

The Fortnightly Rant

Now, That's an Emergency

Standing in the Rose Garden a fortnight ago, President Donald J. Trump declared a national emergency.*

Astute observers of the political scene, however, were quickly able to determine that there was no emergency—a feat of deduction accomplished by the simple expedient of listening to the President say so.

"I don't need to do this," he said, "I just wanted to do it faster." He then flew to Florida to manage his non-emergency from a secure bunker at the 12th hole of the Trump National Golf Course at Mar-a-Lago.

In Maryland that same day, Federal authorities arrested a man they alleged to be a domestic terrorist inspired by the Norwegian mass murderer Anders Breivik. Fifteen weapons and 1,000 rounds of ammunition were seized from his suburban home.

Prosecutors said they also found the suspect's hitlist, a spreadsheet listing the names of critics of President Trump. Included on the list were half a dozen Democratic Members of Congress, two CNN news anchors, and two more from MSNBC. Those were just the highlights—the suspect planned, they said, to "murder innocent civilians on a scale rarely seen in this country." Considering which country they're talking about, that's a potential national emergency right there.

Making the case just that much

* The President's tone would have sounded familiar to anyone who's been in a dive bar during some sad booze hound's recitation of how the world done him wrong: "So, the order is signed ... and we will have a national emergency, and we will then be sued, and they will sue us in the 9th Circuit, even though it shouldn't be there, and we will possibly get a bad ruling, and then we'll get another bad ruling, and then we'll end up in the Supreme Court, and hopefully we'll get a fair shake, and we'll win in the Supreme Court, just like the ban, they sued us in the 9th circuit ..." &c., *ad nauseam*.

more disturbing, Christopher Hasson, the suspect in question, is an active-duty Lieutenant in the U.S. Coast Guard. If our Coast Guard is currently staffed by officers so dumb that they leave incriminating evidence on government computers, we'll be staying on dry land until further notice.

Speaking of computers, anyone with a half hour to spend on The Google can find plenty of credible evidence that Lieutenant Hasson is far from the only neo-Nazi on active duty. That may smack of an emergency to the nation's remaining veterans of the war in Europe. The case has all but disappeared, though, from the mainstream media's malfunctioning radar.

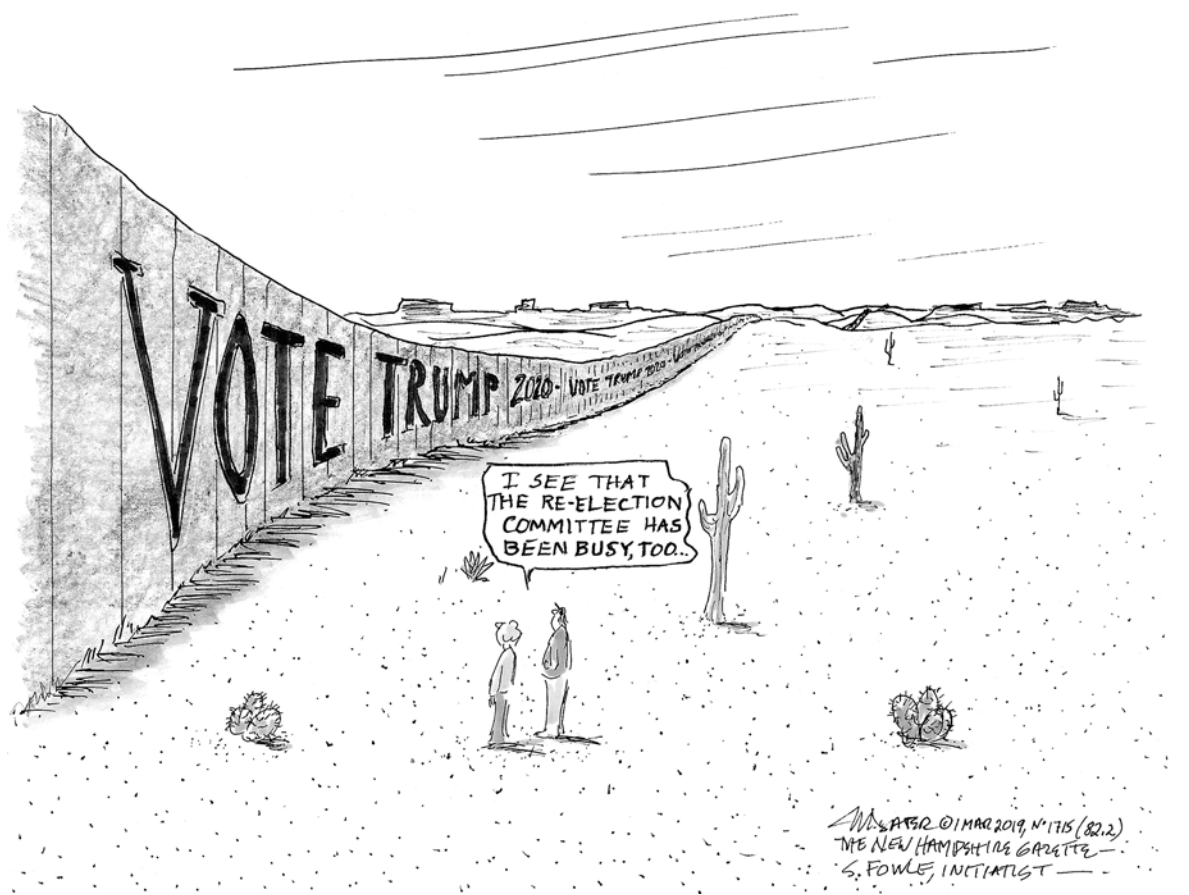
Kaiser Health News tweeted on Wednesday, "More than 42 percent of the 9.5 million people diagnosed with cancer from 2000 to 2012 drained their life's assets within two years, according to a study published last year in the American Journal of Medicine."

If a third of a million sick people go broke every year, is that a national emergency? Or are 333,333 individual emergencies just a recurring annual coincidence?

According to recent news reports, thousands of kids are being groped on our southern border while they're trying to escape from Central America—a region that became a hellhole largely due to the machinations of the Dulles brothers.†

Luckily for us, we suffer fewer national emergencies than we create for others. Global emergencies are another matter. Our appetite for carbon is going to bite us almost as

† We're actually quite serious. See *The Brothers: John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles, and Their Secret World War*, by Stephen Kinzer (Henry Holt, 2013), and *The Devil's Chessboard: Allen Dulles, the CIA, and the Rise of America's Secret Government*, by David Talbot (Harper/Collins, 2015).



badly as it will everyone else.

