

The Fortnightly Rant

Intervention? Hell, No!

Somewhere in America, Uncle Sam lies in a gutter with an array of empty oil barrels scattered around him. Formerly the last best hope of mankind, at least in his own mind, his gaudy red, white and blue suit is smeared with traces of the seductive black fluid for which he lives.

He is in a paralytic stupor, but with every tick of the clock, little sparks set off billions of tiny explosions within him, along every macadamized artery and vein, and every unpaved capillary from sea to polluted sea. The fizzing sensation the little explosions create give him the feeling—utterly false, actually contradictory—of omnipotent power and unending security.

With America's iconic *pater familias* in this sad state there is no shortage of voices calling out competing diagnoses. Thanks to the rules of journalism, the voice heard first, loudest, and most often is that of the incumbent administration: "There's nothing really wrong with Uncle Sam. If he's looking a little peaked, just give the old guy a little more of what he wants. If we have to repeal a few laws to do it, well, what's Congress for?"

Since only the best-behaved worker bees in the news hive get face time on the national airwaves,* the administration's diagnosis and proposed treatment become the default; any other proposal must be considered as suspect.

True, the remedy proposed by the White House seems suspiciously simple. And, true, we've had about eighty years to meditate upon H.L. Mencken's warn-

ing that "[f]or every complex problem there is an answer that is clear, simple, and wrong."

It's also true that the top two figures in the administration both spent much of their careers—such as they were—in "the oil bidness." Bush's track record is monotonous: failure, then bailout, failure, then bailout. Cheney's is not dissimilar. His biggest deal at Halliburton saddled the company with huge asbestos-related liabilities. His primary "success" came while he was in the government, establishing a pattern of huge, no-bid, cost-plus contracts for—Halliburton. There's an old canard that holds, falsely, we believe, that "Those who can, do. Those who can't, teach." Perhaps in the oil bidness there's a truer, unspoken corollary: "Those that can, do. Those that can't, go into the government to remove obstacles for those who can."

It may seem insanely reckless for national news organizations to quote, much less tacitly endorse, any prescriptions put forth by such self-serving, ham-handed serial blunderers as the President and Vice President. In fact, it probably is. Sadly, the same First Amendment that makes it possible for us to tell the truth about them, politicians and newsies alike, makes it impossible for anyone to arrest the newsies for malpractice.

That leaves it to the likes of us to scan the horizon for an explanation of our current national predicament. Anyone inspecting our credentials for this task would be justified in calling them sketchy, but you get what you pay for, and this paper is free.

* The one obvious, shining exception to this rule is Keith Olbermann, who fumes and fulminates for an hour each evening on MSNBC's "Countdown," thus becoming the exception that proves the rule. Olbermann is the closest thing anyone has ever seen to the mythic Howard Beale, a network newscaster in the 1976 movie *Network*. "I'm as mad as hell," Beale told viewers on live TV, "and I'm not going to take this anymore!" Eventually, of course, he is crushed by powers beyond his control. You can't have a man like that running around loose, even in the movies. We wonder whether Olbermann will survive the inevitable shakeup at NBC News, following the untimely death of Tim Russert.



A piece we found by Paul Craig Roberts recently on the website CounterPunch.org, headlined "Why Oil Prices Are So High," seemed to make more sense than what we've heard from the White House or CNN. Roberts was once the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury under that notorious liberal whack job Ronald Reagan. He also was an Associate Editor of some Marxist sheet called *The Wall Street Journal*.

If we understand him correctly, Roberts believes that today's high oil prices are caused, not by any shortage of oil, but by a weak dollar, and speculation in the oil futures market. What follows is a brief interpretation of Roberts's piece, with a few of our own thoughts thrown in. Deranged mischaracterizations are our work, not his.

Since the serial collapse of two bubbles, the dotcoms and real estate, the Federal Reserve has been keeping interest rates lower than prudence would dictate, increasing the money supply in an effort to stave off a recession. Why would Federal Reserve bankers gamble like that? That's their job. Their primary function is to prevent recession. Setting interest rates is the only tool they have: raise them, lower them, or keep them the same. Raise rates to stifle inflation and they'll cause a

recession—and take the blame. So, there's money available cheap on Wall Street, if not on Main Street.

The Fed doesn't have the power to write incredible exploding federal budgets, or to sic the Pentagon on the latest supposed Hitler surrogate. That's George Bush's job. He's already rattled the planet by bringing democracy to Middle East at gunpoint.

Now he's doing his Elisha Cook impersonation** in Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's face. He's only the President of Iran, a country that happens to sit on the northern shore of the Strait of Hormuz, through which passes one fifth of the world's oil.

The problem with that situation is not so much that Ahmadinejad might fire Silkworm missiles at a few oil tankers and bring the world's economy to a screeching halt; one senses there's a little Elisha Cook in Ahmadinejad, too. It's that he *could*. That possibility is all it takes to create the opportunity for hedge fund managers to taking the money the Fed is making available, and multiply it by speculating in oil futures contracts.

Meanwhile Washington's bud-

** Elisha Cook, Jr. played Wilmer, a neurotic gungel and deluded would-be tough guy, opposite Humphrey Bogart's Sam Spade in John Huston's *The Maltese Falcon*.

get deficits, inflated by multiple wars, are further weakening the dollar. For half a century the dollar has been the world's darling. It's a global reserve currency, meaning large parts of the world hold a lot of dollars. But it's losing its allure because we keep treating it like a cheap floozy.

Concurrent with this mess is a deeper underlying problem, begun for a change—at least in these pages—by a Democrat. During his Presidency Bill Clinton changed the formula used to calculate the Consumer Price Index. Official inflation figures since then have understated the problem. "[T]oday," Roberts says, "both inflation and unemployment rates, as originally measured, are around 12 percent."

"The crisis that looms for the U.S. is the loss of its world currency role. Once the dollar loses that role, the U.S. government will not be able to finance its operations by borrowing abroad, and foreigners will cease to finance the massive U.S. trade deficit. This crisis will eliminate the U.S. as a world power."

Which is, essentially the same conclusion we reached in this space a fortnight ago. But now it comes with the authoritative *imprimatur* of a former high-ranking Republican Cabinet official. Isn't that reassuring?

News Briefs

Valerie Cunningham: National Treasure

Local historian Valerie Cunningham has been busy accumulating much-deserved laurels lately, locally and in the nation's capitol. She was guest of honor at a retirement party at the University of New Hampshire, where for the past few years she has been coordinator of Community Black Heritage Partnerships. And on Tuesday, June 3, she was named a Restore America Hero by the National Trust for Historic Preservation at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

Our old friend J. Dennis Robinson summed up these honors nicely on his e-mail newsletter:

"It seems that everything Valerie touches turns to treasure," Dennis writes. "She helped found the African American Resource Center, birthed the Blues Festival, helped save the steeple at Portsmouth's first black church now known as The Pearl. She created the Portsmouth Black Heri-

tage Trail and, with Mark Sammons, wrote a book about the African American roots of what looks on the surface to be a white colonial seaport. She taught us about black Yankees, uncovered the lives of formerly invisible New Hampshire slaves and never stops reminding us that the North and South created and perpetuated slavery equally.

"New Hampshire history will

* Sign up for it at: www.seacoastnh.com/Get_Our_Free_Newsletter.

