

The Fortnightly Rant

Republicans Betting the Farm

New Hampshire's Republicans have spoken. On Primary Day, September 13th, their voters picked, for both Congressional districts and for the Senate, the Trumpiest candidate on the ballot.

Summer this year seemed to suddenly flip into fall. So it is with our politics. Our primary elections come late, dictating only a brief season for the general election. In a little over six weeks we should know how this all turns out.

That assumes, of course, that our civic wheels stay on the rails laid down by law and custom. Here in the newsroom, making assumptions comes naturally; we are, after all, entering out 267th year in this racket. Habits do develop.

Recent experience suggests, however, that we ought to at least consider getting with what appears to be the new program. Adding a few more cars, as it were, to our railroad metaphor, we could speculate that one of the candidate's campaigns might insist on some previously un-enumerated right to make use of a jet-powered locomotive.

This is all to say that, in the absence of a hat trick of absolute Democrat landslides, we may see one or more protracted scuffles over who actually won. Each of the GOP candidates would, in the event of a close outcome, be expected by their supporters to put up a good fight.

The bounds of political discussion, though, have expanded considerably since the election of 2016. What constitutes a close outcome? What previously-accepted norm might suddenly appear to some disappointed loser to be an egregious violation of his or her God-given rights?

This is where things could really get interesting, since control of

Congress may be up for grabs. In fact, with 435 House seats at stake, and one-third of the Senate, we'll be surprised if things are settled before December rolls around.

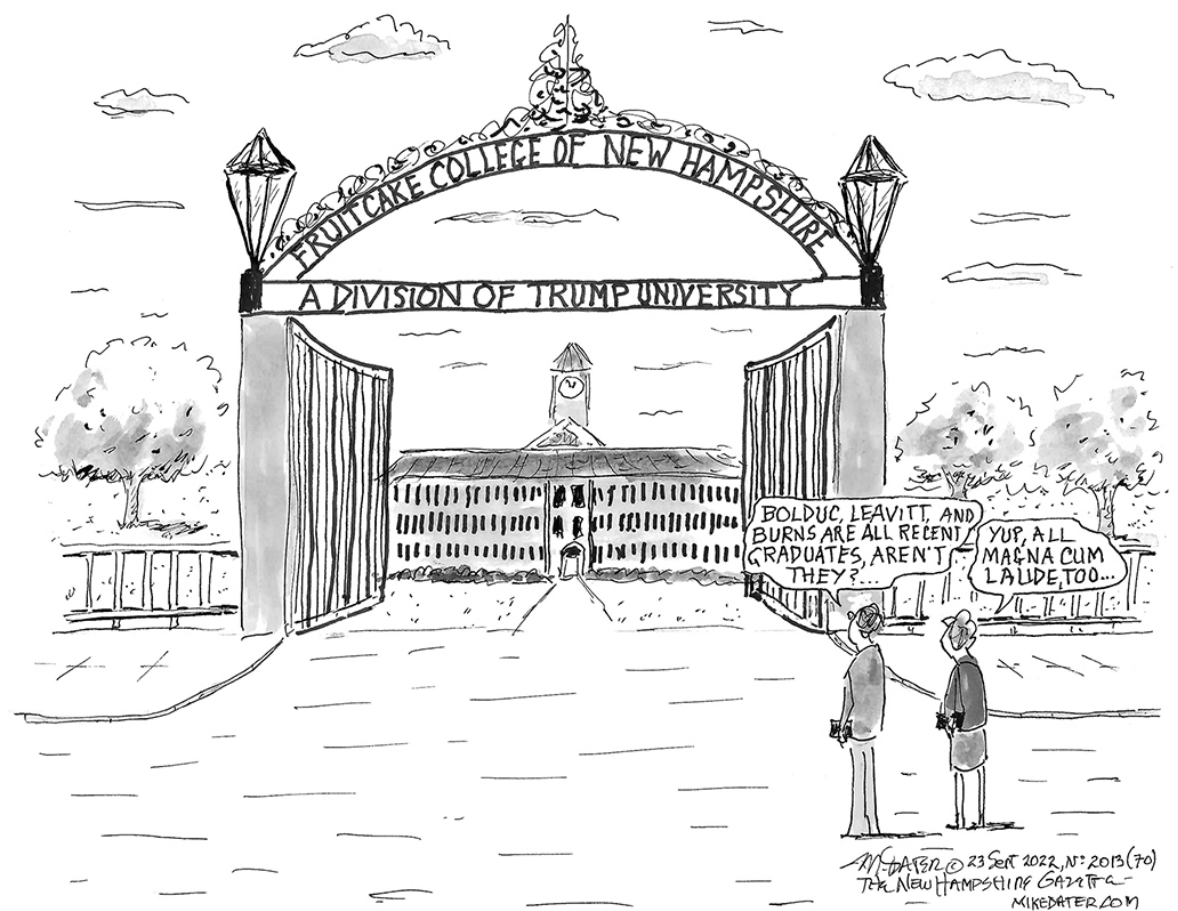
This much is certain: if there is a hangup, this is the state for it. In 1974, Republican Louis Wyman beat Democrat John Durkin for the Senate seat previously held by the retiring Republican, Norris Cotton. Durkin appealed Wyman's 355-vote victory and won the recount with a 10-vote margin. Naturally Wyman appealed. Durkin, a wicked smaht lawyer, fought back. For nearly a year, Wyman and Durkin disappeared in a cartoon-worthy cloud of flying dust and legal fists. Eventually, Durkin won a special election in September, 1975.

It was legendary. Our right to hold the First in the Nation™ Presidential Primary Election® is threatened and may not last; but if there is to be a full-scale, fate-of-the-nation, donnybrook with the control of Congress hanging in the balance, all hinging on a disputed election in a single state, that state simply must be New Hampshire.

Who, then, are our designated potential instigators for such a hullabaloo?

Second district nominee Robert Burns says he owns and operates Burns Automation, in Bedford. It makes testing equipment for the pharmaceutical industry. According to the company's website, the general manager is one Bill Burns. That suggests the possibility of nepotism; not that there's anything wrong with that—that's how our editor got his job. Burns' campaign website claims Donald Trump selected him as "one of his delegates for the 2016 Republican National Convention."

The Issues page on Burns' cam-



paign website checks all the right wing boxes: pro-guns, pro-borders, pro-forced birth, anti-government mandates.... Mostly it's the usual, but here's a twist: "Returning Jobs and Our Pharmaceutical Manufacturing To America." Why export your pill-testing widgets if you can sell them in-country?

In a report from WMUR, Burns explained with Trumpian self-assurance why he won: "I mean, let's face it, my two other opponents, one of them is a woke liberal mayor from Keene. The other is libertarian from Colorado. I'm a lifelong New Hampshire Republican."

Burns raised less than half as much money as "woke liberal mayor" George Hansel, and squeaked by with a margin of 1,714 votes. Gotta hand it to him for frugality.

Just as New Hampshire balances its budget with money from out-of-

state boozers, though, Burns had some outside help. A Democratic PAC spent \$90,000 on a TV ad linking Burns to Trump. It's a bold strategy. Let's see if it pays off for 'em.

Burns may have needed help to nail down the Trumpists. For Karoline Leavitt that wasn't a problem.

Matt Mowers, the front-runner early in the first district race, had #45's endorsement in 2020, when he was the GOP nominee. Leavitt easily Trumped that, though. She worked in the man's White House for two years, as a writer and assistant press secretary. Leavitt is not one to rest on her resumé, though. She is on tape saying the 2020 election was "undoubtedly stolen from President Trump."

If elected to Congress in November, Leavitt would become, in addition to one of its members most

tenuously attached to reality, its youngest at just 25. She won't be the dumbest, though—Louis Gohmert will still be there—shortly after winning, Leavitt removed mentions of Trump from her campaign website.

Finally we have the case of former U.S. Army Brigadier General Don Bolduc—and what a case he is. Full disclosure here: our objective is in doubt because we find it hard not to like a guy who once called Governor Chris Sununu a Chinese Communist sympathizer.

Bolduc is reported to have said, during a debate, "I signed a letter with 120 other generals and admirals saying that Donald Trump won the election and, damn it, I stand by my letter. I'm not switching horses, baby."

After winning, though, Bolduc promptly dismounted, climbing aboard another right wing nag.

The Alleged News®

Conspiracy theories are dangerous even if very few people believe them

by Keith Raymond Harris

There is an open question among pundits and researchers: Do more Americans believe in conspiracy theories now than ever before?

But as a scholar of conspiracy theories and their believers, I am concerned that focusing on how many Americans believe conspiracy theories can distract from their dangers.

Even if most people dismiss conspiracy theories or accept them only in some limited sense, leaving very small numbers of true believers, the high visibility of these false ideas can still make them dangerous.

Association Without Belief

Philosophers often suppose people can explain their actions in terms of what they want to do or get, and what they believe. However, many of people's actions are guided not by explicit beliefs but rather by gut

feelings. These feelings aren't set in stone. They can be influenced by experience.

This principle is taken to heart by advertisers who aim to influence behavior, not by changing how people think but how they feel. Manipulating feelings in this way can be accomplished by subtly associating a product with desirable outcomes like status and sex.

This can also take a negative form, as in political attack ads that aim to associate an opponent with threatening imagery and descriptions. Forging similar mental associations is one way in which conspiracy theories, like other misinformation, might have consequences even without being believed.

One of the earliest political attack ads, placed by Lyndon Johnson in 1964, never even mentions its target's name.

Some Examples

Consider conspiracy theories alleging that the 2020 U.S. presidential election was rigged. Some people no doubt believe that. But even if people don't buy the whole lie, they may still believe that something about the 2020 election doesn't "feel right," "seem right" or "smell right." They might, therefore, be more inclined to support efforts politicians claim will protect election integrity—even if such efforts result in targeted voter suppression.

