

The Fortnightly Rant

Another Great Victory

It hardly seems possible, but we have just four more newspapers left in which to beat up on the incumbent President of the United States, George W. Bush. Unless of course Mr. Bush—or, more likely, his evil sidekick Dick “Dick” Cheney—calls out the SeaSmurfs* and declares martial law.

Readers frequently ask us these days how we will ever manage once the Bush League has left the White House. It is an abysmally selfish way for us to view things, but we must admit that the incumbent administration has provided us with a remarkably fertile environment in which to operate. As to what we'll do after January 20, our plan is simple: we'll burn that bridge when we come to it.

In the meantime, while this execrable administration lasts—and the nation's net worth sinks rapidly in the canyons of lower Manhattan—we note with our trademark grim satisfaction a report published by the Associated Press on Monday.

According to an AP review of “regulatory documents,” worried federal bank regulators proposed, in 2005, a number of more restrictive regulations for mortgage lending. In retrospect, it appears that if they had been approved—which, of course, they were not—they could have significantly reduced the current level of fiscal carnage.

One proposed regulation would have required banks to verify that would-be home buyers “actually had jobs and could afford houses.”

Another regulation would have required banks to warn home-buyers that “interest rates

might skyrocket and huge payments might be due sooner than expected.”

A third rule would have required that banks selling bundled mortgages explain to investors “exactly what they were buying.”

It is worth remembering, if only to fully savor the richness of the irony (and why not savor it, since we're paying for it anyway?) that the people proposing these radical restrictions on mortgage lending were not a bunch of hand-wringing, Birkenstock-wearing, left-wing worrywarts like Ralph Nader, or Senator Bernie Sanders from the People's Republic of Vermont, or the head of Nancy Pelosi's Constituent Services team back in Godless San Francisco. They were bureaucrats working for the Bush administration.

Through the rest of this sordid tale, the characters run more true to type.

Bank officers told regulators that the proposed changes were not necessary. Any risks that might be entailed in giving no-money-down, adjustable rate mortgages to people who might not have jobs would best be managed by the banks themselves. Their own self-interest would be the most efficient regulator.

One banker, David Schneider, told regulators that his adjustable-rate mortgages were “safer ... than many fixed rate mortgages.” Schneider ran the home loan department of Washington Mutual—into the ground. WaMu became the largest failed bank in U.S. history last September.

Another banker, Mary Jane Seebach, said the proposed changes were “excessive” and would “inhibit innovation in the



[sacred—Ed.] marketplace.” Seebach was speaking for Countrywide Financial Corp, the country's Number One originator of toxic mortgages. Countrywide's market value approached \$25 billion at its high point. Last summer, Bank of America bought its bleached bones for \$4 billion.

The struggle over the proposed tighter regulations went on for about a year. In the end, the regulators faded and the bankers prevailed. A few new rules went into effect late in 2006, but the more restrictive ones had been dropped. It was another great victory for the free market.

One person's victory is another person's defeat, though. In the first quarter of 2007, there were just under a quarter of a million properties in the U.S. “with foreclosure activity.” In each of the six quarters since then, that total

has gone up by about 100,000 properties. By the third quarter of 2008, the number was over 750,000.

Fortunately, no one would have been foolish enough to take these doomed mortgages and throw them into a large blender along with a few good ones, inextricably mix them all together, then extrude the resultant mess into large chunks, slice those chunks up like baloney, and, finally, sell each slice with an official Stamp of Approval claiming they were USDA Prime Angus Tenderloin. A nutty scheme like that would have screwed things up to a fare-thee-well. But no banker would be crazy enough to seriously propose doing that, and no responsible regulator would let them.

Oh, wait ... Yes, they did. And to fix the mess they created, the Bush administration, with an

OK from Congress, gave Hank Paulson the OK to hand out \$700 billion.

Surely they learned their lesson, right? Asked for a little accountability? These guys were always big on accountability, when they were asking for it from others, like schoolkids, and single mothers, and teachers in poor school districts, auto makers ...

“Treasury ... has no policies and procedures in place for ensuring that the institutions [who received the \$700 billion] are complying with ... requirements [that they restrict executive pay and dividend payments to shareholders] or that they are using the capital investments in a manner that helps meet the purposes of the act ...”

Report from the Government Accountability Office, Tuesday, December 2, 2008.

News Briefs:

Meet the SeaSmurfs

For a hundred and thirty years, the Posse Comitatus* Act of 1878 has prohibited the use of U.S. military personnel to enforce the law, unless specifically authorized by Congress. Unlike some federal laws, this one seems to draw support from both ends of the political spectrum. Mostly from the ends; those in the middle seems less concerned about the issue. The Act may generate more debate in the future, though. There's just something

about tanks in the streets that tends to draw people's attention.

The most recent encroachment on the Posse Comitatus Act (PCA) was briefly noted in our November 7 paper: the 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT) of the 3rd Infantry Division was assigned to the Northern Command, or NORTHCOM, “to assist civil authorities in the response to ... CBRNE incidents in the U.S. homeland.”

Just what is CBRNE? We'll get to that. First, NORTHCOM.

Organized in 2002, in response to the 9/11 attacks, NORTHCOM is that part of the Pentagon whose Area of Responsibility includes Canada, Mexico, Alaska, and the continental U.S. In other

words, under a strict interpretation of the PCA, NORTHCOM's very existence smacks of infringement.

NORTHCOM's new unit got a new name along with their new assignment: CCMRF. Pentagon terminology, always complex, seems to have taken a great evolutionary leap forward, judging from this example. The first C in CCMRF is actually a one-letter sub-acronym unto itself, standing for that mysterious CBRNE.

If you pull the pin on CCMRF, back up, and let the whole thing explode into whole words, you end up with Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosive Consequence Management Response

Force. To avoid spending whole days jabbering such lengthy incomprehensibilities at each other, or reciting long series of letters like a bunch of meat-based Morse Code machines, members of the military develop standard pronunciations for their myriad acronyms. In accordance with that system, CCMRF is pronounced “SeaSmurf.”

So: 4,700 U.S. soldiers who have spent more than half of the past five years in combat, either in Afghanistan or Iraq, are now responsible for the suppression of any insurrections perpetrated by revolting peasants or *New Hampshire Gazette* readers. And they are named after small, harmless, friendly, blue-skinned



A Regular Smurf

cartoon characters (see above).

Did we say 4,700? That's so October. The *Washington Post* reported Monday that the number of CCMRFs is expected to grow to 20,000 by 2011.

There was a time when the assignment of tens of thousands of

* *Posse Comitatus* (Latin): Power of the county. The whole force of the county: that is, all the male members of a county over fifteen, who may be summoned by a sheriff to assist in preventing a riot, the rescue of prisoners, or other unlawful disorders. Clergymen, peers, and the infirm are exempt.—*Wikipedia*



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armed soldiers to maintain order in the U.S. would have been seen as a blatant violation of the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878. But that was back when we still had a semi-functional Justice Department and a vaguely engaged press.

The strangest part of this story may be how our perception of the Posse Comitatus Act has evolved over the course of its lifetime. The Act is now widely seen as a valuable bulwark protecting the citizenry from the arbitrary use of executive power. In 1878, racist Southern Democrats knew it for what it then was: a device for stripping freed southern slaves of their newly-won rights under the Constitution.

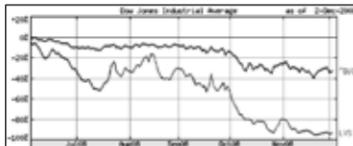
Tough Luck, Sheldon

In our July 25 issue, we used a favorite method to mercilessly abuse a certain Sheldon Adelson:

we printed some facts about him. The facts related mostly to the source of his vast fortune, and to how he has chosen to spend some of it: giving it to the poorly-named "Freedom's Watch," so that they could publish scurrilous, non-factual attacks on our incumbent Democratic Congresswoman, Carol Shea-Porter. There have been a couple of developments since then.