Rocket billionaires like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos think they'll just zoom off and terraform Mars. We'll be happy to wave goodbye and wish them the best of luck. They'll need it. The rest of us chumps, though, are literally grounded. Whatever Earth's atmosphere has in store for us, we're gonna get—from sea to shining, plastic-polluted sea. And we're a little bit concerned about that. Bad climate news has been rolling in faster than we can track it. Apparently there's some danger that the clouds may boil off, with catastrophic results. Is there any other kind anymore? Also, a crucial, previously-stable Antarctic glacier is suddenly off to the races.

Pakistan shot down an Indian fighter plane this week. It was the first cross-border incursion between the two nuclear-armed powers since the Kargil War in 1999. Ordinarily our Ambassador to Pakistan would

be trying to mediate, but we don't seem to have one at the moment. The Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs slot is empty, too.

If a nuclear war starts in South Asia and there's no one there to take fallout readings, is it still an emergency? Maybe we don't need to worry about nuclear war. The *Washington Examiner* ran a piece Wednesday headlined, "How a nuclear war between India and Pakistan could reverse global warming." Author Phillip Klein was quick to point out that his piece wasn't "meant as a how-to guide advocating nuclear war as some sort of out-of-the box alternative solution to climate change. It's meant as a description of the science surrounding how a theoretical regional nuclear war could affect the Earth's atmosphere, and thus the climate, even for people not directly in the blast radius."

That's a relief. One would hate to

think that a newspaper belonging to Philip Anschutz, the 38th richest person in the U.S. and a prodigious donor to Republican politicians, would be entertaining the notion that if global warming is a problem, nuclear war is the solution. That would really be a . . .

We began this Rant intending to end it with this point: the true purpose of Trump's Wall is to shore up his base of support for the 2020 election.

In other words, the Wall is nothing more than a campaign advertisement that Trump intends to fund by looting the Pentagon's construction budget.

There was a time when a scandal like that would constitute a national emergency all by its lonesome. These days, though, it just gets lost in the shuffle—which, it could be argued, constitutes . . .

Oh, never mind.

The Alleged News®

Two States, One Death Penalty

Once again our General Court is grappling with the question, "should New Hampshire kill people to make the point that killing people is wrong?"

We bring up this issue not to mock—though, when framed as simply as possible, the question does sound a bit odd—but to normalize our home state by pointing out that we're not alone. Wyoming just asked itself the same question.

The Casper, Wyoming *Star-Tribune* celebrated Valentine's Day by reporting that their Senate had just shot down—metaphorically speaking—a bill which would have repealed that state's death penalty. A 12-18 vote ended "what had been up to now the most successful legislative effort in recent memory to do away with capital punishment," according to *Star-Tribune* reporter

Nick Reynolds. The bill had passed "by a safe margin" in the house.

All in all, that's a pretty close outcome for a state that gave Donald Trump a margin of victory of over 45 percent.

What was most striking about Reynolds' story was the rationale given by one Senator:

"Sen. Lynn Hutchings, R-Cheyenne, argued that without the death penalty, Jesus Christ would not have been able to die to absolve the sins of mankind, and therefore capital punishment should be maintained.

"The greatest man who ever lived died via the death penalty for you and me," she said. "I'm grateful to him for our future hope because of this. Governments were instituted to execute justice. If it wasn't for Jesus dying via the death penalty, we would all have no hope."

Somehow, despite its proximity to Wyoming, the neighboring state of Montana engendered an organization called Conservatives Concerned About the Death Penalty.

According to a press release, Conservatives Concerned About the Death Penalty is "a nationwide group of conservatives questioning whether capital punishment is consistent with conservative principles and values due to the system's inefficiency, inequity, and inaccuracy."

Assuming that things went as planned, by the time we go to press, the organization's National Manager, Hannah Cox, will have testified that she changed her stance on the death penalty "a number of years ago for the reasons that many other conservatives have. I realized there are innocence issues—with 164 wrongfully convicted people freed from

death rows—as well as high costs, the lack of a deterrent effect, and arbitrariness and bias in the system."

Bills to repeal have passed here before, only to be vetoed, once by Democratic Governor Jeanne Shaheen, once by incumbent Republican Governor Chris Sununu. If repeal passes again, Sununu has vowed to veto it again. This time, though, there's a chance, however slim, that the veto might be overturned.

Susan the Bruce, who blogs from up north somewhere [*susanthebruce.blogspot.com*], has written eloquently on this topic, deftly bringing to the fore a point that might sway even the hardest-hearted:

"We should, perhaps, take a moment to consider this. New Hampshire hasn't conducted an execution since 1939. Will we bring the death

penalty out of mothballs to kill [Michael Addison] a black man? Would we hang him? Tiny, white, New Hampshire proudly clings to the first in the nation presidential primary, despite rumblings from other states that we're tiny, white, and clueless about the rest of the country. If the moral arguments against the death penalty don't sway folks, perhaps the very real potential of losing that exalted primary status will."

—==—

The Sanders Poynt Saga is Now Complete
Six years and four months after it began, it seems safe to say that the epic legal battle over public access to Little Harbor at Sanders Poynt has finally ended.

It began on Halloween, give or

The Alleged News®
from page one

take a day, of the year 2012, when employees of the Wentworth by the Sea Country Club, (William “Bill” Binnie, proprietor), exceeding the permission granted by a Town of Rye building permit, blocked off a small parking area and small boat launch area at Sanders Poynt.

Local resident Robert Jesurum asked the State’s Attorney General to remedy this obvious abridgement of the peoples’ rights, but the AG declined. Undaunted, Jesurum hired the law firm of Shaines & McEachern to sue Binnie’s golf course on behalf of the public.

As events were to show, the law was clearly against Binnie. He seemed to believe, though, that money was on his side. Testimony in open court revealed his strategy: to drag out the court battle until mounting legal fees forced Jesurum to concede.

