

The New Hampshire Gazette

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The Fortnightly Rant

The Shredding Party

Saturday, December 2nd, 2018—a date which will live in infamy—the people of the United States of America were deliberately attacked by 51 Republican U.S. Senators, who, under cover of darkness, voted for a 500-page tax bill prepared in such haste that some provisions were scrawled in the margins by hand.

No Senator could have read all of the bill, and some of them may have read none of it. So much for their mantra of eight years ago: “Read the bill, read the bill.”

All of them, though, knew the one thing that mattered: if they didn't pass this bill, their campaign donors would shut off the cash.

Those with a need to know were, of course, quite familiar with the bill's contents. We mean, of course, the lobbyists. According to Public Citizen, disclosure forms filed by the nearly 11,000 registered lobbyists in the Capitol reveal that 6,243 of them worked on issues involving taxes during the first three quarters of this year. Lobbyists working on tax “reform” outnumbered Members of Congress by 11 to one.

So integral have lobbyists become to the functioning of our government that one Senator, Claire McCaskill [D-Mo.], complained, “We have just gotten [a] list of amendments to be included in bill NOT from our R[epublican] colleagues, but from lobbyists downtown. None of us have seen this list, but lobbyists have it.”

Of course they did—they wrote it. The Senate, like the House, long ago outsourced the writing of bills to the corporate-funded lobbyists whose clients benefit from them. That arrangement allows our Representatives and Senators to specialize in the arcane rules and procedures which move those bills through Congress.

Laymen may scoff and imagine that this is just evidence of sloth and

laziness. Nothing could be further from the truth. It must have taken a fearsome amount of mental energy for Mitch McConnell to conjure up the deviousness required to pass this bill—not to mention a frightful degree of ruthlessness.

Consider its tortuous path.

If the Senate tax bill had been considered under “regular order,” Democrats would have had enough votes to kill it with a filibuster. To dodge that obstacle, Senate Majority Leader McConnell made rather fanciful use of what's called “reconciliation.” Originally intended as a process for making small adjustments, McConnell instead used reconciliation to commit one of the greatest acts of pilferage in history.

Solving one problem raised another. Senate rules require that bills passed under reconciliation must be “revenue neutral”—a label that just won't stretch to fit a shortfall of \$1.4 trillion. Since the appearance of fiscal responsibility has been a core selling point of the Republican™ brand since Hector was a pup, some potent form of flim-flam was clearly required.

Fortunately for the oligarchs who are the ultimate beneficiaries of this complex charade, McConnell is a longtime practitioner of voodoo economics.

Early on he had recognized the signs of an incipient case of Intermittent Deficit Concern—a contagious rash normally seen only when Democrats control the White House or Congress. By way of inoculation, he added a sprinkling of pixie dust to a fat tax break for corporations hiding \$2.6 trillion in profits overseas, and conjured up revenue forecasts showing an extended period of unprecedented economic growth.

Granted, George W. Bush employed the same bit of legerdemain a decade and a half ago, only to see corporate shareholders pocket all the



proceeds. No matter. The maneuver didn't have to actually produce more jobs or higher wages. It only had to be plausible enough to serve as a talking point on TV news.

A couple of Republicans, apparently not understanding how these things work, suggested rather gauche that the bill could include some triggers which would automatically raise taxes if economic growth failed to appear. That heretical proposition earned them a ruler across the knuckles. In the end, only one Republican Senator, Bob Corker of Tennessee, balked at the budget-busting bill. He's not afraid of being challenged in his next primary, because he's quitting the Senate.

One might think that, after passing a bill that will in one decade increase the national debt by one or two trillion, some rather long faces would be in evidence. Yet when photographers captured the moment,

they showed a group of old white males smiling as if their aged bowels had finally just moved well for the first time in several weeks.

Will they still be smiling when reality eventually rears its untelegenic head, and the budget deficit balloons? You betcha. Kevin McCarthy, the Amazing Shrinking House Majority Leader, explained why to CNBC on Monday.

“McCarthy signaled that Republicans could take care of the deficit issue by making changes to programs like Social Security, Medicaid or Medicaid. Those social safety net programs account for most federal spending.

“I worry about deficits, but you're not going to get out of this problem until you grow the economy. Then, you've got to look at the entitlements,” McCarthy told the reliably-pliable propaganda-dispensing network.