Next, consider anti-vaccination conspiracy theories. Anti-vaccination content, whether about vaccines in general or specifically about the Covid-19 vaccines, often takes the form of pictures and videos purporting to illustrate disturbing side effects of vaccines. Material of this sort can proliferate rapidly across social media and, by relying on dis-

turbing imagery rather than explicit false claims, can often escape moderation.

Exposure to anti-vaccination information might give readers or viewers a vague feeling of unease, and consequent hesitancy concerning vaccines, even without producing explicit anti-vaccination beliefs. In fact, previous studies have shown that people who tend to rely on their intuition and who have negative emotions toward vaccines are more likely to refuse vaccination. While that research involved other vaccines, it's likely that similar factors help explain why many Americans have gone without full Covid-19 vaccination, and most have gone without boosters.

Pretense and Coordination

Scholars often suggest that many people merely pretend to believe in conspiracy theories and other forms

of misinformation as a way of expressing their political loyalties. But even pretense can be costly. Consider an analogy.

When a child declares that "the floor is lava," few if any believe the declaration. But that child, and others, begin to act as if the declaration were true. Those who do may clamber onto furniture, and repeat the declaration to others who enter the space. Some children play just for fun, some play to show off their climbing and jumping skills, and some play to appease the child who initiated the game.

Some kids quickly tire of the game and wish to stop playing, but like or respect the child who initiated the game, and don't want to upset that person by stopping. As

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from page one

the game progresses, some take it too seriously. Furniture is damaged, and some get injured while attempting to leap from one raised surface to another. The lava is fake, but real things get broken.

More seriously, when Donald Trump claimed that the 2020 presidential election was “rigged,” some officials and ordinary citizens acted accordingly. Whether out of sincere belief, partisanship, loyalty to Trump or financial opportunism, many Americans behaved as if the 2020 election was unfairly decided.

Some people acting as if the election conspiracy theory were true assembled in Washington, D.C., some stormed the Capitol building and, behind the scenes, some developed a scheme to submit fake slates of electors supporting Trump’s reelection despite his loss at the ballot box. The people involved in these activities could count on the support of others who endorsed the rigged election claim, even if these endorsements were largely insincere.

The Price of Pretending

The costs of acting as if the 2020 election were rigged are no doubt greater than those for acting as if the floor is lava. The costs of acting as if the 2020 election were rigged led to millions of dollars worth of damage to the Capitol building, led to hundreds of arrests for Capitol rioters, led to multiple deaths and imperiled American democracy.

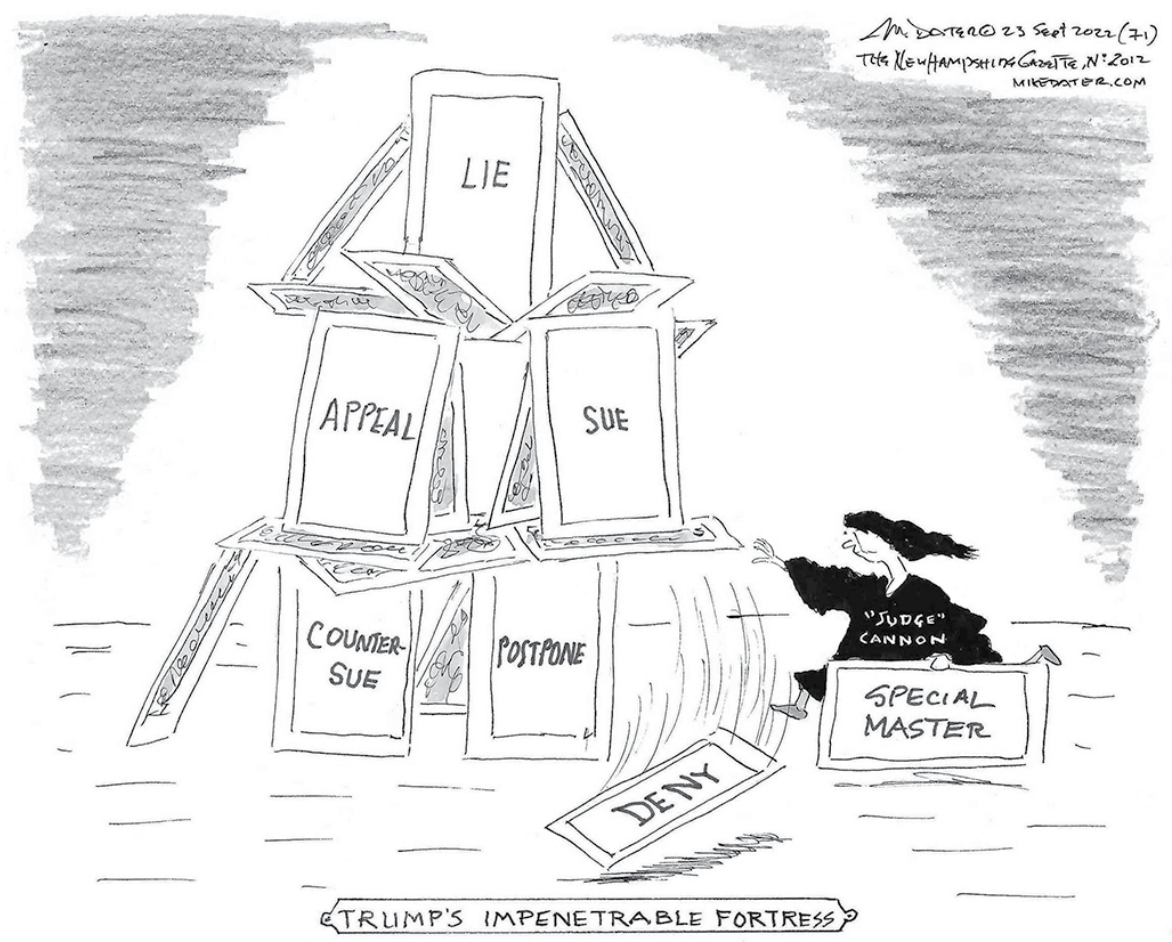
Given the severe risks involved, it’s worth wondering why people who did not sincerely believe the election was unfair would risk pretending. This question highlights the unique danger of conspiracy theories endorsed by those in power: There can be much to gain from pretending to believe them.

Keith Raymond Harris is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Philosophy at Ruhr University, Bochum, Germany. This article is published under a Creative Commons license.

While Fighting Workers, Railroads Made Over \$10 Billion in Stock Buybacks

by Kenny Stancil

At the same time they have fought to deny sick days and other vital



The Ffoundry Place Garage is rarely full when used for its originally-intended purpose, i.e., the temporary storage of silent, unoccupied automobiles. The evening of September 10th, however, showed that the structure could serve as a lively, exciting venue unto itself. Scores, if not hundreds, of car owners showed up, having left their mufflers at home, cruising from floor to floor, revving their engines so that others might enjoy the high-decibel cacophony, as seen online at <https://bit.ly/3dpG0Xr>.

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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.


MIKE DATER'S CARTOON ORIGINALS
AND OTHER DRAWINGS BY THE NEW HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE'S VERY OWN
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points out, Union Pacific chief executive officer Lance Fritz told investors on a July call that the company had cut staff by a third since 2018 and said, “We’ve got to do some other unique and creative things with our labor unions in order to make our crews more available and more productive.”

After admitting that Union Pacific’s workforce “hasn’t seen a raise in 2.5 or three years,” Fritz praised the Presidential Emergency Board (PEB)—a panel of three arbitrators appointed by President Joe Biden earlier this summer in a bid to resolve heated contract negotiations between rail carriers and unions—and expressed hope that it would propose a “reasonable approach to wages.”

He also said that Union Pacific is prepared to make further staffing cuts during an economic downturn, asserting that conductor-less trains would be “better for the conductors’ quality of life.”

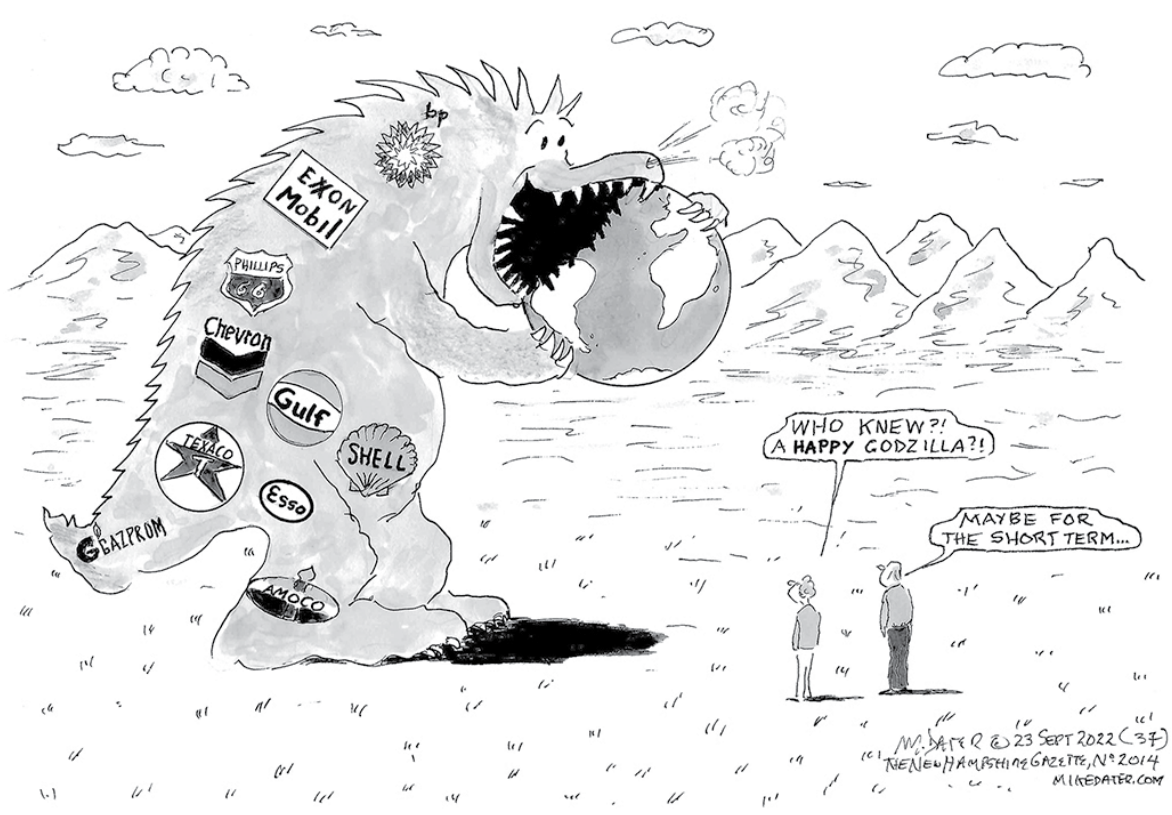
Like Fritz at Union Pacific, CSX chief executive officer James Foote told investors on a July call that workers at his company “are not happy that they didn’t get a raise for 2.5 years” and expressed hope that the PEB “puts out a recommendation that’s a win-win for both sides.”