Binnie had misjudged his opponent. Eventually the State Supreme Court ruled for Jesurum—and the people. Faced with a final order to remove his elaborate triple barrier of boulders, fencing, and tall, dense

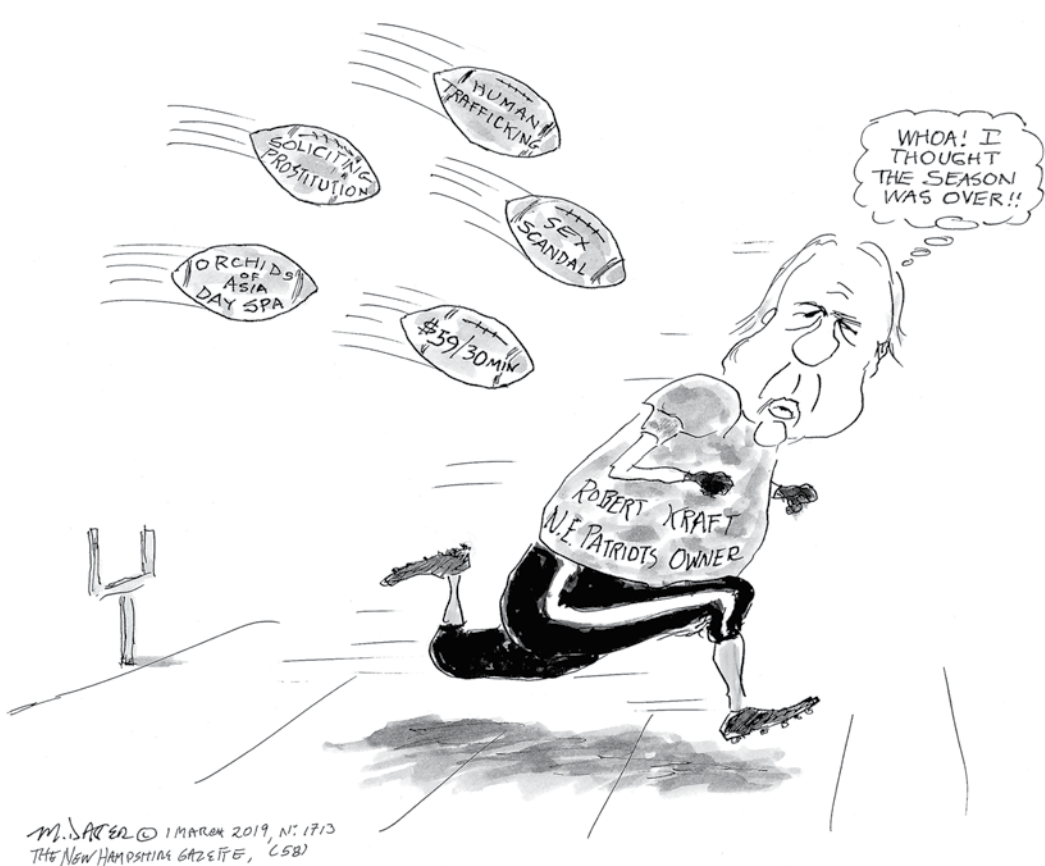
hedges, and restore the graveled parking area, Binnie complied as begrudgingly as possible.

The final issue was the placement of signage. Playing true to form, Binnie had a small sign erected which was barely visible to passing motorists. Dogged as ever, Jesurum asked the clearly exasperated court to compel Binnie to do the right thing. In mid-January, the court gave Binnie one month to comply.

In mid-February, we asked Jesurum if he was satisfied with the result. Was this saga really over?

“I’m happy,” he replied, “that WBTSCC finally obeyed the judge’s order, as she was forced to spell it out. Judge [Marguerite] Wageling ruled that the sign, though barely adequate in size, would be visible to motorists if properly placed, and that is what they did.

“I am relieved that, finally, the case appears to be over, after more than six years. We won a great victory. My only regrets are on behalf of Paul Sanders having lost his historical marker and a concern that the parking area was not well installed, has severe puddling problems, and is in danger of neglectful maintenance from a landowner who has displayed



The Flag Police are not automatons. They are capable of making allowances under certain circumstances. There are limits to their forbearance, though. They are not about to grant amnesty to any business which can afford to make a hobby out of suing the City.

no interest in pleasing the public.”

Justice has finally been done—no thanks to the Attorney General—at a cost to Jesurum of more than \$100,000. Devotees of karmic justice may rest assured that Binnie’s expenses—constructing the triple barrier, hiring a succession of lawyers and a landscape architect, removing the triple barrier—had to have been far greater.

The Coastal Conservation Association of New Hampshire has been accepting donations to reimburse Jesurum. To date they have raised more than \$17,015. They are still soliciting donations. Checks can be sent to: Coastal Conservation Association of N.H., PO Box 4372, Portsmouth N.H., 03802.

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So Much for Our Clout ...

We had hopes—slim ones, to be sure—that the manifesto we published one month ago would result in a solid commitment from the USPS to maintain a full service Post Office in the McIntyre Building.

In a piece published in the *Portsmouth Herald* on February 12th, representatives of the Postal Service, the City, and the developer all made reassuring statements. They included loopholes large enough for an entire vital public service to escape through.

The AWLD, quoted a city press release which stated that USPS vice president for facilities Tom Samra had “agreed the postal service *will attempt* to secure a suitable downtown space, *possibly* in a redeveloped McIntyre space.” [Emphasis added.]

“If in the future, a space can be identified in the Portsmouth downtown area that meets our operational needs on terms that are acceptable to the Postal Service, including, for example, length of term and rental payments that do not exceed fair market value, then the USPS would be able to move retail operations back to the downtown area [from the bulk mail facility at Heritage Avenue, where it now plans to move].”

If pigs had wings, then ...

Deputy City Manager Nancy Colbert Puff said the Postal Service had indicated it was “open to options in the downtown and they need to find a suitable space.” How about a commitment? “They left it open.”

No suitable space? Well, then ... We are mortified.

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Two Die in Robinson Helicopter Crash

A Norwegian couple in their 40s were killed February 17th when their Robinson R44 helicopter crashed near Røldal. Jarle Hegerland and his wife Ann-Cathrin Losvik, of Avaldsnes on Karmøy, were reported missing late that night. The next morning their bodies were found in the wreckage.

A few days earlier, on February 13th, two American tourists escaped with their lives after a bad landing in a Robinson R44. According to the *Daily Mail*, quoting Radio Mitre, “Walter Quiroga was piloting the aircraft with two American passengers aboard and were travelling

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over the Uco Valley [of Argentina], a region famous for drawing tourists to its wine vineyards in the province of Mendoza." Engine trouble forced Quiroga to attempt a forced landing. The machine landed hard, then flipped on its side. It was badly damaged, but the passengers suffered only minor injuries.

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Listen Up and Die Right

It's a mystery: everyone knows how a lousy ending can dampen your enjoyment of an otherwise excellent movie, yet few take the time to learn how to avoid a less-than-optimal end to their lives.

Katy Butler wants to change that. The bestselling author will visit The Music Hall March 6th as part of its Innovation + Leadership series, to share *The Art Of Dying Well: A Practical Guide to a Good End of Life*, her compassionate and crucial handbook for passing peacefully.

