

The New Hampshire Gazette

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The Fortnightly Rant

That's a Feature, Not a Defect

While the Members of the 113th Congress have been preparing to slither back to their home districts for a non-denominational holiday recess,* the national news media have been reporting on their collective attainment of dramatic new heights of uselessness.

For over sixty years the standard by which Congressional productivity is judged has been the 80th, dubbed by Harry S Truman, "The Do-Nothing Congress." Compared to the 113th, the 80th was packed with overachievers.

This seeming lack of effort has sparked complaints from some quarters. What those people don't seem to understand is that nothing needs to be done. The aims — the proper aims — of government have been reached. History is over, and what you see is what you're going to get. Get used to it.

It's Basic

To understand our current situation — which is no less than the apotheosis of all of mankind's striving — the concepts of income, wealth, distribution, and redistribution must be properly understood.

Let us first consider wealth and income. Income is money that's moving, at so many dollars per hour. Wealth is money that's static, in piles of varying sizes. It's not really that simple, but that's as complicated as we need to make it to explain how Congress is working — which is to say, doing nothing.

How Income Becomes Wealth

Wealth is created by having an income large enough to allow

you to accumulate some part of it into piles over time — after having paid your expenses, of course. We're not Communists, after all.

A prerequisite to the accumulation of wealth, then, is having more in the way of income than you do in expenses.

Income Distribution

Now, under our free market economic system, the ratio between an individual's income and expenses is the result of a subtle interplay between willing buyers and willing sellers. There was a time when slave markets were also involved, but the Emancipation Proclamation put an end to that.

Since we are blessed with freedom of speech in this country, debating the proper distribution of income is fair game for us all.

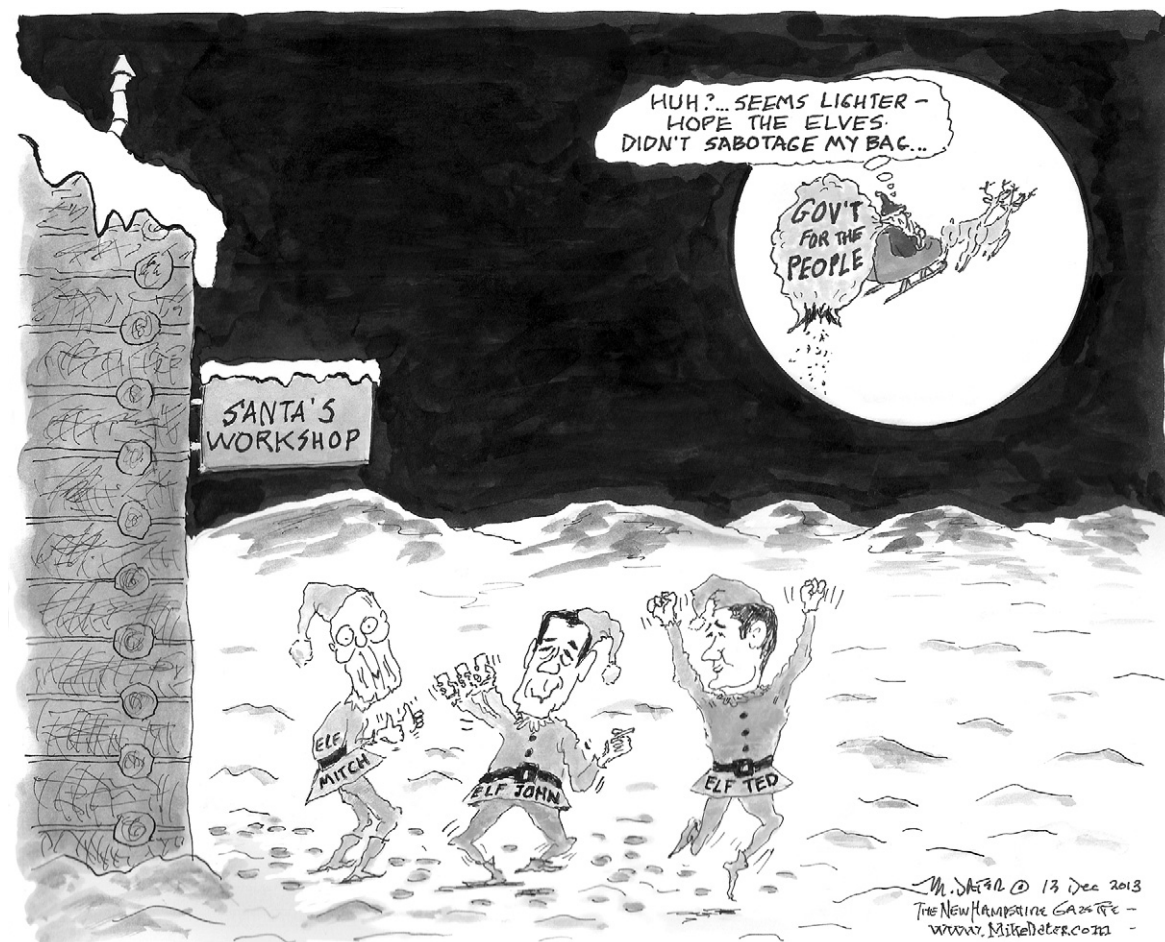
Because the First Amendment also bars the government from meddling in religious affairs, actual control of the distribution of income is in the invisible hands of the market.

This being a free country, anyone can become wealthy. All you have to do to get started is watch what those invisible hands are doing.

This We Believe

Republicans and Democrats agree: equal opportunity is a central tenet of the American mythos. In the Republicans' rather more lofty interpretation of that mythos, they refer to our core values and attitudes. Democrats interpret mythos more literally, as in an underlying system of beliefs, especially those dealing with supernatural forces.

The same opportunity will produce different results, depending on how much of an effort an individual makes. Naturally, more



effort will result in a greater reward.

Some people relish the challenge of creating complex and arcane financial instruments which may or may not turn out to have any value. Others prefer spending long, relaxing afternoons in the great outdoors, applying fresh layers of asphalt to interstate highways while basking in the sun.

Redistribution Never!

Fuzzy thinking in certain quarters — universities being the prime suspects — has led to the spread of the insidious notion that the government ought to punish strivers and reward slackers through the redistribution of wealth. For several decades now, the Republican Party platform has essentially been a vigorous branding campaign based on its implacable opposition to this heinous practice.

Unconfirmed reports say the

Heritage Foundation was working on a plan to bar redistribution through a simple, six-word Constitutional amendment. In English, it reads, "the redistribution of wealth is forbidden." (*"Die Umverteilung des reichthums ist verboten,"* in the original.)

He Said, He Said

Critics say Republicans are fixated on redistribution because most of the nation's wealth is controlled by Republicans. Republicans say they can't help it if invisible hands put wealth where it belongs.

If Republicans didn't rigorously safeguard that wealth, it might end up in the hands of people who would spend it. The consequences would be catastrophic: with money flowing freely, the unrich would lose their only motivation to work hard and inevitably become a class of opulent, parasitical sloths.

News Flash

We interrupt this turgid exegesis with breaking news: Congressional leaders [pardon the oxymoron] have announced a multi-year, bipartisan budget agreement Tuesday — when did you last hear that phrase?

That Democrats agreed is no surprise — they were primed to do so. More surprising is that it throws only a million would-be food stamp recipients and long-term unemployed people to the wolves, while leaving Social Security untouched.

What's amazing is that those Republicans who have had their shots found a way to say "Yes." The question is whether they can prevail over their anti-vaccination caucus and pass a bill before going back to their districts to rest up from not doing anything — other than fund-raising for their next campaign.

The Alleged News

U.S. Government, circa 1962: "Jail Nelson Mandela"

On the morning of August 5, 1962, Nelson Mandela was a fugitive from injustice. By the end of that day, the CIA had solved that problem.