CSX acknowledged that its injury rate in the second quarter “increased modestly from the near-record levels in the first quarter,” only for Foote to blame the company’s staffing challenges on what he described as pandemic-induced changes to “employees’ work and lifestyle preferences.”

“It’s been somewhat of a surprise to all of us, the number of people that have dropped out after, again, going through all of the classroom training, all of the on-the-job training, and then working a few months and deciding that they don’t like railroading as a profession,” said Foote, just moments after stagnant wages and unsafe conditions were discussed.

Mark George, the CFO of Norfolk Southern, meanwhile, also attributed high attrition rates to a so-called “lifestyle challenge” occurring “in a very unique [labor] market where everybody is looking for talent.”

He did go on to acknowledge, however, that “despite the very rich and attractive pay structure that the railroads offer, sometimes, [people would] rather work in a more predictable schedule in warehousing or in home construction, where they can be nearby where they live and



not stay in hotels and also just not be on call.”

Norfolk Southern’s chief operating officer Cindy Sanborn said that the company is looking into “sign-on and attendance bonuses, retirement deferral, and referral incentive[s]” to boost hiring and retention, but she didn’t say anything about workers’ fundamental demands for sick days, paid leave, and other basic benefits revolving around better “quality of life.”

Last week, labor lawyer Jenny Hunter and Terri Gerstein, director of the State and Local Enforcement Project at Harvard Law School’s Labor and Worklife Program, argued in *Slate* that railroad companies nearly inflicted an economic catastrophe on the U.S. because they chose profit-maximization over humane workplace policies.

As the pair wrote:

“It should not be controversial to say it, but: People should have sick leave so they do not have to come to work when they get sick. They should be able to take leave to attend doctors’ appointments or deal with family emergencies without risk-

ing their jobs. Workers should also have regular time off, not be on call almost every day of their lives. This strike or lockout was threatened because of the railroad companies’ refusal, right up until the last minute, to accept these basic human needs, and their willingness to bring an already weary country to the brink of yet another economic disaster, all in the name of ever more profits.

“The United States, unlike many countries, does not have a national law guaranteeing sick leave; if we did, the railroads’ attendance systems would be clearly illegal. The kind of point-based attendance systems that railroads employ can still be considered unlawful retaliation if workers lose points for taking leave that is legally protected, such as for absences guaranteed by the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or state or local sick leave laws. Apart from questions of legality, it is grossly irresponsible to punish people for unexpected illnesses ever, and especially during a pandemic.”

A nationwide strike or lockout was at least temporarily averted last

Thursday when the Biden White House announced a tentative agreement between rail carriers and unions that would enable workers to take days off for medical care without being punished, though just one of those days would be paid.

As a pair of unions representing tens of thousands of rail workers has stressed, however, the proposed deal still must be approved by rank-and-file members in an upcoming ratification vote.

Had it not been for Sen. Bernie Sanders’ (I-Vt.) intervention last week, Senate Republicans may have succeeded in forcing rail workers to accept the PEB’s original proposal, which many workers found intolerable because it excluded the sick leave benefits they sought, among other shortcomings.

Mitchell, for his part, said Monday that “it’s time for these railroad companies to start prioritizing the safety and well-being of their workers—or we’ll all pay the price.”

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A string of tank cars loaded with liquified petroleum gas, down at the Pan Am railyard next to the Foundry Place parking garage. Hereditary multi-millionaire Timothy Mellon sold Pan Am to CSX on June 1st.

Murph’s Fortnightly Quote

“Beware of false knowledge; it is more dangerous than ignorance.”

— George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)

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“The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.”

— Antonio Gramsci (1891 – 1937)

Italian writer, politician and political theorist

— Not-So-Random Thoughts from an Oregon Subscriber

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Ten Million Bottles of Water in the Dump...
To the editor:

Humans may be a self-screwing species—genetically disposed to solve one problem by making another one worse. Maybe the biologists will find something to confirm this as they continue to develop a better understanding of our genome.

In the 21st century, Jackson, Mississippi, the capital of one of the fifty states in one of the wealthiest nations in the world, with a population of 150,000, has been unable to provide water to its residents. Yes, there was some flooding there recently, but we can't just blame the weather. *The New York Times* reports:

"...state officials offered a more dire outlook, saying the city's water system had appeared to be barreling toward a breaking point even before the floods. 'It was a near certainty that Jackson would begin to fail to produce running water sometime in the next several weeks or months if something didn't materially improve,' [Governor Tate Reeves], a Republican, said on Monday."

Our response to this crisis includes trucking in lots of little disposable plastic bottles filled with water. Yes, it's an emergency, but the image of all that plastic headed for landfills, rivers and oceans, is hard to get out of your head.

Is it a coincidence that the population of Jackson is over 80 percent African-American? It's not the first time we're seeing this. In Flint, Michigan a few years ago, where the population is over 80 percent African-American, the tap water had so much lead in it that it was unsafe to drink, though you could still use it to flush a toilet. Maybe there's a sliding scale: at 50 percent African-American you get water, poisonous but at least you can still flush, at 75 percent or higher, you need to go dig a field latrine.

In Flint too, the plastic flowed freely, even if clean water didn't. According to the University of Nebraska's Institute of Agricultural and Natural Resources, Nestle donated 1.6 million bottles of water for free distribution in Flint (100,000 bottles per day for several months). You do the math there.

Peter C. Dolan
Gloucester, Mass.

Peter:
Let's see here...call it 100 days...that's ten million bottles.

The Editor

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Money to Burn

Dear Editor:

I saw a letter stating money support for Sen. Hassan "isn't coming from New Hampshire or anyone interested in the people of New Hampshire." Wrong. I give a campaign donation to Sen. Hassan's campaign about every third mail piece asking for it. I live in Sanbornton. I'm not the only donor from New Hampshire, either.

The letter writer supports candidate Don Bolduc, whose closest rival in the primary, by poll numbers, is Chuck Morse. Any time now, one or the other will likely get a Trump endorsement. Bolduc's campaign says that like Trump, Bolduc "will go to DC and drain the dreaded swamp." Does it mean Bolduc is all right with the bloody January 6th attack on our Capitol building and the legislators therein doing their job—the attackers showing they support Trump? Morse, in an interview with Fox News, said he'd "welcome the endorsement of Trump." He also must find no fault with Trump's lunatic anti-Democracy behaviors. Clearly Sen. Hassan, who is responsible and normal in her behaviors, and at work every day for us all, is the best choice to continue to represent us in our U.S. Senate.

Lynn Rudmin Chong
Sanbornton, N.H.

Lynn:

You wrote before the primary election was held. Now, in hindsight, we know two interesting things: 1) the Morse campaign received more than \$4 million in anonymous donations from a super PAC, presumably from out-of-state Republicans; and, 2) he lost.

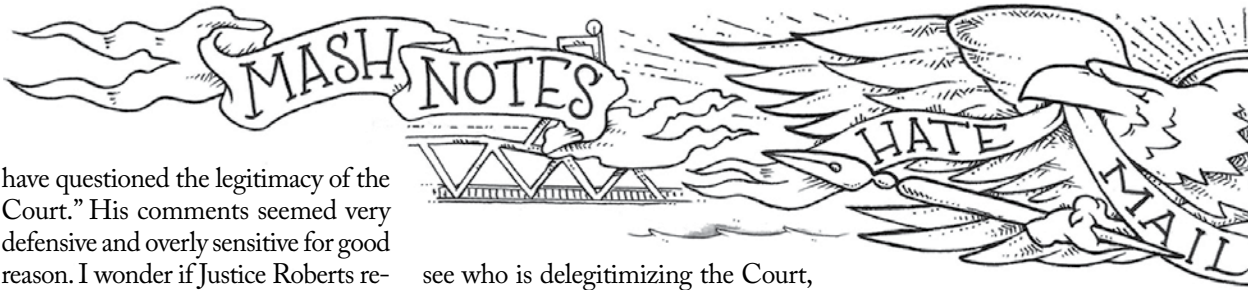
The Editor

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Justice, Heal Thyself

Dear Editor:

Last week, in a speech, Chief Justice Roberts said, "lately some critics of the Court's controversial decisions



have questioned the legitimacy of the Court." His comments seemed very defensive and overly sensitive for good reason. I wonder if Justice Roberts recalls the vicious attacks by the right-wing against the Warren Court for decisions they did not like? Decisions that protected and supported Constitutional rights, not remove them, as your court has done. Did Mr. Roberts consider those attacks questioning the legitimacy of the court?