Seeking to restore an element of the sacred to the process of dying, Butler provides the tools to navigate a modern medical system that is inadequately designed to meet the needs of the elderly and patients managing prolonged illnesses. Preparing readers for seven phases of

late life, from vigorous old age to the final breath, *The Art Of Dying Well* is indispensable for those caring for aging parents, or contemplating their own advancing years.

"Katy Butler has clear eyes and speaks plainly about complicated decisions. This book is chock-full of good ideas."—Sallie Tisdale, author of *Advice for Future Corpses*.

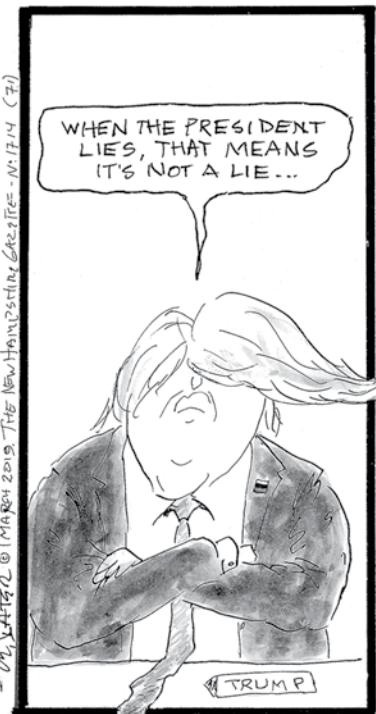
This event will begin at 7:00 p.m. The ticket package is \$41. In addition to a reserved seat, the package includes a copy of the book (\$26 hardcover), a bar beverage, Q+A, and book signing meet-and-greet. Packages can be purchased online at TheMusicHall.org/events/katy-butler, over the phone at (603) 436-2400, or in person at the Box Office at the Historic Theater, 28 Chestnut Street.

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by LATEL @ MARCH 2019 THE NEW HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE - 10/11/14 (71)

"And Still We Rise"—Improving Race Relations in a Divided Country

The Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire (BHTNH) will host "And Still We Rise," an exploration of ways to improve race relations in a divided country, at the Portsmouth Public Library on Sunday, March 10th.

A panel moderated by Cait



EVOLUTION OF A G.O.P. TRADITION



It would hardly be just for the Flag Police to require strict compliance from commercial enterprises—see accompanying citation, on opposite page—while allowing "public-private partnerships" such as the Pease Tradeport to to deviate from the Flag Code.

Vaughan, community organizer for Maine Family Planning, will discuss three innovative ways bridges have been built to help overcome the racial divide in New England.

Wildolfo (Will) Arvelo, formerly the president of Great Bay Community College, and now the director of the N.H. Division of Economic Development, with his understanding of both higher education and the workforce needs of business and industry, will discuss new state initiatives for greater economic growth through diversity and inclusion.

Judy Dow, a Winooski Abenaki tribal member and the Executive Director of Gedakina, Inc., a Native American Experiential Outdoor Education and Leadership Development organization, has been documenting sustainable land use practices with Indigenous youth in New England. She'll discuss her efforts working to strengthen the cultural knowledge and identity of New England Native American youth and families.

Brenda Bailey Lett has a Masters

in Community Mental Health and Community Economic Development from Southern N.H. University. She will lead a dialogue around reparation for the injuries of enslavement and its aftermath.

"And Still We Rise" will take place from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Levenson Room of the Portsmouth Public Library, at 175 Parrott Avenue. As with all the Tea Talks, this event is free and open to the public.

The Winter Tea Talk Series, presented by the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire in partnership with the Portsmouth Public Library, is a series of participatory lectures related to New Hampshire's Black history and African American culture. More information and the full schedule, can be found at: blackheritagetrailnh.org/programs/tea-talks/.

The Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire works "to open hearts and minds for a deeper understanding of who we are as a collective and to recognize that we share a uniquely American heritage." Building on the success of the Portsmouth Black

Heritage Trail that started more than two decades ago, the new state-wide Black Heritage Trail connects the stories of New Hampshire's African heritage by documenting and marking many of the historic sites that testify to this rich history.

Guided tours and public programs, along with educational materials and teacher workshops, will continue to be developed by the Black Heritage Trail to promote awareness of African-American culture and to honor all the people of African descent whose names may not have been included in previous town histories. The Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire provides a variety of learning experiences for adults and children. Offerings include school programs, guided tours, traveling programs, lectures, and workshops.

The Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire is an independent, non-profit organization. The organization is a registered 501c 3 nonprofit; Taxpayer Identification Number 81-3921917.

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GOP Steadfast in Righting the Ship of State!

Dear Editor,
The Republican Party stands for upholding the U.S. Constitution and its laws, holding fast to the American Dream which includes the work ethic of Capitalism, is a Party of morality and ethics, a Party which believes in law and order, a Party which believes in individual responsibility and personal reward through one's own efforts. The Republican Party believes in less government control, low taxes, and workfare not welfare. The Republican Party believes in a strong U.S.A. with definite borders. We don't believe in infanticide, and believe if you do the crime you do the time! We believe in saluting our American flag, and we believe that God created this Nation to be a force for Good in the world! It's a privilege to be an American citizen... one that's earned every day!

The Democrat [sic] Party, on the other hand, is hell-bent on destroying America and forming an entirely new government where the philosophy is one of Entitlement...where everyone has a right to American citizenship, where everyone has a right to free education, free medicine, free social security, free housing, where taking drugs is legitimate, where infanticide is sanctioned, where you get a free out-of-jail card if you commit a crime. And, the list goes on! It seems the philosophy of the Democrat [sic] Party is one that does not promote individual responsibility and personal growth by one's own merits, but "leaching" [sic] off the hard work of others!

Nick De Mayo
Sugar Hill, N.H.
Nick:

Thank you for sending this remarkable communiqué. We can't recall the last time we received anything quite so...unsettling.

Our initial reaction was fear that you may have sent it under duress while being held hostage by the Republican National Committee. That seems the most likely reason a person might spontaneously declare allegiance to a criminal enterprise passing itself off as the legitimate political heir to the Party of Lincoln. If so you're out of luck. We don't negotiate with ter-

rorists.

As for your line about the Republican Party "holding fast to the American Dream," permit us to paraphrase one of the 20th century's most astute philosophers, George Carlin: "they call it the American Dream because you've got to be asleep to believe it."

Of course, you may simply have been striving for some sort of comic effect—very simply. Do you have a day job? If so, stick with it.