The year before, Mandela had co-founded *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, or "Spear of the Nation," in response to the Sharpeville Massacre: 69 unarmed protestors, who had volunteered to be arrested for not having their papers on their persons, were shot to death by security police armed with automatic weapons.

"Our men are armed and trained freedom fighters not terrorists," its manifesto declared. "We are fighting for democracy — majority rule — the right of

the Africans to rule Africa...." In response to that threat to its core principles, the avowedly-racist South African government issued a warrant for Mandela's arrest, but had been unable to find him.

However, a CIA undercover agent within the African National Congress [ANC] knew where Mandela would be that August 5th. And, since Mandela's freedom was an obvious threat to the security of the U.S., the CIA informed on him to the South African security police. By nightfall on August 5, 1962, Mandela was in custody and would remain so for the next 27 years. Apartheid would last another 32 years.

After Mandela was sentenced

in 1964, William F. Buckley's *National Review* reported that "South African courts have sentenced a batch of admitted terrorists to life in the penitentiary, and you would think the court had just finished barbecuing St. Joan, to hear the howls from the Liberal press."

The South African press reported on the CIA's role in Mandela's capture in 1986, but U.S. news-product dispensers, perhaps distracted by Geraldo Rivera's dramatic opening of Al Capone's vault, missed that story.

In August of that same year the U.S. Congress passed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, calling on the South African

government to negotiate with the black South African majority, recognize the ANC, and free Nelson Mandela. Ronald Reagan vetoed the bill on the grounds that the racist rulers of South Africa, by virtue of their strategic role in the global crusade against Communism, were the moral equivalents of our [slave-owning] Founding Fathers. Reagan, of course, could not have known that P.W. Botha, the President of South Africa, would in 1988 personally order the bombing of the headquarters of the South African Council of Churches.

Congress, including Republican members Newt Gingrich and Mitch McConnell, voted to over-

ride Reagan's veto. Dick "Always Dick" Cheney, allegedly representing Wyoming, voted to sustain Reagan's veto, and defended that vote as recently as 2000.

Cheney's refusal to acknowledge Mandela's role as a freedom fighter pales in comparison to former Senator Rick Santorum's attempt to co-opt it. In a rather stunning feat of imagination, the once and future Presidential wannabe equated the GOP's current battle to deny health care to forty million people with Mandela's struggle to win for all South Africans the right to vote.

The Alleged News

to page two

The Alleged News
from page one

Dispatch from the Flag Police
President Obama ordered U.S. flags to be flown at half-staff to honor the late Nelson Mandela.

Obama's order was clearly authorized by Title 4, U.S. Code Section 7 (m), Position and manner of display: "In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law."

Upon learning of the President's decree, Rick Clark, the Sheriff of Pickens County, SC, did what any teenage girl would have done in similar circumstances — he went to his Facebook page.

"Nelson Mandela did great

things for his country and was a brave man," Clark wrote, "but he was not an AMERICAN!!! The flag should be lowered at our Embassy in S. Africa, but not here."

The point was somewhat moot, since the Sheriff's Office's flag was already at half-staff in honor of a deceased deputy "in the low country," and would remain so on December 7th in honor of Pearl Harbor Day — but come Sunday it was going all the way up! Clark attempted to justify his refusal by asserting that the U.S. Flag code it is not "an 'enforceable law' with penalties."

Welcome Back, Bob!

New Hampshire's political scene in has been short on pizzazz since Jack Kimball vacated the Chairmanship of the GOP and retreated to his bunker; though, to give credit where it's due, Kimball did send a hair-on-fire email alert



The Flag Police issued a rare triple citation while conducting heightened patrol activities in Portsmouth's West End on Saturday, December 7th: #1 — flying a flag at full-staff in contravention of of President Obama's half-staff order of December 5th; #2, flying a flag at full-staff on Pearl Harbor Day; and, #3, flying a flag in an advanced state of dilapidation.



to his fan base last month that read like an outtake from "The X-Files."

"[M]y Daughter and Son-in-Law were on Route 95 [in Maine] ... they observed 40 – 50 unmarked white trucks and hum-vee type vehicles headed South toward NH ... driven by Military personnel There were also some white buses interdispersed [sic] in the group Don't know what they were doing or where they were going but the white vehicles sound more like UN trucks. Be alert." Kimball's UN invasion from the North turned out to be just a routine National Guard convoy.

A couple of infiltrators from the South seem sure to liven things up, though. One of them is Scott Brown, the half-term Senator from Massachusetts. He's being egged on to challenge Senator Jeanne Shaheen next year by the National Republican Senatorial Committee [NRSC].

There are many reasons why the NRSC should be concerned about that seat. Mostly, they'd love to win it to help tip the balance of power to their favor in the Senate. But Senator Shaheen is popular and a tough opponent. The only election we can recall her losing was in 2002, and the Republicans had to jam the Democrats' phone lines on election day to do it.

But Brown's acting kind of coy for a guy who once posed nude for *Cosmopolitan*. Flirtatious, but coy. He keeps hanging around the state, he's formed a PAC, he dropped the "MA" from his Twitter handle ... but he just won't announce he's running.

Brown's not just vague about what he's doing around here — he's vague about where he is. Last Friday in Londonderry — Londonderry, New Hampshire — he said, "What I've heard from the Republicans up here is they're thankful that I've been around for a year helping them raise money,

helping them raise awareness as to the issues that are affecting not only people here in Massachusetts — I mean New Hampshire — but also in Massachusetts obviously, and Maine."

All this vacillation on Brown's part must be giving the NRSC the willies because the alternative is so horrible to contemplate — for them.

For us it's all sunshine and rainbows. Yes, our prayers have been answered, and former Senator Bob Smith, one of our favorite New Hampshire Republicans ever, announced early this month that he's going up against Shaheen to re-take the Senate seat he warmed from 1989 through 2002.

Against It Before He Was For It

News of Smith's candidacy may have come as a shock to faithful readers of John DiStaso's "Granite Status" column in the *Union Leader*.

On October 9th, Smith told

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DiStaso that “[n]ormally, I’m very decisive but I had a lot of difficulty making up my mind. I went into all aspects of it and right up until yesterday, I was on the fence. That’s when I decided that I wasn’t going to do it.”

But, that was then and this is now. ABC News asked canny New Hampshire political consultant Dave Carney what he thought of Smith’s chances.

“He was rejected and thrown out of office ... and I see very few folks who will rally to his tattered banner this time either,” ABC quoted Carney saying. “He is a craven free media seeker and he will provide some comic relief but in the serious business of fielding credible candidates he does not fit into that equation.”

ABC’s report noted that Carney once served as Deputy Chief of Staff to Gov. John Sununu, but it left out the best part: according to *SourceWatch.org*, Carney “worked to draft Sununu’s son John E. Sununu to run for the U.S. Senate from NH in 2002” —

against Smith.

