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The Fortnightly Rant

An Odd Way to Define Security

With the single, simple-minded act of making John Bolton National Security Advisor, President Trump has swept the Oxymoronic Olympics: we are more secure only in the knowledge that more wars are on their way.

The job description calls for an “honest broker,” a person who will mediate between the disparate agencies of the national security state. Suitable candidates would provide the President with a clear and objective view of the challenges the nation faces, without favoring his own agenda. Trump has tapped instead a man whose most distinguishing characteristic—to the point of eclipsing even his own heroically-furry upper lip—has been the relentless furtherance of his own remarkably belligerent agenda. One can only assume that Bolton's résumé reached Trump by what is now the usual means of transmission: a Fox News infomercial. No Senate confirmation will be required, not that that would be any barrier with a Senate this supine.

Ominous Precedents

It's possible we're being alarmist. Bolton won't be the first nutjob to hold the post, and Armageddon hasn't arrived just yet.

President Dwight Eisenhower established the position. His fifth and final National Security Advisor was Gordon Gray—a fact which tends to undermine Ike's resurgent reputation as a sage in this era of George W. and The Donald.

Gray, the son of a tobacco millionaire and a member of the Order of Gimghoul (UNC's answer to Skull & Bones), had previously been head kangaroo of the Gray Board. In what proved to be a pivotal moment in the history of global insecurity, the Gray Board, by a vote of two to

one, revoked the security clearance of J. Robert Oppenheimer, who had favored the international control of nuclear weapons. In those days, loss of a security clearance ended one's career. The Gray Board's decision depended heavily on testimony from Oppenheimer's subordinate, Edward Teller. His boss's exile cleared a career path for Teller, a self-promoting fanatical hack who later sold Ronald Reagan on Star Wars, one of history's greatest boondoggles.

Gray's successor, McGeorge Bundy, happened to be in Vietnam on the morning of February 7, 1965—the day the Viet Cong mortared Camp Holloway, near Pleiku. Bundy and U.S. Commander Gen. William Westmoreland flew in to assess the situation. According to *Dereliction of Duty*, a presumably authoritative account written by Gen. H.R. McMaster (the 26th National Security Advisor), Bundy had previously compared U.S. casualties in Vietnam to traffic-related accidents in Washington, D.C.; but, on viewing the carnage at Pleiku that morning, Bundy became “intense, abrupt, and arrogant,” and began acting as if he were under “a sort of field marshal psychosis.” Here, McMaster is quoting Westmoreland—something of an expert on the topic of field marshal psychosis. Bundy advised President Johnson to bomb the North. He did, with great vigor. All the bombing accomplished was to effect a rapprochement between Hanoi and Moscow.

Bundy's replacement, Walt Whitman Rostow, was a chief proponent of the curious delusion that Hanoi's war plans could be controlled from Washington by raising or lowering the tonnage of bombs dropped.

Between Bundy and Rostow, over the course of eight years, an ill-advised brushfire became a multi-na-



tional calamity. Then came National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, who elevated the tragedy into a regional catastrophe. We could go on—the sorry record certainly does—but the reader is probably depressed enough.

John Bolton, Chickenhawk Supreme

Into this fraught slot our Commander in Chief is dropping perhaps the nation's most belligerent Chickenhawk.

Bolton's 1948 birthday “won” him draft number 185, which came with a free flight to Southeast Asia. Rather than going to Vietnam and risking his life for his country, he wrote in a memoir, he went “driving from Armory to Armory in the Baltimore area and signing up on waiting lists until a slot opened up” in the National Guard.

The tedious gambit paid off: he got to go to Yale, leaving someone else to take his place in Vietnam. Someone with a death wish, Bolton

suggests. “I confess I had no desire to die in a Southeast Asian rice paddy,” he wrote in his 25th reunion book, “I considered the war in Vietnam already lost.”

Was that because the Vietnam War was a deranged, misguided, and doomed mistake, the futility of which had been acknowledged by many of its own architects as early as 1965? No, it was because of the liberals.

“[O]pponents of the Vietnam War had made it certain we could not prevail,” he told interviewer Diane Rehm, “I had no great interest in going there to have Teddy Kennedy give it back to the people I might die to take it away from.” With a little more gumption—and other people's blood—the U.S. should have been able to sustain indefinitely a hated and corrupt puppet government 10,000 miles away.

As with so many on the Right, if the principle is correct, the facts

don't matter. Bolton doesn't just believe George W. Bush was right to wage a pre-emptive war against Iraq, he thinks we ought to try the same thing again.

“It is perfectly legitimate for the United States to respond to the current ‘necessity’ posed by North Korea's nuclear weapons by striking first,” he recently wrote in the *Wall Street Journal*. A similar attack on Iran would be “not provocative or preemptive [but] entirely responsive on our part.”

Access to Weapons, Great and Small

We have long been engaged in a great national debate about who should and should not have access to lethal weapons. The consensus seems to be that some individuals should not, but we're having a lot of trouble deciding on the specifics. It's a debate that is well worth having, and long overdue. We just worry that its current scope is a bit too narrow.

The Alleged News®

Toys 'R' Not Us Any More

Charles Lazarus died March 22nd, one week after Toys “R” Us filed for bankruptcy. He got a sympathetic sendoff in the *New York Times*.

“It was a painful denouement for a company that Mr. Lazarus founded 70 years ago in Washington, D.C., and that grew into a global toy seller with thousands of stores in locations stretching from the United Kingdom to Asia.”

While building this empire Lazarus accumulated enough wealth to live in a Fifth Avenue duplex worth \$21 million. In the process he destroyed thousands of small, local toy stores—a fact the *Times* mentioned only in passing. What goes around comes around, though: the company's toy sales were eclipsed by Wal-Mart in 1998. Finance being what it is, the company's weakened position made it attractive to preda-

tors private equity firms.

A private equity firm is either a group of very wealthy people who have entered into a formal arrangement to pool their money in the hopes of making a profit, or an accumulation of money that has become sentient and taken control of one or more humans in a bid to accumulate more power. The humans linked to these piles of cash can be roughly sorted into two categories: managers and non-managers—a distinction with a difference, as we shall see.

In 2005, three private equity firms, Bain Capital Partners, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts [KKR], and Vornado Realty Trust, collaborated and/or conspired, depending on one's perspective, to take over Toys “R” Us.

The process was bold and grand but not uncommon. The collaborating entities bought about 20 percent of the company's stock for \$1.3 bil-

lion. That gave them the power to control its corporate decisions, the first of which was to saddle the company with a debt of \$6.6[6] billion.

[Tip for Readers: Do not, under any circumstance, walk into your neighbor's home, throw down \$40 thousand, and mortgage the place for a million bucks. You may or may not be assaulted, but you will almost certainly be arrested.]

Somehow, despite the boldness of this move, Toys “R” Us became no healthier. The company filed for bankruptcy on September 18, but CEO Dave Brandon pasted on a smiley face and assured customers in an email that “we welcome the opportunity to serve you this holiday season and long into the future.”

By February, the happiest talk the company could muster revolved around how many stores would not be closing.

This month the company's 33,000

U.S. workers learned they have all lost their jobs. Thanks to the benevolent nature of U.S. bankruptcy laws, the company is being spared the burden of giving them any severance pay.

