

The Fortnightly Rant

Helluva Way To Run A Railroad

For most of Monday the word “railroad” was absent from the online front pages of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Boston Globe*.

Maybe all those editors were girding their loins, in preparation for whatever comes next. After all, if railroad workers go on strike, half the stories they publish will suddenly revolve around that mode of transportation.

Finally it appeared, at the end of the day. President Biden called on Congress, wrote the *Times*, to “pass legislation to impose an agreement that his administration helped broker but that has failed to win the support of all the rail labor unions.”

Earlier AP had reported—date-line Omaha—that a coalition of 400 business groups led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce had “sent a letter to Congressional leaders Monday urging them to step into the stalled talks because of fears about the devastating potential impact of a strike that could force many businesses to shut down if they can’t get the rail deliveries they need. Commuter railroads and Amtrak would also be affected in a strike because many of them use tracks owned by the freight railroads.”

An anonymous White House spokesperson told AP that a strike is “unacceptable.”

The same story reports that Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick [R-Pa.]—a co-chair of the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus—told Fox News Sunday, “Congress will not let this strike happen. That’s for sure.”

Well! That surely is a big relief. The public has taken enough of a beating lately.

We’ve been through nearly three years of a Covid pandemic that’s still knocking off 300 people a day. Throwing in the flu and RSV, we’re

said to be in a tri-demic now—and that nasty-sounding neologism doesn’t even count the grotesque new Monkey Pox. Oh, pardon us—in the interest of garnering broader public acceptance for this new malady, which seems to have leapt from the screen of a B-movie, we’re now being told to call it M-Pox™.

While we’re on the topic of generalized threats to public health, the intended merger of two enormous grocery chains deserves a mention. Perhaps it’s a good thing so few are paying attention to this issue. Any increased demand for anti-depressants would likely lead to a shortage.

In the all-too-likely event that the Justice Department’s lone remaining anti-trust lawyer, chained to a dank wall in the basement, trades his approval of the merger for a bowl of gruel, several hundred supermarkets across this allegedly-great nation will be permanently shuttered. The neighborhoods once served by those stores will then turn into food deserts. This will have predictable and deleterious effect on the diets, and health, of millions. It’s a terrible thing to contemplate but it must be done: it’s necessary to maximize shareholder value.

For almost a year, at irregular and unpredictable intervals—making them all the more disconcerting—we’ve been getting jolts of psychic discomfort from Ukraine. If we may mix a metaphor, it’s like a Chinese menu: column one is nuclear war, column two is a meltdown. Unending stories of combat, massacres, torture, and rape represent all the rice you can eat.

Even in the one thing at which this country truly excels, *i.e.*, consumption, we Americans have been thwarted and discombobulated. Supply chain disruptions have deprived us—again, in unpredictable



ways—of using our credit cards to spend money we don’t have on crap we don’t need. Oh, the humanity....

So here we were, minding our own miserable business as we suffered the cumulative effects of all these previous assaults, and suddenly railroad workers—whom we had recently been led to believe had agreed to a contract—are threatening to bring the economy to a halt.

Merry #@%\$ing Christmas.

Such, at least, is the situation as it is presented to us by our strictly objective friends in the corporate mass media.

Based on the Gospel of Supply and Demand, one would think that the workers are in a very powerful position here. As with Christianity, though, it can be risky to rely on strict adherence, even from professed believers.

In 1992, a single union struck against a single railroad. Instantly, railroad bosses began behaving

like soccer players faking an injury, shutting down the nation’s entire rail network.

To paraphrase The Joker, workers can get fired, or injured, have their pensions stolen, and nobody panics, because it’s all “part of the plan.” Let workers actually exert their collective power, though, and everyone loses their minds.

Less than 24 hours after the 1992 strike began, Congress passed legislation barring strikes and establishing an arbitration system to resolve such disputes. Rep. Pat Williams (D-Mont.) called the bill “a fundamental mistake that will haunt railroad workers for decades.” The AFL-CIO said the legislation “punishes workers by taking away their right to strike while rewarding the carriers for their irresponsible action in shutting down.”

The deal announced in mid-September was hashed out between union representatives and the rail-

roads. If union members can’t vote on the contract themselves, their union negotiators might as well be labor contractors—in which case they’d be working for the railroads, not the workers.

It’s worth remembering what the rail workers are asking for: 15 days of sick leave, which would cost the railroads \$668 million a year.

That may sound like a lot of money, but it’s just three percent of the \$23 billion in profits the railroads made last year.

How much sick leave did the railroads offer? Exactly zero [0] days.

Journalist Judd Legum did the math: Warren Buffett, aka the “Sage of Omaha,” owns Berkshire Hathaway, which in turn owns BNSF.

“One day last week,” Legum wrote, “on Tuesday, Buffett’s net worth increased by \$1.38 billion.”

“That’s enough to pay for 15 days of paid sick leave for the entire workforce for two years.”

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Break Out the Crutches—Here Come the Lame Ducks

Charles “Sparky” Schultz, whose 100th birthday was recently celebrated, was a mensch with remarkable talents. Never what you would call a flashy draftsman, he was able nevertheless to draw humor out of the unlikely raw material of existential dread, using children as his medium.

Perhaps the most lasting image he inserted into our national imaginarium was that of Charlie Brown lying flat on his back after trying to kick a football which has been whisked away at the last moment by Lucy van Pelt.

Charlie Brown’s chagrin is compounded annually. He knows he’s been through all this before. Maybe he’s smarter than Congressional Democrats. We’ll soon see.

Democrats will hold the House through the end of this month.

Then Republicans will take over in January.

Once Nancy Pelosi has been routed from the Speaker’s rostrum, and her place is taken by Kevin McCarthy—whose strings are held in turn by the likes of Marjorie Taylor Greene—they threaten to do what they always threaten to do: slash Social Security and Medicare, in the name of fiscal prudence.

To gain Democratic support for this phase of the class war, they’ll use a strategy pioneered by the *National Lampoon*: “Buy this magazine or we’ll shoot this dog.”

By refusing to permit an increase in the nation’s artificial and arbitrary debt limit—a unique construct, we’ve been led to understand, which is not found in serious industrialized countries—Republicans will, in effect trash the Treasury’s credit rating.

This ploy would be less annoying if there were any meaningful connection between the national debt—jacked up primarily by spending on weapons and Republican tax breaks for billionaire donors—and our two most effective programs for preventing elderly citizens from starving to death on the sidewalk.

One might think that, after having faced this situation so many times before, Democrats could finally have found some way to spare us from all this drama.

However, they have not. And so, we are forced to sit through yet another rerun of this dusty and shopworn scenario.

It’s all part and parcel of a larger and more generalized failure of Congress to do the will of the people. Yet we live in hope. Our ink-stained fingers are crossed.

Voters Strongly Support Unions and Oppose Companies’ Anti-Union Tactics
By Lew Blank and Zachary Hertz

Throughout 2022, the United States experienced a surge of organizing activity. The labor movement has been electrified by pushes from workers across the country to join together in unions, including employees for Starbucks, Amazon, and Apple.

In a June survey of 2,698 likely voters, Data for Progress tested how Americans are responding to this boom in organizing. We find that when voters cast their ballots in the November 2022 elections, they were more likely to vote for pro-worker candidates. We also find that voters strongly oppose companies’ anti-union tactics and support reforms to make it easier for workers

to unionize.

In our survey, conducted prior to the midterm election, we asked voters whether they’d be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who supported unions. We find that 53 percent of voters preferred these candidates—including 74 percent of Democrats, a plurality (47 percent) of Independents, and more than a third of Republicans.

Next, we tested broad support for workers’ right to form a union. We asked voters whether they think the decision to join or form a union should be left exclusively to employees, or whether employers should be able to influence workers’ decisions. We find that 73 percent of voters—including strong majorities

The Alleged News®
from page one

of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans—think the decision to unionize should be left exclusively to workers, and employers should remain neutral.

Voters Strongly Support Allowing Workers to Organize and Bargain Across Industries

Under current law, workers are expected to unionize workplace by workplace. Forming a union across an entire industry—which would allow workers to negotiate for industry-wide wages, benefits, and working conditions—is very difficult.

Voters think this should change. We find that 60 percent of voters—including 77 percent of Democrats, 55 percent of Independents, and a plurality (47 percent) of Republicans—support allowing workers to unionize across their industry.

Voters Across Party Lines Want Government Jobs to Meet Certain Standards

We also tested support for using our government's spending power to encourage quality wages and working conditions. We asked voters whether they'd support requiring that any jobs that are financed by the local, state, or federal government meet certain standards: paying a

living wage, providing good benefits and working conditions, and allowing workers to form a union.

We find that this proposal is highly popular. Fifty-seven percent of voters—including 64 percent of Democrats, 58 percent of Independents, and 50 percent of Republicans—support requiring that taxpayer funds only go to jobs that meet certain standards.