News Briefs

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Valerie Cunningham, right, and Editor Fowle, left, in January, 2004, at the installation of a plaque at 337 Pleasant St., the Gazette's original location, honoring Primus, Daniel Fowle's enslaved African pressman.



Once again, Portsmouth has said to the world, "Give us your hungry masses, yearning to eat curly sweet potato fries," and the world has answered, "OK, here we are." Market Square Day 2008 was well attended, and the weather was flawless. Also flawless, this young woman's technique for preparing said curly sweet potato fries: halve the peeled vegetable, spear it into the chuck of a Milwaukee power drill, and spin said spud into a fixed cutter blade. American ingenuity at its finest.



News Briefs

from page one

never be the same. No one since Jeremy Belknap, the state's first historian, has done more to define the way we see the Granite State. Her work has inspired heritage trails in many cities and no one can ever again talk about this place without acknowledging its African influences.

"I sincerely hope that, like Frank Sinatra, she will not let retirement get in the way of her career. She is working, even now, on preserving Rock Rest, the humble Kittery resort where black visitors stayed when white lodgings were closed to them in the 20th century. She is working with the city on the African Burial Ground memorial, where Portsmouth's only African cem-



etry was paved over and all but forgotten.

"In a perfect world, even in retirement, Valerie will continue to be Valerie, and we will all be the better for it."

For more about the Portsmouth Black Heritage Trail, see www.seacoastnh.com/b/Black_History.

Re-Opening Soon, We Hope

Some time ago the alleged editor of this humble rag developed the habit of stopping by The Stockpot, on Bow Street, most Monday evenings, to do his part in the ceaseless effort to reduce the planet's excess inventory of tasty cowburgers and cold, carbonated barley soup (the lat-

ter item being specially priced at a very affordable two bucks on Mondays). So, imagine his shock and disappointment to discover on June 23 that the place was *hors de combat*—doors closed, nobody to home. Fortunately Po'town is the culinary capitol of New England, and he did not starve. But that is a matter of no consequence, compared to the disruption of service at an institution which has been feeding the hungry since 1982.

The official explanation posted on the door referred discretely to some sort of drainage trouble, resulting in a need for extensive renovation [emphasis in the original].

A few days later we went around to the alley out back. We saw, and heard, ample evidence of furious construction: a stainless steel sink holding some twisted old pipes outside, the sound of a power saw cutting wood inside. So it looks and sounds like the place will be back in service, offering great food at reasonable prices, with a priceless view of the river and the tugboats and the sunset and the cormorants and the occasional seal, as soon as possible. We certainly hope so.

In the meantime, we can't help but wonder whether there might be a connection between the Stockpot's drainage trouble, Bow Street's no doubt ancient and

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Limited Time Offer—We can't imagine this went on long. A couple in a car with Mass. plates were selling—or trying to sell—shoes on High Street a week ago today. The young lady at right seems to be more skeptical of our Wandering Photographer than the peripatetic shoe sales team.



Location, Location, Location—Sometimes it's on your side. Maybe sometimes it's not. See "Re-Opening Soon, We Hope," page two.

brittle sewer pipes, and several weeks' worth of violent hammering by the massive track-mounted jackhammer/excavator which has removed a few hundred yards of solid rock from a location no more than 100 feet up the street.

Salvation Army Food Pantry Food Drive
Seacoast Obama supporters have asked us to publicize a food drive they are organizing to help stock up the Salva-

tion Army Food Pantry. Items most urgently needed are: Pampers™ and wipes, personal items such as toothpaste and deodorant, canned fruit, ground coffee for the food kitchen, meals-in-a-box, macaroni and cheese, peanut butter, jelly, jam, small jars of mayonnaise or salad dressing, and non-perishables other than dry pasta or canned vegetables. These items can always be delivered directly to the Salva-



tion Army any time of the year, but during the week of June 29 to July 6, items can be left at the Portsmouth locations of the Democratic Coordinated Campaign Headquarters: 195 Hanover Street, Parade Mall/Deer Street entrance, or the porches at 100 Wibird Street and 430 Richards Avenue. In Rye, locations include the barn at 520 Washington Road or the driveway by the porch at 24 Harborview Drive, and in Rye Beach, the garage at 616 Central Road. Obama volunteers will then take the goods to the Salvation Army on your behalf. For more information, please e-mail yeswecan.nh@gmail.com or phone 964-4133 or 431-5805. Although this event is sponsored by Obama Supporters, it is non-partisan in nature because the Salvation Army Food Pantry is open to anyone in need. Thank you.

Remembering Geoff Coughlin
Saturday night, July 5, The Press Room on Daniel Street will host a Tribute to Geoff Coughlin, the late, inimitable bass player for Hotrod Fury. The event is slated to begin at 8:00 p.m., but we harbor serious doubts that anyone will be check-

ing their watches. We don't know anything about the program beyond what is listed on Hotrod Fury's MySpace page: appearances by The Frosting and Jerry Brookman. Well, we do know one more thing: Geoff's friends will be there—so the place is bound to be packed.

The Gazette's New Cartography Division
If the alleged Editor seems to have a bit more spring in his step lately, it may be because we've achieved a long-sought goal.

Visitors to the Gazette's website, www.nhgazette.com, can now click on the link marked "Where You Can Get The Gazette," and be presented with an interactive Google map showing (almost) all our 150-plus free distribution points, from Exeter up to Rochester. (A few spots on our less-formal distribution loops have yet to be added.)

Visitors to the site can hover their cursor over a marker and the name will pop up. Click on a marker and get the address. At the right of the main map, a series of further links lead to seven close-up maps: one each for Dover, Durham, Exeter, Newmarket, Portsmouth, Rochester, and

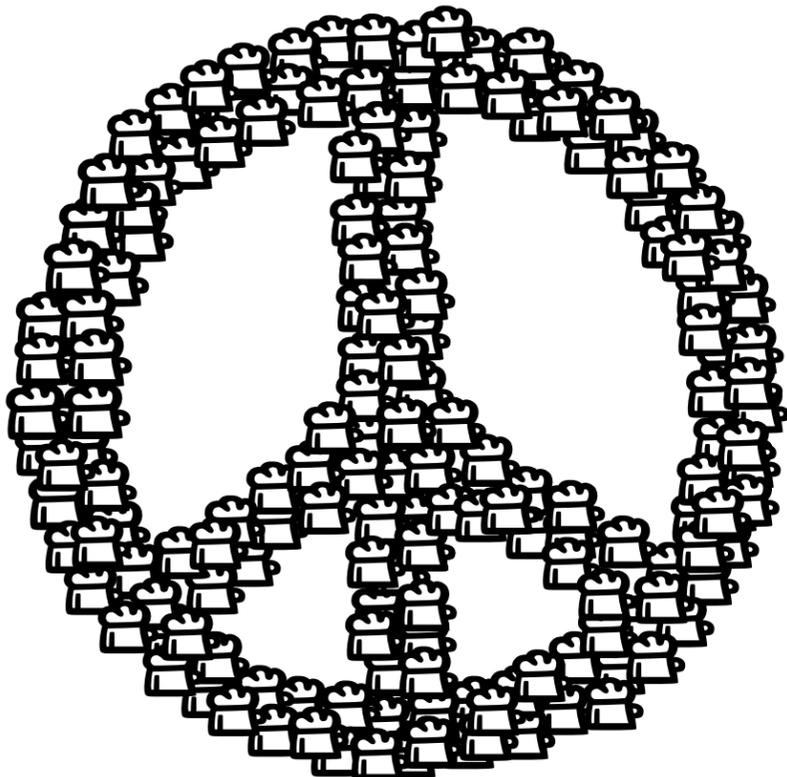
Somersworth. These maps have alphabetical lists of the names of the distribution points in those towns.