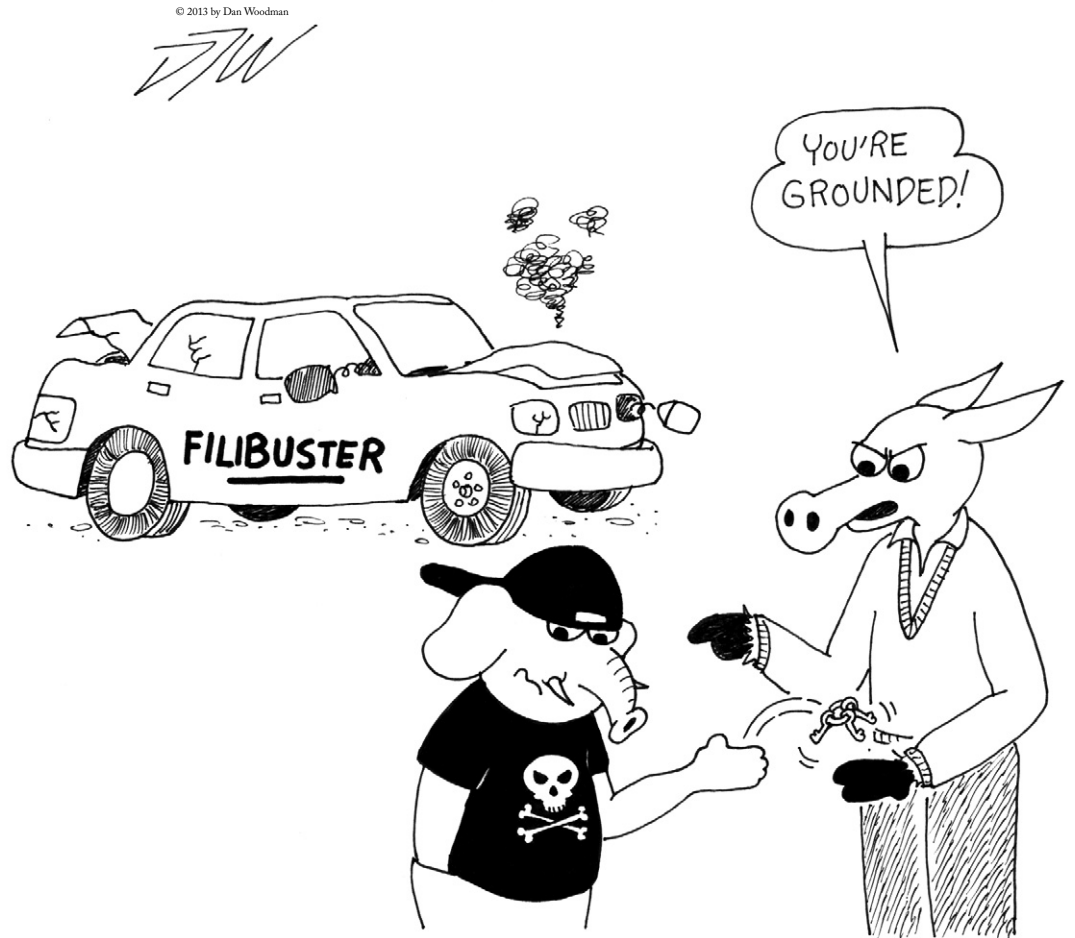
Democrats and fun-loving journalists across the state and across the country are going to be praying hoping fervently for Smith to win the primary; Democrats because Shaheen would crush him in the general election, and journalists because he’s the greatest New Hampshire story generator since Meldrim Thomson. Sadly, though, he hasn’t got the ghost of the hope of a chance.

The GOP will do whatever it has to to keep the nomination away from Smith — including calling in Carney for Round Two.

But that probably won’t be necessary — we’ll bet Smith changes his mind again before this winter’s slush melts.

Propagandize the Debt

Last April the Peter G. Peterson Foundation announced it was throwing a cool \$1 million to “the newly established Warren B. Rudman Center for Justice, Leadership and Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire School of Law.



“The grant will support a new Fiscal Responsibility Institute and an annual conference focusing on national budgetary issues. The Center will provide scholarship, training and opportunities for a new generation of leaders who value public service,” according to a Foundation press release.

The Foundation claims to be non-profit and non-partisan, of course, “dedicated to increasing public awareness of the nature and urgency of key long-term fiscal challenges threatening America’s future and to accelerating action on them.”

Peterson got rich beyond the wildest dreams of avarice by running a hedge fund called Blackstone. Hedge fund bosses are special. They get their very own “carried interest” tax loophole. Their tax rate is 15 percent. Truck drivers and school teachers pay 35 percent — more than twice as

much.

What really happened last April is that the 352nd richest person in America dangled some loose change in front of the University and UNH took the bait. Of course it did — where else is it going to get money — the state legislature? Don’t make us laugh.



In exchange for 0.0000015 percent of his fortune — that’s not a joke; he’s worth \$1.5 billion — Peterson got a brand new propaganda mill in Durham with a

former Senator’s name on it.

The “long-term fiscal challenges” the Rudman Propaganda Mill will blather about are Social Security and Medicare, and the action it intends to “accelerate” is the slashing of the benefits they pay.

There are fairly easy and affordable ways to make both programs solvent for the indefinite future. Just ask Senators Bernie Sanders [I-VT] and Elizabeth Warren [D-MA]. But Peterson and his cronies in the GOP have haughtily declared those measures non-starters.

When Congress talked two years ago about closing the “carried interest” loophole, Stephen Schwarzman, Peterson’s co-founder at Blackstone, said “It’s a war. It’s like when Hitler invaded Poland in 1939.”

This is a war and the rich are fighting. The rest of us have a choice: fight back or surrender.



Our Wandering Photographer drifted into the newsroom Saturday night claiming he’d heard Portsmouth High School’s Clipper Band performing a Christian hymn during the Christmas Illuminated Holiday Parade. The Staff Attorney denied him permission to call the ACLU on the grounds that doing so might disturb the delicate balance which also allows the terrifying, goat-like northern-European creature Krampus, the scourge of bad children, to participate along with his sinister cohorts.

Getting a Leg Up on the Competition
A Great Moment in Gender Equality

There are large glasses and there are small glasses but when the local Moose Lodge held an outing, even the largest glass could not keep local contender Mildred Cuddeback from entering the famed beer drinking contest, where (much to the surprise of onlookers) she took home the blue ribbon.

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Remembering Ray Burton

To the Editor:

I was most fortunate to have been blessed in calling Ray Burton (Executive Councilor to the Governor) my friend for over 30 years and I was deeply saddened to learn of his passing, November 12th.

I first met Ray in 1981 when I lived in North Conway shortly after retiring from the U.S. Navy. I worked in hospitality then and Ray made numerous visits to Conway, as he did all the towns he represented (95 I believe) in the sprawling District One.

We joked that he must be one of quadruplets, he seemed to be everywhere at once, a real gifted and dedicated individual.

In 1983 our paths aligned when he became one of my professors at New Hampshire College. I had the opportunity to visit with Ray in his home in Bath, in his office in Concord, and around the district he travelled and loved so much.

When Lenore and I moved to Vermont in 1990, later to Kentucky, and now North Carolina, we kept in touch regularly by mail. I have a folder in my file drawer marked simply, "Ray B." with some of the material he shared with me over the years, and no less than four New Hampshire magnets (one from each of the four Ray Burtons perhaps?) will remain adhered to the outside of the drawer. Ray always kept me apprised of what was happening

back "home" and also offered me a chance to lend my two cents worth to things I had an interest in.

To say that Ray Burton was a key motive for my continuing interest in politics would be an understatement as would that Ray was truly one of a kind, a genuine New Hampshire icon, and now an immense loss to our beloved state. Ray, I will surely miss you, my friend.

David L. Snell
Dillsboro, NC

David:

Thanks for sharing with us your personal remembrances of one of this state's most dedicated public servants.

The Editor

Sky Falling — Thanks, Obama

To the Editor:

So many false claims have been made for Obamacare that I did some research about medically caused bankruptcies. What I found indicates that Obamacare will probably increase, not decrease, medically-caused bankruptcies.

"Bankruptcy facts." "63 percent of filers blamed credit card bills. Fifty percent blamed mismanagement. Thirty-seven percent blamed pay cuts or job loss, and 28 percent blamed medical bills." And, "89 percent of filers still get credit card offers on a regular basis."

In her book *The Fragile Middle Class: Americans in Debt*, now-Senator Elizabeth Warren claims that two out of three bankruptcy filers have lost a job and 40 percent of bankruptcies result from medical crises, unemployment or divorces.

"The primary cause of personal bankruptcy is a high level of consumer debt often coupled with an unexpected insolvency event such as the loss of a job, a major medical expense not covered by insurance, divorce, or death of a

spouse."

In summary, bankruptcy is usually the result of an unexpected event which happens to people who already have considerable debt. Going for the sensational or showing political bias, headline writers and some authors blame bankruptcies on medical bills even when medical bills are a small part of a person's total debt.