All these gory details are readily available to anyone with The Google and time on his hands. More difficult to ascertain was how many millions Bain, KKR, and Vornado were able to squirrel away during this sordid process. Perhaps some obscenity laws are still in effect.

We did learn this much, from the last 15 seconds of a 4:45 minute story on *Marketplace*:

“The private firms' investors haven't made money off this deal. But the firms themselves have. It's unclear where Vornado ended up, but, after collecting fees from Toys “R” Us, both Bain and KKR took home at least \$15 million.”

We're going out on a limb, here, but we believe what that last sentence means is that the humans-designated-as-managers pocketed the profit, while the rest got fleeced. For ease of calculation, let's assume that these humanoids collected a total of \$33 million. That works out to a profit of \$1,000 each for every job that was destroyed.

On their way down the drain, the managers of Toys “R” Us blamed their fate on everyone's favorite punching bag, “the millennials.”

The company's 2017 SEC filing stated that “our revenues are dependent on ... birth rates ... many countries' birth rates have dropped A continued and significant decline ... could have a material adverse effect on our operating results.”

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The Alleged News®
from page one

"Makes me wonder," an online wag named Mediocre1 wrote on *Reddit*, "if people talked about the things the baby boomer generation killed. 'These damn kids with their polio vaccine are killing the iron lung market!'"

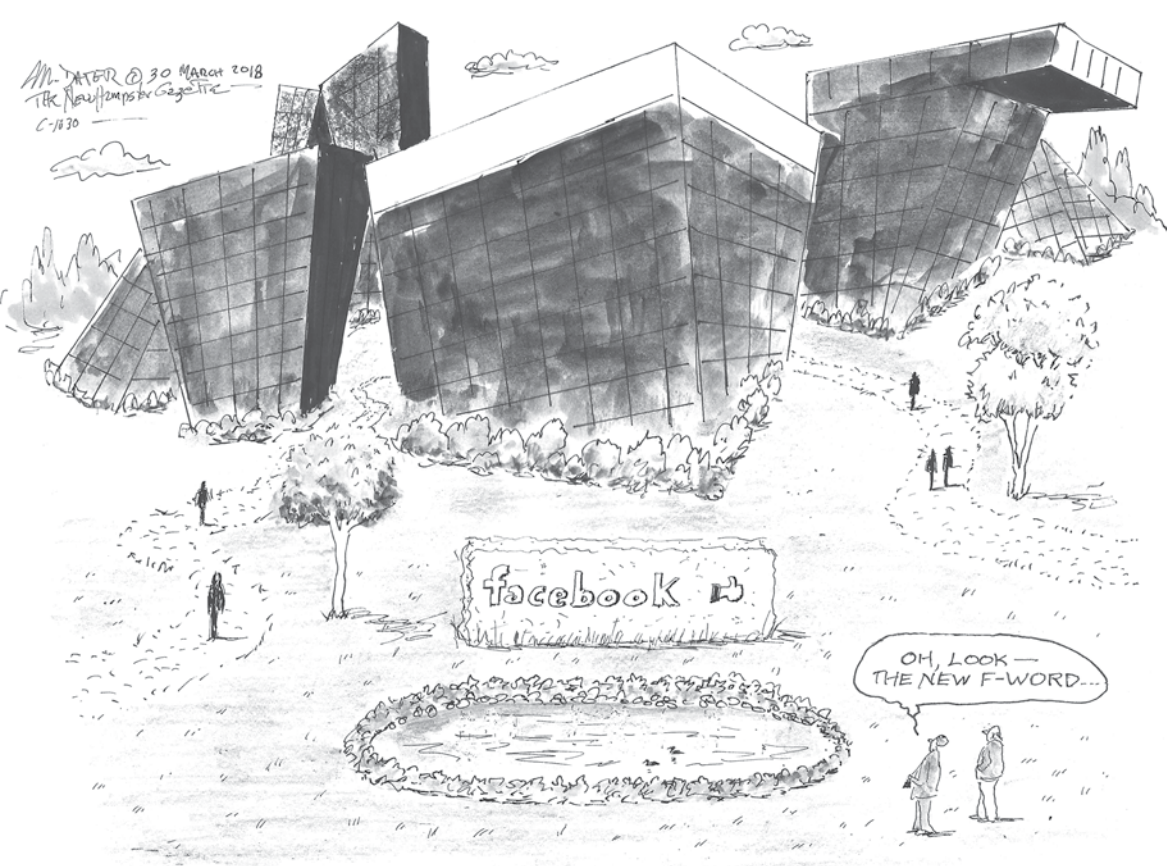
Notwithstanding his biblical name, Charles Lazarus is still dead.

Lazarus is Dead, Long Live Bezos!
In other retail news, Amazon founder Jeff Bezos is currently the richest person in this, the best of all possible worlds. He is, in fact, \$40 billion ahead of whatever schlub is in second place. This is not altogether surprising, given a March 9th report in *Money* which states that he is making \$230,000 a minute.

Bezos modestly attributes his success to luck. In a March 18th *Bloomberg* article he referred to his phenomenal wealth as "Amazon lottery winnings." That remark was made at the Explorers Club Annual Dinner, during which Bezos [upper right] consumed an iguana.



A February 27th article in *Fox Business* suggests another possible reason for Bezos' personal prosperity. Despite making \$5.6 billion in profit last year, Amazon "essentially paid



Based on the number of people streaming away from Market Square Saturday afternoon, our Wandering Photographer concluded that the March For Our Lives Rally was probably over. Clearly he was wrong. A small sampling of the thoughts on offer: "Actually, Guns DO Kill People;" "Our Lives Are Worth More Than Your Hobby;" "21st Century Weapons—18th Century Laws;" "Kids Should Be Reading Books, Not Eulogies;" "Guns Have Evolved, The 2nd Amendment Hasn't;" "Protect Kids, Not the NRA;" "Boycott Violent Media;" and "Arm Me With Sensible Gun Laws That Prioritize The Lives Of My Students." We were ready to award the "Best Sign" prize to "The Only Thing Easier To Buy Than A Gun Is A Republican," until we saw a photo of a Gabby Hayes-looking fellow, we're not sure where, holding a sign saying, "If No Mentally Disturbed Person Should Have An Assault Weapon, Should A Mentally Ill President Have An Army?"

\$0 in federal income taxes."

But wait! There's more! Because Amazon was prescient and clever enough to "defer" paying taxes that actually came due in prior years, it is eligible for an additional windfall of \$789 million from President Trump's new tax break. We seem to recall that those breaks were created because taxes were crushing American businesses, but we may be hallucinating due to a steady diet of nothing but ramen noodles prepared in water laced with PFOAs.

Speaking of food, another likely reason why Bezos can afford to eat iguanas is that he doesn't pay his employees enough to feed themselves. The *Columbus Dispatch* reported in January that at least ten percent of Amazon employees in Ohio were receiving food stamps.

That's just one taxpayer subsidy the company has received from the Buckeye State. It pocketed \$17 million in tax breaks for opening two distribution centers there.

Amazon is currently dangling

the prospect of siting a second headquarters—at a location to be determined by the generosity of its taxpayers. Among those who are falling for this scheme is New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu.

Distributing the Goods

Death comes to us all: recently to Lazarus, eventually to Bezos, and, a while ago, to Stephen Hawking.

Hawking, who was generally recognized as perhaps the smartest person alive, spent nearly his whole long, productive life in a wheelchair. He once said his greatest regret was never having used his chair to run over Maggie Thatcher's feet.