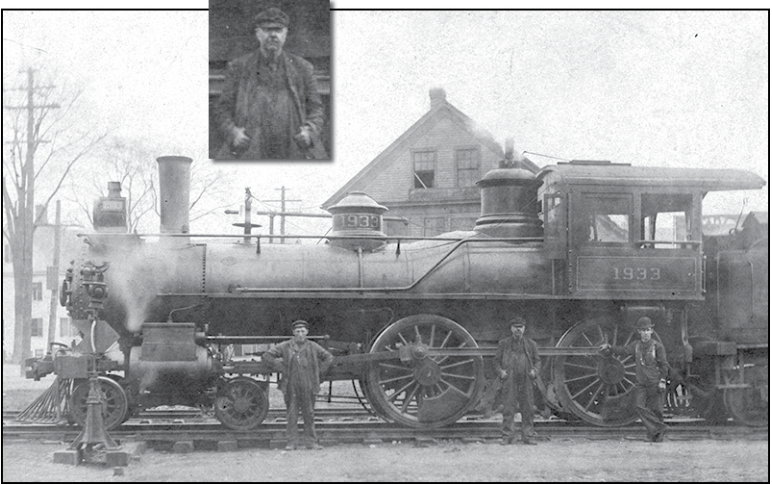
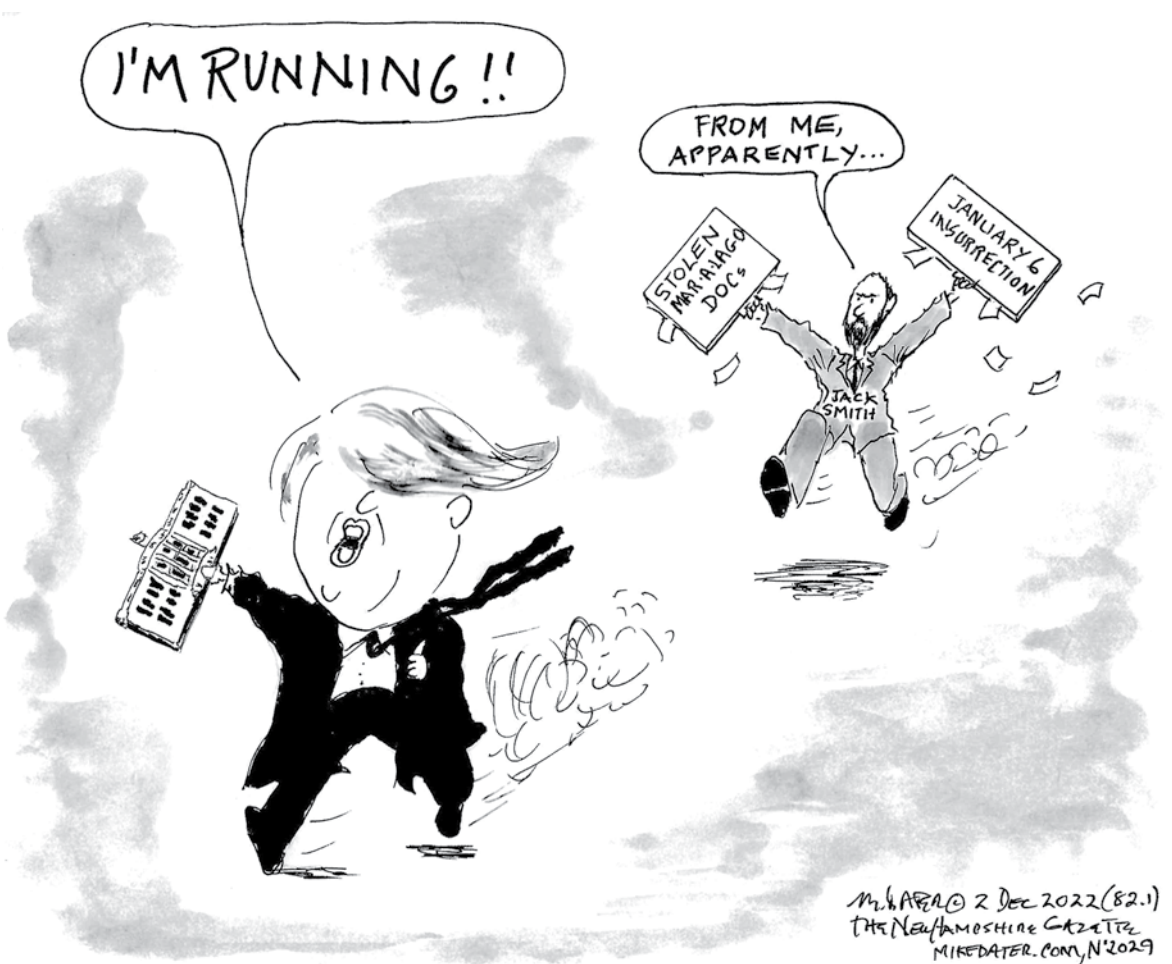
Voters Strongly Oppose Mandatory Anti-Union Meetings and Want Them Reformed

Finally, we find that voters across party lines do not want employers to interfere with unionization efforts by holding mandatory anti-union meetings. Sixty-nine percent of voters—including 75 percent of Democrats, 65 percent of Independents, and 66 percent of Republicans—say that workers should not be required to attend mandatory meetings where the company talks about its opposition to unionization.

We also tested voter support for two reforms that would limit employers' ability to force workers to attend anti-union meetings.

First, we find overwhelming voter support for new legislation that would allow workers to opt out of anti-union meetings—including more than two-thirds of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans.

Next, we asked voters whether



Full Disclosure: Readers of this fortnight's Rant have a right to know that the editor's normally-fanatical objectivity may be suspect when it comes to the issue of railroad management. His maternal great-great uncle, Ledru Valentine Stuart (1850–1939) [see inset] was a locomotive engineer

they would support giving pro-union and anti-union speakers an equal amount of time at these meetings. Currently, anti-union speakers are allowed to speak for the entire time. We find that this proposed reform is supported by 71 percent of Democrats, 65 percent of Independents, and 65 percent of Republicans.

Conclusion

Broadly, these findings show that as workers across the country organize to form unions, voters across party lines have their backs. Democrats, Independents, and Republicans oppose anti-union tactics like mandatory meetings, and support pro-union reforms, such as allowing workers to unionize across their industry and only providing taxpayer funds to jobs that meet certain standards. We also find that supporting workers and adopting pro-union stances is a strong electoral strategy that helped candidates win in the

November 2022 midterms. *Lew Blank and Zachary Hertz are polling analysts at DataforProgress.org, where this article was published on November 21st. It is published here under Creative Commons license.*

Black Twitter's expected demise would make it harder to publicize police brutality and discuss racism
by Deion Scott Hawkins

Before the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Philando Castile and Sandra Bland were propelled into the media spotlight, their names were Twitter #hashtags.

In 2020, Twitter was essential to the spread of historic Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality across the world.

But Elon Musk's takeover of Twitter has thrown the future of Black Twitter into question. Social media users argue that the takeover has already had an impact on the

Black social media community.

For instance, not only do multiple sources report an almost immediate spike in the use of the N-word, but Musk has also allegedly mocked Black Lives Matter in general and the group's apparel found at Twitter's headquarters in San Francisco, California.

The impact of Musk's takeover is so abundantly clear that Black Twitter held its own satire-infused funeral.

User tweets clearly take a humorous approach, a well-documented coping technique for the Black community. But as a Black professor who studies communication and police brutality, I am petrified when I envision the implications of Black Twitter's demise.

It starts with a hashtag

A world without Black Twitter is a world void of robust, rapid and authentic information sharing on police brutality within the Black

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community. As a result, it is my belief that the community will be systemically silenced and exposed to increased levels of police-related violence.

Black Twitter refers to the digital community within Twitter that embraces and celebrates Blackness all while circulating topics, stories and images that directly relate to and affect the Black community. Black Twitter is not defined by geography or membership.

Instead, it refers to a culture and community co-created by Black Twitter members. Black Twitter is used to offer cultural critiques, and to discuss significant historical moments.

Pew Research has found African Americans who use Twitter are twice as likely (68 percent) to discuss issues of race online compared with their white counterparts (31 percent). In addition, 85 percent of those Black users believe social media to be an important tool in creating sustained social movements.

Finally, according to Nielsen, 19 million, or 28 percent, of Twitter's 67 million users are African American. And about one in five African Americans are on Black Twitter.

A 2016 study found that education, amplifying marginalized voices and pushing for structural changes to policing were the main goals for Black Twitter users dedicated to BLM. My dissertation clearly shows that the Black community, especially Black millennials and Gen Zers, use Black Twitter as a primary source of information about police brutality.

I discuss this in greater detail on the Opinion Science Podcast and Emerson College's Campus On The Common Podcast.

Without Black Twitter, one of the Black community's main information channels would not exist.

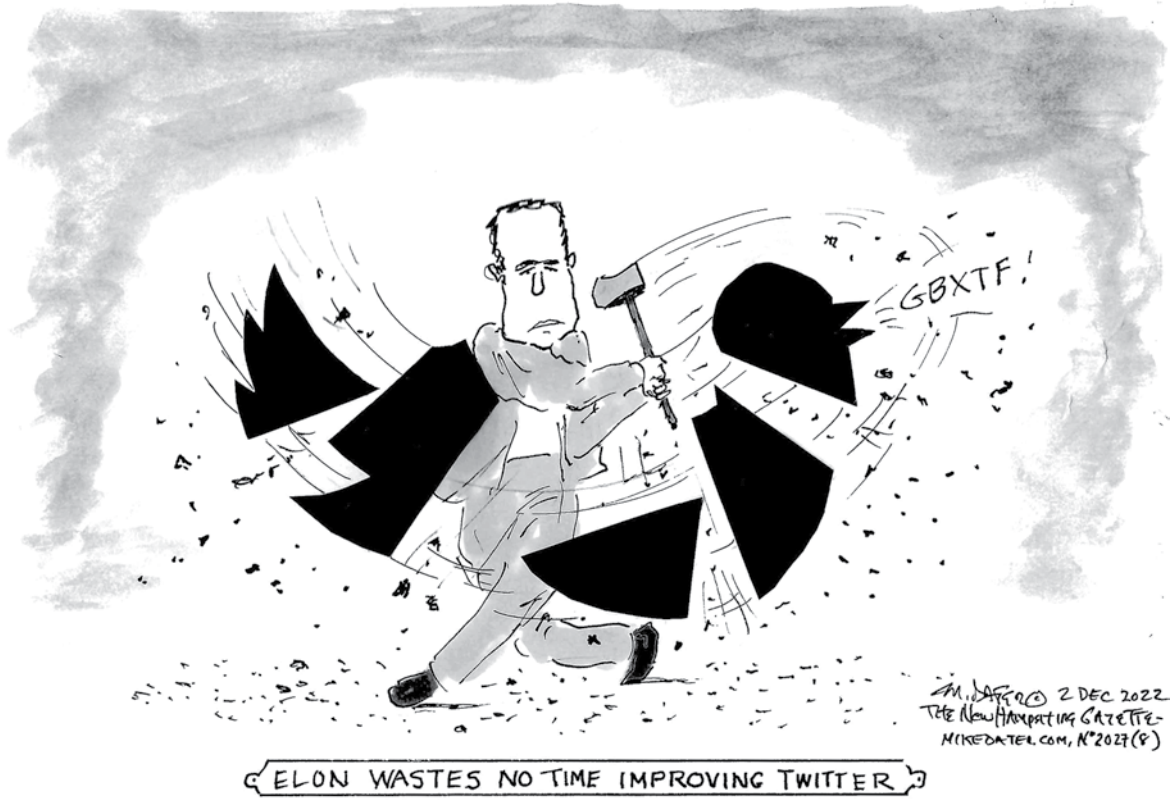
First with breaking news

For many social media users, Black Twitter is the first way they hear of stories involving police brutality.