Busted by the Flag Police: The U.S. Postal Service

Officer Krupke of the Flag Police reports that a letter from *Linn's Stamp News* charges that a new 42¢ American flag stamp shows a flag with 14 stripes. We bought a roll of the stamps, and can verify that this is true.

Officer Krupke further argues that, because the lowest visible stripe is white, and the flag code dictates that the bottom stripe of the flag must be red, there must be a 15th stripe not visible on the stamp! The U.S. Postal Service is busted!



"WHEN THE POWER OF LOVE OVERCOMES THE LOVE OF POWER, THE WORLD WILL FINALLY KNOW PEACE." -- JIMI HENDRIX



Moving Pictures

Get Smart

by Rodman Philbrick

Stars: Steve Carell, Anne Hathaway, Alan Arkin, Terence Stamp, Dwayne Johnson, Dalip Singh; **Screenplay:** Tom J. Astle & Matt Ember, based on the show created by Mel Brooks and Buck Henry; **Director:** Peter Segal; **Rating:** [PG-13]

So the choice came down to this: a fake Indian guru or recycled TV show. No insult to my many friends in Bangalore, who always seem to be there, reading from a script whenever help is needed, but I went with the dude with the phone in his shoe. Maxwell Smart, the goofball version of Bond, James Bond, was created—or maybe ‘set loose’ is the better term—by Mel Brooks and Buck Henry in 1965. The irreverent Mr. Brooks thought it was about time to make fun of the Cold War that had spawned so many we-teeter-on-the-brink-

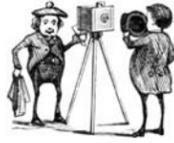
of-annihilation stories, from *Fail Safe* to *The Spy Who Came In From The Cold*. Big screen black humor had already been covered, brilliantly, by Stanley Kubrick in *Dr. Strangelove*, but that sardonically twisted viewpoint hadn't yet come to mainstream TV. It was, after all, only three years removed from the Cuban missile crisis, and a mere two years from the JFK assassination by an American who had defected to the Soviet Union and then back again. Time for a laugh at ourselves, obviously.

Brooks and Henry intended a broad parody of the gadget-oriented Bond films, and had the good sense to cast stand-up comic Don Adams as the bumbling agent with the infallible gun, Maxwell Smart. Adams took their premise—and their irreverent viewpoint—and made it his own. His Agent 86 is as incompetent as any Pentagon ideologue, but like Douglas Feith and

his happy band of chickenhawks, Maxwell Smart is incapable of acknowledging the destruction he leaves his wake. In nearly every thirty-minute episode his bacon (and his undeserved self-confidence) is saved by agent 99 (Barbara Feldon), who really is the hero he mistakenly thinks himself to be.

As screwball comedies go, *Get Smart* was fast, clever, witty, and well-acted. You can't ask much more of episodic TV, and it went on to win many Emmy Awards, adding the catch-phrase, “Sorry about that, Chief” to the American vocabulary. One would assume that phone-shoe wouldn't be easy to fill, and Steve Carell, who has had great success in both TV (*The Daily Show*, *The Office*) and feature films (*The Forty Year Old Virgin*) has wisely chosen to go in a different direction. Convinced that a 112-min-

ute impersonation of Don Adams would be, at the very least, tedious, Mr. Carell plays Agent 86 pretty much like he played his character in *The Forty Year Old Virgin*: an achingly sincere, overly self-conscious guy who struggles with the fear that he might be, despite his best efforts, a loser. A guy who can't bring himself to give up, no matter how stupid he looks, and who ultimately saves himself—and others—with flashes of brilliance.



The good news is, this works. It doesn't hurt that the new Agent 99 (Anne Hathaway) is both easy on the eyes and a gifted physical comic, or that Alan Arkin has exactly the right attitude as the long-suffering Chief of CONTROL. Okay, Terence Stamp seems to be going through the motions as KAOS agent Siegfried, but even so, he ain't bad. Dalip Singh, the 7' 2" Punjab

giant, is comically engaging as himself, more or less, with maybe a nod to Richard Kiel (“Jaws” in the Bond films). Bill Murray has a nice little cameo as the hapless Agent 13, as does James Caan as an inarticulate U.S. President who defers in all things to his manipulative VP.

By and large the mainstream media critics have been dismissive of *Get Smart*—not enough laughs, too much action—but some of us who ply our little canoes far out of the mainstream came away pleasantly surprised by a big screen adaptation that had the courage to set off in a new direction.

As to the gentleman in the adjacent seat, who coughed his way through the entire movie and never bothered to cover his mouth, thanks much for sharing, but there seems to be some confusion between infectious laughter and just plain infectious.

Get smart, willya?

Driving the Surge in Oil Prices: The Bush/McCain Surge in Iraq

by Greg Palast

I can't make this up: in a hotel room in Brussels, the chief executives of the world's top oil companies unrolled a huge map of the Middle East, drew a fat, red line around Iraq and signed their names to it.

The map, the red line, the secret signatures. It explains this war. It explains this week's rocketing of the price of oil to \$134 a barrel.

It happened on July 31, 1928, but the bill came due now.

Barack Obama knows this. Or, just as important, those crafting his policies seem to know this. Same for Hillary Clinton's team. There could be no more vital

difference between the Republican and Democratic candidates. And you won't learn a thing about it on the news from the Fox-holes.

Let me explain.

In 1928, oil company chieftains (from Anglo-Persian Oil, now British Petroleum, from Standard Oil, now Exxon, and their Continental counterparts) were faced with a crisis: falling prices due to rising supplies of oil; the same crisis faced by their successors during the Clinton years, when oil traded at \$22 a barrel.

The solution then, as now: stop the flow of oil, squeeze the market, raise the price. The method: put a red line around Iraq and declare that virtually all the oil un-

der its sands would remain there, untapped. Their plan: choke supply, raise prices, boost profits. That was the program for 1928. For 2003. For 2008.

Again and again, year after year, the world price of oil has been boosted artificially by keeping a tight limit on Iraq's oil output. Methods varied. The 1928 “Redline” agreement held, in various forms, for over three decades. It was replaced in 1959 by quotas imposed by President Eisenhower. Then Saudi Arabia and OPEC kept Iraq, capable of producing over 6 million barrels a day, capped at half that, given an export quota equal to Iran's lower output.

In 1991, output was again lim-

ited, this time by a new red line: B-52 bombings by Bush Senior's Air Force. Then came the Oil Embargo followed by the “Food for Oil” program. Not much food for them, not much oil for us.

In 2002, after Bush Junior took power, the top ten oil companies took in a nice \$31 billion in profits. But then, a miracle fell from the sky. Or, more precisely, the 101st Airborne landed. Bush declared, “Bring'm on!” and, as the dogs of war chewed up the world's second largest source of oil, crude doubled in two years to an astonishing \$40 a barrel and those same oil companies saw their profits triple to \$87 billion.