Public approval of the Republican tax cut bill averages about 32 percent, while disapproval is at 46 percent. The rich are fortunate, though: it's been scientifically proven that when it comes to Congress, the opinions of plebes are irrelevant.

For decades now the wrong-headed Right has been salivating over the prospect of slashing what they call “entitlements.” They refer, of course, to programs like Social Security, which the recipients have been paying for their entire working lives. After the tax-cutting fever passes, and Intermittent Deficit Concern returns, the programs which keep the non-rich from impoverishment will be the next item on the chopping block.

How do Republicans expect to get re-elected after waging class war on the non-rich, you ask?

What do you think voter suppression is for?

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Too much of a good thing is bad, though. That's why it's important to stop all those skeezy Democrats who are racing around all over hell's half acre, masquerading as five or six other people, and voting multiple times in multiple locations to elect the godless communistic candidate of their choice. Sure, they're risking felony convictions in the process, but any true Democrat wears such a conviction as a badge of honor.

Such is the professed theory, as we understand it, behind the Republican Party's present hysteria over what is actually a non-existent phenomenon: widespread voter fraud.

As a non-fiction newspaper

which is free from the constraints capitalism imposes on more commercially-oriented newspapers, we will treat that professed theory with all the respect we would give to any other fairy tale.

So, rather than boring our readers with yet another tedious summation of the many authoritative studies which have proven beyond all doubt that this alleged phenomenon is strictly chimerical, we will bore them by approaching this subject as we would any other: rather than glossing over the larding of lies that are always injected into political discussions these days, we will treat those lies as material facts which are bound to have some bearing on the outcome of the constant struggle for power that is politics.

As alluded to in this fortnight's admittedly intemperate Rant, when it comes to the issue of voter fraud we operate under the assumption that Republicans are hyperventilating ostentatiously in order to provide cover for their own ongoing effort to suppress the votes of those who are likely to vote for their opponents. Given the GOP's record in these matters, coming to such a conclusion required no great feat of imagination.

The Ballot Security Task Force

Return with us now to those thrilling days of November, 1981, when the Republican National Committee [RNC] conducted a three-stage experiment in democracy under the rubric of the Ballot Security Task Force [BSTF].

First, the RNC ran a voter caging operation in Newark and Trenton, New Jersey. The Brennan Center for Justice defines voter caging as “the practice of sending mail to addresses on the voter rolls, compiling a list of the mail that is returned undelivered, and using that list to try to purge or challenge voters registrations on the grounds that the voters on the list do not legally reside at their registered addresses.” In this case the RNC mailed 45,000 pieces of mail to addresses taken from an outdated voter registration list.

Then, on election day, the RNC had signs posted near polling places saying, “Warning: This Area Is Being Patrolled By The National Ballot Security Task Force It Is A Crime To Falsify A Ballot Or To Violate

Election Laws.”

In a final flourish, the RNC hired a bunch of off-duty cops—selected, no doubt, for their friendly, non-threatening demeanor—to patrol polling sites in non-white neighborhoods of Trenton and Newark while wearing Ballot Security Task Force arm bands and carrying guns.

We do not know how many voters the BSTF discouraged. We do know that Republican Tim Kean won the Governorship of New Jersey that year by a margin of just 1,797 votes. Kean's chief strategist was Roger J. Stone—yes, the man with the Richard M. Nixon tattoo between his shoulder blades who

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from page one

went on to work for the Donald J. Trump campaign.

Naturally the namby-pamby Democrats went whining to the courts. Naturally the RNC denied having done anything wrong.

Rather than risk going to trial, though, the RNC signed, in 1982, a consent decree in U.S. District Court, in which it pledges not to engage “in activities that suppress the vote, particularly when it comes to minority voters.” The decree also nixes the wearing of armbands at polling places, and commits the GOP to allowing federal courts to review any proposed “ballot security” programs, including any proposed voter caging.

The Widening Gyre

Let us pause here for a moment to reflect on the fact that the Democrats caught the Republicans red-handed, suppressing voters in the most egregious manner imaginable. The Democrats then got the court to lay down the law in a con-

sent decree.

For 35 years, under this consent decree, the RNC has been barred from engaging in exactly what it has been doing non-stop for 35 years—suppressing voters. Yet somehow the Democrats have been unable to stop them.