No, Mr. Roberts, it is when nominees to the Court, during their confirmation hearings, state under oath that certain decisions are settled law and have precedent, and then overturn those decisions at their first opportunity, that questions arise about the legitimacy of the Court. When the court overturns a 100-year-old gun safety law, that raises questions about the legitimacy of the Court. When the Court gives corporations the same First Amendment rights as individuals, that raises questions about the legitimacy of the court. When Justices twist their interpretation of the Constitution to fit their political ideology or religious beliefs, that raises questions about the legitimacy of the Court.

The Judiciary Branch of our federal government is the only branch that has no direct accountability to the people. Supreme Court Justices are granted a lifetime appointment and are not accountable to anyone, save the almost impossible threat of impeachment. They are free to make any decision regardless of its Constitutional merits, and there is no recourse or appeal of these decisions. As such, the only option remaining for the people and the Executive and Legislative Branch is to protest and condemn egregious Court decisions that are inconsistent with the Constitution. This does not delegitimize the Court, it provides the only remaining avenue for debate and future change in a democracy.

No, Mr. Roberts, if you want to

see who is delegitimizing the Court, look no further than to yourself and your five reactionary colleagues. Do not blame the victims of your Court's right-wing fanaticism.

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

Rich.

Bravo.

The Editor

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Lest We Forget

Editors:

As Election Day approaches, Governor Sununu is still marketing himself as an affable moderate. He wants us to forget that he's been in cahoots with Free State Project radicals for years. In 2019 and 2020, the Democratic majority in the Legislature passed dozens of bills to support workers, families, children, and vulnerable adults, but as a gift to the FSP-led Republican minority, he vetoed over 60 of them—even a bill to extend federal Covid-19 family and medical leave, reduce costs for testing and treatment, extend unemployment insurance, and establish sanitary protections at the height of the pandemic. He was caught on video laughing about it with his country club friends.

New Hampshire deserves better. Fortunately, we have the opportunity to elect a Governor who will be truly representative of the good people of New Hampshire: Democratic Sen. Tom Sherman. He voted with the majority for all the legislation Gov. Sununu killed in his 2020 veto rampage. Dr. Sherman's voting record, both as a Representative and as Senator, shows his life-long commitment to children, families, workers, access to affordable health care, reproductive freedom, the environment, and democracy. All this is on the line this November. Non-partisan websites like justfacts.votesmart.org have

well-organized and easy-to-navigate information so voters can compare and contrast candidates' biographies, public positions on important issues, and voting records. It is clear that Sen. Sherman represents the best of New Hampshire values and has earned the right to serve as Governor.

Jean Lewandowski
Nashua, N.H.

Jean,

Thank you for detailing a few of the ways our Hereditary Governor has chosen to accommodate this band of yahoos. Sometimes, when we need a laugh, we imagine him gritting his teeth as he tries to govern this crackpot rabble, invited in by Craig "One-Term" Benson.

The Editor

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American? Patriot? Good Citizen?

To the Editor:

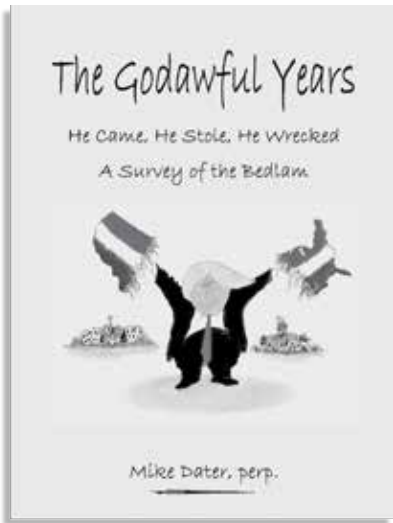
Dan Rather recently tweeted, "When you are more worried about the reputation of Donald Trump than the safety and security of the United States..."

Though he left his thought hanging, I surmise his comment was directed to all American citizens, Republican politicians and others who seem to be complacent about or partially responsible for the January 6th insurrection and the continuing threats of violence America faces.

My question, following Rather's observation, would be: Do you believe it appropriate to use violence to resolve political disputes?

If you actually do, then you would do well to dig into our Civil War history and consider buying a ticket to an appropriate country where despotic, authoritarian dictators rule their countries, violating their laws and their people's civil rights! For instance: Brazil, China, Egypt, Hungary, India, Iran, Pakistan, The Philippines,

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a compendium of drawings by Mike Dater most of which first appeared in *The New Hampshire Gazette*
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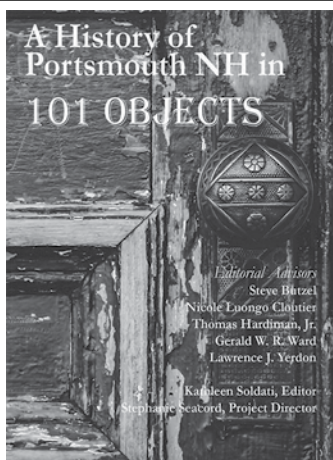
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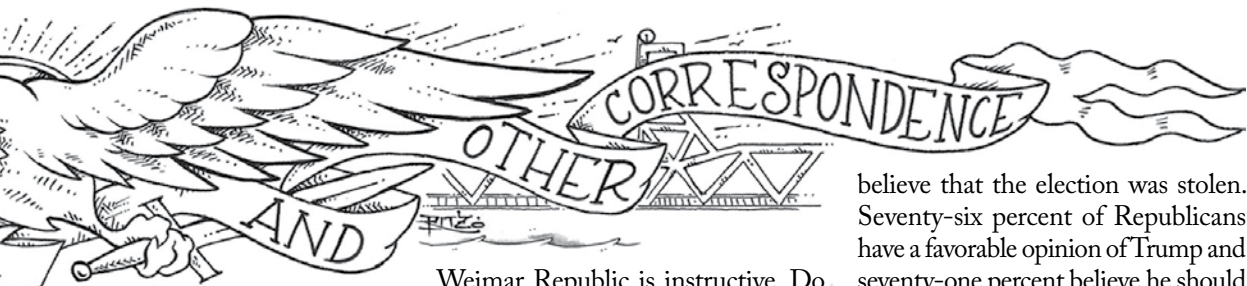
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Herb Moyer
Exeter, N.H.
Herb:
We'll second every bit of that.
The Editor

=====
Biden Didn't Go Far Enough
To the editor:
President Biden has been criticized by some pundits for being "divisive" in calling MAGA Republicans "semi-fascists." His mistake was not in alienating Republicans; it was in not calling out the Republican Party as fascist to its core.

Let's review some of the characteristics of fascism. Fascist Parties customarily are controlled by authoritarian leaders. There is an emotional connection to their followers through national identity, ethnicity or religion. Fascists often harken to a mystical golden period in their group history that has been debased by enemies who have betrayed the fascist identity. For example, Hitler's Nazi Party fantasized about a mystical Teutonic Knighthood whose martial virtues were betrayed by Jewish and political elites during World War I resulting in Germany's defeat. Fascists reject the rule of law, viewing it as a means of oppression by their cultural enemies. They rely on the force of will to achieve the leader's objectives even to the point of using violence. The Nazi overthrow of the

Weimar Republic is instructive. Do these characteristics sound familiar?

Trump is the clearly dominant leader of the Republican Party. His propensity toward authoritarianism was on full display during his presidency and it continues today as his purloining of classified government documents demonstrates. The Republican base is comprised of white, working class, religiously conservative supporters who share an emotional attachment to Trump based on their social identity rather than support for any policy platform. The MAGA base demonstrates a blind loyalty to him that is not amenable to reasonable discussion. They display a deep resentment toward coastal elites and Democrats who they blame for compromising their economic well-being and disregarding their values.

The presence of militant white supremacists and Christian Nationalists among the MAGA base, groups that openly advocate the overthrow of the Constitution, exemplifies the party's disregard for the rule of law. Trump's disregard for the Constitution was on full display after he lost the election. He lied to his gullible base, claiming that he had been denied re-election because of voter fraud. He and his sycophants then embarked on several illegal efforts to retain power and invalidate the election. These failed efforts culminated in a violent and shambolic insurrection by his supporters on January 6th, calling to mind Marx's maxim that "History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce."

Pundits argue that some Republicans can be persuaded to reject Trump yet the overwhelming majority of elected Republicans continue to support Trump's Big Lie either openly or tacitly. Those who dissent are isolated and ostracized. Recent polls tell the story. Seventy percent of Republicans

believe that the election was stolen. Seventy-six percent of Republicans have a favorable opinion of Trump and seventy-one percent believe he should run again. In Weimar Germany, the violent Brown Shirts were a minority of Hitler's supporters. It was the quiet support of the majority of Party members that ensured Hitler's rise to power and led to the horror of World War II. Quiet support of Trump by Republicans does not indicate that they are likely Democratic voters nor does it make them less culpable for the Party's fascism.

If it walks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then it is probably a duck. The Republican party demonstrates all the characteristics of fascism. It is to its very core, a fascist party that presents a clear and present danger to American democracy.

