; a display that reminds me of an old caboos poster with a caption that said—*don't be a pocket rocket!* Had a cartoonish guy with pocketed hands—rocketing upwards. Well, no cabooses anymore so nobody at the slack end of a train rocketing anywhere. I only bring this up because it reminded me of another classic poster which used to hang in our depots. This one had a great picture of a train clipping right along with a caption that said—*we expedite freight.* Well, for reasons unknown, the company propagand machine replaced the word *expedite with velocity.* Now, we're stumped. Either we don't know what velocity means or what dragging feet implies cuz nowadays—trains don't clip anywhere right along. ***Leavin' on a slooow train ~STP.***
- Safety posters are all that hang in our now—humorless depots. I refer to this under the banner of safety as a frenzy because something's gone plum out of control when a workforce gets slammed with 10#'s of ever-changing edicts. I'd thought to offer some rail examples but once I began to select, I couldn't choose between all the absurdities and besides—it's

embarrassing. You'll just have to visualize how impossible it'd be to drive anything from A to B with pounds of ever-changing rules weighing on the forefront of your mind and never miss a one. We like to say we're just one rule away from a complete standstill. **Midnight train ~ leave if you can ~BF.** Truly, the time has come to stand in awe when you actually witness a train rolling!

- Before trains try rolling anywhere though, railyards must first sort railcars and oh boy, lookout! *RCO's man the helm now.* This means there's no engineer up there anymore to watch you safely cross the tracks so remember; Baby-G not only knows not what it does—it cares even less. Anyway, glitch-rich RCO yards now have railcars backed up all across the country. It's like velocity in-motion at viscosity sludge-rate. Maybe someone meant to type viscosity but spell-check didn't catch it? Well, too late now. Rail propaganda is loaded with the idea that velocity moves something. So, north to south, east to west; seems simple enough that even auto-brains outta be able to sort it out but instead, southbound trains get peppered with northbound loads and eastbound loads oftentimes go way west til an ocean redirects them. **Take this train til it runs out of track ~CDB.** Lots of train ditties out there! Well regardless of what heffes purport, I can assure you we aren't Casey Jones anymore.

- Customers are also exasperated. They wonder at what viscosity-rate the railroad plans to deliver their cars; the ones stuck in a siding three states away—*goin' nowhere on a train ~O.* Welcome to velocity mayhem. They long for the days when clerks kept their pickup and deliveries handled, when crews were actually able to move and efficiency-magic got them switched with a regularity they could bank on. Now, they place orders online to VRS-Siberia with fingers crossed. With only luck to bank on, they can only hope the right amount of cars get delivered on the right day, to the right plant—in the right state! **Train kept a rollin' all night long ~AS.** Yep, we chug right by workers standing on their loading docks watching their cars—roll right on by.

- Imagine how even more absurd it would be to get our country's freight delivered if we were actually a booming economy! Now imagine: **the viscosity delivery-rate to come when the load of every freight train is tasked to one sole worker.**

I feel badly for customers whose products sit for days in nowhere sidings but it angers me to see loaded refer cars get sidelined. Satellite-controlled or not, I wonder just how many needlessly slaughtered cows and pigs rot away in those boxes. This waste, lands in the same unconcerned discard barrel along with all those trees our now paperless society—doesn't save.

Recently, I've been speculating on the possibility that our bio-brothers are already here on our desks concealed as pixels—*sucking away at everybody's common sense.* Like ours for instance! You see, in order to stay current; capable of running trains with competency measured, PowerPoint pixels arranged as PowerPoint quizzes from the PowerPoint heavens are evidently enough to cover the bases. Now, we have in-depth knowledge on tricky issues like; how to wear ear protectors correctly, how to sleep correctly, walk correctly—even how to drink lots of water correctly! I for one, feel much more qualified to move freight after I get my competency tested!