Two years ago on *Reddit*, Hawking participated in an online ritual called "Ask Me Anything." Someone asked him, after bringing up the precedent of the Luddites, about the future impact of technology on employment.

"If machines produce everything we need," he replied, "the outcome

will depend on how things are distributed. Everyone can enjoy a life of luxurious leisure if the machine-produced wealth is shared, or most people can end up miserably poor if the machine-owners successfully lobby against wealth redistribution. So far, the trend seems to be toward the second option, with technology driving ever-increasing inequality."

Hot Tip—Invest in Politics!

Entergy Corporation, which owned the James A. Fitzpatrick Nuclear Power Plant in Oswego, N.Y., announced that it would close the plant on November 2, 2015 because it could no longer compete profitably with natural gas-fired plants.

The following year, pushed by Governor Andrew Cuomo, the state's Public Service Commission decided that taxpayers should cough up enough money to artificially make the plant profitable. This was apparently done under the heretofore unknown principle

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that a lethally-dangerous technology, which has been operating for 70 years without a workable method of safely disposing of highly radioactive waste, deserves to be treated with the same consideration as safer, more modern technologies, like solar, tidal, and wind power.

After a public subsidy, worth \$5.7 billion over 12 years for Fitzpatrick and two other plants, had been approved by the regulators, Exelon Corporation bought the plant for \$110 million. Exelon, according to *Wikipedia*, is “the largest electric holding company in the United States by revenue, the largest regulated utility in the United States with approximately 10 million customers, and ... the largest operator of nuclear power plants in the United States.”

One can easily see how Exelon felt it deserved a little help from the state’s prosperous taxpayers.

If you think this story looks ugly from the outside, wait ‘til you hear it from the inside.

Michael Krancer, a former environmental regulator who became a lobbyist for Exelon, delivered a presentation last year to an oil and gas

industry conference in Pennsylvania. One of Krancer’s visual aids was a slide entitled, “Is Politics Profitable?”

Rob Galbraith got his hands on the slide and wrote about it at *LittleSis.org*.

“The slide, which features a photo of a nuclear power plant alongside a vortex of \$100 bills, compares the \$610 million Exelon invested in the Fitzpatrick nuclear plant, plus lobbying and public relations, to the value of the 12 years of public subsidy the company obtained, \$5.7 billion.

“The return on investment for Exelon’s political messaging in New York State? Over 750 percent according to Krancer.”

It’s All a Coincidence, No Doubt

The *Wall Street Journal* reported on March 16th that in 2011 the steel company Nucor paid \$1 million to a San Diego-based non-profit which then paid Peter Navarro to film a documentary arguing that China’s overproduction was the cause of all the U.S. steel industry’s troubles.

Navarro, a Democrat, is now President Trump’s Director of Trade and Industrial Policy and the Director of



the White House National Trade Council, who no doubt provided much of the impetus for Trump’s impetuous imposition of tariffs on imported aluminum and steel—tariffs which are bound to have a positive impact on Nucor’s bottom line.

Perhaps some day a leaked PowerPoint slide will inform us whether or not Nucor’s return on investment approaches the benchmark of 750 percent.

New Home for the Black Heritage Trail
The Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire [BHTNH], formerly located at Discover Portsmouth on Middle Street, will have a new home as of April 1st, at a historically significant location that is one of the stops along the Portsmouth Black Heritage Trail: the old South Meeting House, also known as South Ward Hall, located atop Meetinghouse Hill in the town’s South End. Built in 1866, on the site of an earlier meeting house built in 1731, its first floor was originally used as a school and

the second as ward room for public functions.

“This Victorian election hall was the site of two major 19th-century institutions in the lives of Portsmouth’s black citizens,” according to Jerriane Boggis, Executive Director of the BHTNH.

“Starting on New Year’s Day in 1881, many annual celebrations of the Emancipation Proclamation were held here. The first was attended by ‘most of the colored people of the city’ and over 100 invited white guests. The celebrations included speeches, a catered supper and music, and recurred for eighty years.

“This building was also home to New Hampshire’s first black church. It began when a multi-denominational Bible-study class outgrew the capacity of James F. Slaughter’s living room, and moved here in 1890 as People’s Mission. In 1892, it reorganized as the People’s Baptist Church with Reverend James Randolph as its first pastor. It was an auxiliary of the Middle Street Baptist Church. Racially separate churches in this

county allowed and provided not only a center for social and political activities, but relief from the segregated seating and other limitations imposed by white religious institutions. They worshiped here until 1915.

Boggis says she is excited about the move to a location that not only reflects New Hampshire Black history, but will allow for a new, dedicated home for the organization and its staff.

BHTNH will be sharing the building with Portsmouth Public Media Television (PPMTV).

“PPMTV has been very generous in offering us a place here until we find a permanent home to headquarter the BHTNH,” Boggis said. “We appreciate their support and cooperation as we transition from our alliance with Discover Portsmouth to our own dedicated home.”

BHTNH is an independent organization registered with the IRS as a 501c 3 nonprofit, with Taxpayer Identification Number 81-3921917.



Barring any last-minute hangups, delays, misunderstandings, unforeseen events, mishaps, or catastrophes, the New Sarah Mildred Long Bridge over the mighty Piscataqua should open to vehicular traffic on or before the day this newspaper is published. Congratulations to the owners and employees of Jackson’s Hardware and Marine—a vital local resource—for surviving this seemingly interminable challenge, and doing so in an admirable manner.

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Democrats' Motive: Get People Murdered
To the Editor:

The Great Mills High School shooting confirms the NRA's claim that, "It takes a good guy with a gun." Fortunately an armed responder was close enough to the shooter to prevent more casualties.

Since the Parkland school shootings, outcries by Democrats and other leftists have demanded new gun control laws on law-abiding people which wouldn't have stopped the shootings at Great Mills, or anyplace else.

In fact, Democrats vehemently oppose what probably saved lives at Great Mills, armed response in school able to quickly confront a shooter.

These Democrat actions reveal that the Democrats' goal isn't to save lives but to make law-abiding people vulnerable to criminals. Other evidence includes: Obama's Promise Program that stopped arresting student criminals (allowing Cruz and other criminals to legally buy guns), Obama's early prison releases of thousands of criminals (including drug criminals despite our horrible drug problem), Obama's refusal to deport tens of thousands of illegal alien criminals, Democrat protection of illegal alien criminals in sanctuary cities, Democrat soft treatment of criminals, Democrat gun control laws that make poor people defenseless, etc.

On March 14th students rallied in sympathy for the Parkland victims and for their own safety. Students were lied to about the Democrat policies and the law enforcement and school administration failures which enabled the Parkland massacre. Misinformed students are being coached and used to promote Democrat [sic] goals of disarming law-abiding Americans.

Hypocritically, anti-gun rally speakers Bernie Sanders, Governor Cuomo, Nancy Pelosi, and Chuck Schumer had armed security. Democrat [sic] leaders demand for themselves what they deny to students in schools, effective armed security.

With the help of a complicit media Democrats diverted attention from their own culpable policies and actions

at Parkland, and blamed an inanimate object (gun), the NRA and other groups with no authority, responsibility, or influence over the events in Parkland.