For one, Ms. Shea-Porter defied the odds, and the odds-makers, for a second time. She beat her opponent Jeb Bradley by a larger margin than she did the first time. Perhaps those distasteful ads Mr. Adelson sponsored had an effect he had not anticipated.

The other development took place on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE). Most of Mr. Adelson's wealth is tied up in the stock of his gambling empire, the Las Vegas Sands Corp., which is traded on the NYSE. Readers



may be aware that things haven't been going well there lately.

In fact, over the past six months, the value of the stocks that make up the Dow-Jones Industrial Average have lost about one-third of their value. Mr. Adelson likely wishes he had done that well.

In the graph at the top of the column, the upper squiggly line represents the Dow-Jones Average (DJI). The lower squiggly line represents the Las Vegas Sands (LVS). Shares of LVS, worth about \$64 in June, now fetch about between \$3.23 and \$5.17, if a buyer can be found. That's a loss of about 94 percent.

And what of Freedom's Watch, which rather tellingly bills itself as "the first full-time nonpartisan movement dedicated to preserving, protecting, and defending



Above: The view from Chapel Street, across Bow Street, and up the Piscataqua towards the Mildred Long Bridge is history now. Yay, progress.

conservative principles and promoting a conservative agenda?" The New York City newspaper *The Jewish Week* reported Wednesday, quoting a Las Vegas paper, that it was "pretty much kaput."

Support the Brass

On December 4, 2006, U.S. Army Privates First Class Albert Nelson and Roger Suarez-Gonzalez were killed during an intense firefight in Ramadi. According to an article published October 14, 2008, by the online magazine *Salon*, the mother of one of the men was first told that her son "might have been killed by friendly fire, and then that it was enemy mortars." Army investigators later declared that the deaths were from enemy mortar fire.

Soldiers who were in Ramadi with Nelson and Suarez when they died were interviewed by Mark Benjamin, and gave him helmet-cam videotape supporting their contention that the two were killed by a round from an American tank. The tape shows the aftermath of a tank shell hitting their building, and their futile attempts to save the men's lives. It also shows a sergeant reporting by radio that the fire came from a U.S. tank, and that

report being overruled by "a superior officer not at the scene."

On November 20, *Salon* published a follow-up. On the night the first article was published, it said, three soldiers who had been in the Ramadi firefight and had returned to Fort Carson, CO with their unit were ordered to shred two large document-storage boxes full of papers relating to the incident.

A Google search for the names of the two men shows that, among news organizations, *Salon's* findings have been mentioned by *Time* magazine's Swampland blog, and the Reno (NV) *Gazette-Journal*.

Hmmm ...

That Explains a Lot

There was a time—2002 and 2003, to be specific—when it was impossible to get through the day in America without hearing the New National Mantra™: "Support the Troops." For a lot of people, that was probably not a big problem. For veterans of a certain age, though, it could be grating.

The constant repetition of the mantra did have one positive effect, though. It temporarily displaced much of the otherwise incessant coverage, on cable news, of the "missing young female

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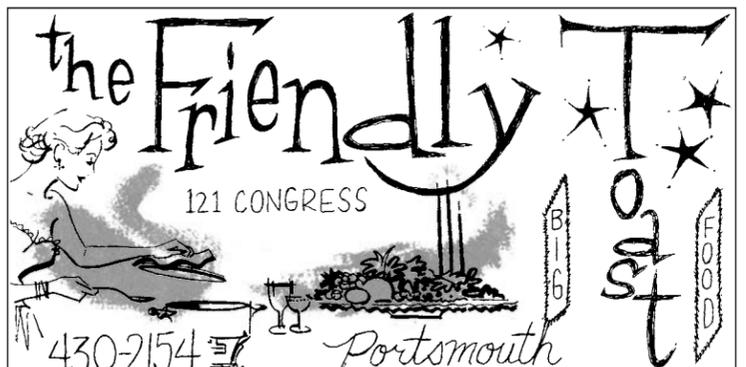
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Portsmouth



Above: The text of the sign under the Federal Eagle reads, "Memorial to the Sailors and Soldiers of New Hampshire who Participated in the World War 1917 - 1919." As we reported last fortnight, this War Memorial—which is also the only bridge open to pedestrians and bicyclists between Portsmouth and Kittery—is in dire condition. Maine and New Hampshire negotiated an agreement to pay for a full rehabilitation, but the amount budgeted fell short of contractors' bids. The shortfall is about \$15 million—enough to fund the Iraq War for about one hour.

Caucasian" beat.

For reasons we can't quite figure out, the issue of "Supporting the Troops" no longer gets much air time anymore. Which is odd, since they need our support more now than ever. But the "missing female Caucasian" genre is still doing brisk business.

While "researching" another topic—which is to say, aimlessly surfing the Internet instead of writing the alleged "news"—we stumbled across a few bits of data that, we think, gave us a better understanding of that particular variety of journalism. It turns out that Greta Van Susteren, who is surely one of the most eminent practitioners, is the daughter of Urban van Susteren, who managed the election campaign of the late and thoroughly disgraced Sen. Joseph McCarthy. And when Greta was a child, the alcoholic right-wing Senator lived at the Van Susteren home in Appleton, WI, when not in Washington tormenting people for his own political gain.

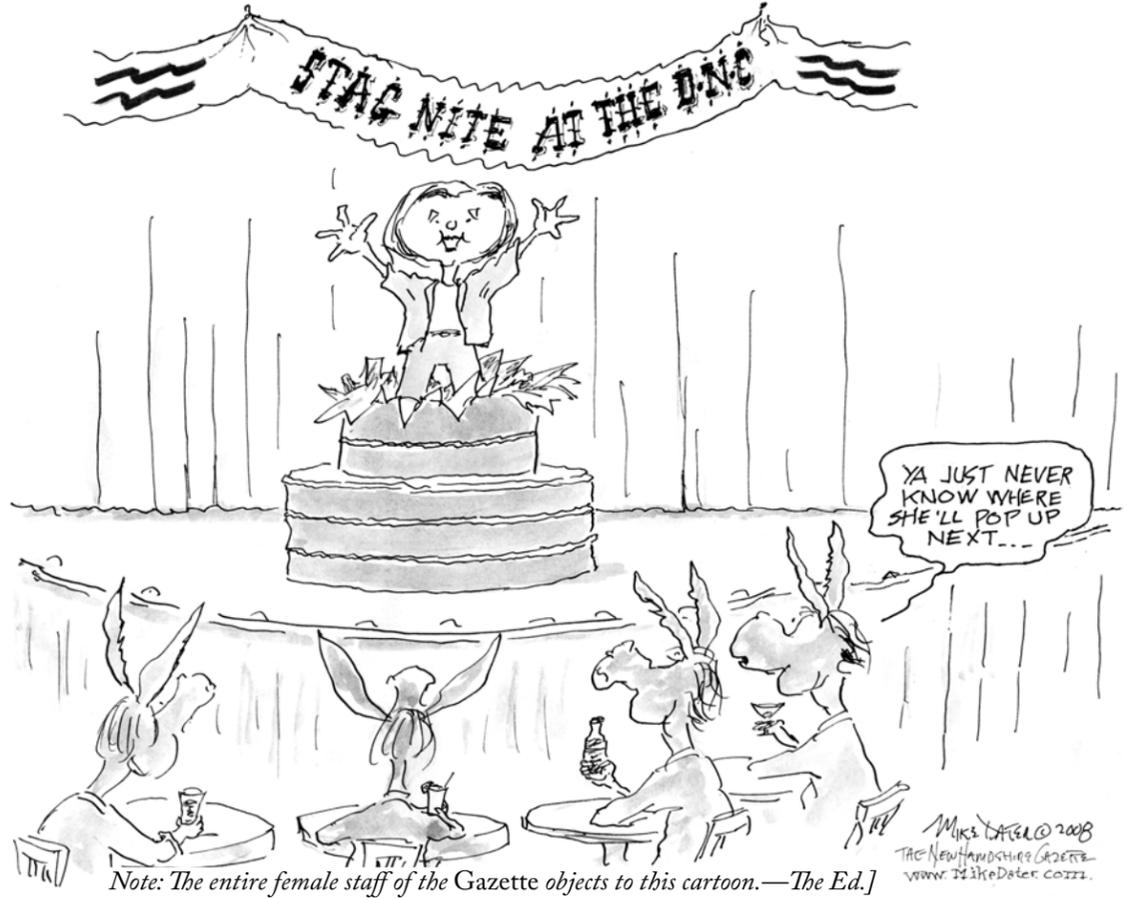
If you've ever watched Greta, thought there was something a

bit odd about her, and wondered how she got that way, well, now you know.