Robert D. Russell, Ph.D.
Harrisburg, Pa.
Robert:
Thank you very much. The next time this question arises in casual conversation, we'll skip our customary frothing at the mouth, and just point to this letter.
The Editor

=====
Take Control of Electric Bills
To the Editor:

Most New Hampshire residents have seen their electricity bills increase dramatically within the last month. It is frustrating, and everyone is looking for someone to blame. Some recent opinions blame our utility companies for gouging us and charging outrageous rates. However, as our Consumer Advocate Don Kreis has explained in numerous pieces, this is not true. Here in New Hampshire our utilities are regulated by law and are not allowed to profit from the sale of electricity to customers. They make their profits from the Distribution Charges and other services, not Supply Charges for electricity). In fact, it is the oil and gas companies and the fossil fuel processors that are most

likely overcharging for their product, because they can charge whatever they can get. With the global fuel crisis and the war in Ukraine driving up the demand and the price of natural gas, they sell at the highest price, whether in the U.S., Europe, or Asia. So, what can residents in New Hampshire do? We have the power to purchase electricity from third-party suppliers, and it is not complicated. In fact, more than 80 percent of New Hampshire businesses are already doing this, resulting in lower rates, stable contracts and even buying 100 percent Renewable electricity, instead of only the 12.9 percent contained in the utility's offering.

For the last six years I have been purchasing 100 percent renewable energy from a third party supplier. Once I signed the contract for my two meters for one to two years, I continued to pay my monthly bill, including the supply charge, which went to my third party supplier.

Interested?
A) Go to the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (PUC) website:

B) From the top tabs select Consumer, Choose an Energy Supplier, and Comparison

C) You will now see a list: 2nd column describes the kind of energy, while the 3rd column gives you the rate, the term of the contract 6 to 27 months, finally the 1st column provides the name of the company, a phone number and a Sign-Up button.

If you need any assistance, contact the Office of the Consumer Advocate, who assures me that they are eager to help: Tel. (603) 271-1172. Do this soon, because rates offered are constantly changing. Yes, the rate may be only 2-3 cents per kWh cheaper (a \$22. saving), however, it is locked in. And if you always wanted 100 percent Renewables you can get that too.

State Rep. Peter Somssich
Member Science Technology & Energy Committee
Portsmouth, N.H.

=====
Banning Books Harms All of Us!
To the Editor:
The New Hampshire legislature

passed HB2, and Governor Sununu signed it into law. Public schools, state agencies and state contractors are now effectively banned from providing instruction that frames racism, sexism or ableism as systemic issues that remain endemic in our society. (This ruling is referred to as "banned concepts" in many arenas.)

This law has brought book challenges to our schools and libraries; censorship and threats to academic freedom are heard in New Hampshire and in many other states. Teachers are needing to navigate curriculum restrictions for fear of losing their positions. They are clearly erring on the side of caution when deciding whether, for example, to deal with LGBTQ+ topics, or to assign "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" into their classrooms. Sadly, many of them are removing some powerful topics, books and writers from their curricula!

As a former high school teacher, I ask myself *why* the pressure to take issues of race, gender, sexuality and class *out* of the curriculum. My position as a teacher and designer of curriculum has always been, "What is the consequence of *not* including issues of racism, sexism, gender identity in the classroom?"

The consequence of omission, of a narrowing of perspective, of absence of historical and cultural facts and experiences: ignorance! Without wide exposure to a broad range of ideas, the diversity of humankind is marginalized; equity (fairness) is omitted; inclusion of the good, the bad, and the ugly is diminished. How, then, can we expect that justice can be an educated conclusion?

Authentic history and literature will include political and military campaigns, and racism and sexism and homophobia that are part of real human history. Reality and knowledge are the only way to avoid repeatedly making mistakes in how we conduct our lives.

Undoubtedly some of what we learn when honest history is included in our human history will cause discomfort,

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

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What do we choose to remember with memorial markers, buildings and community projects?

Open Door
29 Russian Jewish families in Portsmouth formed in 1905 the congregation that became Temple Israel

To learn more about memorials and what else we choose to remember go to PortsmouthGenome.org Join the conversation.
A Portsmouth Peace Treaty Forum project.

HUD-VASH HELPS VETERANS GET AND STAY HOUSED. YOU CAN HELP, TOO.

HUD-VASH is a partnership between the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the VA's Supportive Housing unit. It helps homeless Veterans with housing, employment, recovery (both mental health and substance abuse) and independent living.

HUD-VASH is no longer accepting donations of used furniture, &c. The Homeland Heroes Foundation in Salem, N.H. does: homelandheroesfoundation.org.

HUD-VASH does have a dedicated fund for purchasing new items veterans may need. Donations to that fund may be sent to The VA Medical Center, 718 Smyth Rd., Manchester, N.H. 03104-7007. HUD-VASH should be included on the subject line. Every penny will go into home goods for veterans.

For more information, contact:

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from page five

anxiety, even guilt among students. Teachers are usually prepared for navigating difficult conversations about complex and even contradictory information. That is what education is all about: opening our eyes to the range of human experience, in all of its failures and successes!

Fearful folks who want to eliminate access to some aspects of human history and culture from the libraries and classrooms of our country are actually working against the very democratic principles of our Constitution.

The basic question to ask when challenges to libraries and schools arise, is,

Whose freedom is at stake? Parents have a right to question, even reject, an assignment for their own children; teachers will offer alternative readings. But parents do not have the right, nor should they, to demand the restriction for everyone! Libraries and schools are supported by taxpayers, that is, all of us. The objections must be heard, but they must not limit what is authentic, truthful reality in what we read and teach!

The Racial Unity Team, in collaboration with Oyster River Equity and Justice and the Exeter Public Library, will present a panel discussion addressing these very issues on September 20th, 6:30 p.m., to which the public is invited at the Exeter Public Library. At this program, the New Hampshire law restricting what may be/may not be taught will be reviewed, and a brief history of book censorship will be cited. Responses to book challenges by public and school librarians, will follow, as well as a summary of a legal challenge to the law by ACLU-NH. Suggestions for effective opposition to censorship and academic freedom will conclude the evening.

For more information: *Racial-UnityTeam.com*.

Patricia Yosha

Exeter, N.H.

Patricia:

It's entirely understandable that an



uninformed person might discount the legacy of slavery in notoriously white New Hampshire.

Here's one fact that might get them thinking: beginning in 1756, and for decades thereafter, much of the printing done in New Hampshire—this newspaper included—was done in part by enslaved labor.

The Editor

The Catalans Have Done It Again

To the Editor:

On 11 September, the Catalans commemorate the loss of Catalonia's sovereignty, because, on that day in 1714, Philip V entered Barcelona with his army and annexed Catalonia to an absolutist state, governed from Madrid, which annulled all Catalan institutions and imposed the Castilian language, banning the Catalan language.

In the face of the increasing disagreement with Spain, for the last 10 years, the Catalans have been demonstrating peacefully by the hundreds of thousands, demanding the independence of Catalonia from a state that treats us as a colony. This year's demonstration was attended by some 300,000 people, according to independent estimates (700,000 according to the organisers and 150,000 according to the police under the orders of the PSC, a Spanish nationalist party). Thus, Catalan independence is proving to be the most powerful European movement, organising the largest demonstrations on the continent year after year.

In the face of this, Spanish nationalism, accustomed to fighting ETA with the police and judges, treats the peaceful and non-violent independence movement as if we were terrorists. From Madrid they feel legitimised to impose our membership of Spain on us, as if we were in a dictatorship, instead of trying to win us over politically or democratically, for example, by accepting that the Catalan people can decide

what they want to be in an agreed referendum.

And it is true that it is not necessary for all stateless nations to constitute new states within Europe. Each case should be studied on its own merits. However, the Catalan case, in terms of its manner and volume, has earned to be considered as a very singular case, and above all because of the repression and abuses carried out by Spain, which prove that the Catalans are a national minority within the Spanish state that has a "just cause," since it needs to constitute itself as a sovereign state so that it can guarantee basic democratic and social rights to its citizens.

Jordi Oriola Folch
Barcelona, Catalonia

The Catalan People Speak Out

To the Editor:

11 September is the "Diada de Catalunya" (Catalonia Day), the day that commemorates the end of the War of Succession, which took place in 1714. The fall of Barcelona came after a long year of siege. The city and the civilian population suffered the consequences of a fierce attack. Visiting the archaeological remains in the Ribera district, you can get a sense of what that loss and the subsequent repression suffered by the people of Barcelona must have meant.

More than three hundred years later, the feeling of lack of freedom is still present. This is evidenced by the hundreds of thousands of people who demonstrate year after year calling for the independence of Catalonia—a territory whose rights have been curtailed. A language, in this case Catalan, should not be undervalued, nor should the identity of a people. No state should be allowed to crush a people's yearning for freedom in such a dramatic way. That is why many voices are being raised towards Europe calling for the same understanding they have shown towards other nations.

While Scotland is preparing for a new referendum on self-determination, we Catalans continue to be denied this right and are punished

and criminalised for wanting it and wanting to put it into practice. The European Union lost credibility, in terms of its democratic values, the very moment it looked the other way, when the Spanish state ordered its police to attack the people that was going to the polls to vote in Catalonia's 2017 self-determination referendum, and later when Spain imprisoned politicians, social activists and protesters.

The "Diada de Catalunya" is more than a festive event, more than a claim, much more than a memorial: it is the cry of a people who want to break free from the chains of repression.

Lola Salmerón
Barcelona, Catalonia

Catalonia, Seven Times Independent

To the Editor:

The independence movement in Catalonia, which made headlines around the world in 2017 following the holding of a referendum on self-determination and which is still being severely repressed by the Spanish state, is not new, but has a long historical trajectory dating back centuries. Catalonia has always aspired to be free, independent, trying to form a republic with the aspiration of creating a fairer society and improving the lives of its inhabitants. In fact, Catalonia has already been an independent state on several occasions:

1. Since 988, Count Borrell II became independent from the house of Anjou, because the Franks did not help in the wars against the Arabs. He reunited his counties to form our nation, Catalonia, which remained independent, alone or in confederation with other territories of the peninsula, until, in 1714, a Bourbon, Philip V, thanks to the military reinforcements sent to him by his French grandfather Louis XIV, entered Barcelona, subsequently breaking all the agreements made with the Catalans. It had been practically eight centuries of independence.