In response, Senators Obama and Clinton propose something

wrongly called a “windfall” profits tax on oil. But oil industry profits didn't blow in on a breeze. It is war, not wind, that fills their coffers. The beastly leap in prices is nothing but war profiteering, hiking prices to take cruel advantage of oil fields shut by bullets and blood.

I wish to hell the Democrats would call their plan what it is: a war profiteering tax. War is profitable business—if you're an oil man. But somehow, the public pays the price, at the pump and at the funerals, and the oil companies reap the benefits.

Indeed, the recent engorgement in oil prices and profits goes right back to the Bush-McCain “surge.” The Iraq government at-

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Northcountry Chronicle

The Silver Lining

by William Marvel

For most of my life the idea of driving north from Boston on a Friday night or driving south from Conway on a Sunday night has filled me with dread. Since the 1960s our community has served as such a playground for eastern Massachusetts that either end of the weekend has always been a daunting time to drive that road.

For half of 1968 I lived and worked within three blocks of Plymouth Rock, but every chance I got I came home to South Conway. Those chances usually came on Friday night, when I would begin the nerve-racking crawl up Route 3, the Southeast Expressway, I-95, and Route 16. I quickly learned the Massachusetts method of commuting, which consists of passing everybody at every opportunity and hanging on the bumper of the car in front, waiting to do it again.

Impatient caravans of suburban refugees would creep through Milton and Union, itching for two days of lassitude in some hillside chalet, where they could alternately extol the beauty of the landscape and lament the ignorance of the inhabitants. On Sunday night it would begin all over again in the opposite direction. Long lines of tired or hungover migrants would weave south toward Revere, Westwood, or Quincy, fighting for position and stacking up two miles deep at every toll booth or construction site. Three-day weekends came less often then, so the self-imposed torture usually yielded only forty hours or so of relative relaxation, which was always passed under the shadow of the looming return.

After the army and college I returned here to live, but for many years I seldom ventured to Boston at all. On weekends I avoided even going into town, for the

advent of factory outlets brought the heavy Route 16 traffic right into Conway and North Conway. That traffic mushroomed in the 1980s, when the Milton bypass skirted the most frustrating segments of Route 16 and effectively extended the Spaulding Turnpike to Ossipee.



The popularity of recreational vehicles and massive travel trailers immeasurably worsened a traffic nightmare that had already reached an apparent peak. When work forced me to drive Route 16 during the summer those behemoths made it virtually impossible to pass, and everyone behind them had to gear down as they struggled over the major hills. I still hate them: they turned the "open road" into sheer torture.

For two weekends out of the past four, however, research took me to Worcester and Boston. In an effort to decrease both the cost of travel and my portion

of the demand on gasoline supplies, I stayed over in each place until I was finished, rather than returning on separate days. Traffic certainly seemed at least a little lighter on 495 and 128: a few more drivers brought passengers, and there seemed to be fewer overall cars than I remembered. Everything still came to an abrupt and inexplicable halt now and then, but the impact of gas prices appeared to have reduced traffic volumes nearly to manageable levels.

The most promising sign came on the return, however, and particularly on May 23. It was Memorial Day weekend, but the traffic that Friday would never have reminded me of it. Occasionally someone would roar past me on the way north, but everything flowed smoothly, although there were usually a few cars in sight ahead. Most noticeable was the paucity of RV traffic. One antiquated Winnebago lumbered up the Milton bypass, and atop

Wakefield Hill sat a big pickup truck dragging a long trailer, but—blessed sight—his hood was up and steam was boiling from beneath it. They were the only two of those traffic blights I noticed all day, and I was home in time to make dinner.

I stayed home all weekend, too. While my more suburban new neighbors still zipped back and forth, fewer of those transient strangers passed by, prowling dirt roads in search of some secluded place to develop or dump their trash. The effects of costly gasoline are slow in coming and difficult to perceive, but they seem to have begun. In this family we will compensate for our one long jaunt this summer by cutting out a lot of other travel, and bicycling as much as possible. The most prodigal will likely have to make some cutbacks. If that reduces the number of tourists, and thins out the number of businesses that cater to them, not all of us will be unhappy about it.

tack on a Basra militia was really nothing more than Baghdad's leaping into a gang war over control of Iraq's Southern oil fields and oil-loading docks. Moqtada al-Sadr's gangsters and the government-sponsored greedsters of SCIRI (the Supreme Council For Islamic Revolution In Iraq) are battling over an estimated \$5 billion a year in oil shipment kickbacks, theft and protection fees.

The Wall Street Journal reported that the surge-backed civil warring has cut Iraq's exports by up to a million barrels a day. And that translates to slashing OPEC excess crude capacity by nearly half.

Result: ka-BOOM in oil prices

and ka-ZOOM in oil profits. For 2007, Exxon recorded the highest annual profit, \$40.6 billion, of any enterprise since the building of the pyramids. And that was before the war surge and price surge to over \$100 a barrel.

It's been a good war for Exxon and friends. Since George Bush began to beat the war drum for an invasion of Iraq, the value of Exxon's reserves has risen—are you ready for this?—by \$2 trillion.

Obama's war profiteering tax, or "oil windfall profits" tax, would equal just 20 percent of the industry's charges in excess of \$80

a barrel. It's embarrassingly small actually, smaller than every windfall tax charged by every other nation. (Ecuador, for example, captures up to 99 percent of the higher earnings).

"War is profitable business—if you're an oil man. But somehow, the public pays the price, at the pump and at the funerals, and the oil companies reap the benefits."

Nevertheless, oilman George W. Bush opposes it as does Bush's man McCain. Senator McCain admonishes us that the po' widdle oil companies need

more than 80 percent of their windfall so they can explore for more oil. When pigs fly, Senator. Last year, Exxon spent \$36 billion of its \$40 billion income on dividends and special payouts to stockholders in tax-free buy-backs. Even the Journal called Exxon's capital investment spending "stingy."

At today's prices Obama's windfall tax, teeny as it is, would bring in nearly a billion dollars a day for the U.S. Treasury. Clinton's plan is similar. Yet the press's entire discussion of gas prices is shifted to whether the government should knock some sales tax pen-

nies off the oil companies' pillaging at the pump.

More important than even the Democrats' declaring that oil company profits are undeserved, is their implicit understanding that the profits are the spoils of war.

And that's another reason to tax the oil industry's ill-gotten gain. Vietnam showed us that foreign wars don't end when the invader can no longer fight, but when the invasion is no longer profitable.

Greg Palast is the author of "Trillion Dollar Babies," on Iraq and oil, published in his New York Times bestseller, Armed Madhouse.

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What You Have Known For Years?

To the Editor:

Writing in your June 13th issue of the *New Hampshire Gazette*, you claim "we have known for years" that the Bush administration "lied to drum up support for their invasion of Iraq," thus misleading Congress and the American public. When, in making the claim, you write "we" have known for years, I'll take the liberty of assuming you mean the inclusive "we" to embrace the broader public, rather than the exclusive "we" of referring only to the *New Hampshire Gazette* staff and readership of true believers. And I think you're right: "We," to include a simple majority if not a supermajority of Americans, believe they lied to us and that they lied to Congress in order to get the war they wanted. But do they really know it's a crime to do that? It's called "con-

spiracy to defraud Congress."