And the effects appear to go deeper than her weird reporting. According to a 1998 article in the *St. Petersburg Times*, Ms. Van S. and her husband, John Coates, are both Scientologists, "a religion that teaches of Xenu, evil head of the Galactic Confederation ... [w]ho flew people to Teegeeack (Earth) 75-million years ago in space ships, chained them to volcanos and blew them up with hydrogen bombs, releasing exploded 'thetans' that are now the source of most human suffering..."

Oh, Those Troops

While we're on this harangue, we can report that after seventeen years of official denial that Gulf War Illness exists, a committee appointed by Congress has released a report which says "[a]t least one in four of the 697,000 U.S. veterans of the 1991 Gulf War suffer from Gulf War illness, a condition caused by exposure to toxic chemicals, including pesticides and a drug administered to



Note: The entire female staff of the Gazette objects to this cartoon.—The Ed.]

protect troops against nerve gas, and no effective treatments have yet been found."

A press release from Boston University, where the study was assembled, says "The extensive body of scientific research now available consistently indicates that Gulf War illness is real, that it is the result of neurotoxic exposures during Gulf War deployment, and that few veterans have recovered or substantially improved with time." But you no doubt heard that from Greta.

Turn Up the (H)EAT

We have been relatively slothful members of Seacoast Local since its inception. Seacoast Local is a grassroots not-for-profit network "dedicated to promoting community involvement in local business, agriculture, arts and culture, the environment and civic life in the Seacoast region of

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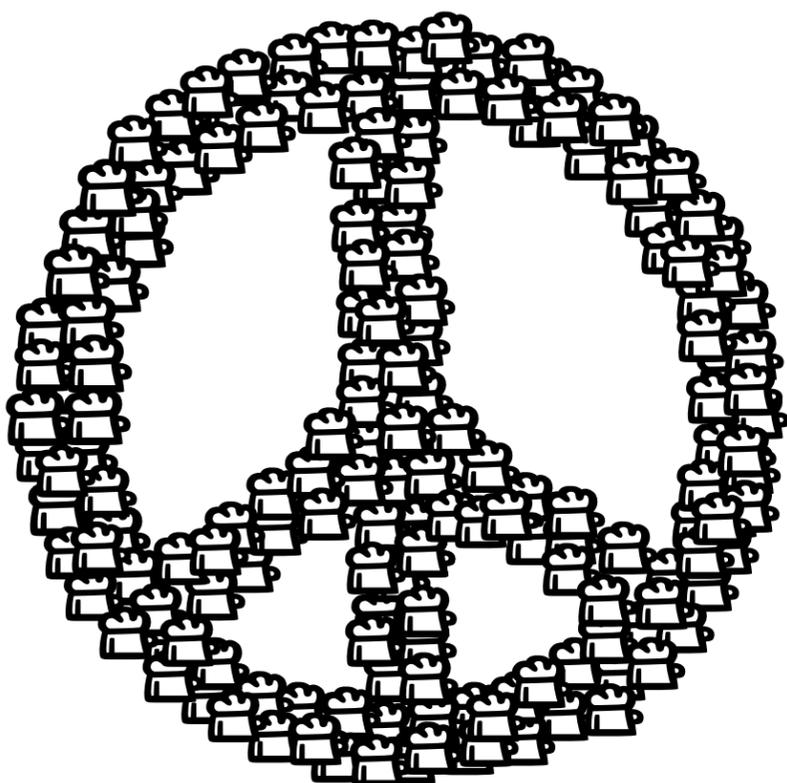
The Flag Police Stir Briefly From Their Reveries

Since the latest ignominious defeat of the anti-free speech crowd, the Flag Police have been less than diligent. But the object pictured at right snapped them out of their reveries.

"Ol' Glory" purports to be "America's Best Energy Drink." But if it had any merit, would it need to wrap itself in a disfigured flag? Oklahoma-based Ol' Glory's CEO Don Sessions, a diamond-flashing septaugenarian, told the online video gaming magazine *PTD* he'd "like to see Ol' Glory become "the drink of the Armed Forces."

Sounds rather improbable, but apparently he's already got the Oklahoma National Guard distributing his guarana-laced version of high-fructose corn syrup and water for free during its recruiting efforts and at special events.

The Flag Police are speechless.



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



Northcountry Chronicle

Mad Christian Disease

by William Marvel

This title may seem a little irreverent, but please understand that we've just received our latest letter from one of my wife's obsessively Christian relatives, begging for money for a good Christian purpose. The cultural implications are nothing short of terrifying: the Taliban has nothing on Kansas gospel mongers, except perhaps AK-47s.

This time it was another of the innumerable nieces and nephews, from whom we only hear when they graduate from high school, get married, or have some other excuse to hint for money. Frequently they ask for cash outright, usually to fund some "missionary" venture in South America or Eastern Europe, where they try to convert the inhabitants to their Bible-thumping brand of Christianity. The recent letter had an even uglier twist: this particular niece and her husband have determined to make their living by transforming other people's children into "good Christians."

I've never met this niece, and that's fine with me. Her parents and one of her sisters (Misty Dawn, no less) were more than enough, thank you, with their constant comments on the "wisdom" of God, the "theory" of evolution, and the visceral allure of Wal-Mart. Like her parents and sister, Wende and her husband use divine will as an excuse for everything they do and everything that happens to them.

According to Wende's letter, "we are both searching for what God wants from us for future job situations." That's Christian-speak for "unemployed." God is responsible for everything out there, and they ask his counsel before they even go to the bathroom. From recent photographs it would appear that God mostly advises them to siphon down hamburgers and soda.

Wende attended a Wesleyan college, where she met her husband, Tyler. She taught in the elementary grades briefly, but didn't like it. Judging from her letter, she didn't like English grammar,

either, so perhaps it's just as well. God obviously had another use for her, as she would put it. That use apparently did not include further employment, which is unfortunate, because Tyler heard the same voices: God "clearly and without any doubt" told him to resign from his job. Now he's taken some EMT training and, like many who have been led by divine guidance into a private profession where they failed, he hopes that God will now find him work in the public sector. He may, meanwhile, wish that God had kept his mouth shut about Wende's teaching job.

Since God told them to hit the skids, they've taken in a pack of foster children. That is currently their only means of making money, and it gives them the chance to transform helpless kids into the same religious fanatics that they and their parents are. "We are thankful for the spiritual influence we are able to have on their lives," says Wende of her state-subsidized boarders. "Their favorite thing to do is sing wor-



ship songs in the car." I guess the car is the only convenient place to lock them up while she watches the soaps.

The presence of all those children must have ignited the maternal fire in Wende, whose evangelical euphemisms may imply that they cannot have children of their own. Perhaps it's merely that, after all those hamburgers and sodas, God won't lead Tyler to the requisite performance. Whatever the underlying problem may be, Wende tells us that "God has laid it on our hearts to adopt and have a house full of children who would

not be our children biologically, but they would be our children in every other sense of the word. It is my dream and goal to be in a place in a few years to be able to have eight to ten kids in our family, some of them adopted, others foster kids."