Most telling was your indictment of the party whose name you insist on getting wrong. Your litany of its alleged sins—especially when viewed in the light of your groveling paean to the GOP—perfectly exemplifies what the shrinks call projection: if you're guilty of something, accuse your opponent of it.

Please, keep writing. Dissecting your letters is a welcome distraction from the environmental hell towards which your party's policies are sending us in a clapped-out, over-priced hand-basket.

The Editor

—==—

Democrats Can't Handle the Truth

To the Editor:

The newly formed Congress is the most interesting to come along in many years and all the interest comes from the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives as their elation of gaining control has turned the joy of victory into the chagrin of reality brought about by two brave women—Tulsi Gabbard and Ilhan Omar—who have dared to speak the truth, and in doing so have come under attack from their own party. But as is always the case this is what happens to those who speak the truth to a den of liars and thieves.

Tulsi Gabbard is challenging the wisdom of the perpetual wars in the Middle East recognizing that these wars are not in America's interests, are illegal, and a waste of blood and treasure.

Representative Omar, the other teller of an inconvenient truth, quite correctly reveals the enormous power of Israel and AIPAC on both the foreign and domestic policies of the United States. And these Israeli interests are not those of America; they



are those of Israel. Walking away from the Iran nuclear deal was just one of them. Even more profound is the bill that would deny to Americans their First Amendment right to join in or advocate for the boycott of Israel, while at the same time and in the face of America's financial problems and the threats against Social Security, veterans benefits, and Medicare, the bill will give to Israel a minimum of thirty-eight billion dollars over the next ten years. The Congresspersons, both Democrat and Republican, who support the anti-BDS portion of this bill are violating their sworn oath to uphold and defend the Constitution. The only person it seems who is doing the defending and upholding is Representative Omar.

Of course, the old worn but effective charge of anti-Semitism has been bought out, particularly by the Clinton clan, in order to ridicule and discredit this brave woman. However, the truth has a way of asserting itself and it has come in the form of the one brave female who dares to reveal it. It recalls to mind the observation of the great Martin Luther King—that the arc of history bends toward justice.

One more thing: It seems the Democrats can't tolerate independent, outspoken females.

John Dente
Wilmington, Del.

John:

After our recent, somewhat contentious exchanges, we're pleased to find ourselves in agreement with much of your criticism of the Democrats. That said, what's the point of replying if we can't agreeably disagree?

We must pick a few nits regarding your characterization of the Democrats as having antipathy towards "independent, outspoken females." This charge seems questionable mostly because it's so familiar as a standard line of Republican bushwah.

There are few things Republicans enjoy

more than accusing Democrats of hypocrisy. We suspect that's because projecting their own flaws and deficiencies upon others is so central a component of the GOP's repertoire.

Sean Hannity, Rush Limbaugh, and Tucker Carlson—the troika of twisted twaddle—constantly accuse Democrats who profess gender equality of actually oppressing women. That—coming from authoritarian mouthpieces bleating propaganda for a monolithic system bent on turning every human of whatever gender into a profit center—is simultaneously hilarious and nauseating.

Stripped of their mawkish faux-concern and translated into blunt English, their true message is, "in order to protect the delicate flower of womanhood, it is necessary to strip these babes and bimbos of their right to self-determination."

When Democrats do come down hard on the likes of Gabbard, Ilhan, AOC, &c., we suspect that it's more a matter of their unwillingness to adhere to the approved corporate/big donor line.

In other words, we wonder—why are you so strict with Democrats while giving the GOP a pass? Having asked the question, the answer becomes obvious—who's got time to catalog all their sins?

The Editor

—==—

Justifies Fear with Dubious Numbers

To the Editor:

Every day an average of five people (DHS numbers) are killed by illegal aliens in our country. Every day five more families grieve because politicians refuse to enforce our laws. President Trump is fighting to enforce our laws to save lives. Democrat [sic] leaders led by Speaker Pelosi and Senator Schumer and supported by our delegation (Democrats Hassan, Shaheen, Kuster, and Pappas) fight to stop President Trump from enforcing our laws to protect Americans.

Every day about 39 women suffer the trauma of being raped by illegal aliens. At least 300 more people are assaulted, kidnapped, robbed, burglarized, or otherwise victimized every day by illegal aliens in our country. President Trump is trying to reduce these numbers to the right number, zero. Democrats oppose President Trump's efforts to protect Americans.

Every day about 120 people die of heroin or other illegal drugs mostly coming from Mexico. Millions of illegal drug users and their families suffer as well. These deadly drugs are often distributed by illegal aliens who hide in illegal alien communities. President Trump is trying to stop the flow of illegal drugs to Americans. Democrats feign concern by improving detection at border control checkpoints, but they fight efforts to stop the huge flow of drugs through our open border.

Because New Hampshire is a relatively safe state, many people don't realize the illegal alien threat until someone they care about becomes a victim; then it's too late. Others see the illegal alien caused harm and, like President Trump, want to end the needless victimization of Americans by people who have no right to be here.

Democrat [sic] leaders fight against President Trump's efforts to protect the American people. They refuse to acknowledge the problem; they won't even meet with Angel parents. Democrat [sic] "sanctuary" cities release illegal alien criminals, allowing them to victimize others. Democrats encourage illegal immigration with their talk, policies, and funding. Democrats fight against President Trump's efforts to the implement the plan that Border Patrol experts say is needed to control the border and protect Americans.

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Prominent Democrats including Presidential candidates show disdain for American lives by advocating eliminating Immigration and Customs Enforcement, tearing down all border barriers, and even preventing notifying ICE when illegal aliens illegally try to purchase guns.

President Trump is fighting to enforce our laws and stop the totally avoidable victimization of many thousands of Americans by illegal aliens annually. Democrats claim to care about others. So, it astounds me that grassroots Democrats don't demand that their Democrat [sic] leaders stop protecting illegal aliens and help President Trump end the totally avoidable killing, raping, robbing, assaulting, kidnapping, or otherwise victimizing many thousands of Americans every year.

Don Ewing
Meredith, N.H.
Don:

As usual, the figures you cite are squishy, impossible to verify, and framed for maximum inflammatory effect. This, coupled with your history of providing verifiably-false "data" on at least one occasion, require us to dismiss them out of hand.

The arguments they are meant to buttress fare no better under analysis. Undocumented immigrants—you, of course, use the pejorative term "illegal aliens," which, extended back in time, could easily have encompassed murderous conquistadors, the Pilgrims who would have starved, had they not looted food caches, &c. &c. ad nauseam—commit violent crimes no more often than citizens. Perhaps fewer, the difference is too slight to matter.