Democrats grouse that they can't get their voters to show up for off-year elections, while Republican voters show up like clockwork. Picture two prize fighters: one sits in his corner complaining to his trainer, the other bounces on the balls of his feet, throwing shadow punches and yelling “Lemme at him!”

Which boxer has more fans?

W.B. Yeats said it best, of course: “The best lack all conviction, while the worst/Are full of passionate intensity.”

Yet Another Blind Referee

From time to time over the past few decades the RNC has interrupted its voter suppression efforts just long enough to petition the District Court and ask it to please lift the consent decree barring it from suppressing voters.



So close, and yet so far away: the Sarah Mildred Long replacement bridge—or, as our Wandering Photographer calls it, the Science Fiction Bridge—is now slated to open to traffic some time in January. Provided it works properly, few will recall that it was finished a few months later than anticipated. More important, one would think, is that the shipping channel is now straighter and wider, and the shipyard can still send off its nuclear waste by railroad. One thing is lacking, though: since the four towers look so much like Bic lighters, they ought to be topped with flickering neon flames.



To its credit, the Democratic National Committee [DNC] has not been entirely comatose. Last October—at which time Donald Trump's website was recruiting “election observers” with the mild and innocuous slogan, “Volunteer to be a Trump Election Observer. Help Me Stop Crooked Hillary From Rigging This Election!”—it actually got worked up enough to drag the RNC back into District Court.

In its court filing, the DNC accused the RNC of “supporting and enabling” Trump's efforts to suppress voters.

“Although certain RNC officials have attempted to distance themselves from some of the Trump campaign's more recent statements, there is now ample evidence that Trump has enjoyed the direct and tacit support of the RNC in its ‘ballot security’ endeavors,” the Democrats wrote, “including the RNC's collaboration on efforts to prevent this supposed

‘rigging’ and ‘voter fraud.’

“In a rally in Denver, Colorado, on August 3, 2016, Trump's vice presidential running mate, Indiana Governor Mike Pence, admitted that the RNC was directly coordinating with the Trump campaign on ‘ballot integrity’ initiatives, stating that the Trump campaign and the Republican National Committee are working very very closely with state governments and secretaries of states all over the country to ensure ballot integrity.”

The RNC countered, “the DNC relies almost exclusively on news accounts containing inadmissible double and even triple hearsay. None of those press accounts identifies any concrete steps by anyone covered by the Consent Decree to engage in prohibited conduct and none of them identifies a single voter who has been intimidated or deterred from voting by anyone, let alone the RNC. Even taken at face value,

these press accounts carry no weight ...”

In his opinion, on November 5th, Judge John Michael Vazquez “denie[d] the DNC's motion for injunctive relief, denie[d] the DNC's motion to hold the RNC in contempt, denie[d] the DNC's request for sanctions, and denie[d] without prejudice DNC's motion to extend the Consent Decree.”

This willfully blind decision was made with the consent decree in effect. On December 1st, the same judge allowed that consent decree to expire.

Now watch the Republicans go.

Being somewhat paranoid, we checked out the judge, expecting him to have been appointed by Bush #41 or #43. Our paranoia morphed into mere disappointment—he's an Obama appointee.

Vazquez did leave room for a tiny sliver of hope. The Democrats want to know more about a visit then-

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RNC official Sean Spicer made to Trump Tower on the night of the election. Their lawyers will get to question Spicer, and Vazquez ordered the RNC to give the DNC “any relevant emails related to Spicer’s visit to the Trump campaign’s poll-monitoring operation.” If a violation is found, the consent decree could be extended.

2016 was, of course, the first Presidential election since *Shelby County v. Holder*, the Supreme Court decision that effectively neutered the Voting Rights Act in 2013. That would be Shelby County, Ala-god-dam-bama, which may soon get Roy “Not a Pedophile” Moore as a Senator, to replace Attorney General Jefferson Beauregard “Not a Racist” Sessions III.

The Trump Voter Fraud [De]Commission
So-called President Donald J. Trump created a President’s Advisory Commission on Election Integrity back in May, allegedly to protect the sanctity of the ballot box from those skeezy Democrats to whom we alluded many paragraphs ago.