In contrast to Democrats, the NRA teaches gun safety to help law-abiding Americans protect themselves, hunt, and engage in other lawful activities. The NRA advocates keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and dangerous mentally ill people and supports severe penalties for criminal gun use. The NRA has a school safety program and has worked to improve school safety in more than 150 schools. NRA policies and actions help law-abiding people be safer; Democrat policies make law-abiding people more defenseless and criminals safer.

Democrats should join Republicans in fully enforcing our existing laws. Remember, if proper law enforcement hadn't been curtailed by Democrat policies, the Parkland massacre wouldn't have happened and those 17 people would be alive.

Don Ewing
Meredith, N.H.

Don:

You oppose more restrictive gun laws because you believe that having armed "good guys" all over the place will lower the chances that you, or someone close to you, will be shot on any given day.

Your theory doesn't fit the facts, though. Study after study has shown that people are more likely to get shot if there are more guns around. Who'd a thunk it, right? Oddly, the Catechism of Right Wing Beliefs is jammed with such surprises.

In case you did not notice, your "more guns" principle failed at Great Mills, where a kid with his father's legally-owned handgun shot two students then killed himself, and at Marjory Stoneman Douglas, where the "good guy" cowered for six minutes while 17 people died. Your attempted demonization of the Democratic Party is built on a fake foundation.

Speaking of the Democratic Party, would it kill you to use the proper adjectival form for a change, rather than the Banana Republican buzzword of which you seem so fond?

The Editor



Revive the Assault Weapon Ban
To the Editor:

Assault weapons and high-capacity magazines were illegal in this country for ten years (1994-2004). During that time murders with those weapons declined.

Studies show that trained police officers do the wrong thing in an emotional gun situation 55 percent of the time. Yet, extreme idiotlogs [sic] think the solution to school shootings is to give everyone a concealed gun! What percentage of lightly-trained teachers might accidentally shoot a student? Probably more than 55 percent, since armed protection is not their primary job. What if a student overpowers the teacher and takes her/his gun? Suppose the teacher has locked the gun for safekeeping, then how would he/she get hold of it in time to prevent an armed intruder from killing? Gun fanatics ignore these questions.

The solution is to limit access to guns, to require frequent background checks and test-based licensing, and to require a valid gun license to purchase bullets.

Our safety and the safety of our school children will not change overnight. It will improve gradually over a decade or more. Criminals will probably continue to have guns for quite a while also. But the shooters who killed school children throughout our country were not criminals, they were unhappy loners who snapped and had way-too-easy access to high efficiency murder machines.

Bruce Joffe
Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:

You make a good point about the nature of many mass shooters.

Gutenberg's invention of the printing press made the novel possible: a text-based simulacrum of reality. Radio dramas, movies, and television followed, even as the Sacred Market was reducing our status from autonomous individuals to mere

elements in a capitalist machine.

A few of those who bear the violence-prone Y chromosome, personally frustrated by the contrast between their lives as lived and the garish fantasies which inescapably surround them, are inevitably going to express their distress. This being America, they're going to use the tools that are closest at hand.

The Editor

Impeach the Russians' "Useful Idiot"
Dear Editor:

In replacing Rex Tillerson, one of the last remaining moderate-voiced "adults" in the Administration, with bellicose hyena Mike Pompeo, this deplorable President is assembling a War Cabinet. War is his "trump card" to distract from a Mueller-fueled criminal indictment, and North Korea his likely target. The blowhard bully said so himself in his State of the Union speech, "there is tremendous divisiveness in the nation and I want to unify the country but it is hard to do it without a traumatic event affecting Americans."

A Democratic majority in Congress could prevent the catastrophe of nuclear war by impeaching this traitor who has dismantled our diplomatic corps, allowed his unqualified advisors with no security clearance see our country's most secret intelligence, and who the Russians groomed to become their "useful idiot."

It is not too early to organize voters to turnout in November and turn Republicans out of Congress.

Bruce Joffe
Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:

"Bellicose hyena Mike Pompeo"—that's good. Have you been tutoring the North Koreans?

The Editor

Trump, Russia, and the Republic
To the Editor:

"Trump's refusal to defend the integrity of the U.S. election system and our Democracy from Russian attack represents an unconscionable dereliction of duty and utter faithlessness to his oath of office. This betrayal is unprecedented in American history. There has never been a President who refuses to defend America. Ever. He has been abetted by a deeply corrupted Republican majority in Congress and a profoundly dishonest right wing propaganda campaign. Their perfidy affronts the memory of all those who died so that we are free."

These are the words of Steve Schmidt a Republican analyst and President George W. Bush campaign aid, posted on Twitter February 28, 2018.

His comments were prompted by the indictments of 13 Russian individuals and three Russian businesses, with connections to the Kremlin, for attacking our 2016 election. He was also considering the comments of Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on February 7th, when he said that Russia was already meddling in the U.S. mid-term elections. But most concerning were the comments before Congress by Admiral Mike Rogers, head of the National Security Agency (NSA) on February 27th. Rogers testified that he has not received orders from Trump to disrupt Russian cyberattacks at their source which are already targeting our elections. The fact that Trump has refused place the sanctions on Russia that the Republican Congress overwhelmingly passed last year, adds to the list of Trump's dereliction of duty.

Of course, the big questions are, why is Trump protecting Russia while failing to protect America? What in-

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formation does Putin have on Trump that explains this narrative? Why are the Republicans in Congress refusing to do their constitutional and legal duty to protect the country from this betrayal? Why are Trump, Republicans and the Right Wing media so intent on discrediting the Mueller investigation in Russian interference?

If and when we get the true answers to these questions will justice be served? And lastly, and most important, will our Democratic Republic survive this treason?

Rich DiPentima, LTC, USAF, Ret. Portsmouth, N.H.

Rich:
Trump finally threw out a passel of Russian "diplomats"—perhaps he felt he'd better give himself some cover.

You express concern over the future of our Democratic Republic. We fear that bouncing Trump from the Oval Office won't do much good unless Mike Pence, Paul Ryan, Orrin Hatch, Mike Pompeo, and Steve Mnuchin go with him. God help us, that we'd settle for Mad Dog Mattis. After that would come Jefferson Beauregard Sessions III . . . Oh, God, it's just too depressing.

Our point here is that the current Maladministration is the symptom, not the disease. These insane grifters are where they are because Our Democratic Republic was already on life support.

The Editor

=====
The Cost of Security and Gun Violence
To the Editor:

How much would it cost to have at least one full-time police officer at every public school in the State? Add to that the cost to police and fire agencies whenever someone is shot, robbed or threatened with a gun. Add in the cost hospitals incur when treating gunshot victims. A million here a million there,

pretty soon you are talking about real money and high property taxes.

It is the State's policies that have allowed guns to proliferate. It should be the State's responsibility to reimburse cities and towns the cost of their policy. Given that it is gun buyers that create this cost it would be sensible to tax them to reimburse the cost to the state and town. We do this with tobacco. People did not lose their right to smoke, just their right to push the cost of their smoking onto the rest of society. Let's impose taxes on the sale of guns, magazines and ammunition sufficient to cover gun violence's the cost to society.

Walter Hamilton
Portsmouth, N.H.

Walter:
That looks like a heavy legislative lift, but, at first glance, it seems entirely in keeping with conservative principles.

Why stop at gun owners, though? Gun manufacturers are making a killing. How about taxing them?