You, or at least the political party whose line you follow faithfully, profess to embrace the Judeo-Christian ethic. (If you are, in fact, an atheist or worshipper of Satan, please accept our apologies.) What

the hell, we would ask, are you doing trying to turn away those in desperate need?

Leaving aside religion, after a century of American foreign policy which bludgeoned Central America into acquiescence to the demands of the United Fruit Company and other miscreants, do you think we bear no responsibility?

The Editor

====

It's that "S" Word...Again

To the Editor:

Back in the early 1950's when I was a kid, two wars were raging. One was America's cold war with Russia. The Russians were rotten Commies, propagators of the Big Red Lie, and a daily menace to our existence. We were the good guys, they were the bad guys. Fair enough.

The other war was with Organized Labor. They were "rotten Socialists" who were threatening to undermine free enterprise. Organized Labor, it turns out, probably deserved much of the abuse it received due to its strong-arm tactics, inexcusably lax labor standards, and flat-out corruption. They had it coming.

Conflating the Socialist labor movement with the Communist threat was mostly a convenient propaganda ploy. Two for the price of one. A threat from without, and a threat from within. Stir the pot. Lock 'em up.

Pretty ironic: the new cry against Socialism is coming from a President who is arguably in bed with Russia's current dictator. Possibly in bed because of undisclosed financial ties. When you get in bed and money's involved, the profession has a name. The President says the press is picking on him. They should.

Russia, it turns out, was never a Communist nation. It was a dictatorship with a license to steal. Same for Venezuela. Dictatorships with licens-

es to steal abound these days. Some would argue Wall Street has a license to steal.

Here's my point. Words have meaning, but not always the same meaning Merriam-Webster assigned. Socialism is one of those words. Please look it up before you start throwing it around like a grenade. You probably won't find a definition that says: "Pooling resources for something beneficial in a way that makes sense." To find that definition, you need to look under "good government."

Rick Littlefield
Barrington, N.H.

Rick:
We can't quite put our finger on "why," but for some reason, as we read this, we thought of George Orwell.

The Editor

====

Now We Have a National Emergency

Dear Editor,
We've seen him stumble, reading speeches on a teleprompter, and we've heard he won't, or can't, read daily CIA intelligence briefing reports. But there is one book that Donald Trump kept beside his bed and studied carefully, according to his first wife, Ivana. Adolf Hitler's *My New Order* held Trump's attention as he read this tome on using propaganda to control a nation.

After the Parliament building was destroyed by a suspicious fire, Hitler issued the 1933 "Reichstag Fire Decree," giving him extraordinary powers that crushed Germany's democracy under the jackboot of dictatorship. Is Trump attempting to replay that disaster with his phony "national emergency" declaration?

Declaring a national emergency gives the President many more dangerous powers than simply spending military base reconstruction funds to build a useless, symbolic wall. It enables censorship of our free press; it enables massive spying on American citizens with tools unimaginable in

Hitler's time; it could squelch Mueller's investigation.

Democrats will oppose this fake "emergency," but Senate Republicans also need to stand up for our democracy, now, before Trump actually uses this power, or it will be too late to stop catastrophe.

Bruce Joffe
Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:
Thanks for the reminder that in this era of flim-flam, it's always a mistake to look only at the point where the person on stage is directing your attention.

The Editor

====

The Political Revolution is All About Justice

To the Editor:
The establishment of justice for all was one of the primary goals of the founding fathers as evidenced by the inclusion of the idea in the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States. The Pledge of Allegiance of the United States also promises "liberty and justice for all."

As a strong proponent of justice, I was elated to hear that U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders has thrown his hat into the ring of a large field of excellent Democratic candidates. Bernie has clearly raised the bar for what we should expect from our public servants, and I am therefore thrilled that he is now vying to become the Democratic Party nominee. It would be a real win for justice if Bernie replaces the current occupant of the Oval Office in 2020, providing the occupant hasn't already been impeached and or indicted for high crimes before the election.

During his announcement, Bernie vowed to see the Progressive Political Revolution, which he started in 2015, to its finish with a laser focus on the following: economic, political, social, racial, gender, environmental, criminal, and international justice.

Bernie's message to the 13+ million who voted for him in the 2016 Democratic Primaries, the Revolution, was that we can attain justice in order to transform our country into a democracy that works for the many. We, the people can effectively oppose the current oligarchy that works simply for

the few by taking on the powerful special interests who dominate our economic and political life. By working together, we the people of the Revolution can fight for justice by successfully fighting against the stranglehold that Wall Street, the health insurance and pharmaceutical industries, the fossil fuel industry, the Military Industrial Complex, the private prison industry, and multinational corporations have on us.

Although Bernie did not imply that accomplishing our goals would be the least bit easy, he did remind us that while the special interests have the money and power on their side, the Progressive Political Revolution has the vast majority of people on its side to focus on promoting liberty and justice for all.

Wayne H. Merritt
Dover, N.H.

Wayne:
Many of our current societal ills are symptomatic of the broad failure of our government to provide, as you say, "justice for all." The effort to maintain and defend that failure currently employs the majority of Washington lobbyists. Wall Street, of course, provides much of their funding.

In a superficial sense, one might say that Bernie won in 2016: positions that were previously seen as outlandish and radical proved to be immensely popular—once the citizenry finally got a chance to hear and vote on them. Most of the Democrats now running echo positions which were previously espoused only by Bernie.

Regardless of whether he wins the nomination—or the Presidency—his participation in 2020 will do the nation good.

The Editor

====

Trump Looking for Land Mines?

To the Editor:
President Trump finally came to the end of his petty guessing game as to whether or not he would sign the newest border wall funding deal offered by Congress. He had claimed to be reviewing the legislation and was on the lookout for "land mines."

Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.
to page six

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Murph's Fortnightly Quote
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—Aldous Huxley, from *The Olive Tree*, 1937

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*"...I have a total irreverence for anything connected with society except
that which makes the roads safer, the beer stronger, the food cheaper and
the old men and old women warmer in the winter and happier in the summer."*
— Brendan Behan (1923–1964), Irish rebel, poet, and playwright
john@wordpraxis.com

Sometimes Old is Good
The Fechheimer Building, one of the finest examples of a cast-iron facade in Portland, Oregon, was built in 1885. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, it was restored in 1981 by Russell Fellows Properties, the principals of which enjoy a subscription to this newspaper.