This is just some of the bumbling going on while the billions at stake work themselves out. It's no wonder workers drink lots of beer. We're beyond exasperated. We shake our heads daily, make jokes for relief and trudge on—velocity style! **The dysfunctional side of technology needs tracked.** We should have been doing this all along but we've remained stuck; waiting for idiots to wake up and see that no amount of velocity propaganda can possibly conceal such absurdity. Oh but the billions invested! Well, regardless of where technology falls short or if it's even tracked is as telling as this: **technology is damn well being used to track where we fall short.**

## **Inexcusable.**

The rail industry, now a highly oppressive and intimidating arena, won't acknowledge anxiety or paranoia as valid health-related consequences any more than our actual, #1 safety issue that Congress, bless them—tried to solve. Lineups to live by is—**safety critical**. Railroaders live a 24/7 on-call life and like anyone—*we need adequate rest to do anything right*. Well, maybe it's because dysfunction now reigns but management isn't able to provide us accurate lineups anymore which is why Congress was called upon. FYI: *if newday technology is so superior, then lineups from a computerized, satellite-precision era, would easily be proof of that superiority*. As it stands, teletype and telephone, even tethered balls hit with more accuracy. But, back then—**real brains commanded the other end of those lines**.

Lineups—a *truly valid safety concern that goes so blatantly ignored*—chaps me more than all the other in-our-face disregards. If rail tycoons genuinely had everyone's safety at heart: **workers and society**, the adequate rest fiasco would never have landed on the steps of Congress. Another FYI: if Congress has to be employed, say like a plumber, to unclog what I'm supposed to be an expert at running, well that'd be plumass embarrassing! This inexcusable reality attests to one more indisputable fact: *if it aint a litigated issue—it aint a safety concern*.

Speaking of government, in 2015, The NTSB required inward-facing cameras in our cabs—*purely for safety*. Here, it should be noted: **cameras won't prevent one damn tragedy**. Now why would a governing branch for a *free humanity* push for such?

2018 update; PTC (Positive Train Control) now sits in the driver's seat of most every train running. Currently hyped as assistive technology to the public, railroad management unabashedly conveys their giddiness as to how this technology will soon displace at least one of the two remaining sets of eyes, ears and reactive brains in those cabs. And after this transpires, I've no doubt about what will happen to co-pilots in planes.

## **Nitwits.**

Guess that sounds better than idiots. Disgruntled? You bet! This was once a great company and I was proud to work here! It's more like these nitwits high-jacked *my company* all because machine-seduction overcame their senses. We might be headaches but that's just it—**our heads' house brains**. Something my company has depleted to a nearly incapacitating absurdity. Sure I'm disgruntled but it would be more accurate to tag me loyal as that's what underlies my indignation. It's another human peculiarity. When things go well, workers easily overlook frustrations not because we are ignorant but loyal. Plus, we don't like grief. *Pushing a workforce to see where the parameters of enough lies are factored on these traits*. It's taken a good deal for me to even write this installment because of loyalty and if they'd view it as a wake-up call I'd be honored to remove nitwit from their lapel. After all, 20-plus years ago—who wasn't enamored with all that technology could soon do? Meanwhile, they need to at least muster up a few brainwaves powered by decency to get rid of us without toying with our loyalty. Personally, I don't like mine toyed with. **You got no fear of the thing you don't understand ~S.**

If this series ever gets read by enough of you, the rail industry will likely discredit today's telling. The favored disclaimer right now exalts auto-scans; *assistive tools here to prove just how inept and unsafe we really are and why such intense policies are necessary*. We are dabbed with constrained praise about how improved we've become since auto-scan usage and if the exit door wasn't hitting our newly seared brands—maybe we'd agree. **It's a hickory dichotomy. Someone's messin' with my brain ~STP.**

For the record—*oppression always gets results*. I guess if we don't factor in the very real price tag extolled or the civilized era we live in, then oppression's still an option but backwards will always be just that. A workforce not governed by a genuine regard for their value; *evidenced by proactive management*, will incur low morale, anxiety, paranoia and other health afflictions common to oppressive environments. Companies genuinely intent on safety purely for safety, must surely appreciate the significance of this statement.