She conspicuously failed to note whether this was also Tyler's dream, any more than it was his idea for her to quit teaching. Adoption is a wonderful substitute for having children, but—thanks probably to the foster-care experience—this couple seems unable to shake the notion that kids are something the rest of the world is supposed to pay you for raising. Their form letter therefore included a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which we were expected to return a check.

My wife contemplates using the envelope for one of her gently dissenting letters, designed to explain that we do not share her niece's religious views or social perspective. I think I'll just throw in a copy of this column.

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southern Maine and New Hampshire." If it had been dependent on our active participation for its survival, Seacoast Local would have failed by now—but it has not. In fact, it's thriving. And it's doing something so compelling, we're actually going to start putting our oar in, right here, right now.

The project is called (H)EAT, and it's about "Ten Thousand Meals, Ten Thousand Gallons."

The local, independent businesses that make up Seacoast Local have committed themselves to raising enough money—\$50,000—to buy the aforementioned quantities of food and fuel. The donations they collect will go directly to agencies that already serve the public, such as Rockingham County Community Action, the Salvation Army, South Church, Kittery's Table of Plenty, and York County Community Action.

The inspiration for this project is fairly clear. Income inequal-

ity in the U.S. has risen to levels not seen since the Gilded Age (1877—1890). Over the past thirty years, most of the gains in per capita income have gone to those in the top few percent. And that was before the present meltdown. Now that the disadvantaged and just plain unlucky are most in need of help, the federal and state taps are running dry. All that money had to go to Wall Street, don't you know.

It's always a better idea, if you're going to spend any money, to do it locally if you can. Money spent in big box stores goes to China, by way of Wall Street. Money spent locally stays in circulation, and helps keep the wheels of the local economy greased. Spend it

today, get it back next week.

And local businesses provide something else, which the (H)EAT campaign clearly demonstrates. Local businesses are already participating in local philanthropy, day in, day out, in less obvious ways. You need look no further than your local bookstore(s) to see that. (H)EAT is just a grander, more obvious manifestation of the phenomenon.

Congreenience Store Opens in Dover

New Hampshire's first exclusive biofuels station and "Congreenience" store held a grand opening this afternoon at 547 Central Avenue in Dover. Seventy-five percent of the products

carried in the store come from a one hundred mile radius of Dover—reducing the amount of miles that the inventory has traveled to get to the consumer, thus reducing CO2 emissions.

"This concept was second nature to us," Andrew Kellar, Founder of Simply Green Biofuels, explained to us by means of a convenient and useful press release.

"We want to provide a local option not only for fuel, but for items that people use every day. Our customers can come in to shop and know that what they are buying is helping our local community."

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Moving Pictures

British Invaders

by Rodman Philbrick

As far as American-born actors are concerned, the most dangerous invaders are not Sharia-spouting terrorists or go-dripping alien pirates from outer space. What shivers the timbers of the Screen Actors Guild is the infestation of accent-perfect actors from the far-flung nations of the British Commonwealth. We're not referring to big-screen stars like Russell Crowe (New Zealand) Mel Gibson (Australia) and Cate Blanchette (Australia), all of whom arrived under their own flags, impressing theater audiences with their ability to exude, when called upon, convincing patterns of American speech, right down to the subtleties of regional accents.

No, the most recent invaders seemed to have slipped into our living rooms without so much as flashing their passports, or lifting their pinkie fingers when sipping milk-sodden tea. Think England's Hugh Laurie in the title role as *House*, or that Tasmanian devil Simon Baker in *The Mentalist*. Or—and some viewers still refuse to believe it—the veddy British Dominic West as “Baltimore” detective Jimmy McNulty in *The Wire*.

A thespian fifth column, obviously. If the trend continues they

might even infiltrate the high levels of government, where good actors are always in demand. Why, if the conspiracy succeeds we could find ourselves electing a president who might be hiding ancestral connections to the former British colony of, say, Kenya. Okay, so he's hiding his father in plain sight, on the best-seller pages—that simply underscores their evil cleverness—or is it their clever evilness?—like replacing cornpone-prone Bill Clinton with a Royal Shakespeare-trained bubba clone when he attended Oxford.

Far better—and far more patriotic—to take your Commonwealth actors straight, with no deception. You have nothing to fear from the following British television series, all available on DVD (and some on BBC America) and all featuring actual British-sounding actors easily identified as enemy combatants. Some with regional and class accents that will have you cupping hand to ear and ranting “what did he say?” to your long-suffering spouses.

Hustle—a slickly produced, cleverly plotted variation on *Mission Impossible*, about a charming team of con artists who take money only from those who deserve to be punished. Created by Tony Jordan, who exported *Life*

On Mars to these shores. Great acting by Adrian Lester, Marc Warren, Jaime Murray (the bad and sexy girlfriend on *Dexter*) and with American actor Robert Vaughn as the eminence greasy.

Jekyll—a six part miniseries starring James Nesbitt as the last living descendent of the infamous Dr. Jekyll. Mr. Hyde frolicking in the 21st Century London club scene? Delicious. Plus he gets to keep himself prisoner under lock-and-key, which for the Brits is almost as much fun as a high colonic.

The State Within—A two-disc thriller starring Jason Isaacs as a diplomatic operative drawn into a vast right wing—or is it left wing?—conspiracy that starts with a passenger plane exploding over Washington, D.C. The U.S. Secretary of Defense looks suspiciously like Dick Cheney in drag, but then again, don't they all?

Murder City—A great little ten-episode series starring Amanda Donohoe as a detective inspector with a team of investigators that includes boy genius Kris Marshall, a university-trained savant.

MI-5—Already familiar to many viewers, who got a taste of it on cable. The long-running espionage series is at least as suspenseful as *24*, and the torture scenes are done in a posh accent.

MI-5 is, of course, Military Intelligence Section 5, the British equivalent of the FBI spy-catching division. *MI-6* being more like the CIA. If you find the distinction interesting, and you ever loved the Bond movies or the John le Carre spy novels, you'll find *MI-5* pleasantly addictive. Lots of crisp dialogue, clock-ticking suspense, slick cinematography. Plus you never know what long-running character is going to be killed in any given episode.

Rebus—An Edinburgh detective series based on the Ian Rankin novels. The first season starred John Hannah as a too-young version of the beer-and-single-malt swilling homicide investigator, later corrected by the more age-appropriate Ken Stott. Played close to the books, and you get to discover how all those weirdly spelled names are pronounced. Pour yourself a Laphroaig and enjoy.

McCallum—An excellent five-disc series starring the above-mentioned John Hannah as a forensic pathologist in London's East End. Intelligent scripts, well-acted characters, plus oodles of Indian take-out. Not as gory as *CSI*, but is that really a bad thing?

Hamish Macbeth—A delightful throwback to the old Ealing Stu-



dios rural comedies, with a bit of tea cosy mystery thrown-in. Starring Robert Carlyle (*The Full Monty*) as a constable in a small village in the highlands of Scotland. He's less interested in making arrests than he is in preserving a way of life. More eccentric characters than you can shake a haggis at, and there's plenty of puzzles to be solved with nary a hint of violence. Based on the mystery novels of M.C. Beaton.

Kavanagh QC—This series stars John Thaw in one of his last roles. He's very much in his “Inspector Morse” persona as the irascible barrister—a Queen's Counsel—whose avid pursuit of justice often involves solving a crime in the guise of a courtroom drama. Well played, sir!

As to those Brits, Aussies, and sheep-loving New Zealanders currently impersonating native sons and daughters on red-blooded American TV shows, show us your true selves, please. Lift the pinky.