Perhaps the biggest surprise is the size of the medical debt causing bankruptcy. "On average, medically bankrupt families had \$17,943 in out-of-pocket expenses, including \$26,971 for those who lacked insurance and \$17,749 who had insurance at some point."

Having bankruptcies caused by this level of debt says more about our nation's failing economic policies that don't create decent jobs and our failing education system that doesn't teach the skills needed to earn a good living and responsibly manage finances than it says about health insurance or America's medical care.

Unfortunately the new Obamacare insurance deductibles are in the range of \$6,250 per person and \$12,500 per family, much greater than with most of today's policies. An accident or illness with these high Obamacare deductibles could easily result in bankruptcy, especially if medical expenses require paying multiple years' deductibles.

So many Obamacare claims are false that I should not have been surprised to find another lie. But, I was shocked to find that Obamacare will probably significantly increase bankruptcies. This is just another example of how Obamacare, like so many of President Obama's policies, hurts middle income Americans.

Don Ewing
Meredith, NH

Don:

There you go again, straining at a gnat yet swallowing a camel.

Mash Notes, HATE MAIL,

While briefly in control of the White House and both houses of Congress, Democrats created an imperfect plan to extend health care coverage to forty million people who could not get it otherwise. In your view, that's the problem — never mind thirty years of Republican pie-in-the-sky tax cut theories and a war on organized labor.

You admit yourself that "our nation's failing economic policies ... don't create decent jobs" — but you're probably mistakenly referring to our infinitesimal Keynesian deficit spending, not tax cuts for billionaires or wars fought on-the-cuff.

The Editor

Calling for Compassion

To the Editor: This opinion/article is offered for free and may be used for any of your publications.

Media attention on Florida Congressman Trey Radel [R, 19th District] has waned some. Radel was arrested for buying cocaine and has since taken a leave of absence for drug rehabilitation. We won't hear much until he resumes his elected Congressional job.

Radel by his own admission spiraled downward in his life being consumed by alcohol that led him to become a cocaine user. Alcohol or drug addiction never leads to the best of times. Most of us can identify with lives that get imbalanced or totally out of control. Too many Americans are addicted to junk food with a third of our nation being obese. However, obesity is not illegal and we would rather meet a fat man on the highway than a drunk or drug crazed man. Millions of Americans are addicted to prescription medications and seek pills from pill mill doctors all over the nation. Deaths occur routinely throughout the nation as every day good American people swallow too many pills blessed by

duly licensed physicians. Many of us know someone who left us prematurely. Remember Elvis? Remember Michael Jackson? Addiction took over their lives as they plummeted to the bottom and sadly on out of the world.

The last time I got a speeding ticket I didn't really mean to be speeding. I was just in a hurry. The police officer kindly gave me a citation that cost me some money. It is irritating to receive a speeding ticket; however I have to think that maybe that policeman saved my life. I have to think that maybe a brief pullover on the highway saved me from greater calamity further down the road.

I know Congressman Radel is embarrassed and will work hard to do better. Everybody deserves a second chance. However, one of several good things about his arrest is that maybe this brief pullover on life's highway will enable him to live to a ripe old age.

Glenn Mollette
Newburgh, IN

Glenn:

Thanks — we'll take you up on your generous offer, assuming that you won't mind if we reply. Extending forgiveness to Rep. Radel is very Christian of you, but we would expect no less from the President of the Newburgh Theological Seminary regardless of its lack of accreditation. Granted, your Seminary's website states "[w]e feel the accreditation of God is on our school because we strive to please Him in academics and ministry training," but we have different standards.

Radel attempted to buy an eighth of an ounce of cocaine from an undercover cop in Washington, D.C. He pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor and was sentenced to one year of probation and a \$1,000 fine. In Florida he could have been charged with a felony and gotten five years.

We'd be more inclined to be chari-

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And Other Correspondence

table towards Radel if he had not voted to impose drug testing on food stamp recipients. Where is it written that Jesus made the multitudes pee in little cups before He fed them?

We're with the 18 percent of Americans who oppose drug testing as a requirement for welfare assistance — and the 78 percent who want Congress members to submit to it as a condition of employment.

The Editor

§

Being Tom Brady

To the Editor:

Having just left work, I caught only the waning moments, via the radio, of the recent NFL matchup between the New England Patriots and the Carolina Panthers. The Pats had just relinquished the lead with only 59 seconds remaining on the clock, yet I was certain that Tom Brady was going to orchestrate another one of his magnificent comeback drives to snatch victory from the Panthers. Unfortunately, the Pats fell just short!

Listening to Tom Brady leading his team down the field, I found myself fantasizing about what it would be like to be our beloved quarterback. I discovered that I would be in the prime of my life, healthy and fit, great looking, at the top of my profession with three Super Bowl rings, making a fairly comfortable living and getting to share breakfast every morning with Gisele Bundchen.

That fantasy also led me to recall a snarky bumper sticker I once saw, in Dover, on a Cadillac SUV that I was working hard to ride alongside on my bicycle. The sticker read, "Work hard, be successful and enjoy life!" My immediate thought was that the owner of the vehicle thought very highly of himself/herself and was displaying a mindset typically associated with a registrant of a major

political party that starts with an "R." I additionally found the advice offered by the vehicle owner as woefully incomplete. Given permission and some indelible ink, I would have added the following variables to the equation: find luck and serendipity, avoid any and all life-changing misfortune and obey the Golden Rule.

The political belief system brandished on the bumper of the fancy Cadillac will always fail to acknowledge that "stuff happens," and that the majority of Americans are susceptible to the effects of that "stuff." We should be reminded that even the immensely talented and hardworking Tom Brady, a relatively unknown 6th round draft pick and backup to a franchise quarterback, benefitted from someone else's misfortune (Drew Bledsoe's) and was on the favorable end of a critical, controversial call in a first round playoff game (see 2001 Oakland Raiders), which indubitably set the stage for his long-term success.

Wayne H. Merritt

Dover, NH

Wayne:

Scholars whose names we've momentarily forgotten have traced the sanctification of selfishness at least as far back to the Puritans.

Some people hit a few bad breaks and decide that they don't deserve the good things in life. That can lead to a poor attitude, which frequently engenders poor decisions. Pretty soon, they're in what's called a downward spiral.

Others — of no more intrinsic worth — get lucky and decide that they do deserve the good things in life. That can lead to an obnoxious attitude which presumes they ought to get first dibs on everything in sight. When that works, for some perverse reason, it's often labeled success.

The official verdict is in: those who enjoy higher status in our society

— whether through inheritance or effort — are deemed ipso facto to be virtuous. Apparently nothing is quite so cozy as the assumption that since you're comfortable, you're good.

The Editor

§

Can Doorways Be Political?

To the Editor:

I find doorways intriguing, like the catchy cover of a book. What is the story behind the door? I have a collection of personal doorway photos from 32 countries. I am not alone, there are hundreds of books and thousands of photo collections available. What is the attraction, the physical doorway or what it might portend?

There are many ways to look at doorways, their size, color, material, design, strength and their number. One seldom thinks a doorway could be an icon for a political party, but I do.

When I see a tall, wide, clear glass, automatic double door that swings in, displaying a big bright welcome, that suggests an inviting and easy entry, I think of the Democratic Party.

When I see a single, narrow, heavy wooden door, unlocked with a passcode, a skin and voice scan with a "Members Only" notice above the gold plated handle, I think of the Republican Party.

Behind the Republican door awaits a litmus test to access the inner offices through the anti-choice door, anti-immigration reform door, anti-government door, anti-science door, anti-tax door, anti-healthcare door. If you don't commit to any of these options you are directed to the exit door.

The Democratic door opens to a landscape of problem solving pods, no closed doors, no restricted areas, no loyalty test. Instead a suggestion box, in multiple languages, dominates the entry area along with a sign-up sheet for public service projects.

The doorways tell us even more — one is welcoming, suggests di-

versity, focus on moving forward, a positive attitude and openness to new ideas. The other is barrier-like, ideologically restrictive, opposed to any and all change, with a generally spiteful attitude.