I don't know what businesses are blessed with proactive environments for the entire workforce but I did attempt a search. Seems predictors and indicators are the catchwords used to rate businesses. Ethical decency isn't rated—yet. I do know the rail industry and other blue-collar arenas; particularly where any auto or machinery is driven and safety is hyped, subject workers to all that's backwards. Surely there are hallmark companies making concerted efforts to keep their workforces intact in lieu of the many machine for human replacement options—aren't there? Companies that mitigate the socio-accountability impact without using rank tactics? Ganders worthy of the goose?

### **Oh for a crystal ball.**

As long as techies write great programs and nothing out of the programmed-ordinary happens, *inanimate its* can now do a variety of things at once. And if we don't count the upfront techno-billions, the cost of non-stop upgrading, or the unknown price tags of current dysfunction, then replacement machines are doing a fair job nearly free! So let's hypothesize; throw out some numbers but remember—I'm no expert. *I don't got no crystal ball ~SB*. Damn. Lyrics just keep jumping onto these pages!

Let's say that for every job-eliminating machine implemented 20 years ago, our average job-loss was 5. Exponentially then, let's say 10 years ago, that same but now enhanced gadget—does the job of 20. Enter newday higher-thinking replacement machines just awakening. Let's say 5 years ago, a single job-eliminator gobbled up 10 lifelines but with *dysfunction grossly omitted*—a fully plugged-in Baby-G now does the job 50 of us used to do! Of course we'll have to backup and prorate a bit because just like the industrial and automated eras, a less skilled job was replaced with a higher skilled one. Exponentially thinking then, this means techies should remain employed for about 20 more years. Remember, nano means creation will no longer be yours—even if you are a techie.

Mid-management will lose out as well because there just won't be much of a human workforce to manage. Just think of how refreshing it will be to manage bio-brother who will be so robotic with nary of those messy human emotions! Well, bio-brother might be manageable but I doubt Bad Dog Super-G will be. This means mid-management ought to be able to work something out for another 10 years.

If this series ever does fly, we'll have to contend with well-paid mouthpieces chompin' at the bit to PowerPoint the way, just why this hypothesis is incorrect and how it's all gonna work out *just fine!* Hope they explain it to us in a way that actually connects some dots. Meanwhile, we are still a commerce-driven society because we eat, pay mortgages and buy a whole lotta stuff. Ray says not to worry though: "*we'll have lots more time to do creative and pleasurable things!*" This is the last flaw I see in Ray's fantastical. Aside from assuming we'll all stay motivated to keep our hands busy in good and happy ways; something I don't think we're all gonna do just yet but regardless, creating things usually requires a few supplies and for that—*my common sense tells me we'll still need a paycheck dammit!*

## Hit it!

The rail industry has taken a big ethical backslide. They aren't alone. What's *pervasive, insidious, ominous, is: conditioning all society to accept invasive monitoring and replacement schemes*. Meanwhile, I'm not sure how long worker-bees can hold on; keep those big commerce and taxpaying wheels greased at the rate we are being replaced before *Virtual Reality* gets here to ease the absurdity of it all. And there's still that paycheck issue. I've been wondering, if we're all just kicked back, sedately eating Bonbons and getting fat, visualizing we are doing something creative but aren't, visualizing we work but don't—will we still get paid?

While miss-information trinkets get splashed around to assure us our basic decency ethos are of the utmost importance, that replacement is only a minor drawback and that monitoring is necessary, please remember this: *I am you and our agenda does not have billions at stake. However, our very freedoms and lifelines damn sure are. These two facts are also—indisputable.*

Speaking of trinkets, I should defuse some. When I wrote that infamous letter, my record reflected the highly-skilled, integrally-driven employee I've always been. Today, I'm Super Special! After countless registered pink-slip trips to the post office, this brand came with four absurd trials; something I'd never experienced prior to writing my CEO. Targeting then, probably. Targeting now—surely!