2. Between 1793 and 1871, as an echo of the French Revolution, conspiracies took place in Catalo-

nia aimed at the creation of a Catalan Republic. Between 1810 and 1812, under Napoleon's protection, the Catalan Republic was declared, much to the anger of his brother Joseph Napoleon I, King of Spain.

3. In 1873 the Diputació de Barcelona proclaimed the Catalan State.

4. In 1928 the Catalan Republic was proclaimed in Cuba by the exiled Constituent Assembly of Catalan Separatism.

5. On 14th April 1931, President Francesc Macià proclaims the Catalan Republic, which he later calls off.

6. On 6 October 1934, President Lluís Companys proclaimed the Catalan State within the Spanish Republic. He was imprisoned and years later, in 1940, he was shot by the dictator Franco, thanks to the Gestapo who arrested him in France and handed him over to the Spanish dictatorship.

7. Finally, on 27 October 2017, the president of the Generalitat Carles Puigdemont, on the basis of the overwhelming "yes" in the Referendum of Self-Determination held on 1 October, proclaims in the plenary of the Parliament the independence of Catalonia in the form of a Republic, which he then suspends under the threats of the powers of the Spanish State, including another Bourbon, Felipe VI, of provoking a bloodbath in Catalonia if this proclamation goes ahead.

It is clear that Catalonia will keep trying until it achieves a sovereign state within Europe. Right now we Catalans suffer within Spain, which is an expression of the Castilian worldview, based on imposition, uniformity, rejection of difference and dependence on royal and oligarchic power. On the other hand, Catalan society needs, like the air it breathes, to be able to live according to its worldview, forged over centuries, based on pacts, democracy, respect for plurality and social justice.

Josep M. Boixareu
Les Franqueses de Vallès, Catalonia

Jordi, Lola, and Josep

We are honored to receive your letters. The more we learn about Catalonia, the better we understand the depths of our ignorance; time to re-read Orwell's Homage to Catalonia, for a start. By all means, please continue.

The Editor

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A shorter workweek may increase worker productivity—but that’s not why we need one

by Robert Raymond

Studies show that a shorter workweek is healthier for people and the planet—but much of the conversation is focused on its impact on worker productivity or efficiency. This is a big mistake.

With the average worker in the United States clocking 47 hours a week, Americans are among the most overworked populations in the world—in fact, they work more hours per year than workers in almost any other industrialized country.

Advocates of a shorter work week had a brief moment of excitement in California last April when state Democrats proposed a bill that would have required private-sector employers with more than 500 employees to pay hourly workers overtime after logging more than 32 hours a week.

Unfortunately, the proposal didn’t make it very far through the legislative bill-making machine before it stalled out in committee. For the foreseeable future, the bill will remain in legislative purgatory.

However, despite a disappointing outcome, the mere existence of the proposed bill in the state legislature is an important step toward shortening the Californian workweek—something that would be a boon to workers.

There are many benefits of working shorter hours. One that has been particularly compelling to employers is the fact that shorter hours have been linked to increased worker efficiency and productivity. For example, a 2021 study from Japan empirically determined that “when long working hours are reduced, individual productivity increases, and fewer mistakes are made at work.”

Studies have also shown that working fewer hours actually increases worker happiness—leaving employees feeling more energized and giving them more free time to pursue their interests outside of work.

I’d hazard a guess that the majority of us would drool over the prospect of fewer hours of wage labor and more hours in our day for rest, leisure, or—as the 19th-century slogan of the 8-hour day movement advocated—more hours to do with “what we will.”

In fact, re-framing this discussion around the needs of labor rather than the needs of employers is critical for getting us on a path towards a healthier, more sustainable world where workers thrive.

As journalist, economic analyst, and author Doug Henwood told Shareable: “I’m not particularly moved by the productivity argument on this question. An appeal organized around “enjoy your life, hang with friends and family, make some art, learn to cook, cherish the ‘pleasure of merely circulating’—a line from Wallace Stevens—or ‘la dolce fa’ niente’—sweetly doing nothing, an Italian phrase that really doesn’t exist in American English—might have more appeal.”

Yet traditional economists tend to focus on how a shortened work week can increase productivity, which limits the conversation to the needs of capital and thus only further hampers the labor movement.

The successful fight for the 8-hour workday did not hinge on appeals of increased worker productivity—it was a bloody, centuries-long battle fought by socialists, unionists, and similar groups. It was part of a much broader movement advocating for labor rights and protections against

capitalists, not for them.

What has changed since 1938—the year that the 8-hour day was federally codified into law—is that much of our culture and politics have become completely dominated by economic thinking. For the most part, we don’t make decisions about how to structure society around the well-being of most, but strictly around what we believe will be best for profits. It’s the complete commodification of everything—including our time.

This kind of thinking has even led to the corruption of religion and spirituality. For example, Buddhist practices of mindfulness and meditation are now being deployed by corporations as a way to increase worker productivity and therefore profits.

In this neoliberal world, even the teachings of the Buddha have been stripped of their ethical components to better serve the interests of capital.

Thinking in terms of productivity and profits only serves the needs of the bosses. If we want to win the fight for our right to free time, we shouldn’t wear a capitalist cloak and wave a banner representing “the economy.”

Rather, the fight must be framed as just one element in a broad set of demands that shift the scale of power, and break the stranglehold that economic thinking has on us.

“We’ve become such creatures of the capitalist mindspace that we can’t imagine anything beyond it,” Henwood says. “There’s an exhaustion of people’s mental and spiritual life as a result of this focus on work and the way people define themselves in their work and career. It’s just such a bankrupt way of looking at the world.”

Aside from increased leisure time,

there are still many arguments for a shortened work week that do not rely on the productivity question.

A recent report titled “The Ecological Limits of Work” suggests that we need to drastically reduce work hours in order to stay under 2 degrees of global warming. The United Kingdom, for example, would need to move to a 9-hour workweek, and Sweden to a 12-hour workweek.

Further, a shortened work week would also distribute paid and unpaid work (such as caring for children or elders) more evenly across the population, which would reduce inequities in general.

Countries, companies, and organizations that are exploring and implementing shorter work weeks include Iceland, Canada, the Scottish National Party, Unilever and Kickstarter. There’s even a pilot program that was launched in April by the not-for-profit 4 Day Week that has brought 38 North American companies and over 50 British companies onboard to experiment with a 4 day work week.

Yet for many of these examples, improved worker productivity is still often cited first and foremost. Even on the 4 Day Week website, worker productivity is highlighted on the homepage.

The website also cites improved productivity on its Iceland page, stating: “The trials, in which workers were paid the same amount for shorter hours, took place between 2015 and 2019. Productivity remained the same or improved in the majority of workplaces, researchers said.”

While the strategy of winning over our bosses makes sense on some level, it cannot be the cornerstone of the fight to shorten the workweek and to ultimately decommodify our

time—because that is what this is really about: taking our lives back.

As writer and anti-work proponent Anglia Delenda puts it, the shift from a productivity-obsessed mindset to more human-focused ways of being has little to do with the traditional capitalist view of gain and greed and more to do with workers’ growing concern for their general wellbeing.

“Anti-work does not mean ‘I should get to live like a king and eat Doritos while other people do all the hard work.’”

“Anti-work means ‘It sure would be nice if I wasn’t impelled by violence to perform labour that wracks my body with microinjuries that will leave me disabled by 60.’”

—Anglia Delenda Est (on hiatus) (@rollerska8er) February 5, 2021.

Perhaps the unionization drives at companies such as Starbucks and Amazon, along with pandemic labor unrest—including the “great resignation”—will open up a space for a parallel fight around a shortened workweek.

It may not seem explicitly clear on the surface, but all of these fights are about the same thing: ending the hegemony of capitalism in our lives.

And if you ask me, the idea of taking back our time and using it for what we want is a great place to start.

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Robert R. Raymond is a creative media specialist at Shareable, founding producer of Upstream, and a producer of The Response podcast. He is passionate about exploring the intersections. This piece was originally published on May 19, 2022 at www.shareable.net. It is published here under Creative Commons license (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

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Why Would We Let Wall Street “Care For” Our Pets?

by Jim Hightower

Question: What does a packet of M&M’s and your local veterinarian have in common? Answer: Both are owned by Mars Inc., the global candy monopolist.

Since the 1980s, we’ve seen massive consolidations in industry after industry—from airlines to newspapers, the internet to candy. These monopolists run roughshod over consumers, workers, communities, suppliers, and our nation’s commit-

ment to the Common Good. And now the corporate attitude seems to be, “what the Hell, why not let monopolization go to the dogs?”

This change has been led by “private equity groups.” They are corporate takeover sharks that borrow billions of dollars to buy out, plunder, then sell off the remnants of established businesses. They target enterprises that can be grabbed on the cheap but have assets like a loyal customer base. Then the sharks raise prices on those customers while cut-

ting staff and quality of service.

This has been happening to thousands of local vet practices and hospitals, which have quietly been plucked by Wall Street entities bearing non-descript acronyms like IVC, JAB, KKR, and VCA. At first locals don’t notice the takeover, because the corporate outfit not only buys your friendly “Dr. Barry Bones” vet service, they also buy the Doc’s name. As an IVC takeover consultant confided: “People like to take their dog to local vets and not feel like it’s a

corporate machine.”

But increasingly, it is. Solo practitioners who became veterinarians to provide friendly, community-based service now must answer to bean counters at headquarters—and, foremost, they must serve profit over animals. Veterinary Center of America (VCA), for example, is one of the most aggressive monopolizers, controlling access to and prices charged by 1,000+ vet facilities in 43 states. In 2017, VCA was taken over by Mars Inc.