In fact, I have found that hashtags have replaced breaking news headlines for some Black Twitter users.

"Honestly, I hear about most cases on Twitter," one interviewee told me during my research. "It's always on Twitter before it becomes main headline news. News will pick it up like a day or two after I've already seen it on Twitter."

On Twitter, a hashtag is no longer



just a name. Instead, it often blossoms into awareness campaigns that seek police reform. Hashtags are often the catalysts for mobilization, and this mobilization would be significantly slower in a world without Twitter.

Twitter is often used to document and upload videos of police brutality. For instance, the video of George Floyd's death in police custody was first publicized on Twitter, and then mainstream news circulated the footage.

I like to think of Black Twitter as the fuel, while mainstream media are the wheels on the information highway.

Real images in real time

In my research, several interviewees indicated Twitter is the preferred message channel on police brutality because of its authenticity.

For many, Black Twitter avoids perceived racial biases of mainstream media outlets that rely on police sources for information. Instead, users are exposed to firsthand accounts often filmed by other Black users.

"I find Twitter to be most credi-

ble, especially the firsthand accounts and videos," one interviewee told me. "There is something about seeing videos that makes it more real. There is less time for someone to flip a story."

Another interviewee echoed similar ideas, stating, "I definitely prefer videos on Twitter over hearsay or the news. I don't trust the news. But videos serve as solid evidence. I think that's important because there are lots of cases where people are killed by police and we wouldn't have any evidence if it weren't for videos on Twitter."

For some, like Elon Musk, Twitter may be a digital playground to boost their wealth and magnify their egos. But Black Twitter and the information it provides is literally a matter of life and death.

From Pearl Pearson to Breonna Taylor to Tamir Rice to Philando Castile, the use of Twitter was essential in gathering evidence, gaining public attention and pushing for reforms.

In a world where cameras are always on and information is constantly being shared, police brutality

still exists. Imagine what may happen when there are fewer places to make public those images and unvarnished stories.

Deion Scott Hawkins is Assistant Professor of Argumentation & Advocacy at Emerson College. This article was published November 30th at TheConversation.com. It is published here under a Creative Commons license.

New Samuel Adams Biography Praised

We have been eagerly soaking up the glowing reviews of Stacy Schiff's new biography, *The Revolutionary: Samuel Adams*, and we are looking forward to reading the book itself when time permits.

Samuel looms large here in The Nation's Oldest Newsroom.™ This is partly out of respect for his extraordinary merits as a revolutionary, and partly due to a direct connection.

For about a year and a half, beginning in 1749, Adams was the driving editorial force behind a newspaper called the *Independent Advertiser*. It was printed and published by the partnership of Gamaliel Rogers and Daniel Fowle.



An enormous tree suddenly appeared in Market Square this fortnight, in apparent defiance of all the known laws of silviculture. Coniferous trees—to which this specimen bears a marked resemblance—normally require several decades to attain such height. Until we learn more, we're filing this incident under "Unexplained Fortean Mysteries."

Murph's Fortnightly Quote

"Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity."

— Horace Mann (1796-1859)
educational reformer, slavery abolitionist

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— Kurt Vonnegut

— Not-So-Random Thoughts from an Oregon Subscriber

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City's 2021 Municipal Elections Tainted
To the Editor:

It is now clear that former Portsmouth Mayor Steve Marchand (a Democrat, who now resides in Rye) attempted to manipulate and influence the 2021 Municipal Elections in Portsmouth and committed several campaign violations in the process. This information is contained in an October 6, 2022 report issued by the New Hampshire Attorney General's office. The report seems to indicate that their investigation has not been completed in its entirety. What is not clear so far from this report is who are the other four unnamed individuals involved and who was Mr. Marchand's client that provided the funding for this effort against five city councilors.

The report also confirms that neither the Portsmouth Democrats nor the New Hampshire Democratic Party were involved in this effort (as I had stated publicly at a City Council session). A joint media statement on December 30, 2021, signed by Ray Buckley (New Hampshire Democratic Party Chair) and Shanika Amarakoon (Chair Portsmouth Democrats) stated: "We condemn the Becksted 5 attacks. The attacks go against the character of our community. We cannot let our local elections be undermined by national political style tactics. The City Councilors who were attacked, after all, are our neighbors. While we may not agree with all of their decisions, they did not deserve this attack, and we do not stand for it."

Many in Portsmouth have always suspected that the attacks on the Becksted 5 had more to do with financial interests than political affiliation. They were considered to be not development-friendly enough. The attacks, using social media, flyers and robo-calls, stated that the Portsmouth City Council was being run by Trump-Republicans. The truth, however, is that the political registration of the 5 councilors in question was: one Democrat, one Republican, and three Independents.

Mr. Marchand was acting as a political consultant. The AG's report refers to four other individuals who worked

with or collaborated with Mr. Marchand. Those individuals need to be identified, since they could also have been involved in the misinformation campaign in order to promote more development-friendly candidates.

Transparency requires that political discourse also involve identifying who is responsible for an ad or a campaign flyer. Knowing the source of funding for various candidates and campaigns, helps our community identify possible conflicts of interest and corruption.

I urge both the Attorney General and the Portsmouth City Council members to support all efforts to provide additional relevant information to the public in this matter.

State Rep. Peter Somssich
Resident of Portsmouth & Proud Democrat
Portsmouth, N.H.

Peter:
Generally we try to stay out of local politics. It's not that we think they're beneath our notice—we don't. It's that, at least in this realm, we can sense our limitations. This matter, though, is sufficiently clear-cut to overcome our inhibition. Thanks for writing, and for forwarding the Attorney General's letter to our former Mayor.

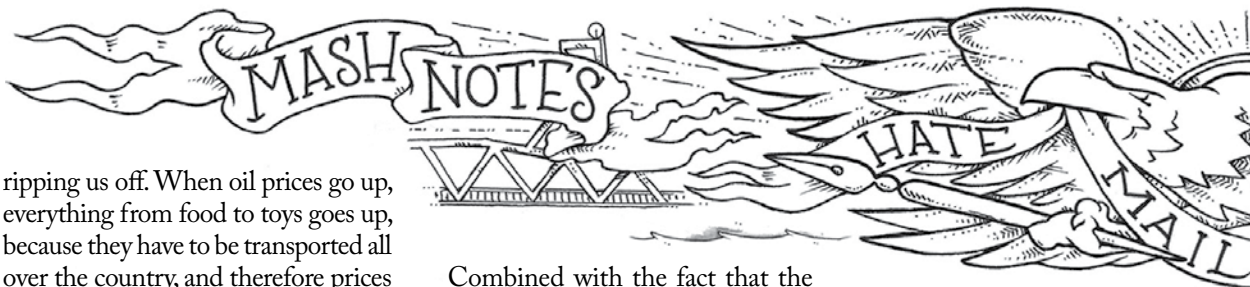
The Editor

Who Raised Oil and Gas Prices?

To the Editor:
When gas prices were going up I understood it to be as a result of the sanctions against Russia and Putin for invading Ukraine. I felt as though it was my contribution to being a pain in the side of Putin.

I am disgusted to learn that my hard-earned money was going toward record-breaking profits to big oil corporations and their investors. So instead of being a thorn in the side of Putin, which I was willing to do, I am actually funding big oil record-breaking profits, which I am not willing to do.

It was my belief that the inflation we are going through was a direct result of us sanctioning Russia, and that the inflation was not just in this country but worldwide. Now I find out that this inflation is not of Biden's doing but is the result of big oil companies



ripping us off. When oil prices go up, everything from food to toys goes up, because they have to be transported all over the country, and therefore prices rise. Yes, we tend to blame the current administration for inflation, but it turns out it is because big oil is ripping us off in the name of profit.

I am appalled. There should be some way of sanctioning those greedy oil companies from creating this inflation in the name of company profits, when they are ripping off the whole country. I understand that any company needs to make fair and reasonable profit, but creating a nationwide inflation which affects all of us is unacceptable.

Chris Mills
Nottingham, N.H.
Chris:

One of this country's most maddening, persistent, and irrational habits is assigning blame for things willy-nilly on people who frequently have little or no agency in the matter.

Let us ask a rhetorical question, though: who is actually assigning the blame, here? Has anyone polled the public at large? Or are lazy journalists putting words into peoples' mouths?