With only months to go before a new administration assumes office, it's increasingly improbable that impeachment proceedings against administration officials will occur, even though it's patently obvious that these "high crimes" occurred. Are there alternatives other than impeachment?

Elizabeth de la Vega, a former federal prosecutor, has written a book called *United States v. George W. Bush, et al*, to encourage us to understand this fact: it's a felony to deceive Congress with purposes to influence policies. She also notes that the president is not above the law. With a nod to Nixon, when the president does it, it's still illegal.

Vincent Bugliosi, the former crackerjack LA prosecutor who famously convicted Charles Manson, reminds us in his book, *The Prosecution of George W. Bush for Murder*, that deaths resulting in the commission of felonies are murders. He claims that, since the Iraq war is the result of a felony leading to the deaths of thousands of American soldiers, George W. Bush and his complicit aides are indictable for murder. He even points out that indictments for murder can be brought at local levels by district attorneys with enough chutzpah to pursue the various cases.

Before the existence of the "reductio ad Hitlerum" ridicule to cynically marginalize critics of political thuggery, how is it that someone like the Nazis could rise to the position they did, then

lead their nation into insanity? Is it not in small amount because moderates feared the loss of respectability in the eyes of the public just as much as they feared Nazi hooliganism? I mean, what holds respectable tongues now?

There really must be trials; the Bush Gang shouldn't get away with it. Following Elizabeth de la Vega's vision, we should start with the conspiracy to defraud Congress and take it from there. Since we know there's no way a McCain attorney general would investigate, if a Democratic attorney general were to be forbidden—as is likely, for the sake of oh-so-precious "Unity"—to pursue that course, then Vincent Bugliosi shows us that, in either case, there's still yet another way. Bugliosi's way is safer for Democrats too, since it insulates, or more distantly locates, criminal prosecutions from national politics.

Stephen D. Clark
Portsmouth, NH
Stephen:

Thank you for so cogently presenting this important material, which is probably more deserving of space in our news columns than some of the Editor's drivel.

The Editor

My Kafkaesque Kountry, 'Tis of Thee

To the Editor:

While the Supreme Court decision in *Boumediene, et al; v Bush et al*, is welcomed, it is nonetheless frightening to contemplate that the five to four decision means we are one vote away from a country in which any person can be thrown into a Kafkaesque world and be removed to jail on just the word of the President or some other bureaucrat.

As a real conservative who has always mistrusted government I was against a Supreme Court that found rights that did not exist; however, a Supreme Court that jettisons rights that do ex-

Mash Notes, **HATE MAIL,**

ist is far worse. The American Republic is moving closer and closer to a dictatorship, and the appointment of a judge that will remove the protection of *habeas corpus* is out there waiting for a McCain presidency, at which time the dictatorship will be established.

John Dente
Wilmington, DE

John:

Nice to be reminded that conservative is not a synonym for stupid.

The Editor

Needed: Reality Check

To the Editor:

I graduated summa cum laude/valedictorian, but it was a long time ago (1973) ... a decent college but not to be confused with Harvard (Franklin Pierce) and I was a lowly English major.

I never took a philosophy course and failed every math course I took, so logic might not be my strong suit.

Since September 12th, 2001 all I've heard from GOP politicians and most TV pundits and pollsters is that the Republicans are much stronger on terrorism than Democrats, and the country would be much better served by a GOP administration in the event of another attack. This argument continues today, as was recently revealed in those heinous, fear-mongering comments by McCain advisor Charles Black.

Here's my problem: try as I might, using all logical means at my disposal, my obviously errant thinking invariably leads to two pesky, nagging questions:

Who was in power for *nine months* prior to September 11th? And who will still be in power if there's another pre-election event?

I would greatly appreciate it if the editor—or anyone else above my pay grade—could set me straight on this, and deliver me

from the past seven years of alternate reality I'm apparently living in.

Alan Grossberg
Durham, NH

Alan:

You have raised one of the fundamental questions which has occupied us since we snatched this venerable institution from the feeble hands of Lord Kenneth of Fleet back in 1989: from whence cometh the basic assumptions upon which our most unavoidable public figures—high-ranking political muckety-mucks, expensively coiffed and tailored television newsmen and their ilk—insist?

You could just as easily have based your question on fiscal responsibility. The Gipper and Bush #43 have, between them, driven our national budget deficit to hitherto unimagined heights. And yet the conventional default position is that Republicans are fiscally responsible.

Our best answer to date is that this drivel is spread by profit-making weapons of mass confusion. We're working on an antidote.

The Editor

Real Gas Price Relief: Commuter Tax Deduction

To the Editor:

The cost of gasoline has become a serious financial hardship for many Americans, especially those who cannot avoid driving to and from work. While there has been much talk about providing minor relief, there is a simple way of providing significant help quickly. Congress should pass into law a Commuter Tax Deduction (CTD) on federal taxes. The CTD would provide a mileage allowance for all miles driven for the purpose of getting to and from a place of employment. Based on this distance and the number of days, a taxpayer would take a deduction on the taxable income for that year. The mileage allowance can be adjusted based



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And Other Correspondence

on the price of gasoline and vehicle wear and tear. Providing a tax deduction for work related driving is something many countries already allow. For at least the past 25 years, the German tax code (where the price is already \$7 per gallon) has allowed a mileage allowance deduction based on the distance between home and the place of employment. Here in the U.S. most businesses, large and small, already have such a deduction, since they rightly see travel expenses as the cost of doing business. For a daily commuter, going to work each day is also the cost of doing business and protecting a job.

While some might claim this would be too expensive, I would claim that if we can afford this for businesses, fairness would dictate that employees also deserve such a break. In addition to the help with gas prices, since a taxpayer would be able to take such a deduction regardless of how they get to work, this deduction would also encourage both car-pooling and the use of public transportation. Let's tell our politicians that if they really want to provide gas price relief, they should support a CTD.

Peter Somssich
Portsmouth, NH
Peter:
And let's balance out the cost by imposing a windfall profits tax on oil companies.
The Editor

Libertarian Invitation

To the Editor:
Two political parties are necessary components in a democracy. The party that wins an election is known as the empowered or ruling party. The party that loses an election has traditionally been known as "The Loyal Opposition Party." If the Loyal Opposition Party fails to be in opposition to

the ruling empowered party then, the result is a dictatorship since there is no effective opposition. In such a case in reality, there is only one party which is made up of a merger of the two parties making but one party. When this happens the result is a failed democracy.

In today's America we find the tragic reality of a failed democracy because it can clearly be seen that there is little if any difference between the two parties. No matter which party is in power the will of the people is largely ignored.

Making things worse we find that the greatest constitution ever devised, is collecting dust with the reigning attitude towards it held by elected officials, that the constitution is a relic of the past that has outlived its usefulness. If America is to truly be a nation that fulfills Lincoln's Gettysburg address proclamation that "government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the Earth," then respect for the constitution must be restored.

If America is to reclaim its claim of being a democracy than there has to be a birth of a new party that will form a true second party. It is to achieve this objective that the Libertarian Party now cries out to the people to give it birth and in so doing Restore the American Democracy.

It is because like the majority of Americans, who believe in the two party system that we, The Libertarians, extend this Libertarian Invitation to the people of N.H. to sign the petition to put Bob Barr on the N.H. Presidential Ballot and there-by create an effective second party that will uphold the constitution and restore the American Republic.