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based fuel and a fuel product made in the from renewable feedstock resources; Simply Green's is a blend of soybean oil and tallow. Blends are available from 5 percent up to 100 percent pure Biofuel. No system modifications are needed to run up to a 20 percent (B20) blend.

For more information about

Simply Green Biofuels, visit www.seacoastbiofuels.com.

Our Future ...

Assuming We Have One

The U.S. economy is in shambles. The global situation is about as dire—and we begin writing this piece on Friday, November 28. Lord only knows how desperate things might be two weeks hence! Just to pick an example at random, experts say

that Pakistan is pretty shaky, due to the strain of trying to simultaneously contain its Islamic militants and maintain the good graces of Foggy Bottom and the Pentagon. When parents divorce, people ask, who gets the kids? If Pakistan falls apart, the question is, who gets the nukes?

Being in this racket, there's a tendency to focus on those external catastrophes, and figure

that we'll recover from whatever little bumps we hit. But considering the rocky economy, and our casual—make that lackadaisical—approach to cash reserves, that's probably not very wise. So we thought we ought to make a pitch here for more subscriptions. Gift Subscriptions, in particular.

No matter how good a person you try to be, the odds are that you're not perfect. Every-

one has flaws. For some of us, that may mean an association, past or present, with one or more somewhat dubious persons. And about this time of year, you may well be wondering, what, if anything, should I give that dubious person? Allow us to suggest that for certain dubious persons, no gift is more appropriate than the Nation's Oldest Newspaper™. See below:

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A Happy Ex-Pat Strathamite

To the Editor:

As a native of Stratham who has lived fulltime in Maryland since 1961, I was pleasantly surprised to see the letter from the co-coordinators of the Stratham for Carol (Shea-Porter) group and to learn that my old home town had resoundingly backed their candidate on Nov. 4. The Congresswoman from New Hampshire's First District was one of the candidates to whom I made a few small financial contributions on the basis of worthiness and need. And I was most happy to see that she was reelected.

When I was a kid (long long ago in the 40s), you could probably count the number of Democrats in Stratham on the fingers of one hand. It's good to know that's no longer the case.

For some years now, my beautiful niece Jenn has sent me a gift subscription to your fine publication (which, at the least, serves to counterbalance the ravings of the *Union-Leader*). And I still have one brother and a couple of other nieces in the old home town.

Keep up the good work.

Kenneth A. Stevens

Savage, MD

Kenneth:

That was an astonishing result. Since her first campaign, a barrage of letters from Strathamites has excoriated now-Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter, and praised her rival to the skies. Thanks for giving us this first-person look at the

history of Stratham's politics. And thanks to your niece, for buying your subscription.

The Editor

You're Right, We're Wrong

[No salutation]

You are so misinformed that it makes me feel sorry for all of you. You are all so wrong in the way you think the world is.

Paul Rody

via the InterTubes

Paul:

Your irrefutable argument has convinced us of the error of our ways. We are mortified to have been so foolish. Please forgive us.

The Editor

Speaker Pelosi's Big Carbon Footprints

To the Editor:

It is reported that Speaker Pelosi wasn't happy with the small private jet that comes with the Speaker's job since this little jet had to stop to refuel and this aggravated her. Without considering the cost, she ordered a 200 seat jet with fuel tanks that could get her back and forth to California without stopping.

"It's not a question of size, it's a question of distance," Pelosi said. "We want an aircraft that can reach California."

Navy Commander Jeffrey Gordon, a Pentagon spokesman, said that Pelosi would be offered "shuttle service for no more than ten passengers between Washington and San Francisco only based on aircraft availability."

"This does not guarantee non-stop transport," Gordon said.

Her colleagues had raised eyebrows as the fuel costs us, the hard working American taxpayers, thousands of dollars additionally each week!

Madam Pelosi works 3 days a week, hence this fuel guzzling jet costs the taxpayers of about \$60,000, one way. Whoops, we have to pay to bring her back on Monday night, right? Cost to you

the taxpayer another \$60,000.

Here is the math; \$480,000 per month x 12 months is an annual cost to the taxpayers of \$5,760,000.

Madame Pelosi wants you and I to conserve our carbon footprint. She wants us to buy smaller cars and Obama says, get a bicycle. This is the epitome of arrogance.

Dick Marple

Hooksett, NH

Dick:

OK, you've roused our curiosity. We're going to look into this.

The Editor

At Least He's Even-Handed About His Intolerance

To the Editor:

Thanks for printing my letter Nov.21. It did take a bit of daring (what with the L. Ron Muhammad thing and my mention of Allah) when one considers the insane outrage over those Danish cartoons a while ago. As far as I know only *Free Inquiry* magazine from Amherst, NY printed the dreaded cartoons in America. The Muslims were upset because the cartoons depicted them as violent. They were so upset that they rioted all over the globe. Sigh!

Over the centuries Jesus has matured a little. He is now able to withstand a joke or two. Allah needs to get a life and grow up. King what's his name of Saudi Arabia is now leading the charge to make blasphemy a crime the world over. The holy rollers are going to the UN with their dark age request. Sigh!

According to a UNICEF report from Somalia, a thirteen year old girl was walking alone to visit her grandmother. She was attacked by three men and raped. When she complained to the authorities, SHE was accused of adultery. They placed her in a hole and fifty men stoned her to death while 1000 others watched. Sigh!

Mash Notes, **HATE MAIL,**

I hope I don't appear to be prejudiced against Islam. I am not prejudiced against Islam. I hate all religions.

Amen,

Gary Walker, aka Infidel

Campton

Gary:

Well, it's nice to see you're not prejudiced.

The Editor

Source of the Affordable Housing Problem?

To the Editor:

There's a reason why we have a lack of affordable housing in Portsmouth and much of the surrounding area. Every time a building gets the slightest bit scruffy and would appeal to people who have less money but don't mind older places that might need some work to live in, some fat cat buys them, tears them down, builds mansions in place of them, sells the mansions to people who can't afford them, and sells the mortgages to some bank out of state. He makes a bundle and we can't find a nice old house to live in and fix up. That's why we have a banking crisis, too, of course. Is there some way we can rein in these tycoons?

Joel S. Look

Portsmouth, NH

Joel:

Cheer up, Joel. After the economy finishes cratering, all those empty McMansions can be converted into tenements. There'll be so many units available, rents will plummet.

The Editor

LCHIP

To the Editor:

Times are tough.

New Hampshire's projected budget shortfall is approaching \$250 million. This should not come as a surprise. Although the deficit and the unfunded liabilities that feed it have been grow-

ing like a cancer for years, the State has failed to address the imbalance between funding and income in any fundamental way.

Now, at the eleventh hour, we find the Governor and Legislative Fiscal Committee desperately cutting the state budget. Desperation does not make for good decision-making: on Nov 21, \$3 million was rescinded from the state's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP).

We question the impact of this \$3 million upon a quarter billion dollar deficit.

LCHIP is an independent state authority that makes matching grants to New Hampshire communities and nonprofit organizations, enabling them to conserve the state's most important natural resources.

LCHIP's total \$4.3 million budget—soon to be minus \$3 million—makes up less than one-eighth of one percent of the state's \$10.3 billion biennial budget.

Since its creation in 2000, LCHIP has enabled 107 New Hampshire communities to conserve more than 220,000 acres of high priority conservation land. Thanks to LCHIP, thousands of acres of working farm and forest lands and important drinking water resources have been safeguarded for future use. Preserving these resources also helps to maintain the state's attraction as a destination of tourist dollars—a major source of income for the state.

Conservation land is not an "extra"—a frill that merits fiscal attention only when there's cash to spare. Clean water and fertile farming soil are finite resources. If we do not take steps now to ensure their future availability, we have no guarantee that these resources will be here tomorrow.

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And Other Correspondence

Or next year. Or in 10 years.