In the next election cycle I hope that the voters slam the door in the face of Republican candidates and show the incumbents the door that leads out of their offices and out of town.

Dave Potter

North Hampton, NH

Dave:

You left out a biggie: Sen. Kelly Ayotte's door to the gas chamber. Oh, wait That sounds so pejorative. How about Senator Ayotte's door to the Intravenous Slumber Room for Felons? Is that more politically correct?

The Editor

§

Republican Decries Obamacare

To the Editor:

Earlier this week, there were whispers that President Obama was considering decreeing that we would have single-payer health insurance. We have a fundamental problem in this country: our President is acting as if he is above the Constitution and the will of the people and their representation in Congress in order to "fix" his ideologically flawed, politically damaging, and disastrous law.

The idea being considered is pretty simple and has the potential to become the biggest fraud in the history of the world today, including President Obama and his henchmen like Jeanne Shaheen deceiving the American people by saying we could keep our healthcare and doctors if we liked them and that we would save \$2,500 per year. The latest in a long line of Band-Aids for Obamacare is even worse than this deception.

The idea was that the president would unilaterally use our public funds to pay insurance companies whatever they guess they need to cover anticipated enrollees. Theo-



retically, the government would work out individuals' payments later. Would you ever go out for dinner and drinks with 300 million of your friends and offer to put it on your card, and agree to work it out later?

The idea is once again to bypass Congress to perform legislative and fiscal action covering the administration's incompetence as well as a rushed and unworkable law rammed through Congress by Democrats like Harry Reid, Nancy Pelosi, and Jeanne Shaheen. The result is more expensive, often shockingly more expensive, prices of health insurance through the exchanges.

Whether the latest revelation of healthcare.gov's failure was due to incompetence, a planned failure, or just a lie, we are told that the exchange cannot accept payment after two months being live. That's right; it cannot sell insurance. If it was an intentional failure to usher in a single-payer system, it was ingenious, devious, and reprehensible. Remember that our representatives in Congress opposed a single-payer system.

Regardless, the administration sees an opportunity to implement single payer coverage in the mess it created — cancelled plans, inability to purchase insurance on the exchange, higher premiums, higher deductibles, and losing access to doctors and hospitals.

More Hate Mail, &c.

to page six

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Northcountry Chronicle

Prelude to Apocalypse

by William Marvel

In early September of 1979, while Germans held peace rallies to observe the 40th anniversary of Hitler's invasion of Poland, I headed west from Düsseldorf on a pilgrimage to the scenes of an earlier conflict. Almost exactly 65 years before, German armies had swept across pesky little Belgium on their way to France, bringing the British into what would be known — for all too brief a time — as the Great War. The Germans had not completely traversed Belgium before they ran into the harbingers of the British army, and their first clash came at Mons, about 20 miles from the French border. The Western Front swung deep into France a few days afterward, and oscillated for the next fifty months, until those two armies were fighting outside of Mons again by Armistice Day.

When I reached Mons on September 4, I was surprised to find

the town's historic center relatively intact: memoirs of World War I by Sigfried Sassoon and Robert Graves depict nothing but rubble and desolation wherever the battle lines collided. Mons boasted a sizable museum to the war, however, and it was housed in a former pawn shop that was built in 1625 and had apparently not been touched since, even so far as to install a rest room. ("On peut faire pipi dans le coin là-bas, monsieur," said the docent, pointing to a flat and glistening rock in the courtyard.)

Rusted metal shards and fading photographs of British soldiers — most of them identified as killed or missing — jammed every room of the museum. The Brits took a pounding in the first battle just outside Mons, beginning with a 16-year-old recruit named John Parr, who died in the first exchange of fire on August 23, 1914. Two weeks later, the Germans had chased both the British

and the French to the outskirts of Paris, and they did not return to Mons until November of 1918. George Ellison, a middle-aged Yorkshireman, was killed there a few minutes before the armistice, on November 11.

There was at Mons a little restaurant called Le Café des Cloches. The waiter, who may also have been the owner, looked about 80 years old, and he had a lot of pants that left him but little torso. He had been born near Mons, and had lived there through both German occupations, but he seemed to remember the first one as the worse of the two. Never enough to eat, he said, and by the end of the war people had to walk ten kilometers with handcars to draw potable water. He complained that his teeth had fallen out, presumably from scurvy, but I detected that he had retained the stumps of a couple of them, evidently as souvenirs.

"C'était terrible," he kept mut-

tering. So was his coffee, but I left him a relatively generous tip, and my sympathy for his troubles. He had endured the cataclysm that precipitated a century of increasingly frequent and connected disasters. The immediate direct consequence of the First World War was the Second World War, and he had suffered through that, as well, although the Nazis apparently turned out to be better providers of sustenance than the Kaiser's commissaries. Yet the defeat of Hitler and the Japanese only seemed to spark a new, loosely related sequence of struggles, the end of which has not yet come — and may never.

Except for the profusion of Flemish-speakers and their indecipherable newspapers, I don't recall much difference between western Belgium and northern France. The trains, architecture, and landscape all looked the same. People seemed to rise late on both sides of the border, and restaurants

opened later still, leaving those of us who are addicted to the sunrise breakfast rather surly until nearly midday.

From Mons to Arras and Cambrai, farmers still armored their tractors against the explosion of the ancient ordnance their plows occasionally detonated. Both countries abounded with signs indicating the location of British, French, and American cemeteries, where the dead were gathered from indiscriminate battlefield graves and arranged in perfect rows beneath gleaming white stones. One of those cemeteries sits a mile or so outside of Mons, and in it lie the remains of young John Parr, the first British martyr in the Great War. The gravestone of George Ellison, the very last British fatality, stands barely six paces away, as though to illustrate that no ground — and nothing else of any good — had been gained by that pointless and residually destructive war.

More Mash Notes, HATE MAIL, And Other Correspondence, from Page Five

So the President is thinking about trying to step in and pay for everyone's insurance with our tax money. And supposedly we would work it out later. We would trust the insurance companies not to overestimate the amount of money they need; we would trust the federal government to work it out for us later.

In reality, this would be the beginning of a single-payer system.

The Obama Administration would never work out individual payments later. It would brush aside that part, and we would have an eternal partnership between the government and the health insurance industry, which is cur-

rently one-sixth of our economy and would begin growing like other Federal programs.

There are several key problems with enacting this terribly dangerous idea:

- President Obama would continue his roughshod trampling of the Constitution.

- It would be the beginning of a single-payer system.

- It would ensure government playing favorites and shutting out competition, as Jeanne Shaheen supported New Hampshire government doing in New Hampshire through SB711 when she was in the state Senate. (Only Anthem is on the New Hamp-

shire exchange.)

- It would ensure massive fraud as the chosen insurance company names its price with a fiscally irresponsible Congress and administration.

- Insurance companies as we know them today would cease to exist, and these insurance companies would care less about what we think of their services.

- Medical expenditures would skyrocket until there are no further revenues available from the over-burdened citizen.

- Healthcare would be managed, i.e. rationed, and the federal government would decide whether you get the care you need.

This "solution" would be a blatant violation of the Constitutional authority of Congress to write the laws and set the budget by a lawless administration with the tacit approval from congressional accomplices like Jeanne Shaheen.

Jon Meadows, Communications Director, [Karen] Testerman for Senate

Jon:

Alarmed at "whispers" that the President "might be considering" something, eh? Maybe you and your patroness should stop mainlining Glenn Beck's dreck.

If President Obama did "decree that we would have single-payer

health care," it would be cause for a jubilee. The only reason we're saddled with health care reform as we know it is that blue-dog Democrats would have balked at a better solution.

You know what would really be alarming? Your boss in the Senate, alongside Kelly "Standing Next to the Switch" Ayotte. This state's got enough problems without another pious death penalty-supporting, healthcare-hating dingbat representing us.