Howard L. Wilson
Andover, NH

Wake Up And Smell The Greenhouse Gases

To the Editor:

Drastic emergency measures are needed to counter the human-induced increase of greenhouse gases into the already polluted atmosphere resulting from climate change. Global warming has altered the planet's ecological equilibrium and is the root cause of extreme weather shifts. The frequency of intense hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, freak storms and associated flooding has more than doubled since the 1970's. Experts predict a global warming of 2.5 degrees Centigrade or more by 2050, with some areas—primarily the polar regions and mid-latitudes—experiencing far more severe levels of heat waves and droughts, impacting upon ecosystems, crops, forests, livestock, water resources, public health and basic human existence.

In the long run, if we hope to avoid an ecosystem collapse accompanied by subspecies extinctions, the disastrous level of carbon dioxide emissions must be addressed, with our shared, universal goal to create a cleaner, pollution-free world for future generations. Steps to begin changing our selfish habits and misguided ways include:

- reducing greenhouse gas emissions through more household efficiency consciousness (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle);
- encouraging greater support for and use of reliable public transport, bicycles and car pools;
- developing geo-thermal plants as sustainable, renewable energy production sources;
- installing solar, waste methane and wind power generation facilities;
- protecting the delicate ecosystem habitat, biodiversity and species that face extinction since climate change is occurring too fast for native flora and fauna to



adapt.

A unified, proactive global community response is urgently needed to reverse the negative impacts of global warming and climate change—one which is rapid, bold and profoundly honest.

Dr. Charles Frederickson
Bangkok, Thailand

Terrorists Both Domestic and Foreign Forewarned ...

To the Editor:

Why? Barack Obama upon achieving the Presidency of the United States of America, will have attained this position with virtually 400 years of accrued moral authority, by the mere fact of who he is in American society, unlike any of his predecessors ... considering the antipathetic sentiments toward the U.S. around the globe. For terrorists to strike Americans or allies during his watch will not only be an insult to that moral authority, in his effort to correct wrongs, but a vicious show of disrespect and a serious mistake in taking his humility for weakness. By means of his office as the new leader of the free world, I dare say, his retaliation will be more fierce than any of his predecessors could justifiably carry out.

Bobby Buck

SummerFilm

The Music Hall

MY BROTHER IS AN ONLY CHILD
JUNE 29, 30 & JULY 1 @ 7:30
Brothers Accio and Manrico grow up in the provincial town of Latina, Italy. Accio joins a seminary, destined to become a priest. Manrico gets a job in a factory, becomes a union leader and falls in love with Francesca. And then Accio meets Francesca.
NR, 108 min, Italy, 2007

OUT OF AFRICA
JULY 2 @ 7:30
Boasting 7 Oscar wins including Best Picture and Best Director for the late, great Sydney Pollack, Meryl Streep and Robert Redford star in this classic set in 20th-century colonial Kenya. PG, 160 min, US, 1985

BLADE RUNNER THE FINAL CUT
JULY 3, 4, 5 @ 7:30
Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, Sean Young and Daryl Hannah star in Ridley Scott's influential 1982 fusion of sci-fi and film-noir based on the novel Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? by Philip K. Dick. Digitally remastered & edited to Scott's original vision.
R, 117 min, US, 2007

INTO THE WILD
JULY 6, 7, 8 @ 7:30
Top college student Christopher McCandless abandoned his possessions, gave all his money to charity and hitchhiked to remote Alaska. Sean Penn's adaptation of Jon Krakauer's nonfiction bestseller, with an outstanding soundtrack by Eddie Vedder. R, 140 min, US, 2007

THE DEVIL CAME ON HORSEBACK
JULY 9 @ 7:30
At age 27, U.S. Marine Captain Brian Steidle became a monitor for the African Union in Darfur, Sudan. He was completely unprepared for what he would see. A documentary journey into the midst of the conflict that has claimed 400,000 lives
NR, 85 min, US, 2007

YOUNG @ HEART
JULY 10, 11, 12 @ 7:30
Documents the Young at Heart Chorus in Northampton, MA. The average age is 81 and many members must overcome health adversities to participate. Their repertoire is unexpected, including songs by James Brown, Ramones and Sonic Youth.
PG, 107 min, UK, 2007
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ADMIRAL FOWLE'S PISCATAQUA RIVER TIDAL GUIDE (NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES)

Portsmouth is bounded on the north and east by the Piscataqua River. Depending on which tour boat captain you believe, it's the second, the third, or the fourth fastest-flowing navigable river in the country.

The Piscataqua's remarkable current is caused by the tide which, in turn is

caused by the moon. The other major player is a vast sunken valley, about ten miles upriver. Twice a day, the moon drags roughly seventeen billion gallons of salt water from the ocean, up the river, into Great Bay. (If the moon ever stopped moving that water for us, it could be replaced with 2,125,000

tanker trucks.)

The moon's meddling creates a roving hydraulic conflict as incoming sea and outgoing river collide. The skirmish line moves from the mouth of the river, past New Castle, around the bend by the old Naval Prison, under Memorial Bridge, past the tugboats,

and on towards Great Bay. This spectacle can best be seen when the chart below shows the tide rising. A good place to watch is the little deck near the sterns of the tugboats, off Ceres Street. Twice a day, too, the moon lets all that water go. All the salt water that just fought its way upstream goes back

to rejoin the ocean. This is when the Piscataqua earns its title for xth fastest current. A good place to observe this is from Bow Street, up by St. John's church. Look up the river, from one of the little parking lots between the buildings. (Don't try to drive or park there, that won't work.) You'll see a red

buoy, at the upstream end of Badger's Island, bobbing around in the current. That buoy weighs several tons, is nine feet wide, and it bobs and bounces in the current like a cork! The river also has its placid moments, around high and low tides. Often when the river rests, its tugboats and drawbridges

work their hardest. Ships coming in heavily laden with coal, oil, and salt generally do so at high tide, for maximum clearance under their keels. When they leave empty, riding high in the water, they tend to go at low tide, for maximum clearance under Memorial Bridge.