Anyone who did not just fall off a turnip truck knows that its real purpose is to salve his tender ego, which was bruised by his loss in the popular

vote to Hillary Clinton last November. Trump fell short by 2,868,691 votes. By subtracting three to five million fictitious votes, he gave himself bogus grounds to claim that he was actually the winner.

Built on such a foundation, the Commission’s very existence is unavoidably absurd; hence, the way it has been conducting itself is altogether fitting and proper.

A member of the Commission, Matthew Dunlap, Maine’s Secretary of State, was forced to sue the Commission last month to find out what the heck it was doing.

ProPublica reports that Dunlap accused the Commission of violating the Federal Advisory Commission Act, “which ... requires that advisory committees be bipartisan and sets transparency requirements for them.”

“Everything we are doing is absolutely perpendicular to that,” Dunlap told *ProPublica*. The non-profit news outlet also noted that the commission “has been sued more times (eight, including the new filing) than it has officially convened for meetings (two times).”

Absurd or not, the Commission has a case to sink its gums into: on



Monday, the Fox News affiliate in Denver, Colo. reported that Steve Curtis, an ex-talk show host, has been charged with “felony forgery misdemeanor [sic] election fraud.” He is accused of forging his ex-wife’s signature on a 2016 mail-in ballot.

Curtis, the former Chairman of the Colorado Republican Party, blames his conduct on “a major diabetic episode.”

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Net Neutrality Protests Sweep N.H., Nation This Week

Protesters are gathering in Concord, Manchester, Nashua, Hanover, and Keene Thursday and Saturday to support a free and open Internet as part of 600 events nationwide to help protect net neutrality.

The Federal Communications Commission plans to vote Dec. 14 on whether to lift rules that keep Internet service providers from offering faster speeds to sites that can afford to pay higher fees, a move that could put small business and non-profit websites at a big disadvantage.

Christopher Mitchell, director of the Community Broadband Net-

works Initiative for the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, says providers might start partitioning off the Internet with packages that only give people access to specific sites.

“The fear is that without network neutrality, without that protection, the Internet service providers will have more power to charge you more to access certain sites or certain services,” he points out. “Historically, the example is that you might get charged more to use Netflix.”

Large Internet providers have promised to be fair and keep consumers’ best interest in mind.

But Mitchell worries providers could slow down connection speeds for website owners that don’t pay higher fees, thus driving viewers to other, faster sites.

Find out more about local protests at events.battleforthenet.com.

Ajit Pai, who was appointed FCC chairman by President Donald Trump, says the market will curb any abuses.

But Mitchell notes that in many towns, big Internet service providers have a near monopoly.

“Most Americans only have one choice in high quality Internet access,” he points out. “Beyond that, they have to either take a lower quality service option or move.”

In more than 30 states, local authorities have taken the matter into their own hands, organizing municipal telephone companies that compete with the big ISPs but are required to operate in the public interest and seek to offer reasonably priced high speed Internet.

— Suzanne Potter

New Hampshire News Connection

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Another Robinson Helicopter Crash

Two commercially-rated pilots were badly injured November 30th when their Robinson R22 helicopter crashed during a training flight in Truckee, Calif. The machine was destroyed. Both pilots were flown in separate medevac helicopters to intensive care units in Reno, Nevada, according to the Truckee Tahoe Airport’s website, and were said to be in stable condition in ICU units. The cause of the crash is under investigation.



There is probably a proper term for a brick arch which accomplishes the difficult feat of bending around a corner, as this fine example does in the Old Customs House at Penhallow and Daniel streets. If there is such a term, though, we don’t know it. We do know that our Wandering Photographer has been eyeing this arch for some time. That’s partly because it’s lovely to look at, and partly because the top bricks in the arch appeared to have been loosening for years. Would the owners of the building get around to re-pointing the bricks before they all came crashing down on the head of some luckless random pedestrian? As it happens, they did.

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It's Not Your Father's Democratic Party
To the Editor:

I was happy to read, in the last issue of the *New Hampshire Gazette*, of your concern for the former middle class workers and their families who Hillary Clinton referred to as "deplorables," but who elected Donald Trump because he recognized how they had been abandoned by the establishment parties, their jobs sent overseas, their standard of living diminished, and their use to the establishment being only as cannon fodder for the neo-conservative rampaging throughout the world.