The Editor

Noxious Plan in Nashua

To whomever it may concern,
Newport Construction Corporation recently submitted an application to build an asphalt plant in downtown Nashua. The plant would be located at 145 Temple Street, which is in a residential neighborhood. In fact, it would be located a mere 100 feet away from the old clothes hanger factor that is being renovated into 88 apartments!

Asphalt plants release hazardous chemicals through combustion such as formaldehyde, arsenic, and lead. These chemicals are known to cause cancer, nervous system issues, liver damage and respiratory problems. In addition, the proposed asphalt plant would increase traffic in the neighborhood, adding up to 150 trucks daily!

Combined with the fact that the asphalt plant would also run 12 hours a day, noise pollution would increase. These effects are especially concerning considering that the neighborhood is populated by a majority colored and low-income communities. Along with toxic chemicals, the factory would release greenhouse gas, contributing to climate change. On average, asphalt plants release around 10,000 pounds of emissions a year!

The city is currently conducting its own environmental study of the proposed asphalt plants. The Nashua Planning Board will hold a hearing in January at Nashua City Hall to discuss this matter. Speak out against this environmental injustice at the meeting. Until then, email the city at planning-department@nashuanh.gov. After all, the best way to prevent it from being constructed is through people-power.

As a high school student in Nashua, I am very concerned about this project. It would have negative effects not only on me, but the people who live in my city. Most importantly, it would harm the environment.

Taylor Barry
Nashua, N.H.

Taylor:
Here you are, still in high school, and you are already writing to newspapers, blatantly attempting to derail what is unquestionably an important—albeit noxious—industrial project involving the investment of millions?

Maybe there is hope for the future!
The Editor

Death on the Mountain

Dear Editor:
Sadly, too many hours have passed since young Emily Sotelo was dropped off to hike Mt. Lafayette and Haystack, to descend at the Flume. Radio tells me that Tuesday, today as I write, 18 search groups are out. Her parents

have called her an experienced hiker, but also said "she has not done winter hiking."

While holiday gifts are being bought, those with hiking friends or family should thoughtfully buy Ty Gagne's two winter-hiking tragedy accounts: *Where You'll Find Me* and *The Last Traverse*. In each true account, hikers lived and died in winter, not taking weather in our Presidentials into account. Mt. Lafayette figures in each book.

When each of these books came out, I bought 23 copies for friends, family, and libraries. I hope others will consider these profoundly smart books, which relay the often small-seeming details winter hikers need to know, must-have survival supplies, equipment, and attitudes. My sympathy to Emily's family and friends.

Lynn Rudmin Chong
Sanbornton, N.H.

Lynn:
When we received your letter we still had hope—irrational though it was. Sadly, you were right. It was already too late.

We haven't read either of these books, but we have heard Ty Gagne on NHPR. Clearly he knows whereof he speaks.

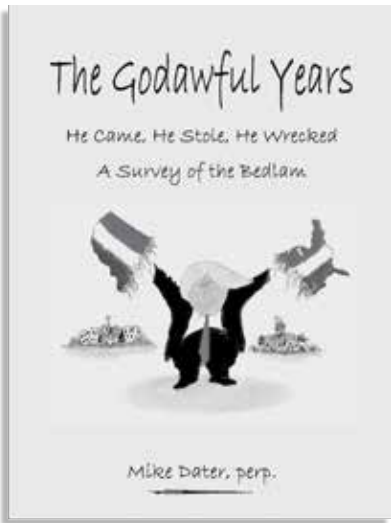
Your suggestion is an excellent one for any season. Right now, in the sad wake of this recent tragedy, it might be all the more effective.

The Editor

With Allies Like These...

To the Editor:
America has been protecting Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States from invasion and pirates with our naval fleet and Air Force for decades. The Gulf States were supposedly our allies. Unfortunately, these Gulf States, including Saudi Arabia, have decided to ally with Russia when that country

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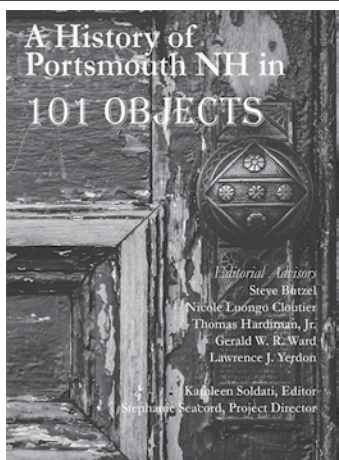
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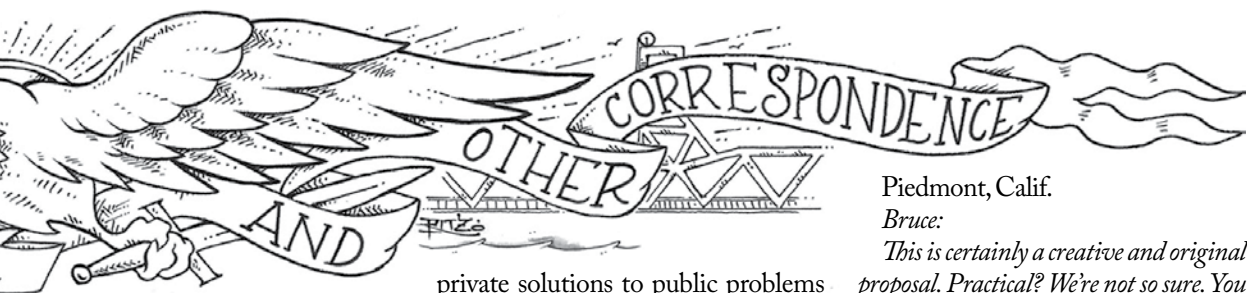


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is invading Ukraine. They cut their exports of oil causing the price of oil to rise thus helping Russia finance its war in Ukraine.

These countries have a right to act in their own interest, but they do not have a right to expect this country to protect them when they are acting against ours. I suggest we withdraw our naval fleet and let the Saudis know it will not return as long as they choose Russia and profiteering over us and our allies.

Walter Hamilton
Portsmouth, N.H.

Walter:
Alas, the interwoven intricacies of commerce and geopolitics are such that the U.S. is unlikely to cut or even reduce its ties with the Kingdom.
Besides, if 9/11 wasn't enough of an affront, why should we draw the line at high gas prices?
The Editor

=====
Two Leading Lizes
To the Editor:
Two women, who are elected office holders, have shown outstanding integrity, superior intelligence, deep compassion for the less fortunate, and sincere dedication to good governance. They could deliver a restorative redemption team for our torn and tattered democracy, if elected to the White House in 2024. And, they both have the same first name, Elizabeth! While they differ markedly on many policy issues, Elizabeth Warren and Liz Cheney both have shown the capacity and ability to find common objectives and join forces with adversaries to accomplish effective policies. If Elizabeth and Liz were a governing team, their presence would bridge the political divide that is tearing our country asunder.
While Liz Cheney advocates for

private solutions to public problems and Elizabeth Warren favors government intervention where the market fails, both realize the severity and need to respond to impending problems like the climate crisis. Together, they could create public-private policy solutions. Together, they could agree on letting private enterprises earn reasonable profits while also fulfilling their public responsibilities, including paying their fair share to maintain essential government services.

If their respective teams were to sit down and examine problems of national defense, global stability, social justice, economic security, health care and education for the next generation of Americans, their shared goals would reveal policy pathways that honor their respective tactical predispositions. Hybrid solutions would emerge because both leaders value effective governance over petty partisan politicking. What is good for the country supersedes what may be tactically cunning for their political parties.

How could such a bipartisan team get elected? Suppose, for a moment, that each candidate wins her party's Presidential nomination with the promise to select the other as Vice-Presidential nominee. The winning vote-getter would become President and the other candidate, Vice President. Imagine that as a team, they would select Cabinet officials willing and able to fulfill their hybrid vision for effective policy. Judges would be chosen by mutual consensus rather than partisan loyalty. Congressional parties would work for their mutual success rather than simply trying to tear down the others' proposals.

Leadership from The Two Lizes' example, would encourage voters to return to a civilized Middle instead of arming themselves for civil strife.

Bruce Joffe

Piedmont, Calif.
Bruce:
This is certainly a creative and original proposal. Practical? We're not so sure. You would be asking a significant slice of the Republican electorate to vote for a person whom they now believe makes Beelzebub look like a saint.

Let's say she miraculously got elected Vice President. Give the Republicans that generous inch, and before you know it they'd be claiming a light year.
The Editor

=====
Postmodernism, Bipartisanship, & Hoodies
To the editor;

Democrats as well as anyone who values the preservation of American democracy are celebrating the outcome of the 2022 midterm elections. The predicted red wave did not occur. The Dems retained control over the Senate although narrowly losing the House. More importantly, most if not all the Republican election deniers lost at the polls. Hopefully, this is an indication that voters have rejected the lies of MAGA Republicans regarding election fraud and are seeking more moderate candidates.

Although relief over an election that averted disaster is understandable, the results hardly delivered a Democratic mandate. At best there will be a one vote swing in the Democratic Senate majority and a slim advantage for the Republicans in the 435-member House. The only clear result was the rejection of Trumpist election deniers. The political status quo remained little changed indicating two more years of conflict and gridlock. Moreover, the margins of victory in the most contested elections were razor thin. The electorate remains deeply divided along party lines with close elections being decided by a shrinking group of independent voters.

On the right, MAGA Republicans constitute a tribal voting bloc, driven by resentment over economic and cultural grievances. Many rely on hare-

brained internet conspiracy theories for information and resist fact-based argument and rational discussion of policy. Although many Trumpist election deniers were rejected by voters, the MAGA base remains blindly loyal to candidates from the extreme right.