The Editor

=====
Voters, Do Your Duty
To the Editor:

The way to make our children safe in schools and the rest of us safe in theaters, churches, concert venues and other public places is for citizens to go to the polls and vote against those candidates, starting with our own Governor Sununu, who proudly wear the Scarlet Letter "A" rating by the NRA.

We need reasonable people in office who know that thoughts and prayers are not enough and who understand that the right to bear arms and gun safety are not incompatible. Since our present lawmakers appear to be unable to think outside the NRA box, its time for the voters to take charge.

Cynthia Muse
Rye, N.H.

Standing Up to Stigma and Stereotypes
To the Editor:

Every time there's a mass shooting in America, the mainstream news media never fails to recklessly speculate and irresponsibly report on mental illness as a possible factor. As a person with mental illness, I get tired of repeatedly hearing this unfair and unbalanced perspective pass for news.

It's not that persons with mental illness cannot be violent. Rather, there is no evidence that persons with mental illness are any more violent than persons without mental illness.

Recently I tuned into the *PBS NewsHour* and again heard a stereotype of mental illness being perpetuated, albeit inadvertently. So I decided to email that program to offer a polite correction. Here-below is a copy of that email:

"Dear *PBS NewsHour*:

"I watched tonight's episode [March 22, 2018] which featured [co-anchor] Judy Woodruff speaking with Fred Guttenberg, the father of 14-year-old Jaime Guttenberg, a student who died in the mass shooting in Parkland, Fla. Thank you for speaking with Mr. Guttenberg, as he speaks with credibility about the need to change gun laws in America. However, as a person with a federally-recognized disability in the form of a mental illness, and as a frequent viewer of both public television and the *PBS NewsHour*, I am concerned about something factually inaccurate that Mr. Guttenberg said about mental illness, and I'm equally concerned that Judy Woodruff failed to correct him or ask him to clarify what he meant.

"At two different times during the discussion, Mr. Guttenberg stated, "mental illness is part of it," when referring to the problem of mass shootings in America. However, what specific evidence is there that mental illness is, in fact, part of the problem? Mental illness is widely assumed and

perceived to be part of the problem, by both sides of the gun control control debate, as well as by news anchors and journalists, but almost no one ever sees the need to cite any form of scientific evidence, such as carefully researched sociological data, that persons with mental illness are statistically more prone to commit homicide, or more prone to use a gun for homicide, than persons without mental illness.

"According to NAMI (the National Alliance on Mental Illness; *nami.org*), persons with mental illness are not more violent than persons without mental illness. NAMI furthermore states on its website that persons with mental illness are actually more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators of it. Based on what I've read and learned from NAMI and elsewhere, and based on my personal experience with mental illness, as well as having friends and loved ones with mental illness, the real concern about persons with mental illness having access to guns should be focused more on using guns for suicide, not for homicide, as suicide is actually the greater risk to public health, when suicide statistics are compared with homicide statistics.

"To make that more concrete and specific, I, for one, would not want a U.S. combat veteran who suffers from depression, anxiety, and P.T.S.D., for example, to feel that she or he cannot seek out mental health care, due to her or his fear of being misperceived as a potential threat to society. That vet, struggling alone with mental illness, may end up dying by suicide, possibly as a result of the stigma of mental illness being inadvertently perpetuated by the news media (on average, 22 U.S. veterans die by suicide every day). That's just one example of the harm that stigma can do in society. I'm sure there are many more examples, including the harm that stigma does to U.S. civilians, if you care to investigate.

"Last but not least, as a person with mental illness, I see the value of practicing nonviolence in my daily life, and that, in turn, affects my decisions about whom to vote into and out of political office. After all, mass shoot-

ings don't happen in a vacuum. Mass shootings happen in the context of a dysfunctional society that largely normalizes violence, even considers violence a form of entertainment, and routinely supports political candidates who repeatedly vote in U.S. Congress to uphold various forms of violence, including war after war, increasing nuclear weapon stockpiles, and increasingly bloated Pentagon defense budgets in the hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars annually.

"Think about it."
Alex J. Boros
Rochester, N.H.
Alex:
Your letters are always welcome invitations to "think about it." Thank you.

The Editor

=====
Why Own Guns?
To the Editor:

A person's fervent desire to own a gun and shield that firearm from government regulation seems based in part on three factors.

First, gun ownership in the United States is a long-standing tradition. In centuries past, guns had a very practical use in settlers' lives. Rifles were used to hunt and defend their homes against the very real threat of intruders. Unfortunately, sometimes good traditions, over time, turn into bad traditions.

In England, at one time, fox hunting was a popular sport. Fox hunting involves the tracking, chase, and, if caught, the killing of a red fox by trained foxhounds and riders on horseback. The sport was highly controversial, defenders arguing that it was an important part of rural culture, while critics called it cruel and unnecessary. In time, as England became more urbanized, the critics won despite frantic opposition. Foxhunting was banned by the Hunting Act of 2004.

So it is with guns ownership. What was once a useful tradition has become, at least in part, a harmful tradition responsible for the deaths of over 30,000 Americans annually. No one is arguing

Hate Mail, &c.
to page six

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The Tail Wagging the Dog

by W. D. Ehrhart

I was dismayed to hear that Florida's Republican governor had signed a bill raising the age of gun purchase from 18 to 21, extending a three-day waiting period, and banning "bump stocks" while at the same time authorizing teachers to carry firearms, a bill that manages to be at once both cowardly and insane.

Cowardly in that the "gun control" provisions are all-but-meaningless: raising the age of purchase has no practical impact because a shooter can get something with which to shoot easily enough; consider that the 20-year-old shooter in Sandy Hook used an assault rifle his mother had purchased legally. And one can easily fire a semi-automatic weapon 60 to 100 times a minute simply by pulling the trigger for each shot. Pulling a trigger doesn't take very long.

Meanwhile, arming teachers as a solution to school shootings would seem utterly unbelievable if it were not actually happening. Witness this new Florida law.

As a Marine veteran of combat in Vietnam, I have an understanding of what happens when people start shooting. Even with the vaunted training I received in the Corps, I

can tell you that it takes tremendous willpower and self-control to remain functional when someone is shooting at you.

Now picture a school cafeteria where someone is blasting away with an AR-15 and several 30-round magazines. Children are dead. Children are wounded. Blood is everywhere. People are screaming and crying and running helter-skelter. Pandemonium such as you cannot imagine unless you have ever been under fire.

And you think some high school biology teacher is going to step into this situation, calmly pull out his or her 9-millimeter pistol, take careful aim, and deftly kill the child who is blazing away? Cool thinking, expert marksmanship, steady nerves. Problem solved. Right? In your dreams.

Yet 18 states allow K-12 teachers to carry firearms on the job. Or does Florida make it 19?

But here's the best part. The day after the Florida bill was signed, I woke up to discover that the National Rifle Association has filed a federal lawsuit blocking this new law because, says the NRA, it violates the 2nd Amendment by punishing law-abiding citizens for the actions of a few deranged whackos.

Yet I am a law-abiding citizen, and I am being punished every

day, having to live in fear of being gunned down in the school where I teach, or at the mall, or at a Flyers hockey game, or a rock concert, or anywhere else in these United States of America because of the deranged whackos of the NRA who think the 2nd Amendment gives them the right to make millions of law-abiding citizens live in terror on a daily basis.