One feisty group battling monopolizers is the National Veterinary Professionals Union—Get info at natvpu.org.

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Populist author, public speaker, and radio commentator Jim Hightower writes “The Hightower Lowdown,” a monthly newsletter chronicling the ongoing fights by America’s ordinary people against rule by plutocratic elites. Sign up at HightowerLowdown.org.

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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, SEPTEMBER 25	MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26	TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27	WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28	THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29	FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30	SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1
2008—Somali pirates capture the <i>MV Faina</i>, a 500-foot freighter whose cargo includes 33 Soviet tanks. 2007—Because Judge Sharon Keller refuses to work overtime, Texas kills Michael Richard on schedule. 2003—An early draft of an interim report from weapons inspectors in Iraq says no WMD have been found. 2002—Disregarding facts, George W.[MD] Bush says, “You can’t distinguish between al-Qaeda and Saddam when you talk about the war on terror.” 1966—The White Sox beat the Yankees 4-1, at Yankee Stadium. Attendance is 413, the lowest ever. 1962—Vivian Stanshall and Rodey Slater form the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band, while listening to the first Sonny Liston/Floyd Patterson fight. 1959—The U.S. Navy loses a nuclear depth charge in Puget Sound. Fortunately it’s lacking a fissile core. 1957—Nine Black kids get to enter Little Rock High School, courtesy of the President and the 101st Airborne. 1945—Vietnamese of all factions massacre French civilians in Saigon. 1926—Henry Ford announces the eight-hour, five-day work week. 1915—At Loos, France, British forces release 150 tons of chlorine gas towards German troops. Then, to their chagrin, the wind shifts. 1789—The Bill of Rights passes. 1662—Portsmouth adopts a bounty: £5 for every wolf killed whose head is “nayle[d] upon the meeting house.”	2016—“We’ve got a couple things up our sleeve that should turn this thing around,” says Rudy Giuliani, two days before Jim Comey reveals the Clinton email investigation is on again. 2001—The CIA invasion of Afghanistan begins: six or eight spooks in a Soviet Mi-17 helicopter, toting 66 lbs of \$100s in three cardboard boxes [\$3M]. 1983—Lieutenant Colonel Stanislav Petrov disregrads Red Army computers showing attacking American nuclear missiles. For thus averting World War III, Col. Petrov is reprimanded. 1955—As Franco visits Barcelona, Quico Sabaté roams the city in a cab, distributing anti-regime leaflets through the sun-roof with a mortar. 1950—A U.S. Navy minesweeper begins a six-day mission two miles upriver of San Francisco: spraying live bacteria into the air. It’s a great success; at least 800K citizens get a heavy dose. 1945—Mistaking him for a French officer, Viet Minh in Saigon kill OSS Lieut. Col. Peter Dewey. Days before he had filed a report saying the U.S. “ought to clear out of Southeast Asia.” 1918—The Battle of the Meuse-Argonne begins, the last great battle of the War to End All Wars. 1908—Józef Piłsudski, Poland’s future Chief of State, loots a Russian mail train to fund a revolution. 1901—Lincoln’s body is viewed before being covered with two tons of concrete. Among 23 present is Fleet-week Linley, 13, who lives until 1963.	2018—Brett Kavanaugh whines, weeps, and shouts while badgering the Senate Judiciary Committee. 2002—Donald Rumsfeld says a made-up link between al-Qaeda and Iraq is “accurate and not debatable.” 2000—Frank Wills, the guard who discovered the Watergate burglary, dies at 52, of a brain tumor, in poverty. 1994—On the Capitol steps, 350 GOP candidates led by Newt Gingrich take out a Contract on America. 1989—To show kids there are more constructive things to do than take drugs, Jeffrey Petkovitch and Peter DeBernardi climb into a barrel and go over Niagara’s Horseshoe Falls. 1986—The United Way of Cleveland holds a fundraiser, releasing 1,429,643 helium balloons. Rain and a cold front bring them down, where they clog the harbor, halt a Coast Guard search, close an airport, and spook horses. 1964—Ex-CIA boss A. Dulles & the Warren Commission report that L.H. Oswald, acting alone, killed JFK. 1944—A group of 35 U.S. B-24s, isolated over Germany by a navigational error, are jumped by 100 enemy fighters; only four survive. 1864—William T. “Bloody Bill” Anderson and his 80 guerillas, including Jesse James, massacre 150 Union soldiers in Centralia, Mo. 1854—Holed in a collision off Newfoundland, the <i>S.S. Arctic</i> sinks. The crew commandeers the lifeboats, leaving 300 passengers to drown.	2014—Future President D.J. Trump tweets, “Every time I speak of the haters and losers I do so with great love and affection. They cannot help the fact that they were born fucked up!” 2001—To avoid further scorn in these pages, Fleet Bank removes its 18-foot tall green, illuminated sign from the middle of Pleasant Street’s sidewalk. 1964—U.C. Berkeley students protest free speech restrictions. 1960—Ted Williams takes the plate at Fenway for his last at bat. He hits his 521st home run. Most seats are empty. 1919—Ten thousand rioting whites storm the Omaha courthouse, drag out Will Brown, a Black man, and lynch him. From his father’s printing plant across the street, Henry Fonda watches in horror. 1918—In Philadelphia, Pa., 200,000 people gather to watch a Liberty Bond parade — and spread influenza. In weeks it kills 12,000 of them. 1891—In New York, 72 year-old Herman Melville dies in obscurity. 1868—Knights of the White Camelia massacre between 25 and a few hundred Blacks in Opelousas, Miss. 1859—Fifty loggers, farmers, and laborers, irate over the damage it causes, try but fail to destroy the dam controlling the outflow of Lake Winnebaukee. Later they’re crushed in court by Boston-based capitalists. 1778—<i>U.S.S. Raleigh</i> runs aground and is captured in Penobscot Bay after battling with two British ships.	2008—The Dow drops 777 points. 2006—Anti child-porn crusader Rep. Mark Foley (R-Fla.) resigns after his lurid e-mails to young males leak. 2002—George W.[MD] Bush claims Iraq has WMDs, al-Qaeda terrorists, and a nuke coming soon. 1980—<i>The Washington Post</i> publishes Janet Cook’s Pulitzer-winning story about a fictional eight year-old junkie. 1976—The Hyde Amendment gives Congress the power to make medical decisions for women. 1972—A short, bearded man in sneakers spontaneously grabs ex-Sec. of Defense Robert Strange McNamara and tries to throw him off the ferry into Vineyard Sound. 1969—The U.S. Army drops murder charges against Special Forces Col. Robert Rheault—the CIA won’t let its agents testify. “Terminate with extreme prejudice” enters the lexicon. 1957—A Soviet nuclear fuel plant blows up near Kyshtym, killing hundreds and spewing more radiation than anything until Chernobyl. The CIA suppresses the news to protect the U.S. nuke industry. 1913—Rudolph Diesel, inventor of the eponymous engine, disappears from the steamer <i>Dresden</i>: a suicide, a murder victim, or an absconder. 1862—Jefferson C. Davis [the Union General, not the rebel President] shoots Union General William “Bull” Nelson dead. Never charged, Davis goes back to fighting Rebels.	2016—N.H.’s Attorney General reports that ex-Rep. Kyle Tasker [R-Nottingham] sold pot to five other State Reps. for medicinal purposes. 2011—U.S. citizen Anwar al-Awlaki is smote by a drone in Yemen. Trial? We don’t need no stinkin’ trial! 1998—The GAO reports that Ken Starr had spent \$40 million in a failed effort to nail Bill Clinton. 1962—César Chávez founds what becomes the United Farm Workers. 1956—Drunk-flying a stolen Cessna, Thomas Fitzpatrick lands on St. Nicholas St. in Manhattan, taxis to Joe’s on the corner, and orders a beer. 1954—<i>U.S.S. Nautilus</i>, the first atomic-powered ship, is launched. 1938—Thanks to the Munich Agreement, peace in Europe is assured. 1919—A white man dies in a shootout in Elaine, Ark. Over the next three days, 240 Blacks and five whites die in the U.S.’s worst single racial conflict. 1864—Black Union soldiers capture Confederate entrenchments at the Battle of New Market Heights. 1847—Dr. Valorous P. Coolidge, of Waterville, Me., autopsies Edward Mathews—superfluously, since he had just poisoned the deceased, then struck him on the head to disguise the cause of death. He is later hanged. 1630—John Billington becomes the first Pilgrim hanged for murder. 1542—Johannes Gutenberg publishes <i>The Bible</i>. No royalties for the pre-sumed author.	2013—In the name of fiscal discipline, Republicans shut down the government. Cost to the economy: \$24 billion. 2003—With Governor Benson’s blessing, Free Staters choose New Hampshire as their libertarian paradise. 2002—Northern Command is established to “Defend America’s Homeland”—<i>posse comitatus</i> be damned. 2002—George W.[MD] Bush claims he hasn’t “made up his mind we’re going to war with Iraq.” 1999—<i>Dow 36,000</i> is published. In real life the Dow peaks months later at 11,722, then loses 37% of its value. 1993—Caving under pressure, the IRS grants tax-free status to the “Church” of Scientology. 1973—Despite many failures to meet service requirements, George W.[MD] Bush is discharged honorably from the Texas Air National Guard. 1964—Campus cops at U.C. Berkeley arrest Jack Weinberg; big mistake. The Free Speech Movement ensues. 1952—The first issue of <i>Mad</i> is unleashed on an unsuspecting world. 1917—Arabs led by T.E. Lawrence capture Damascus. 1910—A botched dynamiting badly damages the HQ of the virulently anti-union <i>Los Angeles Times</i>. A burst gas main finishes the job; 21 die. 1903—Fred Van Wormer’s autopsy is halted because he’s breathing. Taken back to Sing Sing’s electric chair, he is found to have died. He is electrocuted again anyway, just for good measure.
11:46 5:32 5:45	12:00 12:18 6:06 6:22	12:36 12:52 6:40 7:01	1:15 1:29 7:16 7:43	1:55 2:09 7:56 8:27	2:40 2:54 8:40 9:17	3:30 3:45 9:28 10:11
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2	MONDAY, OCTOBER 3	TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4	WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5	THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6	FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7	SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8

2003—Survey chief David Kay reports that his three-month, \$300 million search for Saddam Hussein’s WMD has turned up squat.