The Democratic Party is not immune to tribal politics. The commendable concern of the Party for disadvantaged groups has often been hijacked by "woke" adherents influenced by Postmodern ideology that distorts history and denies the relevance of established fact. To the Postmodern, objective truth established through rational analysis does not exist. All power relationships and social institutions are regarded as instruments of domination wielded by elites over the disadvantaged. Therefore, established historical and scientific narratives are disregarded as propaganda designed to justify elite domination. Like Marxism, Postmodernism looks to revolutionary change in social institutions as the only solution to elite domination.

An ideology that denies objective truth and renounces established narratives as false provides no standard beyond subjective belief for establishing the validity of an assertion. Thus, Robin DiAngelo, with scant empirical analysis, can state that all white people are implicit racists. Any critical pushback is derided as unenlightened adherence to an elite narrative. Only the truly "woke" can understand and be admitted into the inner sanctum of believers. Such beliefs are uncomfortably like the far-right acceptance of baseless internet conspiracy theories. More to the point of this letter, the Postmodern perspective is particularly unsuited to the bargaining and compromise of democratic electoral politics.

Neither populist bombast nor ideological conformity will provide practical solutions to critical real-world problems. Issues related to climate change, immigration, health care costs and economic dislocations cannot be addressed by deeply divided politicians who are mired in ideologies that prevent consideration of mu-

tually acceptable practical solutions. Perhaps politicians of both parties should look to the victorious campaign of John Fetterman for the U.S. Senate in Pennsylvania. Fetterman is an unabashed Progressive and clearly unconventional politician who campaigned in a hoodie and cargo shorts. His opponent was the Trump-backed Mehmet Oz who parachuted into Pennsylvania from his home in New Jersey. Despite being severely hampered by a stroke suffered at the beginning of his campaign, Fetterman brought his Progressive platform to the people and communicated his concern for finding pragmatic solutions to their problems. The approach was successful even garnering significant support from the deep red counties in central Pennsylvania. More Fetterman's from both sides of the divide may be the solution to the deep divide that still separates us.

Robert D. Russell, Ph.D.
Harrisburg, Pa.

Robert:
We, too, are relieved whenever a Republican steps away from Dolt #45. Then we recall that they're likely embracing Ron DeSantis. It's not as if individual Republicans are magically enthralled by some Svengali with superpowers. Vast swathes of the country bathe every day in a right-wing radio soundscape—a right wing Jonestown. Thomas Paine wrote, "Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph." We would argue that the rebels of '76 faced a lesser challenge than ours—and had less at stake.

We haven't seen any evidence that Postmodernists have taken over the Democratic Party. Perhaps we're not looking hard enough.

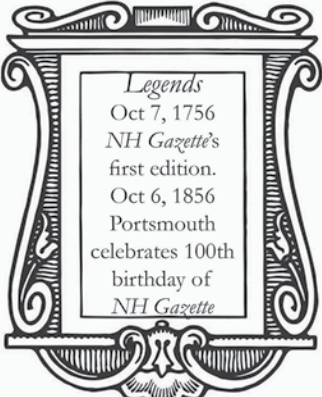
It is our position that this country was built largely on stolen ground by enslaved labor. The rest is details.

Robin DiAngelo, in our opinion, is a problematic data point when it comes to this discussion. Say what you will about the hooligans at Chapo Trap House, their lengthy discussion of her career—

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

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Sam Bankman-Fried's Truly Effective Philanthropy: Teaching

by Dean Baker

We should all recognize that Sam Bankman-Fried is much smarter than the rest of us. After all, outwardly he looks to be one of the biggest frauds of all time. By the age of 30 he amassed a fortune that dwarfs that of your average billionaire. He did it by running a crypto Ponzi-scheme. While claiming to be using his wealth to support philanthropies that were carefully selected to maximize human welfare, he was actually living a high life-style with his friends.

Now that the Ponzi has collapsed, the investors who trusted him look to be out of luck. And, of course there is no money for the philanthropies that he supported, many of which will are now struggling because they won't get contributions they had been counting on.

That all looks pretty reprehensible, but maybe that's the point. See, Sam Bankman-Fried was so committed to his philosophy of effective philanthropy that he was prepared to make himself appear to be the epitome of a despicable human being, and spend many years in prison, all to teach us that finance is a wasteful cesspool that needs to be reined in for the good of humanity. And, the place to start is his particular corner of the cesspool: crypto.

The point here is straightforward. Suppose that Mr. Bankman-Fried was actually able to accumulate tens of billions of dollars through his brilliance, which he would then donate to the worthy causes he had carefully selected to have a maximum impact on human well-being. That would undoubtedly benefit some number of people in the United States and around the world.

But think for a minute about the financial sector. It has expanded enormously relative to the size of the economy over the last half century.

The broad finance, insurance, and real estate sector has more than doubled as a share of GDP over the last half-century, increasing from 5.5 percent of GDP in 1971 to 12.0 percent in 2021. The additional 6.5 percent of GDP being devoted to finance in 2021 is equivalent to more than \$1.4 trillion being absorbed by the sector. That comes to more than \$11,800 a year for an average family.

The more narrow securities and commodity trading sector, along with investment funds and trusts, more than quadrupled as a share of GDP, rising from 0.55 percent of GDP in 1971 to 2.56 percent in 2021. This increase of 2.0 percentage points of GDP comes to more than \$500 billion a year in the current economy, or almost \$4,400 a year per family.

There is little to show for the massive expansion in the size of the financial sector. Finance is an intermediate good, like trucking. While both sectors are essential to the functioning of a modern economy, they don't directly provide value to people in the way that the housing, food, or health care sectors do.

We need these sectors, but we want them to perform their economic functions as efficiently as possible. In the case of finance, those functions are facilitating payments to households and businesses and allocating capital to its best uses.

Clearly we have developed better mechanisms for paying our bills and carrying on other transactions, but the biggest developments are hardly new. Direct deposit of our paychecks and automatic payments for bills are great innovations that save lots of time for both sides of the transactions. However, these innovations date back more than four decades.

The same holds with credit cards and debit cards. The overwhelming majority of transactions are now made with these cards, but this is not

especially new technology. Credit cards were already widely available in 1971, even if they were nowhere near as ubiquitous as they are today.

We can give the financial sector credit for the increase in the convenience of our system of payments, but how much is this worth? Is the time saved from using credit cards or having a direct deposit of your payments worth \$11,800 a year to you? That seems a bit steep. I suspect given the option, most people would prefer an extra \$11,800 in their paycheck and be given the check by hand rather than having it deposited automatically in their bank account.

How about the other part of the financial sector's function, allocating capital to its best uses? There is no simple way to evaluate how effective our enlarged financial sector has been in allocating capital, primarily because we don't have a counterfactual. We can't point to an America with a smaller financial sector over the last half-century. (Steven Cecchetti and Enisse Kharroubi did a cross-country analysis which found a larger financial sector boosted growth, but after reaching a certain size relative to the economy, it was a drag on growth.)

We can make a comparison of productivity growth in recent decades with productivity growth in the decades before the financial sector was consuming such a large share of the country's output. In the years from the beginning of the Bureau of Labor Statistics productivity series in 1947 to 1972, productivity growth averaged 2.8 percent annually. From 1972 to 2022, productivity growth averaged just 1.8 percent.

If anything, productivity growth has slowed further as the financial sector has expanded relative to the economy. While there was a strong decade of productivity growth from 1995 to 2005, in the years from 2005 to 2019, productivity growth averaged just 1.4 percent.

The expanded financial sector may not be responsible for the slowing of productivity growth, and it's certainly possible that it would have slowed even more without a larger financial sector. But, it is not easy to make the case that the financial sector has somehow led to faster productivity growth.

We pay for the waste in the fi-

nancial sector not only through fees on financial transactions and our 401(k)s, and being front-run on our stock trades, but also through higher prices for housing and other items. Finance has created many of the great fortunes in the economy, not just Sam Bankman-Fried's. When these people spend money buying bigger and/or more houses, it makes housing more expensive for the rest of us. They also hire people as their servants and demand workers for a wide range of activities from driving their cars to massaging their backs. Because the rich tie up so many workers meeting their luxury consumption, we have fewer people to work in child care centers or as teachers.

So Bankman-Fried, being a genius, recognized the incredible waste and corruption in the financial sector. He knew that the best way to help humanity is to downsize the financial sector. The gains would dwarf the impact of anything he could hope to do with the money he could accumulate in his business dealings.

After all, even if he gave his entire Ponzi fortune of \$15 billion to the best causes, this would be dwarfed by the good he could do by seriously downsizing the financial sector. After all, \$15 billion is just over 1.0 percent of the \$1.4 trillion increase in the relative size in the financial sector over the last half century. It is only 3.0 percent of the size of the increase in the relative size of just the narrow securities and commodities trading sectors.

Even if he managed to accumulate a pre-Twitter Elon Musk size fortune of \$200 billion it would barely change the picture. That is less than 15 percent of the size of the bloat in the larger financial sector and just 40 percent of the bloat in the more narrow securities and commodities sector.

And, these are annual figures. The financial sector bloat is pulling these sums from the economy every year. A Musk-size fortune, accumulated over a life-time, would just be equal to 15 percent of a single year's waste in the financial sector.

Obviously, Bankman-Fried is aware of this situation. He therefore realizes that the gains to humanity from reducing the waste in the financial sector would dwarf any benefits that he could hope to provide from the wealth he accumulates.

Recognizing the enormous waste and corruption in the financial sector, Bankman-Fried decided that the

best way to attack it was by putting himself at the center of a scandal hitting finance at its most vulnerable point: the crypto craze. Most sectors of finance involve a mix of productive uses with speculation and waste. This is true of the stock and commodities markets, which do allow for businesses to raise capital and for primary goods producers to lock in prices, even if most trading is speculative in nature. Even private equity firms can occasionally turn around troubled businesses, as their supporters claim.

However, crypto does nothing for the economy. If all crypto currencies disappeared tomorrow, the only effect would be that some illicit transactions may become more risky for the people carrying them through.