The Editor

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Why We Can't Balance The Budget

To the Editor:

Liberalism and the benefits it can generate endure only when

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The Highly-Educated Working Poor: Adjunct Professors

by Jim Hightower

There's a growing army of the working poor in our USofA, and big contingents of it are now on the march. They're strategizing, organizing, and mobilizing against the immoral economics of inequality being hung around America's neck by the likes of Walmart, McDonald's, and colleges.

Wait a minute. Colleges? You

go there to get ahead in life. More education makes you better off, right? Well, ask a college professor about that — you know, the ones who earned PhDs and are now teaching America's next generation.

The sorry secret of higher education — from community colleges to brand-name universities — is that they've embraced the corporate culture of a contingent workforce, turning professors into

part-time, low-paid, no-benefit, no-tenure, temporary teachers. Overall, more than half of America's higher-ed faculty members today are "adjunct professors," meaning they are attached to the school, but not essentially a part of it.

It also means that these highly-educated, fully-credentialed professors have become part of America's army of the working poor. They never know until a se-

mester starts whether they'll teach one class, three, or none — typically, this leaves them with take-home pay somewhere between zero and maybe \$1,000 a month. Poverty.

Adjuncts usually get no benefits, no real chance of earning fulltime positions, no due process or severance pay if dismissed, no say in curriculum or school policies — sometimes not even office space. Like their counterparts at

Walmart and McDonald's, adjunct college professors are not treated as valuable resources to be nurtured, but as cheap, exploitable, and disposable labor.

Unsurprisingly, this contingent of the low-wage army is organizing, too. For information, contact New Faculty Majority: www.NewFacultyMajority.info.

Copyright 2013 by Jim Hightower & Associates. Contact Laura Ehrlich (laura@jimhightower.com).

people understand the principles that animate the workings of markets. The central importance of a culture of individual responsibility for the viability of a free and liberal society cannot be over emphasized. Collectivist ideas fail on efficiency grounds, but collectivist mentality persists because we are comfortable handing over control of our lives to the state in order to avoid having to accept personal responsibility.

Keynesian logic allowed that deficits could be used to stimulate aggregate demand during recessionary periods. It also required that surpluses during economic booms be used to pay down the debt. The theory ignores the incentives facing politicians.

Politicians run deficits in good times and bad times in order to please constituents and not raise taxes. Both of these incentives bias politicians to fiscal irresponsibility and short term decision making. This is why the U.S. government faces increasing deficits and mounting debt. This is why both political parties are in competition to see which can act most irresponsibly.

Public debt is justified for only two reasons: National emergencies and long term investments involving significant startup costs.

Everything is not a crisis. Everything is not an emergency. The government is not investing at all.

Public debt should be used sparingly and wisely. Proper use avoids burdening future generations and provides for maximum freedom of choice. Bastardization of Keynesian economics has recast the federal budget as a mechanism for controlling the economy for politically expediency.

Marc Abear
Meredith, NH

Marc:

"Individual responsibility" good; "collectivist mentality" bad — check. "The workings of markets" good; "controlling the economy for politically expediency" bad — check.

If the parallels between your letter and Animal Farm were not so obvious, and we had an infinite number of monkeys serving as researchers, we're pretty confident they could quickly Google up the sources of all the above alleged ideas in the collected works of The Three [Right Wing] Stooges: Ayn Rand, Ludwig von Mises, and Freidrich Hayek.

You do know, don't you, that the Koch brothers lured Hayek to live out his dotage in the U.S. by dangling Medicare as bait, right? It's true — you can Google that, too.

The Editor

On Patrick

We struggled a bit deciding whether and how to print the submission found to the right of this column — if the term struggle can be fairly applied to a process whose outcome had nothing to do with questions of life or death. It's a poem about a guy who ... well, read it.

When he was in Fallujah he may have thought that when he got out of Fallujah — if he ever got out of Fallujah — well, at least he'd be out of Fallujah. Now nobody's there except the Fallujans ... and Patrick, of course, who may never get out. That seems like a harsh outcome for a guy who, let's face it, was probably not trying to get to the top of the greased pole of success by stomping on his neighbors — not carrying a medic's pack, he wasn't.

Which is why we hesitated to run this poem: it succeeds almost too well at putting the reader in Patrick's skin. Random American civilians could use some of that, but other Patricks, under other names but with that same feeling, might read it and just hear a door clang shut.

Some of our best friends are Patricks who've learned over the years that that clanging door can be opened.

Patrick

He can't get out of his head the horrors he's seen
picking the pieces up and stuffing them back.
Like Lady Macbeth, his hands will never be clean.

But not like her: she murdered a king;
he was only an army medic, but now
he can't get out of his head the violence he's seen.

He only tried to put the pieces back
into broken bodies. It wasn't his fault,
but now he thinks his hands will never be clean.

His unit invaded Fallujah;
urban fighting's as ugly as fighting gets.
He can't get out of his head the havoc he's seen.

He can't sit still or even look at his hands.
He tried to save his friends, the dead and the maimed.
Now he's sure his hands will never be clean.

The army said he was fine and sent him home
with so much blood his hands will never be clean.
The VA gives him pills. Frozen in time,
he can't get out of his head the carnage he's seen.

— W.D. Ehrhart

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ADMIRAL FOWLE’S PISCATAQUA RIVER TIDAL GUIDE (NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES)

Portsmouth, arguably the first town in this country not founded by religious extremists, is bounded on the north and east by the Piscataqua River, the second, third, or fourth fastest-flowing navigable river in the country, depending on

whom you choose to believe.

The Piscataqua's ferocious current is caused by the tide, which, in turn, is caused by the moon. The other player is a vast sunken valley — Great Bay — about ten miles upriver. Twice a day, the

moon drags about seventeen billion gallons of seawater — enough to fill 2,125,000 tanker trucks — up the river and into Great Bay. This creates a roving hydraulic conflict, as incoming sea and the outgoing river collide. The skirmish line

moves from the mouth of the river, up past New Castle, around the bend by the old Naval Prison, under Memorial Bridge, past the tugboats, and on into Great Bay. This can best be seen when the tide is rising.

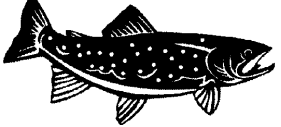
Twice a day, too, the moon lets all that water go. All the seawater that just fought its way upstream goes back home to the ocean. This is when the Piscataqua earns its title for xth fastest current. Look for the red buoy, at the upstream

end of Badger's Island, bobbing around in the current. It weighs several tons, and it bobs and bounces in the current like a cork. The river also has its placid moments, around high and low tides. When the river rests, its tugboats

and bridges work their hardest. Ships coming in laden with coal, oil, and salt do so at high tide, for more clearance under their keels. They leave empty, riding high in the water, at low tide, to squeeze under Memorial Bridge.