Intimidation's a great tool for silencing voices—*it's one huge reason why workers are meekly taking the sideline*. But at this point, I'd have to question my integrity rather than loyalty if I didn't attempt to share what I've learned in spite of personal consequences. So, wish me luck! *I'm gonna hit full speed even if I have to hit the wall ~CCR*. Regardless, no company is worth trading my values for. I'll remain a positive contribution until they get rid of me. I'm beyond personal retribution. I now see the past intimidating years of investigations like Manna; guess that's how many gut-wrenching hits I needed to finally get me off couch-complacency. Besides, it's the new normal—*until we demand better*.

Another footnote: after a post-surgery hiatus, I went back to work last week. The realities staring us down slapped me in the face and reminded me why this installment was necessary. I'm now clear on what was once ominous. I clearly remember what oppressive and backwards feels like and I so clearly see the weight of it all on my coworkers and how it's affecting us and I know what's pervasive. Guess I should thank my company for shoving into my face what's not acceptable in my society. But, that's just me. It's your opinion that matters.

## Damn Choices.

It's now fall of 2014. When I read the above footnote, I'm guessing I penned it three years ago but I've lost track of time and investigations. Currently, I'm in the throes of yet another trial of the absurd and I'm faced with the choice to rail against it or take it. Given advice—take it. After all—corporations really do rule the day. Yeah, we've got a bad case of hopelessness going on alright. Yeah, I'd bend for another S branding just to get it over with except I'm not guilty and that should matter. Even if I was, I've been a positive, loyal asset fully CCC equipped to do a job I've done for many years and these truths should matter as well. ***Shouldn't integral actions testifying to who we really are—still matter?***

Well, I've known all along I wouldn't cave and not because I'm a committed rebel. This is also an important distinction to me. I'm not a trouble-maker. It's just that I wasn't able to wiggle around this never-ending rally encouraging all of us to stop taking it but when it got personal yet again—grovel for more. Damn choices anyway.

## 10 Years and Counting.

May as well add another update. Sure hope this series flies before 2019 updates screech to be included! ***Wrong way on a one way track; feel like I should be gettin' somewhere but I'm neither here nor there ~TP.*** The poignancy of this song isn't lost on this budding rebel. Speaking of years passing, the passing of several great musicians has transpired since I began this project. Now, when I read their borrowed snippets—it warms me. In Remembrance of this musician, his generous smile shines thru; makes me smile too.

At work, the push for a 1-man crew has everyone talking. New-hires look for assurances that they didn't just land themselves a decent paying job only to have to uproot their families once again and go search for yet another. I tell them it'll be some time before they are the latest prime candidates for replacement technology but the truth is—*none of us really know just how much time that means.* Evident is their anxiety so I try to impress on them that no company is worth a belly full of anxiety. To help them see beyond themselves, I offer a brief overview about monitoring and replacement technologies; try to get them to see this new way of re-cogging is going on everywhere and decent paying jobs are getting harder to find anywhere. I try to help them see—***choice is theirs.*** They can choose to sink into all that's pervasive, hopeless and seemingly unstoppable, or they can raise their awareness about the road we're on, where it's taking our great nation, our kids—humanity. I tell them to get a little mad as it appears that rightful indignation helps spur us to rebel. This might not be the best advice but I yam where I yam. Always, I encourage them to question loudly: ***should machines get all the decent paying jobs—humans the menial leftovers only?***

I want to believe that somehow, I've *successfully* conveyed why today's ominous undercurrents end up being more critical to see than tomorrow's what-ifs. Too late tomorrow is just that. It's been within our chapter, a vibrant middle class arose. If we don't stand up to foment a redirect, it will be within this same chapter—that vibrancy will fall.

This is the era and these are the days of titanium-clad, techno-monitoring and replacement schemes being ushered into our society. There's some ill-conceived reasoning behind these invasive techno-trends and none of it is conducive to a free humanity.

Most sincerely yours, Publius.