Indeed, the NRA is the most insidious and lethal terrorist organization on earth, and it is perfectly legal, operates in the open, spends millions of dollars buying spineless politicians, and blames gun violence on everyone and everything under the sun except the guns.

Look, you want to have bolt-action hunting rifles? Okay. Shotguns? Okay. Handguns, even though most firearms deaths are caused by handguns? Okay. But AR-15s, AK-47s, and their ilk? They're not called "hunting rifles." Or "self-defense rifles." They're called "assault rifles." They are designed to do one thing: kill as many people as possible in the shortest time possible. The Marine Corps didn't give me a deer rifle in Vietnam, or a shotgun, or even a pistol. I was given an M-16 assault rifle. My job was to kill people with it.

The 2nd Amendment gives the people the right to keep and bear



At the Haverford School, in Philadelphia, Sunday, March 11: W.D. Ehrhart, students, and colleagues attempt to establish communication with their alleged representatives in Washington, D.C.

arms, but it qualifies that right by placing it within the context of a well-regulated militia. Neither Devin Kelley nor Adam Lanza nor Stephen Paddock nor any other of these mass killers belonged to a well-regulated militia.

And the amendment doesn't

say that Tom, Dick & Harry have the right to own 20 or 30 or 50 high-powered assault rifles. Or even one high-powered assault rifle. It doesn't give people the right to own bazookas or M-60 machineguns or 81-millimeter mortars. Why should any civilian be allowed to own a weapon that is designed to do the same thing as bazookas, machineguns, and mortars?

When will law-abiding, responsible, patriotic Americans finally decide to put a stop to the NRA tail wagging the American dog? When will we throw out of office the craven politicians who kowtow to an organization that terrorizes the rest of us daily?

And as for arming teachers: when I joined the Marines, I expected to be given a weapon and trained how to use it. When I became a teacher, I did not expect to be expected to kill my students. If you expect me to do that, you are stark-raving mad.

=====

W.D. Ehrhart is an honorably discharged former Marine sergeant with a Purple Heart Medal, Navy Combat Action Ribbon, and two Presidential Unit Citations. He is a graduate of Pennridge High School in Perkasi and teaches at the Haverford School in suburban Philadelphia.

=====

If You Don't Have Good Health Care, Neither Should Your Rep

By Jim Hightower

Want good quality, lower-cost health care for your family. And — what the heck, let's think big here — for every man, woman, and child in our society?

Here's how we can finally get Congress to pass such a program.

Step One: Take away every dime of the multimillion-dollar government subsidy that members of

Congress get to cover their platinum-level health insurance. Let them have to live with the same exorbitantly expensive, dysfunctional, and (let's admit it) sick system of medical profiteering they've thrust on us.

Eliminate all of their special treatments, including shutting down their "Office of the Attending Physician" — a little-known spot of pure, 100 percent socialized medi-

cine conveniently located in our US Capitol to provide government-paid doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and others who give immediate, on-the-spot attention to these special ones.

Well, you might say, they still won't feel the pain. They're 1-percenters, pulling down \$174,000 a year each from us taxpayers, meaning they can afford to buy decent health insurance.

Ah, but here comes Step Two: Put

all of our congressional goof-offs on pay-for-performance salaries.

Why pay them a flat rate whether they produce or not?

For example, American babies are one-third more likely to die in their first year of life than babies in Poland, which provides universal health insurance for all of its people.

So, every year that the U.S. Congress fails to provide health coverage for every American family,

the members should get their pay docked by a third. Pay them only when they deliver for the people.

When Congress finally assures good health care for all of us, then its members would get the same coverage. But until they deliver for the whole public, the public owes them nothing.