New Hampshire townspeople and federal decision-makers alike recognize this. Despite the current challenging economic climate, communities across the state as well as the federal government have appropriated funding for land conservation. But without the additional leverage from LCHIP, it's just not enough.

For each LCHIP dollar invested, more than six matching dollars are generated through local, private, and federal contributions.

In effect, the governor and Fiscal Committee have rescinded not \$3 million from the state's conservation kitty, but \$21 million—including \$18 million in outside matching funds.

If it was the goal of the governor and Fiscal Committee to hamstring the conservation work of New Hampshire's citizenry, they have succeeded.

If their intent was to make anything other than a token gesture to address New Hampshire's escalating deficit, they have failed spectacularly.

Steve Panish, Chairman of the Board, Moose Mountains Regional Greenways
Milton, NH

What We're Thankful For

To the Editor:

Having no family in the area, I accepted an invitation for Thanksgiving from a family which had joined my church. She was American and he was European.

This family had two kids, one of whom had a homework assignment to write a paragraph on what he was thankful for.

The kid was thankful for a new computer game.

The adults adopted this as a topic of discussion. Adults are usually more thankful for fam-

ily, friends, or health, but when it came my turn I said, "I'm thankful we're getting a new president."

To this my host replied, "I'm thankful the present one is leaving."

Bill Alton

Exeter, NH

Bill:

Bush finally becomes the uniter he promised he would be.

The Editor

Lethal Obsolescence

To the Editor;

Wars are obsolete. No one wins wars. They do not make world peace. They are not cost effective. Even the Military, Industrial Congressional Complex cannot make profit enough to offset the long-term costs of war to our national economy and debt.

Consider the cost of GI life insurance payments (\$10,000 in 1944 to \$50,000 plus today) paid to all the families of the casualties since WWII.

The costs of supporting the wounded veterans in VA hospitals and the medical payments, plus the travel payments to the VA centers, for the wounded veterans for the rest of their lives as well as burial benefits, plus the cost of veteran's pensions for the past sixty-four years.

Add the costs of the lost naval and commercial ships, landing craft, aircraft, tanks, artillery, firearms, motor vehicles plus the waste, corruption and theft of the Pentagon's military procurement system,

What is the cost of the enemies we have made with the "collateral damage" of the dead and wounded innocent Iraqi and Afghan men, women and Children? What has the evidence of our covert kidnapping and torture cost us in the eyes of the world opinion?

The profit made by the war profiteers and the hangers-on cannot pay for our bravest and best that sacrificed their lives and limbs for the freedom we often take for granted.

There is nothing that can pay for the trauma of grief of the wives and husbands who have lost the love, intimacy and the support of their mates or the trauma of the children who have lost the love of a parent, a mentor and a role model to help them mature into happy, responsible adults?

How do we pay for many Veteran suicides that are as much a combat casualty as the rest but they are never part of the count? What is the price of many of the homeless veterans with PTSD, living in the nightmares of the secreted atrocities (See *The Nation*, December 1, 2008) of wars that have proven to be fought for corporate profit?

Wars may end and hostilities cease but the price we all pay goes on and ON and ON until we work as hard for peace as we do for war.

Wilbur N. Rhodes

Kittery, ME

Wilbur:

Perhaps you've heard of Major General Smedley Darlington Butler. Twice decorated with the Medal of Honor, he was the most decorated Marine in U.S. history.

As a young Marine, Butler fought with great courage and distinction in the Boxer Rebellion, for which he was awarded the Marine Brevet Medal, and given a battlefield commission. Sadly, he lost a chunk of Central America from the large tattoo on his chest of the Marines' "eagle, globe, and anchor" symbol due to a gunshot wound. He went on to fight in Honduras, Veracruz, Mexico (first Medal of Honor), and Haiti (second Medal of Honor). He eventually served 33 years in the Corps.

After his retirement, Butler gave a speech in which he described his career as follows:

"I helped make Mexico, especially Tampico, safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street.

"The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested. During those years, I had, as the boys in the back room would say, a swell racket.

"Looking back on it, I feel that I could have given Al Capone a few hints. The best he could do was to operate his racket in three districts. I operated on three continents."

In his book, War is a Racket, he elaborated:

"A racket is best described, I believe, as something that is not what it seems to the majority of the people. Only a small "inside" group knows what it is about. It is conducted for the benefit of the very few, at the expense of the very many. Out of war a few people make huge fortunes.

"In the World War [I] a mere handful garnered the profits of the conflict. At least 21,000 new millionaires and billionaires were made in the United States during the World War. That many admitted their huge blood gains in their income tax returns. How many other war millionaires falsified their tax returns no one knows.

"How many of these war millionaires shouldered a rifle? How many of them dug a trench? How many of them knew what it meant to go hungry in a rat-infested dug-out? How many of them spent sleepless, frightened nights, ducking shells and shrapnel and machine gun bullets? How many of them parried a bayonet thrust of an enemy? How many of them were wounded or



killed in battle?

"Out of war nations acquire additional territory, if they are victorious. They just take it. This newly acquired territory promptly is exploited by the few—the self-same few who wrung dollars out of blood in the war. The general public shoulders the bill."

But who knows? Maybe things have changed since then.

The Editor

Old Guy Needs Work



Dear Readers:

The above gentleman appeared at our lavishly appointed offices recently, smelling faintly of rum and asking for employment. We explained that we had no work for him at the moment, but if sufficient numbers of people were to buy gift subscriptions for friends, relations, or people they simply wished to annoy, we might get busy enough to hire him. If you wish to help him, and us, you will find the form on the bottom of page five to be useful.