Sunday, December 15	Monday, December 16	Tuesday, December 17	Wednesday, December 18	Thursday, December 19	Friday, December 20	Saturday, December 21
2000—Sen. Phil Gramm gives Enron what it wants: energy futures deregulation hidden in a 11,000 page appropriations bill. One year later Enron is bankrupt. 1997—Paula Jones' lawyers maneuver Bill Clinton into signing a legal document claiming he'd not had sex with government workers. 1989—Sicilian-born sculptor Arturo Di Modica installs a 16-foot long, 3.5 ton bronze bull in the middle of Broad Street in New York, in front of the Stock Exchange — without a permit. 1986—Bill Casey, CIA director, suffers a well-timed seizure, preventing him from testifying about Iran/Contra. 1983—Ed Meese denies Ebenezer Scrooge exploited Bob Cratchit. 1969—The Mormon Church reaffirms its "no black priests" policy. 1968—Richard Nixon announces a third round of troop withdrawals from Vietnam. 1967—A 2.5 mm-deep defect collapses the 39 year-old Silver Bridge over the Ohio River, killing 46. 1966—Walt Disney dies in Los Angeles. Contrary to rumor, his remains are burned, not frozen. 1965—U.S. drops 12 tons of bombs on Haiphong. 1960—Palm Beach police arrest NH resident Richard Pavlick before he can kill John F. Kennedy with his dynamite-laden Buick.	2010—Street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi immolates himself in Tunisia to protest official corruption and harassment, igniting the Arab Spring in the process. 2005—<i>The New York Times</i> reports that the NSA has been tapping U.S. telephones without a warrant. 2001—U.S. troops at Tora Bora ask for help catching Osama bin Laden. Donald Rumsfeld denies their request; Osama walks. 1988—Bush #41 nominates Sen. John Tower, a boozing womanizer, for Defense Secretary. 1988—Lyndon LaRouche, perennial Presidential candidate and arguably the most notable person ever born in Rochester, NH, is convicted of tax and mail fraud. 1965—Gen. Westmoreland, already commanding 200,000 men in Vietnam, asks for another 243,000. 1960—Two airliners collide over NYC killing a total of 134. 1944—Hitler overrules his generals and mounts a massive attack in the Ardennes Forest. 1835—A two-day fire destroys 674 buildings in New York, bankrupting insurance companies and kicking off the Depression of 1837. 1811—New Madrid, MO is hit by the first in a series of four massive earthquakes over a six week period. 1773—"Sons of Liberty" disguised as Mohawks dump 342 chests of tea into Boston Harbor.	2006—Bill Kristol, on "Fox News Sunday," says "Barack Obama is not going to beat Hillary Clinton in a single Democratic primary. I'll predict that right now." 2005—A mob of 40 drunken, anarchist-spouting Santas go on a rampage through Auckland, NZ. 1998—Pres. Clinton continues blasting Iraq, using up about half of the Pentagon's cruise missiles. 1997—In Paris, 34 nations including the U.S. sign an anti-bribery-in-business convention. 1997—Thanks to a new law, landlocked Montana becomes, for anonymous foreigners with over \$200,000 to deposit, an "offshore" banking center. 1996—The last-known eunuch in China, Sun Yaoting, dies. 1996—Peruvian guerrillas crash a party at the Japanese embassy in Lima, take hostages, and stay for four months. 1967—Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt goes for a swim in heavy surf and disappears. 1960—An Air Force C-131 crashes into a steeple in Munich, then falls onto a trolley car killing all 20 on the plane, 18 in the trolley, and 11 more on the street. 1927—Hit off Provincetown by the Coast Guard destroyer <i>Paulding</i>, the U.S. sub <i>S-4</i> sinks. Six of the 40 aboard survive the initial sinking but can't be rescued in time.	2005—"Not only can we win the war in Iraq—we are winning the war in Iraq," declares George W. Bush, 962 days after having declared "Mission accomplished." 2004—John Walsh announces on "America's Most Wanted" that the two fugitives he most wants to see caught are Jahbir and Alfonso Fowle. 2000—"If this were a dictatorship," says George W. Bush on CNN, "it'd be a heck of a lot easier, just so long as I'm the dictator." 1998—Censure of Bill Clinton isn't good enough for House Republicans; they want impeachment. 1996—Kenyan students protest the killing of a student the previous day. Police kill two more students. 1996—G-Man Earl Pitts is arrested for moonlighting for the KGB. 1972—R. Nixon starts a campaign of B-52 strikes against North Vietnam. Three Stratofortresses are shot down the first night. 1957—The first watts of nuclear-generated electricity begin lighting up used car lots and neon signs. 1946—Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker flies over Broadway scattering Damon Runyon's ashes. 1941—Outnumbered 10 to 1, U.S. forces lose Guam to the Japanese. 1917—Congress submits the 18th Amendment to the states for their approval. After it passes, Prohibition begins.	2007—Fire breaks out near "Dick" Cheney's office. Likely cause: spontaneous inhuman combustion. 1998—As Bill Clinton is being impeached for some hanky-panky, Speaker-elect Bob Livingston resigns to cover up a bit of his own. 1984—Due to a work speedup, 27 miners are killed in Utah. 1974—Norris Cotton slides a resolution through the Senate giving the senior Senator from New Hampshire the right to commandeer the "Daniel Webster" desk. 1973—During his Tonight Show monologue, Johnny Carson jokes about a non-existent toilet paper shortage. The next day there is one, and it lasts three weeks. 1946—The Viet Minh take on the French in Indo-China. 1941—Disgruntled former corporal A. Hitler becomes Commander in Chief of German Army. 1910—Baltimore becomes first U.S. city with designated white and black residential areas. 1907—A coal mine explosion kills 239 in Jacobs Creek, PA. 1832—Attempting to find his way home from a New Jersey tavern during a snowstorm, poet and journalist Philip Freneau dies at 80. 1777—Washington's army arrives at Valley Forge, PA. 1776—Thomas Paine's <i>American Crisis</i> is published; "These are the times that try men's souls . . ."	2002—The ten biggest U.S. brokerage houses cough up \$1.44 billion in fines rather than risk a trial over charges they fleeced their customers. 2002—Sen. Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) steps down after lamenting Strom Thurmond's failure to win the Presidency on a racist platform in 1948. 1989—The U.S. invades Panama to arrest CIA agent Manuel Noriega. 1983—Once and future Defense Secretary Don Rumsfeld visits Baghdad to shake mass murderer Saddam Hussein's hand and convey Ronald Reagan's best wishes. 1979—<i>The Washington Post</i> publishes a correction: National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski did <i>not</i> unzip his fly during an interview with a female <i>Post</i> reporter. 1978—Former Nixon Chief of Staff H.R. "Bob" Haldeman is released from prison after 18 months. 1972—Six B-52s are shot down over North Vietnam. 1786—Hannah Ocuish, a developmentally-disabled 12-year-old Pequot Indian girl, thanks her executioner for his kindness just before becoming the youngest person ever hanged in U.S. 1669—In the first jury trial in Delaware, Marcus "The Long Finn" Jacobson is sentenced to be flogged, branded on the face, and enslaved for insurrection.	2008—Todd Carmichael reaches the South Pole after traveling 692 miles on skis and on foot, solo. 2006—Saparmurat Niyazov, President for Life of Turkmenistan, dies at 66, leaving a legacy consisting primarily of golden statues of himself. 2004—In Fort Valley, GA Larry Taylor refuses to give his cell phone to a would-be thief, who then shoots him in the head. Taylor walks two miles to his mother's home, only to find she has moved to a nursing home. Despite this setback, he survives. 2001—"All in all," says George W. Bush three months after 9/11, "it's been a fabulous year for Laura and me." 1996—Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-GA) admits ethics violations, after denying them for two years. 1989—Veep Dan Quayle sends 30,000 Xmas cards in which "beacon" is spelled "beakon." 1988—PanAm Flight 103 explodes over Lockerbie; 270 perish. 1970—At the White House, Elvis gives Tricky Dick a chrome-plated Colt .45; Dick gives Elvis a Narcotics Bureau badge. 1968—The <i>Apollo 8</i> astronauts become the first humans to leave Earth's gravitational field. 1962—The U.S. exchanges \$53 million in medical supplies for 1,113 Bay of Pigs prisoners.