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The Northcountry Chronicle

Gunplay in Goshen

by William Marvel

As a child I entertained a vague notion of time as a dimension that could be modified or reversed by a change in physical location. I was not yet old enough for school when, on a road trip somewhere in the South, my mother pointed toward distant mountains and apprised me that there were people out there who were “still fighting the war.” In her parlance, “the war” was not the world war that had ended a few years earlier, but the one that had been fought nearly a century before, in which she knew that I already had an interest. Her comment made me want to turn toward those mountains, for I supposed that if we reached a certain elevation or crested a particular ridge we might stumble upon a camp of Confederate soldiers.

I found it difficult to grasp the idea that vast, tumultuous events could disappear entirely, and forever. By their sheer intensity such epochs seemed destined to persist in some form—preserved vestigially within one of the innumerable folds that I envisioned wrinkling the face of

time as the Appalachians corrugate the surface of the earth. In the mists of some ethereal mountain moment, fifes had to be tooting “The British Grenadiers” for Redcoats on their way to chastise upstart rebels. The recesses of the cordillera must be hiding remnants of Geronimo’s Apache band, still resisting the conquest of their culture.

My pockets-of-the-past concept of residual history crumbled quickly when the last veterans of the Civil War died off. If everyone everywhere agreed that they were all gone, it seemed presumptuous of me to dispute it, even privately. My fluid temporal theory of history began to evaporate into the mummified linear chronology taught in school.

In 1960, with the Civil War centennial approaching, *American Heritage* published a fat illustrated history of the conflict with magnificent 19th-century paintings and photographs. The images of obscure episodes intrigued me the most. The entire 96th Pennsylvania, standing ten companies deep in its winter camp outside Alexandria, Va., illustrated the scale of the struggle and

the primitive conditions the soldiers endured. Andre Castaigne’s painting of the 22nd U.S. Colored Troops charging a fortified Confederate battery across rolling Virginia farmland portrayed the sweeping panorama and personal valor involved in even minor actions.

The centennial inspired fierce, short-lived interest in that era, and it revealed to me that my fascination with it was shared by another boy in our neighborhood, which old-timers still called Goshen. He had an ancestor who led an Ohio regiment in the Civil War, and came home a general. Once or twice he and I took real Springfield muskets from the parlor of his house and roamed the pastures of his and a neighboring farm, driving away phantom Yankee soldiers or fending them off from behind the stone walls there. We both had to be rebels, although our forebears had all been in the Union army.

Now, whenever I see the stone walls and pastures of those farms at the end of the Potter Road, I think of the Virginia scenery where so much of that epic contest played out.



The terrain is very similar—or was, I should say, because so much of the hallowed ground of the Civil War has been obliterated in the past 150-odd years. The 96th Pennsylvania’s Camp Northumberland has been so drastically changed that it can’t really be found; the vicinity consists of dense, deadening suburbs, with winding roads exactly like those of a cemetery, except that the inhabitants are all buried above ground.

Last November I found the approximate site where the 22nd Colored Infantry stormed that Confederate battery. Castaigne’s painting of the charge was chosen as one of the postal service’s commemorative Civil War stamps in 2014. The spot where the battery sat was bulldozed long ago for the exit ramp to Hopewell, Va., for southbound traffic on I-295. That interchange

and the surrounding retail hell now dominate the hillside where that rookie regiment made its charge, winning the first of many battles in the long siege of Petersburg.

Only relatively recently have I begun to realize that the most appealing aspect of 19th-century history for me is neither the volatile politics nor the personal drama, but the landscape on which it all transpired. It’s a little easier to understand the patriotic impulses during an era in which mention of one’s “country” primarily evoked images of agricultural plenty prudently interspersed with undisturbed nature. In those increasingly scarce locations where such landscapes still exist, the sentiments of a much earlier time usually do, too. In a way, therefore, it seems that place really can modify the dictates of the calendar.

from page five

To me, land mines was a strange term for Trump to use in his perusal. He received five draft deferments during the Vietnam War years. With his fifth deferment in 1968, he was found to be disqualified for military service because he had a bone spur problem. So he never served.

If only Trump had been with me in Vietnam’s Thua Thien Province that long-ago February day, when five of us were medevacked from a land mine explosion. The pathetic president would then have a much clearer understanding of what a land mine is!

Evidently, he found no tripwires and signed the spending legislation,



then immediately declared a national emergency over an utterly ridiculous border wall.

Paul Nichols
Loudon, N.H.
Dear Paul,
We suspect that it may have occurred to you already that Lance Corporal Bone Spur would probably not have been much of an asset on patrol in the boonies. Somehow, though, pondering this question got us thinking along legislative lines.

It begins to look as if the Granite State might legalize sports betting. No surprise there, since we led the way in

state-sanctioned lotteries more than 50 years ago. Why stop there, though? Why not legalize betting on political questions, as the U.K. does? We suspect that would generate a lot of school-funding revenue here in this First in the Nation™ state. If such a system were in place today, we could be placing bets on whether and when our 45th President will take up residence in Leavenworth.

The General Court could then begin considering whether legislation might be in order to specify whether or not impeached and convicted Presidents residing in Leavenworth are included

among those we honor on President’s Day.

The Editor
—==—
C-in-C Silent in re: Active-Duty Terrorist
Dear Sir:
The silence from Donald Trump’s twitter regarding the arrest of a Coast Guard Lieutenant charged with domestic terrorism, is deafening. Lieutenant Christopher Hasson created a large hit list of prominent Democrats, including Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senator Chuck Schumer, Senator Cory Booker, and many others. He also targeted journalists

from CNN and MSNBC, including Joe Scarborough and Chris Cuomo, among others. He amassed an arsenal of 15 weapons and thousands of rounds of ammunition that he planned to use in his attacks.

The silence from Donald Trump regarding this thwarted domestic terrorism by a self-proclaimed white nationalist is very troubling. I suspect that had this individual been a liberal, a Muslim, a Mexican, or an immigrant, the response from the White House would have been swift and brutal. So why the silence in this case? Even former Republican National Chairman Michael Steele, when interviewed on MSNBC, was questioning the lack of a

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Just say no to the corporate bribe racket

by Jim Hightower

The richest man in the world, who heads one of the world's largest and richest corporations, is also filthy rich in arrogance and pomposity.

Jeff Bezos of Amazon has demanded that a city's officials kowtow to him by handing billions of taxpayer dollars to his retail behemoth, essentially bribing him to

locate an Amazon headquarters in this particular city. But—lo and behold—the city mustered its collective integrity and pride to say “no” to his devil's bargain.