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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, APRIL 1	MONDAY, APRIL 2	TUESDAY, APRIL 3	WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4	THURSDAY, APRIL 5	FRIDAY, APRIL 6	SATURDAY, APRIL 7
2013—In Portsmouth Harbor, the tanker <i>Harbour Feature</i> allides with the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge. 2010—Three Somali pirates in a skiff attempt to hijack the 453-foot frigate <i>U.S.S. Nicholas</i>. They fail. 2004—Britain declassifies “Blue Peacock,” a 1957 plan to bury nukes in Germany with live chickens keeping the electronics warm. It’s not a joke. 2003—Bush administration propagandists claim Special Forces have “rescued” PFC Jessica Lynch. 1997—A blizzard dumps 18 inches of snow on Portsmouth. 1994—Steve Bannon, accompanied by federal marshals, arrives via limo to manage Biosphere 2, an ecological experiment in the Arizona desert. A break-in, lawsuits, and failure ensue. 1971—Unsuspecting Texas lawmakers pass a prank bill honoring Albert de Salvo for his “unconventional techniques involving population control.” 1968—U.S. Army begins Operation Pegasus to relieve Marines at Khe Sanh. Two months after the siege is lifted, the base is abandoned. 1966—RIP Brian O’Nolan, aka Flann O’Brien, aka Myles na gCopaleen. 1920—Five New York legislators are expelled for being socialists. 1865—John Milton, Gov. of Fla., descendant of the poet, shoots himself in the head because “Death would be preferable to reunion.” 1671—A blizzard leaves six-foot drifts of snow in Portsmouth.	1996—The NTSB adopts special regs for Robinson helicopters because rotor trouble makes them crash so often. 1994—In Germany, a Robinson R44’s main rotor hits the cabin. The crashing rig kills the pilot and his wife. 1982—U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Jeanne Kirkpatrick dines at the Argentine embassy hours after Argentina invades the Falklands. 1969—President Dwight D. Eisenhower is buried in an \$80 G.I. coffin. 1969—Chicago riots are quelled by National Guard troops. 1963—M.L. King, Jr. leads a voter registration drive in Birmingham. Police Chief “Bull” Connor responds with dogs and fire hoses. 1958—San Francisco columnist Herb Caen introduces his readers to the term “beatnik.” 1942—Three soldiers, two black and one white, are shot to death, and five are wounded, near Ft. Dix, N.J., in a fight over a phone. 1917—President Wilson, who ran as “the peace candidate,” asks Congress to declare war on Germany. 1917—In his office, Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge (R-Mass.), 67, punches constituent Alexander Bannwart. 1865—In Richmond, Confederate troops burn the city to the ground as President Jefferson Davis flees. 1863—In Richmond, women riot in the streets over bread until dispersed at bayonet point by troops directed by President Jefferson Davis.	2014—Sen. Jerry Moran [R-Kan.], whose top contributor is Koch Industries, reads into the <i>Congressional Record</i> a <i>Wall Street Journal</i> op-ed in which Charles Koch defends his right to spend millions buying elections. 2013—A Robinson R44 helicopter loses parts over Miami, Fla. and crashes near a trampoline park in a busy industrial area. Two dead occupants are pulled from the crash by bystanders who escape injury in the ensuing inferno. The pilot had survived an R44 crash two years prior. 2004—Asked to name his biggest mistake, George W.[MD] Bush is unable to answer. 2003—U.S. Marines cross the Tigris River on their way to Baghdad. 1996—Ted “Unabomber” Kaczynski is arrested in his Montana cabin. 1974—Hit by 148 tornadoes, 13 states lose 315 people; 5,484 are injured. 1973—The first mobile phone call is made, on a 2.4lb. device, by a Motorola employee to a rival at AT&T. 1966—In South Vietnam, 3,000 troops protest against the Ky gov’t. 1954—In Wisconsin, a strike begins at the Kohler bathroom fixture factory. Six years later the workers win. 1936—Bruno Hauptmann gets the chair in the Lindbergh baby case. 1882—Robert Ford, that dirty little coward, shoots Jesse James. 1860—The Pony Express begins operating between St. Joseph, Mo. and Sacramento, Calif.	1991—A helicopter pilot rashly tries to inspect the landing gear of Sen. John Heinz’s small plane; a collision ensues. Five die, including two kids in their elementary school. 1989—In her Porsche, reaching for her cellphone while speeding to the bank she owns, Wal-Mart heiress Alice Walton hits and kills Oleta Hardin, a 50 year-old Arkansas cannery worker. Walton is not charged. 1984—Congress nixes Contra funding. President Reagan sells arms to the Ayatollah to make up the difference. 1975—Operation Babylift begins with a C-5A flight out of Tan Son Nhut. It crashes into a nearby rice paddy killing 154, including 78 kids. 1972—The Nixon campaign collects \$100K for EPA approval of a lead smelter that’s poisoning Idaho. 1970—On the National Mall, 50,000 followers of a radio televangelist hold a “March for Victory,” protesting the Vietnamization of the Vietnam War. 1968—Martin Luther King, Jr. is murdered in Memphis, perhaps by James Earl Ray; if so, with help from others who are still unknown. 1967—Martin Luther King, Jr. denounces the Vietnam War and calls for common cause between civil rights and antiwar movements. He is then denounced by 168 major newspapers. 1953—Busy CIA head Allen Dulles OK’s plans to (a) knock over Iran’s elected government, and (b) study controlling peoples’ minds with drugs.	2014—Jack Kimball, ex-Chairman of N.H.’s GOP, calls upon Arizona’s Sheriff Joe Arpaio to put President Obama “in an orange suit . . . and drag his butt out of that White House.” 2010—W.Va.’s non-union Upper Big Branch coal mine explodes, killing 29 miners. After a year in prison, its owner, Don Blankenship, runs for the U.S. Senate—as a Republican, of course. 2006—Texans in Waco boo Bill Nye the science guy for saying the Bible’s wrong to say the Moon emits light. 1995—Sen. Bob Smith [R-N.H.] presciently asks, “How do you stop an elephant if it goes berserk on the grounds of the Capitol?” Alas, his motion to ban pachyderms is defeated. 1962—LBJ crony Billy Sol Estes is indicted for selling fake mortgages on fake fertilizer tanks. 1956—A hired thug throws acid and blinds Victor Riesel, New York newspaper columnist and crusader against labor racketeers. 1955—The Farmers Home Administration announces it will issue mortgages on home bomb shelters. 1952—H. Hughes briefly shuts down MGM—all 11 movies in production are scripted by suspected commies. 1943—The U.S. destroyer <i>O’Bannon</i> defeats the Japanese sub <i>Ro-34</i> in close battle, partly by pelting its deck gunners with spuds. 1926—H.L. Mencken is arrested in Boston for selling his magazine, <i>American Mercury</i>.	2016—For each of the 29 miners killed in his death trap, coal mine owner Don Blankenship is sentenced to serve 12.5 days in jail. 2009—A year before it blows up, BP’s Deepwater Horizon gets relief from oppressive federal over-regulation. 1992—Donald E. Harding gasps, moans, and makes obscene hand gestures for five minutes before dying in Arizona’s gas chamber. 1977—“If the president does it,” Richard Nixon tells David Frost, “that means it’s not illegal.” 1968—Oakland police shoot it out with the Black Panthers. Bobby Hut-ton, 18 and unarmed, dies. 1967—Knocked overboard three miles off North Vietnam, U.S. sailor Doug Hegdahl is saved by fishermen. Two years later he’s set free, with memorized details of 256 POWs. 1954—“The time has come,” says JFK, “for the American people to be told the truth about Vietnam.” 1953—The Cotton States League throws out the Hot Springs team for signing black pitchers. 1917—Former peace candidate W. Wilson declares war on Germany. 1909—Matthew Henson, black share-cropper’s son, is the first non-Inuit to set foot on the North Pole. Admiral Peary stays in the sled but later takes credit. 1712—Twenty-three enslaved Africans revolt in New York, killing nine whites and injuring six others; 21 are convicted and hanged.	2003—U.S. troops take Baghdad. It is a great victory. 1994—Employee Auburn Calloway attacks the flight crew of Fed-Ex Flight 705 with hammers and a spear-gun in a suicidal attempt to win death benefits for his family. After a fight, leaving the cabin awash with blood, the crew subdues him and lands safely. 1990—Future Bush #43 administration appointee John Poindexter is found guilty of multiple felonies in the Iran/Contra scandal. He later wriggles out on appeal. 1972—‘Nam vet Richard McCoy, Jr. hijacks a 727 with a toy grenade and an empty pistol, then parachutes out the back with \$500K. McCoy, a Guard chopper pilot, is arrested days later while searching for himself. 1970—R. Reagan, as Gov. of Calif., announces a nuanced position regarding student demonstrations: “If it takes a bloodbath, let’s get it over with.” 1966—The U.S. discovers an H-bomb it had lost off the coast of Spain. 1961—A cracked electrical plug causes an F-100’s Sidewinder missile to blow the wing off a B-52 during a training exercise over New Mexico. In its crash, three airmen die. 1954—In a news conference, likeable ol’ Ike erroneously characterizes Southeast Asia as a row of dominos. 1926—In Rome, Violet Gibson, 49, the tiny, frail, and deranged daughter of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, shoots Mussolini in the face.
12:21 12:45 6:28 6:48	1:04 1:30 7:13 7:30	1:46 2:14 7:57 8:12	2:28 3:00 8:42 8:55	3:12 3:47 9:28 9:41	4:00 4:39 10:18 10:31	4:52 5:36 11:12 11:26
SUNDAY, APRIL 8	MONDAY, APRIL 9	TUESDAY, APRIL 10	WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11	THURSDAY, APRIL 12	FRIDAY, APRIL 13	SATURDAY, APRIL 14

1984—R. Nixon gripes, “It’s the media’s responsibility to examine the President with a microscope ...but when they use a protocosque, it’s going too far.”

1974—Hank Aaron breaks Ruth’s homer record, hate mail and death threats pour in from sports fans.

1971—A Wethersfield, Conn. home is struck by a 6 lb. meteorite.

1956—U.S.M.C. recruits are marched into a Parris Island swamp for disciplinary purposes. Six of them drown.

1952—Truman orders the Commerce Dept. to take over the steel industry.

1947—After eighteen days of excavation, New York Police find compulsive hoarder Langley Collyer dead in his junk-crammed Harlem townhouse.

1945—An Allied airstrike on Celle, Germany hits an ammo train next to a train full of prisoners being sent to Bergen-Belsen. Hundreds of survivors are then shot trying to escape.

1942—Americans and Filipinos on Bataan surrender to the Japanese.

1917—At the U.S. Embassy in Bern, future CIA head Allen Dulles gets a call from a man begging for an immediate meeting. Dulles, who has a hot date with buxom Swedish twins, puts him off. The man, I.V. Lenin, boards a train to Petrograd and starts the Russian Revolution.

1913—The oligarchy takes a small hit as the 17th Amendment permits direct election of U.S. Senators.