The Editor

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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, December 7	Monday, December 8	Tuesday, December 9	Wednesday, December 10	Thursday, December 11	Friday, December 12	Saturday, December 13							
<p>2006—The "Justice" Department fires eight prosecutors for failing to persecute enough Democrats.</p> <p>1998—Boris Yeltsin leaves the hospital, fires several aides, and returns to the hospital.</p> <p>1995—French workers numbering 1.75 million protest global exploitation.</p> <p>1993—The Department of Energy admits it's conducted more than 200 secret weapons tests.</p> <p>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 on board.</p> <p>1977—FBI releases JFK assassination files ... some of them.</p> <p>1975—Indonesia invades East Timor with a little help from the U.S. and Britain.</p> <p>1970—R.I.P. Rube Goldberg, cartoonist and designer of <i>Gazette</i> business plan.</p> <p>1968—R. Dodd returns a book overdue 145 years to the U. of Cincinnati; librarians fail to collect \$22,646 in fines.</p> <p>1941—Japanese planes attack Pearl Harbor.</p> <p>1931—Hundreds of hungry workers show up at White House petitioning for work; they get the bum's rush.</p> <p>1682—Pennsylvania passes the "Great Law," abolishing war in that colony.</p>	<p>2004—Soldiers in Iraq ask Sec. of Defense Rumsfeld why he sent them there without enough vehicle armor.</p> <p>1993—President Clinton signs NAFTA into law.</p> <p>1982—Norman Mayer threatens to blow up the Washington Monument with a van full of dynamite unless a national dialogue on banning nuclear weapons begins. After a ten hour standoff, police shoot and kill him.</p> <p>1980—John Lennon is shot dead in New York.</p> <p>1972—United Airlines Flight 553 crashes in Chicago, killing 45 people, including E. Howard Hunt's wife Dorothy.</p> <p>1969—The LAPD raids Black Panther HQ.</p> <p>1967—U.S. counts 365 dead Viet Cong in Mekong Delta battle.</p> <p>1963—Lightning strike ignites fuel tanks of a jetliner which crashes near Elkton, Md.</p> <p>1940—Four hundred German planes bomb London.</p> <p>1894—Birth of James Thurber, Columbus, Ohio.</p> <p>1864—Pope Pius IX denounces liberalism, socialism, and rationalism.</p> <p>1854—Pope Pius IX proclaims the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.</p> <p>1792—Henry Laurens becomes first person cremated in U.S.</p>	<p>1994—Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders is fired for suggesting that having sex with yourself is permissible.</p> <p>1992—U.S. Marines wade ashore at 2:00 a.m. local time in Somalia, prime-time in U.S.</p> <p>1983—Ed Meese says people go to soup kitchens because it's "easier than paying."</p> <p>1966—"We are in a much stronger position than two years ago," says Sec. of State Dean Rusk. "[Commies] will not be able to succeed [in South Vietnam]."</p> <p>1958—The John Birch Society is founded; famous for calling Dwight Eisenhower a Commie.</p> <p>1955—Hired by Ford to suggest a name for a new model, poet Marianne Moore suggest "Utopian Turtletop;" Ford goes with "Edsel," instead.</p> <p>1953—GE vows to fire any Commie employees.</p> <p>1949—J. Parnell Thomas, no longer head of House Un-American Activities Committee, gets 6 to 18 months in the Crowbar Hilton for padding Congressional payrolls and spending the loot.</p> <p>1896—Alfred Jarry's <i>Ubu Roi</i> is first performed. A riot follows.</p> <p>1842—Birth of Pyotr Kropotkin, historian and anarchist.</p> <p>1640—Hugh Bewitt declares he's innocent of original sin, and gets banished from Mass. for it.</p>	<p>2004—Gary Webb, a writer who exposed the CIA-Contra drug connection, dies when he's shot twice in the face. The coroner says "suicide."</p> <p>1998—House Judiciary Committee debates whether to impeach Pres. Clinton for lying about his disgusting behavior.</p> <p>1992—Sen. Bob Packwood (Lecher-Oregon) apologizes for his disgusting behavior, but refuses to resign.</p> <p>1978—Cross-dressing ex-paratrooper and bad movie director Ed Wood, Jr. dies in Hollywood.</p> <p>1974—Rep. Wilbur Mills (D-Ark.) resigns in disgrace following the "Fanne Foxe/Argentine Firecracker" affair.</p> <p>1967—To lower the cost of natural gas, the U.S. government explodes an A-bomb in NM.</p> <p>1966—Sixteen U.S. Marines are killed in Vietnam, and 11 are wounded, by "friendly fire."</p> <p>1961—Several highways in New Mexico are closed after radioactive steam escapes following a nuclear weapon test.</p> <p>1936—King Edward VIII of England gives up his day job.</p> <p>1906—The IWW sponsors the first U.S. sit-down strike, in Schenectady.</p> <p>1901—The First Nobel Prizes are given by guilt-ridden dynamite inventor Alfred Nobel.</p>	<p>2006—On national TV, President George W. Bush denies that he was ever "a knee-walking drunk."</p> <p>2000—The Supreme Court hears Bush v. Gore.</p> <p>1998—Pres. Clinton begs for forgiveness, gets three articles of impeachment, instead.</p> <p>1981—Soldiers of the U.S.-backed Salvadoran government massacre approximately 900 villagers at El Mozote.</p> <p>1961—Army helicopters and crewmen begin direct U.S. military support in Vietnam.</p> <p>1960—At the last minute, seeing that JFK has his wife and kids in the car with him, ex-Belmont, NH resident Richard Pavlik defers his plan to crash into the President-elect's car with his dynamite-laden 1950 Buick.</p> <p>1951—Coal dust removal techniques are approved by state inspectors at New Orient mine in West Frankfort, Ill. Ten days later an explosion kills 119.</p> <p>1838—The House of Representatives passes a "gag rule," proposed by Rep. Charles Atherton (D-NH), which prohibits the discussion of slavery.</p> <p>1792—The French Convention tries King Louis XVI, aka "Louis le Dernier," for treason.</p> <p>1602—Genevan women wielding vats of hot soup repel Savoyards scaling the city walls.</p>	<p>2005—"I think we are welcomed [in Iraq]," says George W. Bush, "but it was not a peaceful welcome."</p> <p>2000—The Supreme Court selects George W. Bush President.</p> <p>1998—For good measure, Congress whups a fourth article of impeachment on Pres. Clinton.</p> <p>1988—An errant Navy practice missile hits an Indian freighter, killing a crewman.</p> <p>1985—A plane belonging to Olie North's favorite airline crashes at Gander, Newfoundland, killing 248 American soldiers. Investigations carefully reveal nothing.</p> <p>1984—Georgia officials zap Alpha Otis Stephens for two minutes, but he breathes for another six minutes before they finish him off.</p> <p>1983—At a Boston trade show called "New Trends in Missiles," anarchist wiseguys turn loose 1,000 cockroaches, symbolizing likely winners of a nuclear war.</p> <p>1950—Sen. Joe McCarthy (R-WI) kicks columnist Drew Pearson in the groin.</p> <p>1930—Spanish Civil War starts.</p> <p>1927—Threatened with impeachment by legislators, Oklahoma Governor Henry Johnston calls out state troopers to stop them.</p> <p>1776—Fearing the British will take Philadelphia, the Continental Congress gives dictatorial powers to Washington and flees.</p>	<p>2003—Final victory in Iraq appears imminent as U.S. troops drag S. Hussein out of a hole in the ground. U.S. death toll: 547.</p> <p>2000—Al Gore decides he'd rather be righteous than be president.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>1978—The Susan B. Anthony dollar is released to an anxiously awaiting public.</p> <p>1964—Four black girls die when a church is bombed in Montgomery, Ala. Three white men are convicted, and serve an aggregate total of thirty days.</p> <p>1951—Harry S Truman lets J. Edgar "Mary" Hoover scare him into agreeing to purge "disloyal" government workers.</p> <p>1949—An American League proposal to legalize the spitball fails.</p> <p>1932—The work of Congress is interrupted by a deranged store clerk brandishing a revolver.</p> <p>1864—Paraguay declares war on Brazil; by war's end half its population is dead.</p> <p>1774—Paul Revere rides to Portsmouth with news that the export of powder and arms to America has been prohibited.</p> <p>1642—Abel Janszoon Tasman, a Dutch explorer, discovers New Zealand but flees after Maoris eat a landing party.</p>							
7:44	8:16	8:34	9:09	9:20	9:57	10:03	10:41	10:43	11:22	11:21	12:00	11:58	
1:20	2:00	2:12	2:53	3:00	3:41	3:44	4:24	4:25	5:04	5:04	5:43	5:41	6:21
Sunday, December 14	Monday, December 15	Tuesday, December 16	Wednesday, December 17	Thursday, December 18	Friday, December 19	Saturday, December 20							