| Sunday, June 29 | Monday, June 30 | Tuesday, July 1 | Wednesday, July 2 | Thursday, July 3 | Friday, July 4 | Saturday, July 5 |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| <p>2006—"It was not always certain," says George W. Bush, "that the U.S. and America would have a close relationship." 1989—<i>The Washington Times</i> reports that high officials in the Reagan & Bush administrations are under investigation for involvement in a homosexual prostitution ring. The story quickly and conveniently evaporates. 1987—"We don't care," declares Reagan administration Attorney General Ed "Meese is a Pig" Meese, "about the political or ideological allegiances of a prospective judge." His audience bursts our laughing. 1966—U.S. starts bombing major oil facilities in Hanoi and Haiphong harbor. 1956—The U.S. Federal Highway Act OK's construction of 42,500 miles of highway so the Pentagon can move stuff around in case the Cold War turns hot. 1940—The Smith Act, requiring aliens in the U.S. to register with the government, is enacted. 1897—The Chicago Cubs score a record 36 runs in one game, against Louisville. 1620—Tobacco growing is banned in England, giving the Virginia Company a monopoly. 1613—The Globe Theater burns to the ground during Shakespeare's <i>Henry VIII</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8:06 8:26</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1:53 2:02</p> | <p>2003—<i>The Army Times</i> reports that the Bush administration wants to roll back combat and family-separation pay for troops in combat zones. 2001—Surgeons find a small, hard, black object in Dick Cheney's chest and attach a pacemaker and defibrillator to it. 1980—Jimmy Carter signs a bill creating a U.S. Synthetic Fuels Corporation, supposed to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. 1973—The last man drafted in the U.S. enters the Army. 1971—Richard "I am not a crook" Nixon orders a break-in at the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist. 1956—Two airliners collide, then crash into the Grand Canyon, killing all 128 on board. 1916—Battle of the Somme begins; 19,240 British soldiers die, 35,493 are missing. 1908—A mysterious 40 megaton explosion flattens a huge area around Tunguska, Siberia. 1882—After reading a poem beginning, "I am going to the Lordey, I am so glad," Charles Guiteau is hanged for the assassination of President Garfield. 1864—Sec. of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase (born in Cornish) resigns, charging that speculators were plotting to prolong the Civil War for monetary gain.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9:08 9:24</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2:53 3:00</p> | <p>2002—Two American West pilots, after consuming nearly three gallons of beer, are thrown out of a Miami bar about 4:45 a.m. Slated to pilot Flight 556 to Phoenix, they are busted instead. 1991—George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush nominates Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court. 1968—South Vietnam officially takes over the Phoenix Program. 1968—A chartered DC-8 carrying 214 American soldiers to Vietnam goes off course, strays into Soviet airspace, and is forced to land in the USSR. 1956—Elvis Presley appears on the Steve Allen Show and sings "Hound Dog" to a basset hound dressed in formal wear. 1917—In Boston, 8,000 march against the war. 1898—Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders charge San Juan Hill, soon to be relieved by the black 10th Cavalry. 1884—Allan Pinkerton, founder of the strike-breaking, union-busting detective agency, dies from an infection of the tongue, following an accidental bite, caused by slipping on a sidewalk. 1870—The U.S. Department of Justice is formed. It lasts approximately 131 years. 1863—The Battle of Gettysburg begins.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10:08 10:21</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3:52 3:58</p> | <p>2003—George W. Bush says, "There are some who feel that the conditions are such that they can attack us [in Iraq]. My answer is, bring 'em on." 2001—Recalling who stole the 2000 election for him, George W. Bush flip-flops on oil drilling off the Florida coast. 1982—Vietnam vet Larry Walters, 33, ascends to 16,000 feet in a lawn chair buoyed by 45 helium-filled weather balloons. 1976—The Supreme Court rules there's nothing cruel or unusual about the government killing certain selected people. 1970—Word gets out that South Vietnam is torturing prisoners at Con Son Prison. 1932—One year after predicting that highway speeds of 100 m.p.h. would soon be common, Fred Duesenberg rolls his Duesenberg at high speed. He dies three weeks later. 1894—Attorney General (railroad director) Richard Olney gets an injunction against striking Pullman workers. 1881—In Washington, Charles Guiteau, a Republican of the "Stalwart" faction, shoots President Garfield in the back. 1776—Twelve colonies vote to support the Declaration of Independence at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:06 11:17</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:50 4:55</p> | <p>1988—The <i>U.S.S. Vincennes</i> mistakes an Iranian airliner for an F-14 and shoots it down; 290 civilians die. 1960—George Lincoln Rockwell leads an American Nazi Party rally on the Mall in Washington, DC. It devolves into a riot. 1894—President G. Cleveland sends federal troops to Cleveland, vowing to get the lowliest postcard delivered if it takes the whole U.S. Army to do it. 1890—The 43rd state is admitted to the Union. Idaho's name, once thought to be Shoshoni, is more likely a hoax concocted by one George M. Willing. 1863—Portsmouth-born Benjamin F. Falls captures a flag at Gettysburg; he is later decorated with the Medal of Honor. 1850—In Geelong, Australia, newspaper publisher James Harrison dooms New Hampshire's ice-exporting industry by demonstrating the first mechanical refrigeration plant. 1835—In Paterson, NJ, children strike for an 11 hour day and a 6 day work week. 1775—In Cambridge, G. Washington assumes command of the 17,000 man Continental Army. 1754—George Washington finds it necessary to surrender Fort Mifflin to the French.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:01</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5:45 5:50</p> | <p>1924—Thousands of Ku Klux Klansmen meet in New Jersey to burn crosses and celebrate the failure of a Democratic Party campaign plank which would have condemned the Klan. 1911—Nashua registers New Hampshire's highest temperature to date, 106 degrees. 1898—At Hampton Beach, a tornado kills 3 and injures 120. 1894—U.S. troops arrive in Chicago and the Pullman strike turns violent. 1855—Walt Whitman self-publishes <i>Leaves of Grass</i>. 1845—Henry D. Thoreau moves into his cabin on Walden Pond. 1826—At New Harmony, Robert Owen delivers his Declaration of Independence, blasting "a trinity of ... evils"—private property, religion, and marriage. 1813—A few musket-toting Americans aboard the fishing smack <i>Yankee</i>, using a calf, a sheep, and a goose as bait, lure and capture <i>HMS Eagle</i> off NJ. 1809—Three hundred pounds of powder explode at Fort Constitution, killing fourteen people and mangling others horribly. 1776—Continental Congress formally endorses the Declaration of Independence. King George III writes in his diary, "Nothing of consequence happened today."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:11 12:54</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:37 6:44</p> | <p>1989—Lt. Col. Ollie North gets his wrist slapped for trampling on the Constitution. 1954—Elvis Presley records <i>That's All Right (Mama)</i>. 1950—Private Kenneth Shadrick, 20, of Skin Fork, W. Va., becomes the first American killed in the Korean War. 1946—In Paris, Micheline Bernardini appears wearing the world's first bikini. 1934—A Federal Laboratories sales rep, Joseph Roush, using a riot during a San Francisco dock strike as a chance to demonstrate his wares, fires a long-distance tear gas shell at strikers. One, hit in the skull, later dies. Roush writes to his boss, "as he was a Communist, I had no feeling in the matter and I am sorry that I did not get more." 1894—During the Pullman strike, a massive fire, probably set, destroys six buildings at the World's Columbian Exposition, including Machinery Hall, where Daniel Fowle's long-lost printing press was last seen. 1861—Abraham Lincoln suspends the right of <i>habeas corpus</i>, permitting the arrest of 18,000 subversives and peace activists. 1775—The Continental Congress passes the Olive Branch Petition, trying to patch things up with King George III.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1:04 1:45</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:28 7:38</p> |