The city I'm bragging on is not New York City, which recently made national news by rejecting Amazon's attempt to fleece its taxpayers. Rather, I'm saluting San Antonio, Texas, which in 2017 simply refused to play Bezos' con game when he first rolled

it out. While 238 cities and states groveled in front of the diminutive potentate, San Antonio's mayor and top county official sent a “Dear Jeff” letter kissing him off. They said their city has much to offer, but any development deal “has to be the right fit; not just for the company, but for the entire community,” adding that “blindly giving away the farm isn't our style.”

The officials wrote that a key cri-

teria for awarding any incentives was whether a company is “a good corporate citizen.” Noting that Amazon almost certainly had already chosen its preferred location, they called the national “search” a money-grubbing scam. “This public process is, intentionally or not, creating a bidding war amongst states and cities,” they charged.

Why should public officials anywhere be throwing billions of scarce

public dollars at a pompous corporate prince who neither needs nor deserves such tribute?

City and state officials everywhere need to follow the example of New York and San Antonio, agreeing to stop bidding against each other in the corporate bribe racket.

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from page six

response from Mr. Trump. He said, “Why would we be surprised that a self-proclaimed nationalist would not speak out against a self-proclaimed white nationalist?” He went on to say referring to Trump, “These are his people,” and that “He is not going to thank law enforcement because he's probably not happy about what law enforcement did.” These are very serious accusations against Mr. Trump from a former top Republican. Unfortunately, the rest of the Republican leadership remains as silent as Trump.

Silence in the face of serious threats to our democracy, especially from our Commander-in-Chief, gives us reason to question where his sympathies lie. Silence is a form of acceptance and approval, while not overt, it is certainly suspicious. Does his continued silence and lack of a strong condemnation of such acts give cover and encouragement to other would be domestic terrorists? These are serious troubling questions that I thought would never be necessary to ask with regard to the person serving as President of the United States. Unfortunately, even if Trump belatedly speaks out, in response to political pressure, his insincerity and forced response will be all too obvious. The damage has been done, and Trump can't undo it with empty words.

Rich DiPentima, LTC, USAF, Ret.

Portsmouth, N.H.

Dear Rich:

There are so many disturbing elements to this story that we had to insert it into the Fortnightly Rant. Thanks for the nudge—we needed it.



The Editor

====

Birdbrains of a Feather

To the Editor:

Birds of a feather flock together. Fake POTUS and his rally entourage are exactly on the same scale of low mentality and scant education—regardless of financial advantages. Congressional Republicans refused to turn loose from their authoritarian impulses and assumed super powers. They use the time-worn Right Wing provocative fabrications that can so easily influence the low- and average-mentality portion of the population. Republicans have for decades fought against socialism—even democratic socialism, which is the most profound aspect of American governing—and the success we continue to appreciate: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Postal Service, and prescription insurance—and many other aspects of American democratic socialism.

Capitalist authoritarians are seeking to privatize them all for profiteering! Democratic socialism is a long way from communist authoritarian corruption and the terror grip it had on the Russian people. Today the Russian Federation has long been shed of the communist proclamations—but it has retained aggressively the corruption which is being spread worldwide. Fake POTUS wants to join forces with that authoritarian corruption—or duplicate it here in the US. Democratic socialism has long been the force that is the living spirit of the Constitution when understood properly

with spiritual understanding.

Bigots still scorn the black and brown citizens as inferior—but the counterfeit supremacy they harbor is a reflection of their own sorry character that it hides. Fake POTUS keeps them happy and loyal with his wall obsession when it is suggestive of racial bias. There is a simple way to see why some legislators speak on TV or in session—and say really dumb things. They have climbed their way up the political ladder by exploiting their simple constituencies who crave wingnut opinions and white supremacy theories. North Carolina has become the most politically corrupt state in the Union—from the coast to the western mountains. We have seen the results of Tea Party exploitation simply to gather votes of questionable temperament, especially in the 11th district. (We know who that race baiting representative sycophant is.) [Note: The 11th District is represented by Mark Meadows, chair of the Freedom Caucus.—The Ed.] The 9th District is finally trying to set things right—but we will see. I sincerely and desperately hope that the Mueller investigation will survive long enough to correct this insane jabberwocky fake administration and dump the fake mobster “president”—so he can be swiftly retired (confined) to his cozy beachfront mansion. Saint Pence should also go back to his old talk show studio, where he can, with holy conviction, blast the LGBTQ, abortion, gay marriages, liberals and atheists

to his hearts content. Another hope is that all Americans—liberals and conservatives, can LEARN from this infamous bigotry-based catastrophe.

Helen Kinney
Sapphire, N.C.

Dear Helen:

Just knowing that you're there makes us feel a whole lot better about North Carolina.

The Editor

====

Errors in the Admiral's Tidal Guide

Dear Mr. Fowle,

It has no doubt likely been brought to your attention already that, in the Tidal Guide on the back cover of Vol. CCLXII, No. 10, the column for Saturday, February 9 begins with an entry for the year 1919, and in the column for February 10 the entry for 1964 precedes that for 1962. I naturally presumed these to be errors in chronology, but, upon reflection, on the content of the bi-weekly Tidal Guide as well as on the current state of affairs planet-wide, wondered if perhaps, having done so to pretty much everything else, we had finally f—ed up time as well and the entries are in fact temporally correct. Whatever the case, composition of the Guide must be a labor of love—I can even imagine how you go about it—and perusing it fortnightly is an illuminating, in a disheartening sort of way, experience.

All the best,
John Simon
Portsmouth, N.H.

Dear Mr. Simon:

Actually, the honor of being the first to spot those two errors falls to you. Congratulations, please accept our thanks. We are sincerely grateful.

Also, thank you for your kind words. That feature is, indeed, a labor of love. We do it despite the risk it entails. Some day, some caring professional might comprehend the whole of it, and, in consequence, have its author apprehended. For his own good, of course.

The Editor

====

“The bad thing about all religions is that, instead of being able to confess their allegorical nature, they have to conceal it ... and as absurdities form an essential part of these doctrines we have the great mischief of a continual fraud. ... the difficulty is to teach the multitude that something can be both true and untrue at the same time. Since all religions are in a greater or less degree of this nature, we must recognise the fact that mankind cannot get on without a certain amount of absurdity, that absurdity is an element in its existence, and illusion indispensable; as indeed other aspects of life testify.”

— Arthur Schopenhauer
(1788 – 1860)

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“It has been calculated by the ablest politicians that no State, without being soon exhausted, can maintain above the hundredth part of its members in arms and idleness.”

— Edward Gibbon
(1737 – 1794)

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“To hold a pen is to be at war. This world is one vast temple consecrated to discord.”

— Voltaire
(1694 – 1778)

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