<p>2005—George W. Bush blames the Iraq War on "faulty intelligence."</p> <p>2004—George W. Bush puts Medals of Freedom around the necks of L. Paul Bremer, General Tommy Franks, and George Tenet.</p> <p>1996—An out-of-control 700 foot freighter crashes into a New Orleans dock, killing no one.</p> <p>1987—Chrysler pleads no contest to charges it sold thousands of used cars as new.</p> <p>1986—Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager take off in California to fly around the world in nine days, non-stop.</p> <p>1973—Richard Nixon emerges from the White House to personally thank the U.S. head of Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church for his support.</p> <p>1972—Richard Nixon authorizes air delivery of explosive Christmas presents to Hanoi.</p> <p>1970—Shipyards workers strike against the Commie government in Gdansk, Poland.</p> <p>1911—Roald Amundson beats Robert Scott to the South Pole.</p> <p>1906—The <i>U1</i>, Germany's first submarine, goes into service.</p> <p>1799—At Mount Vernon, George Washington dies surrounded by doctors.</p> <p>1774—Massachusetts militiamen under Major John Sullivan seize powder and arms from Fort William and Mary, near Portsmouth.</p>	<p>1997—Paula Jones' lawyers maneuver Bill Clinton into signing a legal document claiming he'd not had sex with government workers.</p> <p>1986—Bill Casey, CIA director, suffers a convenient seizure while on the job, preventing him from testifying about Iran/Contra.</p> <p>1983—Ed Meese denies Ebenezer Scrooge exploited Bob Cratchit.</p> <p>1969—Mormons reaffirm their exclusion of blacks on religious grounds.</p> <p>1968—Richard Nixon announces a third round of troop withdrawals from Vietnam.</p> <p>1967—A defect 2.5 mm deep causes the 39 year-old Silver Bridge over the Ohio River to collapse, killing 46.</p> <p>1966—Walt Disney dies in Los Angeles. Contrary to rumor, his remains are burned, not frozen.</p> <p>1965—U.S. drops 12 tons of bombs on Haiphong.</p> <p>1953—James Kutcher, who lost both legs in WW II, is informed his disability is being cut because he belongs to the Socialist Workers Party.</p> <p>1944—RIP Glenn Miller.</p> <p>1939—Barefoot trunk murderer Winnie Ruth Judd is captured, 200 miles from the Arizona State Hospital for the Insane from which she had escaped 12 days earlier.</p> <p>1791—Virginia ratifies the Bill of Rights.</p>	<p>1998—Just before Ramadan (and a vote on his impeachment) Pres. Clinton fires 200 missiles at Iraq.</p> <p>1988—Bush #41 appoints Sen. John Tower, a boozing womanizer, to be Defense Secretary.</p> <p>1988—Lyndon LaRouche is convicted of tax and mail fraud.</p> <p>1983—Lars-Erik Nelson reports that Ronald Reagan recently told an assembly of 300 real Medal of Honor recipients a concocted anecdote about a non-existent Medal recipient. Larry Speakes explains, "If you tell the same story five times, it's true."</p> <p>1965—Gen. Westmoreland asks for 243,000 more men in Vietnam.</p> <p>1960—Two airliners collide over New York City, killing 134.</p> <p>1944—Hitler overrules his generals and mounts a massive attack in the Ardennes Forest.</p> <p>1835—A two-day fire destroys 674 buildings in New York, bankrupting insurance companies and kicking off the Depression of 1837.</p> <p>1811—Biggest quake in U.S. history hits New Madrid, MO.</p> <p>1773—"Sons of Liberty," disguised as Mohawks and led by Sam Adams, dump 342 chests of tea into Boston Harbor.</p> <p>1620—"We could not now take time for further search or consideration," says the <i>Mayflower's</i> logbook, "our victuals being much spent, especially our beer."</p>	<p>2005—A mob of 40 drunken, anarchy-spouting Santas go on a rampage through Auckland, NZ.</p> <p>1998—Pres. Clinton continues blasting Iraq, using up about half of the Pentagon's cruise missiles.</p> <p>1997—In Paris, 34 nations including the U.S. sign an anti-bribery-in-business convention.</p> <p>1997—Thanks to a new law, landlocked Montana becomes, for anonymous foreigners with over \$200,000 to deposit, an "offshore" banking center.</p> <p>1996—The last-known eunuch in China, Sun Yaoting, dies.</p> <p>1996—Peruvian guerrillas crash a party at the Japanese embassy in Lima, take hostages, and stay for four months.</p> <p>1967—Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt goes for a swim in heavy surf and disappears.</p> <p>1960—An Air Force C-131 crashes into a steeple in Munich, then falls onto a trolley car, killing all 20 on the plane, 18 in the trolley, and 11 more on the street.</p> <p>1927—The U.S. sub <i>S-4</i> collides with the destroyer <i>Paulding</i> off Provincetown. All aboard the sub perish.</p> <p>1903—Orville Wright flies one of the first successful airplanes at Kitty Hawk. The press miss it.</p> <p>1862—Gen. U.S. Grant orders all Jews expelled from Tennessee, Mississippi, and Kentucky.</p>	<p>2005—"Not only can we win the war in Iraq—we are winning the war in Iraq," declares George W. Bush, 962 days after having declared "Mission accomplished."</p> <p>2004—John Walsh announces on "America's Most Wanted" that the two fugitives he most wants to see caught are Jahbir and Alfonso Fowle.</p> <p>2000—"If this were a dictatorship," says George W. Bush on CNN, "it'd be a heck of a lot easier, just so long as I'm the dictator."</p> <p>1998—Censure of Bill Clinton isn't good enough for House Republicans; they want impeachment.</p> <p>1996—Kenyan students protest the killing of a student the previous day. Police kill two more students.</p> <p>1996—G-Man Earl Pitts is arrested for moonlighting for the KGB.</p> <p>1972—Pres. Nixon orders Linebacker II bombing campaign over Hanoi. 1200 Vietnamese civilians die, 70 airmen are killed or captured. Nixon later calls this "my terrible personal ordeal."</p> <p>1946—Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker flies over Broadway scattering Damon Runyon's ashes.</p> <p>1941—Outnumbered almost 10 to 1, U.S. forces lose Guam to the Japanese.</p> <p>1917—Congress submits the 18th Amendment to the states for their approval. After it passes, Prohibition begins.</p>	<p>2007—Fire breaks out near "Dick" Cheney's office. Likely cause: spontaneous inhuman combustion.</p> <p>1998—As Bill Clinton is being impeached for some hanky-panky, Speaker-elect Bob Livingston resigns to cover up a bit of his own.</p> <p>1984—Due to a work speedup, 27 miners are killed in Utah.</p> <p>1946—The Viet Minh open hostilities against the French in Indo-China.</p> <p>1941—Disgruntled ex-corporal A. Hitler becomes Commander in Chief of German Army.</p> <p>1910—Baltimore becomes first U.S. city with designated white and black residential areas.</p> <p>1907—Coal mine explosion kills 239 in Jacobs Creek, Pa.</p> <p>1832—Attempting to find his way home from a New Jersey tavern during a snowstorm, poet and journalist Philip Freneau dies at 80.</p> <p>1777—Washington's army arrives at Valley Forge, PA.</p> <p>1776—Thomas Paine's first <i>American Crisis</i> essay is published; "These are the times that try men's souls . . ."</p> <p>1732—Benjamin Franklin publishes first <i>Poor Richard's Almanac</i>.</p> <p>1675—About 1,000 Puritans, seeking land, corn, and slaves, massacre the hitherto fairly peaceful Narragansetts in the "Great Swamp Fight," near the present-day Wakefield, RI.</p>	<p>1991—A CIA report on greater openness is classified "secret."</p> <p>1989—The U.S. invades Panama to arrest CIA agent Manuel Noriega.</p> <p>1983—Once and future U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visits Baghdad to shake the hand of mass murderer Saddam Hussein and give him Ronald Reagan's best wishes.</p> <p>1968—U.S. officials put total of missing in Vietnam at over 300.</p> <p>1960—The National Front for the Liberation of Vietnam is organized.</p> <p>1917—In Australia, a referendum defeats a proposal to draft single men.</p> <p>1906—The U.S. Army authorizes "dog tags."</p> <p>1871—Mark Twain writes, "I have a higher and greater standard of principle [than George Washington, who] could not lie. I can lie but I won't."</p> <p>1860—South Carolina legislature dissolves the ties that bind.</p> <p>1835—The Cherokee are forced to cede their lands in Georgia.</p> <p>1786—Moments before her death in RI, Hannah Omish, 12, thanks her executioner for his kindness.</p> <p>1669—In the first jury trial in Delaware, Marcus Jacobson is sentenced to be flogged, branded, and enslaved for insurrection.</p> <p>1606—The Virginia Company sets out for the New World.</p>							
12:38	12:35	1:15	1:12	2:35	2:35	3:18	3:23	4:05	4:15	4:55	5:11		
6:19	6:58	6:58	7:36	7:39	8:17	8:23	8:59	9:11	9:44	10:04	10:32	11:00	11:23

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