This means that cracking down on crypto poses no real risks to the economy, only to crypto speculators. If we put a hefty tax on crypto trades, treating it like the gambling it is, it can raise revenue for the government and hugely reduce the amount of resources wasted in crypto trading.

Even more importantly, it can be a great foot in the door for a more general crackdown on finance. A crypto trading tax should introduce people in policy positions to the idea of taxing financial transactions (they should already be familiar with financial transactions taxes, but they aren't), and ideally open the door to cracking down on finance more generally.

The potential benefits here are enormous. If we can just downsize the financial sector by 10 percent, it will free up more than \$300 billion a year for productive purposes. That comes to more than \$2,500 a year for every family in the country. As the effective philanthropy folks say, you can buy a lot of mosquito netting with \$300 billion a year.

So, Bankman-Fried knew what he was doing in running a Ponzi-scheme and making himself look like one of the most despicable people alive. He may spend a lot of time in prison and be viewed with universal contempt for the rest of his life, but if his crimes lead to a crackdown on finance, he will have provided a great service to humanity.

Dean Baker is Senior Economist at the Center for Economic and Policy Research [CEPR]. This article first appeared at cepr.net, and is published here under Creative Commons licence.

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Will Wonders Never Cease?

by W.D. Ehrhart

Well, the 2022 midterm election results have certainly been a surprise to just about everybody. While the Republicans—can we still call them Retrupmlicans? Sure, what the heck (more on that anon)—did gain a slim majority in the House of Representatives, the Great Red Tsunami that was supposed to obliterate our two-party system and set the nation up for a fascist takeover in 2024 turned out to be more like a Little Red Puddle.

Don't get me wrong. The current state of domestic politics is still fragile and fraught with danger. Ron DeSantis is a lot scarier than Dolt 45 because DeSantis actually has a brain in his head. And nearly 2,000,000 Georgians voted for Hershel Walker even though Walker *doesn't* have a brain in his head. Unless Raphael Warnock defeats Walker in a run-off, Fossil Fuel Apostle Joe Manchin could still continue to do his completely convincing imitation of a fly in the ointment.

But on balance, as one considers the election results across the nation, it looks like I can defer my plan to take a header off the Henry Avenue Bridge—height above Wissahickon Creek and Lincoln Drive: 155 feet—for at least another two years.

In Arizona, Democrats took the U.S. Senate seat and the State House. All five states that had the abortion issue on the ballot voted to uphold a woman's right to choose. Election deniers running for offices that could control future vote counts all lost. Sarah Palin got her butt handed to her in Alaska, the likely winner being a member of the Alaskan Yup'ik tribe and a woman.

Here in my home state of Pennsylvania, we elected Democrat Josh Shapiro governor over MAGA advocate and January 6th participant Doug Mastriano, and Democrat John Fetterman defeated snake oil salesman and television "personality" Mehmet Oz for the U.S. senate seat held by Republican Pat Toomey, who chose not to run again. Pennsylvania Democrats even gained a slim majority in the state Assembly

(the lower house) for the first time in a dozen years. I may have to stop calling my home state Pennsylvucky, especially since Kentucky is one of the states that voted to uphold a woman's right to choose.

But let's not get too complacent here. Kentucky is still more Red than the flag of the People's Republic of China. And here in Pennsylvania, well over two million voters opted for both Mastriano and Oz. The Democratic majority in the Assembly will be something like one or two seats, and the Retrupmlicans still hold the state Senate.

And perhaps the most amazing wonder of all is that Donald J. Trump, The Donald, Dolt 45, has actually declared his candidacy for the presidency of the United States in the 2024 election. How is this even possible?

Twice impeached, and saved from conviction only by a Retrupmlican-dominated Senate. Saved from criminal charges only by the spineless dereliction of duty by special prosecutor Robert Mueller. Still uncharged criminally by Attorney

General Merrick Garland. (God only knows what Garland is waiting for. I certainly don't. If I'd committed a fraction of the crimes Dolt 45 has committed, I'd have been charged, tried, convicted, and jailed years ago.)

Moreover, the only Trump supporter who still has a chance of winning is poor old Herschel Walker, who seems to have sustained permanent traumatic brain injury while earning millions of dollars as a professional football player, his only actual accomplishment in life (unless you count his ability to impregnate multiple women).

All the other Trump-endorsed candidates in competitive elections lost. But that wasn't Dolt 45's fault. Melania gave him bad advice. At least with regard to his endorsement of the Wizard of Oz. And how does he explain the other losses? It's "Biden and the radical Democrats," "radical left lunatics," the "deep state," "fake news media," "blue-ribbon committees," "this rigged and corrupt system." He's just "a victim. [He] will tell you."

And so, like a zombie that won't stay dead, like a recurring nightmare, like lice or fleas, like bubonic plague, like Jason Voorhees of Friday the 13th fame, "He's back!!!!!"

What havoc awaits us, I hardly dare to contemplate. Back in 2016, when Dolt 45 won that election, I didn't feel all that badly because I could take comfort in the fact that I wouldn't have to listen to Hillary Clinton for the next four years. And I thought Dolt 45 would be kind of entertaining.

But I now admit that I badly, very badly, underestimated how much damage a deranged, narcissistic, ignorant, immature, bigoted, misogynistic grifter could do. And I badly underestimated how cravenly spineless, immoral, amoral, power-hungry, and despicable the rest of the Retrupmlican party could be.

I won't make that mistake again.

~~~~~

*W. D. Ehrhart's latest collections are Thank You for Your Service: Collected Poems (2019), and a chapbook, Wolves in Winter: Poems 2019-2021.*



from page five

at [youtube.com/watch?v=7Cx-j0hu691Q](https://youtube.com/watch?v=7Cx-j0hu691Q)—is both entertaining and illuminating.

The Editor

~~~~~

The Status Quo Wins the Elections

To the Editor:

Every two years we have elections to decide our "leaders" and we get to vote for Democrats and Republicans.

The oil companies don't care which party wins as they control both of them.

The big banksters don't care either, nor does big pharma, health care profiteers, insurance magnates, corporate polluters, or the military-industrial complex (war is their racket). Wall Street special interests have controlled the two-party crap trap for the last 100 years! They also control the corporate media that tells you what to think.

The "Golden Rule" of politics is those who have the gold make the rules, and that's the status quo that wins every election. PACs and super PACs give us "the best politicians that money can buy."

The "new world order" just gives the super rich more money and power. Only a voters revolution by We the People can change the course of history, and this must come through grassroots democracy from our towns! For assistance getting organized contact the N.H. Community Rights Network at (info@nhcommunityrights.org).

Get involved NOW to give our children a chance for a decent future and a cleaner environment. It's up to all of us, every person matters!

Peter A. White, N.H. Community Rights Network
Nottingham, N.H.

~~~~~

Uh...

Dear Editor,

School kids get standardized tests to measure progress. Most people don't know that political candidates are given standardized tests by their political parties to see if they are ready. Here are a few of the lies, promises, and magic arts they must tell, make or perform to be successful candidates.

The candidate will:

- 1.) serve only one or two terms, and that's it
  - 2.) not raise taxes
  - 3.) run as a rabid liberal or rabid conservative (but then go in a different direction once elected)
  - 4.) repeal the other party's legislation on Day 1
  - 5.) grudgingly accept big campaign donations but never do what corporations ask, or accept a lobbying job with the industry later on
  - 6.) carry a pocket version of the Constitution (but never reveal it says whatever you do is OK with the Constitution)
  - 7.) promise never to support any legislation or do anything personally against God, kids, women, or the law
  - 8.) promise you care about the people and that's why you ran for this powerful everlasting job in the first place
- Kimball Shinkoskey  
Woods Cross, Utah  
Kimball  
*We get the concept, but the content?*  
*Not so much.*  
The Editor
- ~~~~~

## The Defrocking of Saint Ron DeSantis

by Jim Hightower

Breaking news: After years of failed Republican efforts to uncover any proof of widespread voter fraud by Democrats, Republican Governor Ron "Tough Guy" DeSantis of Florida has found not one, but 20 ineligible people casting ballots!

Like Donald Trump and a gaggle of other GOP governors, DeSantis has used the phony bugaboo of an illegal voting epidemic as a political ploy to keep true believers believing. They spend millions of taxpayer dollars on partisan wild goose chases, and DeSantis even created a new police bureaucracy, the "Office of Election Crimes," to snoop on voters. It was all just silly political nastiness, but then—*aha!*—Ron's dragnet scooped up 20 of the diabolical culprits. Vindication!

Who were they? All are former convicts who had previously been stripped of their right to vote, but each one unwittingly cast ballots in 2020, wrongly believing that their rights had been restored after serving their time. Who cares what they thought, bellowed the bullish gov-

ernor? He trashed them as "election criminals" (conveniently ignoring their Constitutional right to be presumed innocent unless convicted by a jury).

Well, gosh, why did all 20 think they could vote? Because each one had properly submitted voter registration applications that went to DeSantis' state agency responsible for determining eligibility. But—oops—Ron's own administration boo-boomed, erroneously authorizing all 20 to get official voter ID cards. In short, the governor himself effectively told them they could vote—then he had them arrested and publicly condemned for doing so!