7:59 8:27 2:06 2:10	8:42 9:08 2:45 2:52	9:30 9:52 3:28 3:39	10:22 10:41 4:14 4:31	11:18 11:33 5:04 5:28	12:16 5:57 6:28	12:28 1:14 6:52 7:27
Sunday, December 22	Monday, December 23	Tuesday, December 24	Wednesday, December 25	Thursday, December 26	Friday, December 28	Saturday, December 29
2001—Richard Reid fails to blow up American Airlines Flight 63 with a shoe-bomb, but we all must still remove our footwear. 1984—Asked for money on New York subway, Bernhard Goetz responds with lead, then leaves for New Hampshire. 1981—Ronald Reagan authorizes the distribution of 30 million lbs. of moldy cheese to the poor. 1974—Congress passes an act to relocate Big Mountain Indians — away from coal deposits. 1965—Henry House is the first U.S. soldier court martialled for protesting the Vietnam War. 1944—To a German demand for surrender, surrounded General Anthony McAuliffe replies, "Nuts." 1937—Hotel clerk and author Nathanael West and his wife Eileen McKenney die in a car wreck during their honeymoon. 1891—Edward L. Bernays, the father of PR, is born in Austria. 1882—Thomas Edison makes the first string of electric Xmas lights. 1849—Nearly naked and tied to a pole, Fyodor Dostoevsky finds his death sentence commuted to four years in Siberia moments before the executioners' guns were to fire. 1813—An 18-acre swath of downtown Portsmouth, from Daniel Street to Court Street, and Fleet Street to the river, is destroyed by fire.	2004—NASA reports that the asteroid Apophis has a 1.6 percent chance of hitting Earth in 2029. 1997—Woody Allen, 61, marries his ex-wife's adopted daughter, Soon-Yi Previn, 27. 1994—Crooked FBI agent John Connolly warns Whitey Bulger that arrests are pending for him and his Winter Hill Gang. Whitey takes a powder. 1986—The airplane <i>Voyager</i> lands in California, having circumnavigated the world nonstop. 1982—The EPA recommends the entire population of Times Beach, MO leave town due to dioxin contamination. 1981—The Foye Building, adjacent to the Portsmouth Athenæum, partially collapses. 1972—Survivors of an Andean plane crash are rescued; their diet improves markedly. 1955—James Kutcher, who lost both legs in WW II, learns his disability payments are being terminated due to his membership in the Socialist Workers Party. 1953—In Korea, 21 American POWs refuse to go home. 1950—U.S. signs mutual defense pact with France, South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. 1948—Japan's General Hideki Tojo is hanged as a war criminal. 1947—Inventors at a Bell laboratory show off the first transistor.	1992—George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush pardons "Cap" Weinberger, Bob McFarlane, and 4 other Iran-Contra creeps, coincidentally sparing his own sorry ass. 1979—The Soviet Army enters Afghanistan to prop up the Marxist government. Oops. 1972—Over Vietnam, B-52 tail-gunner Albert E. Moore becomes the last man to down a MiG 21 with machine guns. 1971—Her airliner having fallen apart after being hit by lighting two miles above the Amazon, Julianie Koepcke, 17, falls into the jungle and survives with minor injuries. 1970—Nine G.I.'s are KIA and 9 WIA by "friendly fire" in Vietnam. 1968—The crew of the <i>U.S.S. Pueblo</i> is released by N. Korea. 1968—The crew of <i>Apollo 8</i> photographs Earth rising behind moon. 1964—VC blow up the Brink Officers Quarters in downtown Saigon, killing two and injuring sixty. 1913—Thugs hired by copper bosses yell "Fire" during a Christmas party in Calumet, MI's Italian Hall. In the ensuing panic, 73 people die, including 59 children. 1907—In Philadelphia, I.F. Stone, journalist, is born. 1883—Major Henry Rathbone, increasingly deranged since being stabbed by John Wilkes Booth during the Lincoln assassination, murders his wife.	1989—Romania celebrates Christmas with the firing squad execution of former President Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife Elena. 1978—At Plymouth, MA, four Santa Clauses climb the fence at a nuke plant and get arrested. 1974—Marshall Fields, wearing Arab garb, crashes his Chevy Impala through the northwest gate of the White House grounds and drives up to the North Portico. Four hours later he surrenders. 1956—Birmingham, AL anti-segregationist Fred Shuttlesworth's home is bombed. 1950—Students remove the Stone of Scone from Westminster Abbey's Coronation Throne and bring it home to Scotland. 1946—Demonstration at the White House demands release of WW II conscientious objectors. 1945—Four thousand GIs march in Manila, protesting their slow redeployment back to the U.S. 1914—German and British troops leave their trenches, sing Christmas carols, shake hands, and exchange cigarettes. 1868—Despite much opposition, President Johnson grants unconditional pardons to all those involved in the "Southern Rebellion." 1776—2,400 men under George Washington surprise the British and Hessians at Trenton. Another 3,000 get lost on the way.	2004—A massive tsunami kills 300,000 around the Indian Ocean. 1996—JonBenet Ramsey is found murdered and inexplicably gets more press than the other 1,499 kids murdered this year. 1991—The Supreme Soviet meets and dissolves the USSR. 1971—Disgruntled Vietnam Vets occupy the Statue of Liberty. 1966—"American troops are the defense, protection and salvation not only of our country, but, I believe, of civilization itself," says Cardinal Spellman. 1966—An apparently confused <i>Time Magazine</i> bestows upon "The Younger Generation" the title "Man of the Year." 1919—Harry Frazee sells Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees. 1917—Pres. Woodrow Wilson orders U.S. railroads seized for the duration of the war. 1913—Disgruntled Civil War vet Ambrose Bierce writes his last published lines before disappearing behind Mexican lines. 1908—Jack Johnson beats Tommy Burns in 14, becoming the first black heavyweight champ. 1862—In the largest hanging in U.S. history, 39 Santee Lakota Sioux meet their ends. 1787—An anti-Federalist mob armed with barrel staves attacks and nearly kills Constitution-framer James Wilson.	2007—In Pakistan, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is assassinated. 2002—Cult quacks at Clonaid claim they've cloned a human. 1986—In San Diego, on-duty Highway Patrolman Craig Alan Peyer strangles Cara Evelyn Knott. 1981—Supreme Court Justice William H. Rehnquist checks into a hospital to kick his Placidyl jones and the consequent "distorted perceptions." 1978—After 40 years of dictatorship, Spain becomes a democracy. 1929—Leon Trotsky goes into exile from the USSR. 1908—Twenty followers of grocer and revelator Lee Spangler wait on South Mountain in Nyack, NY, for the world to end. It doesn't. 1900—Carrie Nation hatchets-up her first saloon, at the Carey Hotel, in Wichita, KS. 1895—In Bill Curtis's St. Louis saloon, William "Billy" Lyons foolishly — and fatally — grabs "Stagger Lee" Shelton's Stetson hat. 1827—Georgia passes a law proclaiming "the lands of Georgia belong to her absolutely. The Indians are tenants at her will." Indulgent legislators wait three whole years before requiring Indians to relocate west of the Mississippi. 1763—Fifty armed men enter the Lancaster, PA workhouse, hack the last 14 living Conestoga Indians to death, and ride into the sunset.	1999—RIP The Lone Ranger. 1986—RIP Terry Dolan, GOP gay-rights critic, of AIDS. 1984—RIP "Bloody Sam" Peckinpah. 1984—A Soviet missile accidentally launched towards Germany is destroyed in flight. 1973—In Akron, the Chamber of Commerce denounces the Soap Box Derby due to cheating and fraud. 1971—At the White House, 88 Vietnam veterans are arrested for protesting the war. 1963—RIP A.J. Liebling. 1948—A DC-3 with 32 on board disappears en route from Puerto Rico to Florida. 1945—Congress recognizes the "Pledge of Allegiance," authored by Bostonian Christian Socialist Francis Bellamy. 1936—A sit-down strike begins at General Motors' Fisher Body plant in Cleveland. 1917—H.L. Mencken publishes a phony history of the bathtub, now widely accepted as gospel. 1895—The Lumiere brothers screen the first commercial film. 1879—M. Jolly-Bellin knocks over a lamp and invents dry-cleaning. 1869—William Semple patents a chewing gum based on rubber. 1832—Vice President John C. Calhoun resigns to fight for "a perfect good"—slavery.
1:24 2:11 7:47 8:25	2:20 3:06 8:42 9:21	3:14 3:59 9:35 10:16	4:10 4:52 10:29 11:08	5:03 5:43 11:21	5:56 6:33 12:00 12:13	6:49 7:24 12:51 1:06

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