2002—George W.[MD] Bush calls Iraq “a threat of unique urgency,” because of its WMDs.

1990—Three Texans in a Cessna come within 30 feet of clearing Mt. Washington. Their bodies are brought down on the Cog Railway.

1980—Senior members of the Reagan campaign team meet in D.C. with a representative of the Ayatollah, who offers to release U.S. hostages.

1980—Michael Myers (D-Pa.) becomes the first Rep. expelled in 120 years, for bribe-taking and conspiracy. Why only him? Who knows.

1978—With the Yankees and Red Sox tied for the season, a playoff game is held; it’s decided by a three-run homer hit by New York’s Bucky F. Dent.

1967—Thurgood Marshall becomes the first Black Supreme Court Justice.

1965—In Natchez, Miss., 500 people are sent without trial to the Parchman Penitentiary for protesting the denial of their right to register to vote.

1941—On Malta, Major-General Clifford Thomason Beckett of the Royal Artillery tells Major H.S. Fowle he is “not fit to command anything.”

1919—Woodrow Wilson has a stroke; the U.S. gets a woman president.

1918—In the Argonne, the Lost Battalion gets cut off behind German lines; in a week, ⅔ are KIA or WIA.

2009—Combat Outpost Keating, in Nuristan, badly-sited and scheduled for abandonment, is mostly overrun by Taliban fighters who capture weapons and ammunition, leaving eight Americans dead and 27 wounded.

2006—Republicans in Congress try to “roll over” \$20 million set aside for a celebration of victory in Iraq.

2003—*The National Enquirer* reports that Rush Limbaugh is being investigated for illegally procuring prescription opioids.

1993—Berlin, N.H. native Michael Durant’s helicopter is one of two shot down in the First Battle of Mogadishu. Durant, played by Ron Eldard in *Black Hawk Down*, survives.

1986—A fire breaks out aboard the Soviet missile sub *K-219*. The Commies blame an alleged collision with the *U.S.S. Augusta*. The Pentagon blames sloppy Commie work habits.

1980—Moral Majority co-founder and U.S. Rep. Bob Bauman (R-Md.) is charged with making sexual solicitations to an under-aged boy.

1973—Donald Segretti testifies before the Senate about dirty tricks he used to get Nixon re-elected.

1968—George Wallace’s running mate, ex-Strategic Air Command General Curtis LeMay, says he’s not afraid to drop nukes on Vietnam, but doesn’t think that will be necessary.

1955—CIA HQ gets a cable from the Caracas Station: a former SS trooper says Hitler is alive in Argentina.

2017—America learns the hard way it has 800 troops in Niger: four Green Berets are killed in an ambush.

2004—*SpaceShipOne*, Burt Rutan’s tourist rocket, makes it to space a second time, winning the Ansari X Prize.

2002—Knight-Ridder: “The White House and the Pentagon...are pressuring intelligence analysts to high-level information that supports Bush’s Iraq policy.” One paper runs the story.

2001—George W.[MD] Bush orders the NSA to spy on Americans without getting warrants, *i.e.*, illegally.

1986—Dan Rather is attacked on the streets of New York by two men yelling, “What’s the frequency, Ken?”

1971—Pres. Nguyen Van Thieu, unopposed, is reelected. He says it’s “an achievement for democracy” in ‘Nam.

1958—At 12:45 a.m., Thomas “Fitz” Fitzpatrick wins a bar bet by landing a “borrowed” Cessna on Amsterdam Ave. and 187th St in Manhattan, just as he had done two years earlier.

1957—Two bombs wound 13 GIs in Saigon—the first announced U.S. casualties in Vietnam.

1936—Two thousand British fascists try marching through largely-Jewish Stepney; 20,000 anti-fascists explain to them why that’s a bad idea.

1918—The world’s largest munitions factory explodes in South Amboy, N.J., killing 80. Thousands more are made homeless and are left exposed to the elements. Many catch influenza; 300 of them die from it.

2017—The Senate confirms Steve King—who, in 1972, on ex-AG John Mitchell’s orders, restrained his wife Martha Mitchell as she was forcibly injected with tranquilizers to keep her from talking to the press—as Ambassador to the Czech Republic.

2010—“Fox and Friends” reports that Los Angeles has bought \$1 billion worth of jet packs for its Police and Fire Departments. They cribbed the story from the *Weekly World News*.

2003—Timothy Treadwell and Amie Huguenard learn the hard way: the Alaskan grizzly bears they’ve been hanging with are not vegans.

2002—George W.[MD] Bush tells N.H. Guardsmen that Saddam could inflict “massive and sudden horror” on the U.S. It’s not true.

2001—Robert Stevens, an editor of the supermarket tabloid *The Sun*, dies of anthrax. The perp remains at large.

1988—In a Vice-Presidential debate, Lloyd Bentsen informs Dan Quayle that he’s “no Jack Kennedy.”

1986—Nicaraguans shoot down a U.S. plane illegally supplying Contras with arms bought with the proceeds of illegal U.S. arms sales to Iran.

1971—Pat Buchanan advises Nixon to take government action that would “cut [the country] in half,” because the GOP will get “the larger half.”

1789—Parisian women ransack the city armory for weapons, march on Versailles, and demand—successfully—to meet with Louis XVI.

2004—The top U.S. arms inspector in Iraq says there is no evidence Saddam Hussein had tried to manufacture any WMDs after 1991.

1976—Cubana Flight 455 is bombed over Barbados, killing 73. Miami resident Luis Posada Carriles is wanted in Cuba and Venezuela for the crime, but the U.S. won’t extradite him.

1970—The replacement statue of a cop in Chicago’s Haymarket Square is blown to bits by the Weathermen.

1969—The statue of a cop in Chicago’s Haymarket Square is blown to bits by the Weathermen.

1961—President Kennedy recommends that, in case of nuclear war, American families get ready to live for a while in holes in the ground.

1927—Lawyer-turned bootlegger George Remus shoots his wife dead in front of witnesses in a Cincinnati park (she had an affair with a revenue agent and stole all his money). Defending himself, he’s acquitted on grounds of temporary insanity. Prosecutors try to have him committed, since he’s insane, but he cites their witnesses, who said he was sane, and goes free.

1856—Portsmouth celebrates the centennial of the founding of *The New Hampshire Gazette*. Extra trains bring visitors from around New England and beyond for a parade, a regatta, and a banquet featuring many speeches.

1536—William Tyndale is strangled and burned for printing a Bible in English so people could read it.

2020—The nation is mesmerized during the Vice Presidential debate, as a fly takes a stroll on Mike Pence’s hair.

2016—The *Washington Post* releases a videotape on which the GOP Presidential candidate brags about grabbing women by their genitals. Hours later hacked emails of his opponent’s campaign chairman are released.

2011—On her 62nd birthday, Wal-Mart heir Alice Walton gets her 2nd DWI, but no charges are filed. She killed a woman in a 1989 car wreck, but no charges were filed then, either.

2004—George W.[MD] Bush and Dick “Dick” Cheney do the bait-and-switch: so what if Saddam didn’t have WMDs—he cheated on oil-for-food.

2001—“Operation Enduring Freedom” begins with the CIA botching the first-ever drone strike; Taliban chief Mullah Omar gets away.

1996—Fox News begins broadcasting mass quantities of insidious swill.

1985—Attorney General Ed “Meese is a Pig” Meese explains that “Miranda only helps guilty defendants,” because “if a person is innocent of a crime, then he is not a suspect.”

1985—Stop illegal meddling in Nicaragua? No, the Reagan administration pulls the U.S. out of the World Court.

1756—Daniel Fowle and enslaved pressman Primus X begin printing *The New Hampshire Gazette* in Portsmouth. It achieves national seniority in 1839 when the *Maryland Gazette* [founded 1727] folds.

2004—American warplanes miss Abu Musab al Zarqawi but kill 13 people at a wedding instead.

1991—Speaker of the House Tom Foley [D-Wash.] announces that the House’s sergeant-at-arms will no longer fix traffic tickets for Members.

1985—Dining at the White House, President Reagan “praises incessantly” his guest’s most recent work of art: *Rambo: First Blood, Part II*.

1974—The Franklin National Bank collapses, undermined by Mafioso Michele Sindona, a close buddy of President Nixon’s Treasury Secretary David Kennedy.

1969—A three-day riot branded “Days of Rage” begins in Chicago.

1968—Washington, D.C. riots after police shoot a Black man.

1967—Ernesto “Che” Guevara is captured by Bolivian troops led by the CIA’s Felix Rodriguez.

1955—“The nations of the world will have to unite” warns loopy General Douglas MacArthur, “for the next war will be an interplanetary war.”

1942—Shot down on a mission for which he volunteered, Capt. Harl Pease, of Plymouth, N.H., is beheaded by his Japanese captors.

1918—In the Argonne, ex-pacifist Cpl. Alvin C. York kills 25 German soldiers and captures 132.

1871—According to myth, a cow starts a fire that burns Chicago and kills 200. Meanwhile, Peshtigo, Wisc. burns completely and 600 die.

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