This self-serving political thug now wants to be our next president, even claiming in a PR video this month that God has chosen him to rule because he's "a fighter." But—hello—Saint Ron fights the people, rather than fighting for them. He's a bully—and there's nothing godly about that. Nothing presidential either.

~~~~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4	MONDAY, DECEMBER 5	TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6	WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7	THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8	FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9	SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10
2016—To free the fictitious child sex slaves of the Democrat Party, Edgar Welch shoots up Comet Ping Pong in Washington D.C. with a real gun. 1993—R.I.P. Frank Zappa. 1982—Returning from a trip to Lat-in America, President Reagan says, “I learned a lot. You’d be surprised. They’re all individual countries.” 1981—President Reagan OK’s CIA spying on U.S. citizens. 1979—French commandos “convert to Islam,” then help the Saudi military drive rebels from Grand Mosque. The indiscriminate killing by these infidels enrages Osama bin Laden; the CIA concludes the episode is not a sign of widespread Islamic radicalism. 1969—Chicago cops, aided by the CIA, murder Black Panther security guard Mark Clark, then assassinate Fred Hampton, who’s been drugged. 1952—A “Great Smog” so thick moviegoers couldn’t see the screen descends on London. It lasts all winter and kills about 12,000. 1950—In <i>Feres v. U.S.</i>, the Supreme Court rules that servicemembers can’t sue the U.S. for injuries. 1947—On orders from genial ol’ Ike, the Attorney General publishes a list of 51 “subversive organizations.” 1837—In the Arkansas State House, Speaker John Wilson and Joseph Anthony debate wolf bounties with the aid of Bowie knives. Wilson, the winner, is later acquitted of murder.	2013—Scott Brown, in N.H., says he’s been helping Republicans “raise awareness as to the issues...here in Massachusetts.” 2002—At a party on Strom Thurmond’s 100th birthday, GOP Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott expresses regret over desegregation. 2001—AB-52, sent the wrong co-ordinates, bombs U.S. Special Forces in Afghanistan, killing three. 1996—Federal Reserve Chair Greenspan warns: “irrational exuberance” may have inflated stock prices. 1994—The GOP rams Speaker Gingrich down the House’s throat. 1988—A Grand Jury in N.C. indicts “holy” man Jim Bakker on charges of fraud and conspiracy. 1965—An A-4 Skyhawk accidentally rolls off the <i>U.S.S. Ticonderoga</i> near Japan. Plane, pilot, and one-megaton B43 are still missing. 1960—The Supreme Court rules that restaurants in interstate bus stations can’t be segregated anymore. 1955—The CIO, red-baited into irrelevancy anyway, merges with the AFL. 1955—“Uppity Negroes” in Montgomery, Ala., boycott the municipal mass transit system. 1945—Navy Flight 19, five Avengers and 14 men, vanishes off Ft. Lauderdale. During the search for them, 13 more aviators disappear. 1894—Alabama repeals its child labor laws in a bid to entice a Massachusetts textile corporation. It works.	1967—Chaplain Angelo “Charlie” Liteky carries 23 wounded men to safety in Vietnam despite intense hostile fire. For his bravery he is given the Medal of Honor, which he returns in 1986 to protest U.S. foreign policy. 1962—Speaking to journalists at the Deadline Club in New York City, Pentagon spokesman Arthur Sylvester says “It’s [the] government’s right, if necessary, to lie to save itself when it’s going up into a nuclear war.” 1951—The National Association of Broadcasters adopts a Code of [Cowardly and Obsequious] Conduct. 1937—The Supreme Court rules poll taxes Constitutional—why should Blacks and poor whites get to vote? 1933—Federal judge John M. Woolsey rules that Joyce’s <i>Ulysses</i> is not obscene and therefore may be imported. 1928—In Cienega, Colombia, soldiers with machine guns open fire on workers striking against United Fruit Co. At least 47, and possibly several thousand, workers die. 1918—The U.S. War Department ceases shackling conscientious objectors to the walls of solitary cells. 1917—The largest pre-A-Bomb explosion occurs in Halifax when a munitions ship explodes: 1,600 die; and windows break 40 miles away. 1865—Georgia ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment, thus making slavery illegal—leaving a loophole for exploitable prisoners, though. 342—RIP Saint Nick.	2006—The “Justice” Department fires eight prosecutors for failing to persecute enough Democrats. 1997—Six skydivers leap from a plane over the South Pole. Three of them die when their chutes fail to open. 1995—France is virtually paralyzed when 1.75 million workers protest global exploitation. 1993—The Department of Energy admits it conducted more than 200 secret weapons tests. 1987—A disgruntled ex-employee shoots a Southwest Airlines pilot and co-pilot. The plane breaks up while diving at Mach 1.2, killing all aboard. 1985—Their warnings overruled by Ronald Reagan—selling arms to Iran and giving the profits to assassins is illegal—Cap Weinberger and George Schultz joke about jail visiting hours. 1970—R.I.P. legendary cartoonist Rube Goldberg, from whose work the <i>Gazette</i> cribbed its business plan. 1964—Japan bestows the Order of the Rising Sun on Gen. Curtis LeMay, whose fire-bombing of that nation during WW II probably killed half a million Japanese. 1961—At Peterson Field, Colo., MPs hold civilians at gunpoint as CIA-trained Tibetan commandos are smuggled aboard a C-124. 1941—Japan attacks Pearl Harbor. 1874—Angered by a Black sheriff’s election, whites in Vicksburg, Miss. begin a month-long slaughter of 150-300 Black men, women, and children.	2006—Congress votes to destroy the U.S. Postal Service by making it pre-fund pensions for 50 years. 2004—Sec. of Defenselessness Donald Rumsfeld tells disgruntled soldiers to quit bitching and go to war with the unarmored vehicles he gave them. 1993—Bill Clinton signs NAFTA, shipping umpteen jobs elsewhere. 1982—To jumpstart a national dialogue on banning nuclear weapons, Norman D. Mayer, 66, threatens to blow up the Washington Monument with a dynamite-laden van. After ten hours, police shoot him dead. 1976—A prop on the set of “The Six Million Dollar Man” is found to be the mummified remains of Elmer McCurdy, born in Maine in 1880, hanged in Oklahoma in 1911. 1972—United Flight 553 crashes in Chicago killing 45 people including E. Howard Hunt’s wife Dorothy, who was carrying \$10,000 in \$100 bills. 1953—Good ol’ Ike announces Atoms for Peace, leading to an Iranian nuclear program four years later. 1864—Pope Pius IX denounces liberalism, socialism, & rationalism. 1854—Pope Pius IX proclaims <i>Ineffabilis Deus</i>, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. 1793—Madame du Barry is guillotined for aiding emigrés. Her enslaved servant Zamor blew the whistle. 1596—Nine suspected crypto-Jews are tortured and burned at the stake by the Mexican Inquisition.	2019—Leaked documents reveal that officials lied about the war in Afghanistan. Some profess to be shocked. 2008—The Governor of Illinois, Democrat Rod Blagojevich, is arrested for attempting to sell a Senate seat. 1983—Ed “Meese is a Pig” Meese says people go to soup kitchens because it’s “easier than paying.” 1970—Because he’s talking to General Al Haig, Henry Kissinger keeps it simple: “Kill anything that moves.” 1966—“We are in a much stronger position than two years ago. [Commies] will not be able to succeed [in Vietnam],” says Sec. of State Rusk. 1960—Its pilot asleep, a B-52 rolls into a dive over N.Y. state. Fearing a crash, the navigator ejects. That awakens the pilot, who orders “Bail out!” The crewless, nukeless plane flies 100 miles before crashing near Barre, Vt. 1958—Robert Welch Jr. founds the John Birch Society, which goes on to label Dwight Eisenhower a Commie. 1950—General D. “Dugout Doug” MacArthur proposes detonating 26 A-bombs to create an impenetrable barrier across the Korean peninsula. 1949—Two of the Hollywood Ten, in prison, get company: ex-HUAC honcho J. Parnell Thomas [R-N.J.], convicted for padding Congressional payrolls and pocketing the cash. 1864—Hundreds of freedmen are drowned or enslaved after Union Gen. Jefferson C. Davis orders them abandoned at Emerson Creek, Ga.	2011—The gundalow <i>Piscataqua</i> is launched on the eponymous river. 2004—Gary Webb, who exposed the CIA-Contra drug connection, dies from two gunshots in the face. The coroner calls it suicide. 1998—House Judiciary Committee debates impeaching Pres. Clinton for lying about his lewd behavior. 1992—Sen. Bob Packwood (Lecher-Ore.) apologizes for being a serial groper but refuses to resign. 1976—In a memo to President-elect Carter, pollster Pat Caddell makes the case for a “permanent campaign.” 1971—The Senate, buying Wm. Rehnquist’s lie disavowing a letter supporting racial segregation, confirms him for the Supreme Court. 1967—Trying to lower the cost of natural gas, the U.S. government explodes an A-bomb in N.M. 1966—U.S. jets bomb Marines in Vietnam; 17 Marines and Navy medics are euphemized as “friendly fire.” 1943—A year after learning the facts, the Polish government-in-exile reveals to the world that Nazis are “exterminating” Jews. The world shrugs. 1937—G.P. Thompson gets the Nobel for Physics for proving electrons are waves. His dad won it in 1906 for demonstrating that they’re particles. 1789—Moses Brown hires Samuel Slater, a Briton, to build the first U.S. textile mill, in Pawtucket. By poaching British technology and exploiting children, Brown becomes filthy rich.
1:43 2:23 8:07 8:38	2:34 3:15 8:56 9:31	3:22 4:03 9:42 10:19	4:06 4:47 10:25 11:03	4:48 5:28 11:05 11:45	5:28 6:08 11:45	6:07 6:47 12:25 12:24