| Sunday, July 6 | Monday, July 7 | Tuesday, July 8 | Wednesday, July 9 | Thursday, July 10 | Friday, July 11 | Saturday, July 12 |
| <p>2006—Riding a bike in Scotland, George W. Bush takes a hand off the handlebars to wave at police. Bush falls and strikes a policeman, who is hospitalized. 2003—An op-ed by Joseph Wilson in the <i>New York Times</i> accuses George W. Bush of "twisting" intelligence to justify a war against Iraq. 1971—Troubled by leaks, the Nixon Administration forms the "Plumbers" unit. 1959—A C-124 carrying a nuclear weapon (minus its fissile core) crashes at Barksdale AFB in LA. Both plane and weapon are destroyed. 1916—U.S. Army regulations now call for dog tags to be issued in pairs, with serial numbers. 1894—U.S. troops land in Nicaragua to protect U.S. interests. 1892—Pinkerton "detectives" and striking miners fight it out in Homestead, Pa.; 20 die. 1887—David Kalakau, King of Hawaii, signs away most of his power as he inks the "Bayonet Constitution" at gunpoint. 1798—Congress passes the third of the Alien and Sedition Acts, allowing imprisonment of aliens. 1747—John Paul, who later adopts the name "Jones" to throw off the law, is born in Scotland. 1699—Captain Kidd is captured in Boston.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8:18 8:32</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1:57 2:36</p> | <p>2005—Wellington Contreras, 43, walking home in the Bronx, is killed by a falling street sign, hit by a car whose driver has just been shot in the head. 2003—The White House admits its State of the Union claim about Saddam trying to buy uranium in Niger was "wrong." 1967—North Vietnamese General Nguyen Chi Thanh dies of a heart attack after excessively celebrating the Politburo's approval of his plan for a Tet Offensive. 1954—As Ngo Dinh Diem arrives in Saigon to serve as premier, U.S. Gen. John W. O'Daniel, says "[T]he war in Vietnam can be won without bringing in one single American soldier to fight." 1950—FBI Chief J. Edgar "Mary" Hoover proposes to arrest 12,000 people he deems "potentially dangerous to the internal security of the country." 1905—Kentucky hangs Robert Mathley, but he's six feet tall and the rope stretches. Officials with shovels dig until his feet don't touch the earth. 1864—Lame duck Vice President Hannibal Hamlin reports to Ft. McClary in Kittery as a private in the Coast Guard. 1863—The U.S. begins exempting from military service those who cough up \$100.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9:07 9:26</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2:49 3:27</p> | <p>1976—The State of New York yanks Richard Nixon's license to practice law. 1969—The withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam begins. 1959—Viet Cong forces attack Bien Hoa air base, killing two U.S. advisors as they watch a movie. 1947—Radio reports say a UFO has crashed at Roswell, NM. 1932—The Dow-Jones average bottoms out at 41.22 points. 1911—Nan Jane Aspinwall arrives in New York City, having left San Francisco 310 days earlier, and traveled more than 4,500 miles on horseback. 1886—In Britain it rains snails. 1853—Commodore Matthew Perry convinces the Japanese that it's better to trade with the U.S. than get shelled by them. 1835—The Liberty Bell tolls upon the death of Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall. Legend says it cracked this day, but that's been disputed. 1788—In Canterbury, Conn., hail falls to a depth of 34 inches. 1776—In Philadelphia, the as yet un-named Liberty Bell summons citizens to hear the Declaration of Independence read for the first time, by Colonel John Nixon. 1680—The first recorded tornado kills a servant in Cambridge.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9:56 10:22</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3:42 4:19</p> | <p>2004—At the Portsmouth Public Library, Laura Bush tells a reporter that the "Iraqi Interim Governing Council has taken responsibility now" for that country. 2004—"I trust God speaks through me," says George W. Bush to an Amish group. "Without that, I couldn't do my job." 1986—Ed "Meese is a Pig" Meese publishes a 1,960 page report on pornography meticulously listing 100 pages worth of obscene movie, magazine, and book titles. 1958—Fourteen thousand U.S. troops, equipped with nuclear-capable rockets, invade Lebanon. 1951—The House Un-American Activities Committee sentences tubercular <i>Maltese Falcon</i> author Dashiell Hammett to six months in prison for reticence. 1937—Oliver Law, a battalion commander in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and the first African-American to lead white troops, is killed in action. 1932—Donald Rumsfeld slithers from his mother's womb. 1918—Two trains collide in Nashville, killing 101 and injuring another 171. It is the deadliest train wreck in U.S. history. 1917—Federal troops raid an IWW hall in Yakima, Wash.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10:46 11:21</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:38 5:12</p> | <p>2007—China punishes Zheng Xiaoyu, Director of the State Food and Drug Administration. He took bribes that led to 40 deaths; they killed him. 2001—George Tenet tries to warn George W. Bush and Condoleezza Rice about Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda, but is unable to get their attention. 1989—Fifteen tornadoes rip through the northeast, causing \$100 million in damages. 1985—French secret police in the South Pacific blow up Greenpeace's boat, <i>Rainbow Warrior</i>. 1981—Hog rustler Ken McElroy is gunned down in Skidmore, MO before 45 eyewitnesses, but none will testify vs. his killer. 1972—In the Chandka Forest of India, a herd of stampeding elephants, driven mad by the heat, flattens a village, killing 24. 1962—Launch of Telstar, world's first telecommunication satellite. 1925—John T. Scopes goes on trial for teaching evolution. 1805—RIP Revolutionary War soldier Col. William Butler, who was court martialled for refusing to cut off his ponytail. "Bore a hole through the bottom of my coffin," he wrote in his will, "[so that] the damned rascal [his ex-commanding officer] will see that, even when dead, I refuse to obey his orders."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:38</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5:36 6:06</p> | <p>2003—CIA head George Tenet takes the rap for the White House's lies about Iraq, Niger, & uranium. 1995—Twenty-two years after withdrawing its troops, the U.S. establishes diplomatic relations with Vietnam. 1979—After a period of global anxiety, Skylab crashes to earth in the outback of Australia. 1955—Congress makes the appearance of the phrase, "In God We Trust" mandatory on all U.S. coins and paper currency. Which God is not specified. 1947—In Georgia, 8 black prisoners are killed for refusing to work without boots in a swamp. 1914—The Red Sox debut their new left-hander, George Herman "Babe" Ruth. 1888—Snow covers Mt. Washington, almost to the base. 1812—The U.S. unsuccessfully attempts to invade Canada. 1804—At Weehauken, NJ Alexander Hamilton fires into the ground in front of Aaron Burr, who takes aim and shoots Hamilton in the chest, killing him. 1798—Congress passes the fourth of the Alien and Sedition Acts, outlawing "scandalous and malicious writing." On the same day they re-establish the Marine Corps, disbanded 15 years earlier.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:22 12:33</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:38 7:03</p> | <p>1982—The Federal Emergency Management Agency pledges that, in the event of a nuclear war, the mail will get through. 1973—A fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri destroys the only copy of the service records of 16 to 18 million Army and Air Force veterans. 1962—In Pennsylvania, a garbage dump fire spreads to a coal mine where it will burn for more than twenty years. 1917—Armed vigilantes in Bisbee, Ariz. round up striking copper miners, herd them into cattle cars, take them east into New Mexico, and abandon them in the desert without food or water. 1916—Lyudmila Pavlichenko is born in the Ukraine. As a Red Army sniper, she kills over 500 Nazis during WWII, and becomes the first Soviet citizen welcomed to the White House. 1908—Birth of Milton Berle, the first American transvestite to have his own television show. 1892—The Pennsylvania militia wins the battle against striking Homestead steelworkers. 1836—In Cincinnati, a pro-slavery mob destroys type used by James Burney to print his abolitionist paper, <i>The Philanthropist</i>. 1810—New York shoemakers are put on trial for striking.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7:41 7:59</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1:24 1:29</p> |

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