1885—U.S. troops invade Panama, “to defend our national interests.”

2006—“Scooter” Libby says “W” OK’d leaks of secret CIA intel.

2003—In Baghdad’s Firdos Square, American troops pull down a large statue of Saddam Hussein in front of an audience of Iraqis.

1997—A newspaper in Cambodia proposes importing mad cows to clear land mines.

1981—The U.S. sub *George Washington*, with up to 48 nukes on board, is hit by a Japanese freighter in the East China Sea. The freighter sinks.

1972—Agrobiz CEO Dwayne Andreas issues \$25,000 to the Nixon reelection campaign. In return, the Comptroller of the Currency later approves a bank charter.

1967—“We appeal to North Vietnam,” says a veteran-bought ad in the *N.Y. Times*, “if they really want peace, to stop bombing the United States—or else get the hell out of Vietnam!”

1961—The two top planners of the Bay of Pigs invasion, now eight days away, tell their boss Dick Bissell that it is bound to fail. He says do it anyway.

1927—In Massachusetts, death sentences issued against Nicolas Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti are upheld. Judge Webster Thayer, during their trail, called them “anarchist bastards.”

1865—Gen. Robert E. Lee surrenders his Army to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse.

1553—Rabelais dies, leaving this will: “I have nothing. I owe much. I leave the rest to the poor.”

2017—The State Street Saloon burns.

2005—Huge mobs of Iraqis mark the 2nd anniversary of Saddam Hussein’s fall, shouting “No, No to Satan!” and demanding that U.S. troops leave.

1996—An Australian gizmo registers a 253 mph wind, eclipsing Mt. Washington’s old record of 231 mph.

1972—Crooked financier Robert Vesco slips \$200,000 to Nixon’s re-election campaign in exchange for which Attorney General John Mitchell cuts him some slack.

1970—Dick “Dick” Nixon’s lawyers backdate a deed giving his papers to the National Archives so he can claim an illegal tax deduction.

1963—The *U.S.S. Thresher* implodes 220 miles east of Boston killing 16 officers, 96 sailors, and 17 civilians.

1955—Doctors at Oak Ridge inject Ebb Cade, an African American car wreck victim, with plutonium to see what happens.

1928—Illinois holds the “Pineapple Primary,” named for the 62 bombings which preceded the balloting.

1919—Deceived by a colonel being blackmailed by a general, Emiliano Zapata is ambushed. His killers are cheated of half of their bounty.

1917—The Eddystone munitions near Chester, Penn. blows up, probably because it’s unsafe. The owner blames imaginary German saboteurs.

1865—Rioters in Portsmouth destroy the office of Joshua Foster’s Copperhead newspaper *The States and Union*.

2007—Aufweidersehen, Kurt V.

2006—At the Washington Nationals home opener, the ceremonial first pitch is thrown by Vice President Dick “Dick” Cheney, who is greeted with jeers and catcalls.

2003—U.S. officials in Iraq unveil decks of cards showing 55 “Most Wanted” Iraqi officials.

2002—Venezuelan generals replace Pres. Hugo Chavez with Pedro Carmona in a CIA-approved coup.

1985—Press Secretary Larry Speakes says his Boss will lay a wreath at Bit-burg, where Americans and Germans lie buried. Oops: Americans, no; Waffen SS, yes.

1968—The Civil Rights Act of 1968 is signed into law.

1951—President Harry S Truman fires General Douglas MacArthur for insubordination.

1950—A U.S. B-29 carrying a nuclear weapon crashes near Albuquerque. The nuke’s high explosives ignite; but the fissile core wasn’t installed.

1941—Ford signs its first contract with the United Auto Workers.

1938—Richard Whitney, president of New York Stock Exchange, gets five to 10 for larceny.

1898—President McKinley generously declares Cuba’s independence from Spain.

1863—An errant balloon takes Portsmouth’s own Gen. Fitz John Porter over Confederate lines, then back to safety during the Seige of Yorktown.

2007—The George W.[MD] Bush White House announces that official messages about the firing of eight U.S. Attorneys were among five million sent via private Republican National Committee servers — and are “lost.”

2001—Veep Dick “Perpetual Dick” Cheney files his 2000 tax return which shows that \$5.1 million of his \$36 million adjusted gross income came from Halliburton.

1937—Sixty thousand U.S. students demonstrate against war.

1867—William Bullock, inventor of the web-fed rotary press, dies of complications after his leg is crushed in a web-fed rotary press.

1864—At Fort Pillow, hundreds of Union soldiers, black and white, are massacred by thousands of Confederates led by Gen. Nathan B. Forrest, who later founds the KKK.

1862—Union men steal a Confederate locomotive, *The General*, in Georgia and head north; but conductor Wm. A. Fuller, on foot, on a handcar, and finally in another locomotive, chases *The General* down.

1861—Confederate gunners fire on Ft. Sumter.

1788—A mob in New York, opposed to body-snatching, attacks a hospital, occupies the dissecting room, and displays body parts at the windows. The two-day riot kills five.

1782—American militia troops massacre 100 neutral, Christian Indians of the Delaware Nation.

2002—Venezuela’s poor overrule its generals; President Hugo Chavez is restored to office.

1992—Chicago’s business district is shut down due to flooding after the Chicago River breaches an underground tunnel system.

1981—Rep. Jon Hinson (R-Miss.) resigns three months after being arrested for attempting to commit oral sodomy in a House restroom.

1981—For a fraudulent article about an 8-year-old junkie, the *Washington Post*’s Janet Cooke is awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

1970—The *Apollo 13* moon shot lives up to its numeral.

1962—Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* is published.

1953—The CIA’s MKUltra brainwashing program goes to work.

1919—British troops massacre at least 379 unarmed Indian men women and children at Amritsar.

1901—French anarchist Clement Duval, after 14 years on Devil’s Island, makes his 20th escape attempt. He gets to New York City, lives to be 85, and inspires *Papillon*.

1873—In Grant Parish, La., the White League and the Klan celebrate Easter Sunday by killing 280 African-Americans in what becomes known as the Colfax Massacre.

1204—Crusaders take Constantinople for the greater glory of God: murder, rape, looting, and the burning of the Imperial Library ensue.

2006—Six retired generals sign a *New York Times* Op-Ed calling on Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to resign.

2004—Attorney General John Ashcroft blames Bill Clinton for terrorist attacks that took place seven months after Clinton left office.

1999—Dan Quayle throws his propeller beanie into the ring.

1994—Over Iraq, U.S. fighter jets shoot down two U.S. helicopters.

1988—An Iranian mine nearly sinks the missile frigate *U.S.S. Roberts*.

1945—Eight days into its first patrol an improperly-flushed high-pressure head floods the *U-1206*. Commander K.A. Schlitt scuttles the boat; four crewmen die, the remaining 46 are captured.

1939—John Steinbeck’s *Grapes of Wrath* is published.

1935—A windstorm carries away vast amounts of Great Plains topsoil.

1910—President Taft, from the stands, becomes first president to throw out the first baseball.

1865—J.W. Booth shoots A. Lincoln.

1861—As cannons salute the lowering flag at Fort Sumter, one explodes. Private Daniel Hough becomes the first casualty of the Civil War.

1860—First Pony Express rider arrives in San Francisco.

1772—In South Weare, N.H. the County Sheriff tries to collect fines from sawmill owners for stealing the King’s trees. They beat him up.

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