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11	MONDAY, DECEMBER 12	TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13	WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14	THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15	FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16	SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17

2006—President George W.[MD] Bush, on national TV, denies having ever been “a knee-walking drunk.”

2000—The Supreme Court hears *Bush v. Gore*.

1998—President Clinton begs forgiveness for his sins. Instead he gets three Articles of Impeachment.

1985—Veep George H.[H.]W. Bush, at a Manchester, N.H., dinner honoring the late William Loeb, reads aloud Loeb’s most scurrilous attacks against him.

1981—Soldiers of the U.S.-backed Salvadoran government murder 900 villagers at El Mozote.

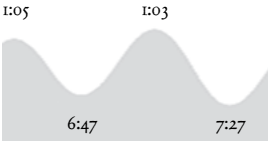
1964—As Ernesto “Che” Guevara speaks at the United Nations, a 3.5 inch rocket launched from Queens falls harmlessly into the East River.

1960—Seeing at the last minute that JFK has his wife and kids with him, Belmont, N.H. resident Richard Pavlick defers his plan to crash into the President-elect’s car with his dynamite-laden Buick.

1951—A few days after slipshod coal dust removal techniques are approved by state inspectors, the New Orient mine in West Frankfort, Ill., blows up, killing 119 miners.

1917—Guilty of fighting back when Houston cops rioted in August, 13 Black soldiers are hanged in unison.

1838—The U.S. House of Representatives passes Rep. Charles Atherton’s (D-N.H.) “gag rule” prohibiting discussion of slavery.



2006—The *Portsmouth Herald* misquotes Sen. Barack Obama [D-III.], who, the day before, in Portsmouth, did *not* say, “The moral arc of the universe bends at the elbow of justice.”

2005—“I think we are welcomed [in Iraq],” says George W.[MD] Bush, “but it was not a peaceful welcome.”

2000—The Supreme Court selects George W.[MD] Bush to be #43.

1995—A Flag Protection Amendment fails by three votes in the Senate.

1994—Freshmen Reps. of the new GOP majority fête Rush Limbaugh and make him an honorary Member at a raucous Heritage Foundation shindig.

1985—Arrow Air Flight 1285 crashes at Gander, killing 248 U.S. paratroopers and eight crew. Islamic Jihad claims credit, which a sketchy U.S. investigation attempts to deny.

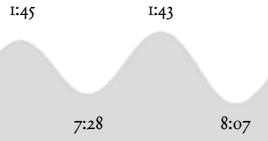
1984—Eight minutes after the end of his first execution, Alpha Otis Stephens keeps breathing and moving. So, Georgia electrocutes him again.

1983—“New Trends in Missiles,” a Boston trade show, draws an anarchist’s entry; 1,000 cockroaches symbolize the only winners of nuclear war.

1983—Nancy Reagan sits on Mr. T’s lap and kisses him on the scalp.

1950—Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-Bushmills) gives columnist Drew Pearson a kick in the groin.

1942—The *Queen Mary*, carrying 11,339 GIs and crew, rolls 52” when hit by a rogue wave up to 90 feet high; 55” and she would have capsized.



2009—Sen. Joe Lieberman [I-Conn.] nixes a Medicare public option.

2003—U.S. troops drag Saddam Hussein out of a hole in the ground, so final victory in Iraq must be imminent. U.S. death toll so far: 547.

2000—Al Gore decides he’d rather be righteous than be president.

1988—In Texas, Ray Landry’s death is delayed 14 minutes when a tube falls from his arm and lethal chemicals spray across the room.

1978—An eager public finally gets its first Susan B. Anthony dollars.

1974—Defecting oceanographer Slava Kurilov leaps from a Soviet cruise ship, swims for three days, and reaches the Philippines safely.

1966—20th Century-Fox pays Governor Reagan \$2 million for 290 acres in Malibu worth about \$200K.

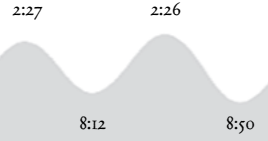
1954—Because he sold a house in a white Louisville neighborhood to a Black man, journalist Carl Braden is convicted of sedition.

1951—J. Edgar Hoover spooks Harry S Truman into purging “disloyal” government workers.

1932—In the U.S. House, sporting goods store clerk Martin Kemmerer brandishes a .38 and demands the floor. Rep. Melvin Maas (R-Minn.) talks him into dropping the gun.

1864—Paraguay declares war on Brazil; its population is soon halved.

1774—Paul Revere rides to Portsmouth to say imports of powder and arms have been banned.



2020—AG Bill Barr quits, the first Covid vaccines are administered, the Electoral College elects Biden President, and Dolt #45 claims he won.

2012—N.H.-born Adam Lanza shoots his gun-enthusiast mother, six other adults, and 20 kids at a Newtown, Conn. school.

2008—“This is a farewell kiss from the Iraqi people, you dog,” yells Mundtadhar al-Zaidi, as he flings his shoe at George W.[MD] Bush.

2005—George W.[MD] Bush blames his Iraq War on “faulty intelligence.” He doesn’t say whose.

1987—Chrysler admits it sold thousands of used cars as new ones.

1986—Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager begin a nine-day, non-stop, around-the-world flight.

1981—Defending his taxpayer-funded cocktail parties at the Lee Mansion, Interior Sec. James Watts says “Mr. Reagan has the White House. I have Arlington [National Cemetery].”

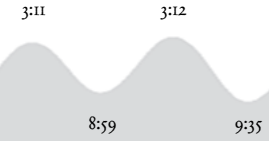
1973—The President of the U.S.—“Tricky Dick”—personally thanks the leader of the U.S. branch of Rev. Sun Myung Moon’s cult for his support.

1972—The last men on the moon leave.

1907—*Thomas W. Lawson*, a seven-masted schooner runs aground off Cornwall; it’s the first major oil spill.

1906—The *U1*, Germany’s first submarine, goes into service.

1774—Local militiamen seize powder and arms from Fort William and Mary, near Portsmouth.



2000—Sen. Phil Gramm gives Enron the energy futures deregulation it wants, hidden in an appropriations bill. One year later Enron is bankrupt.

1997—Paula Jones’ lawyers maneuver Bill Clinton into signing a legal document claiming he’d not had sex with government workers.

1986—Bill Casey, CIA director, suffers a handy seizure, preventing him from testifying about Iran/Contra.

1983—Ed Meese denies Ebenezer Scrooge exploited Bob Cratchit.

1969—The Mormon Church reaffirms its “no Black priests” policy.

1967—A 2.5 mm-deep defect in a part collapses the 39 year-old Silver Bridge over the Ohio River, killing 46.

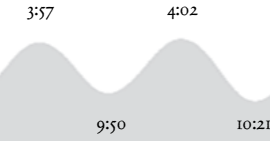
1960—Police in Palm Beach arrest N.H. resident Richard Pavlick before he can kill John F. Kennedy with his Buick full of dynamite.

1922—Harvard’s President defends its policy of banning Black students from dining rooms and residences.

1890—Sitting Bull’s home at Standing Rock is raided by 39 Indian Agency police. Sitting Bull and seven allies are killed, as are eight cops.

1873—Erie County, N.Y. Sheriff [and future U.S. President] Stephen Grover Cleveland rapes and impregnates Maria Halpin, whom he’d been dating. He has mother and child put into asylums: lunatic and orphan, respectively.

1814—The Federalists begin their Hartford Convention; their secrecy, sedition, and bad timing doom them.



2005—*The New York Times* reports that the NSA has been tapping U.S. telephones without a warrant.

2001—U.S. troops at Tora Bora ask for help catching Osama bin Laden. Donald Rumsfeld denies their request; bin Laden walks away.

1988—Bush #41 nominates notoriously boozy womanizer Sen. John Tower [R-Texas] to run the Department of Defense. His confirmation hearings do not go well.

1988—Perennial Presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche—Rochester, N.H.’s most famous native—is convicted of tax and mail fraud.

1973—Protestors celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the Boston Tea Party by hanging Richard Nixon in effigy.

1970—Big Milk offers Nixon a \$2 million “campaign contribution” if he’ll cut milk imports. A fortnight later Nixon imposes milk import quotas.

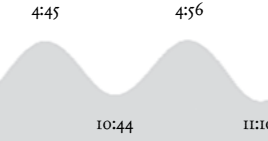
1965—Gen. Westmoreland, already commanding 200,000 men in Vietnam, asks for another 243,000.

1960—Two airliners collide over Manhattan killing a total of 134.

1950—Spooked by Commies, Harry S Truman proclaims a national emergency. It stays in effect until 1976.

1835—A two-day fire destroys 674 buildings in New York, bankrupting insurance companies and kicking off the Depression of 1837.

1773—“Sons of Liberty” disguised as Mohawks dump 342 chests of tea into Boston Harbor.



2010—Street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi sets himself afire, thereby igniting the Tunisian Revolution and the subsequent Arab Spring.

2006—Bill Kristol predicts on “Fox News Sunday,” “Barack Obama is not going to beat Hillary Clinton in a single Democratic primary.”

1998—Impeachment pending, Bill Clinton wags the dog: half the Pentagon’s cruise missiles explode in Iraq.

1967—“I know this beach like the back of my hand,” says Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt, before disappearing in heavy surf.

1960—A U.S.A.F. C-131 hits a Munich steeple, then falls onto a trolley. All 20 on the plane die, along with 18 in the trolley and 11 on the street.

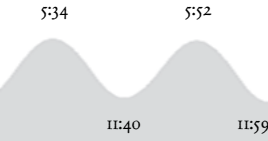
1951—Black Americans petition UN officials in Paris and New York for relief from genocidal U.S. domestic policies. They’re ignored.

1947—The National Security Council, just 90 days old, gives the CIA \$1 million to mess with Italian elections.

1944—Adm. “Bull” Halsey sails the 3rd Fleet into a typhoon. Three destroyers sink; nine other ships are damaged, 100 aircraft are lost, and 790 sailors die, mostly by drowning.

1927—The U.S. sub *S-4* is rammed and sunk off Provincetown by Coast Guard destroyer *Paulding*, which is hunting run runners; 40 are lost.

1862—Gen. Grant issues General Order No. 11, barring “Jews and other unprincipled traders” from his district.



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