However, you continue to portray the problem as one of the Republican Party, refusing to acknowledge that the chosen candidate of Wall Street, the Corporations, the Banksters, the Corporate Media, and the Military-Industrial-Surveillance complex was Hillary Clinton, who embraces both the neo-conservative agenda of perpetual war and the neoliberal economic policies of privatization, reduced spending on the social safety net, globalism, and international trade deals that send good jobs overseas and destroy the middle class, creating the well known Rust Belt of fly over America.

Does this signify the the liberals are finally waking up to recognize that it's no longer their father's Democratic Party?

I doubt it.
John Dente
Wilmington, Del.

John:

We're glad to see you were were happy to read the paper. We are also grateful for your recent renewal, and for your generosity.

We can understand how you might think we're obsessed with the villainies of the Republicans—they are so many, so vile, and so dangerous.

Please don't think, though, that we're wholly unaware of the sins and flaws of the Democrats. It was largely their craven blundering, after all, that got us into Vietnam. They were cowed by the fear that Republicans would blame them for "losing" Vietnam to the godless Commies, just as they "lost" China—never mind that we had no claim to either nation;

never mind that Chiang Kai-shek's Koumintang was venal, corrupt, and largely dependent on opium smuggling for revenue.

Then there's the everlasting shame of the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago. That bloodbath was presided over by Mayor Richard J. "Boss" Daley, who, close readers of the *Tidal Guide* may have noted, most likely played a key role in instigating the week-long Chicago Race Riot of 1919, which left 38 people dead.

What the Democratic Party is doing now, though, may be worse than all of that.

We refer to the party's despicably mealy-mouthed sellout to "centrism." Here the Republican Party is, waging all-out class war, and the Democratic Party is AWOL. You're right to blame Hillary, but don't forget Bill.

The Editor

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Cancel Thanksgiving?

To the Editor:

Just received and read cover to cover the Black Friday edition of the paper. Well done. Not sure about the proposal to eliminate Thanksgiving, however. George Orwell's got nothing to compare with this year's spectacle. We've had the Baboon pardoning a couple of turkeys while bashing his enemies on the tweety machine, corporate pigs salivating at the prospect of even more swill in their troughs thanks to their employees usually referred to as members of Congress, and two old buzzards named Koch who are ready to swoop in and snatch the carcass of what was once a respected media conglomerate. It's been a real Animal Farm greedfest. And you propose that we give all this up? No way! In a world where the lie is the truth, down is up, wrong is right and teenagers are now fair game, we've just been shown the true meaning of Thanksgiving: be thankful for all that you can grab, plunder, snatch or steal. And that, for this bunch running the show now, is the only thing worth giving thanks for.

Respectfully,
John C. Ficar
Richmond, Va.

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Trump: Putin's Horse
To the Editor:

We all have heard the story of the Trojan Horse, when the Greeks, during the Trojan war, used a huge horse filled with soldiers as a subterfuge to take the City of Troy. Every day it is becoming clearer and clearer that Vladimir Putin used his own version of the Trojan Horse to destroy the United States. The Trojan Horse in this case is Donald Trump.

Since taking power, Vladimir Putin has been determined to restore the influence and power of the former Soviet Union, and to weaken the influence and power of the United States. Unable to accomplish his goals through either military or economic power, he has used subversion, deceit, and his old fashioned KGB treachery to achieve his victory.

His great opportunity presented itself when Donald Trump became the Republican Party nominee for President of the United States. Having known Trump for years, and having significant compromising information about Trump, he knew that getting Trump into the White House would be a colossal victory for Russia. He knew that many of Trump's associates, like Flynn, Manafort, Tillerson, Sessions, Page, Stone and others, already had strong connections to and interests with Russia. He also knew that Trump lacked the skill, knowledge, values, experience, temperament and fitness to effectively lead America, and that his election as President would tear away at the fabric of America.

Through the use of effective high-tech social media, Putin was able to successfully attack and influence the election of 2016. Putin has been able to place a Trojan Horse at the heart of the American political system, and the results have been even better than he ever expected. Once the Trojan Horse was installed in the White House, the "soldiers" who were to carry out the

attack and destruction of the American Government were released. For almost every high level appointment from the EPA, Education, HUD, State Department, Energy, Interior, Treasury, Justice, Health and Human Services, Consumer Protection, Labor, Housing, the courts, and beyond, Trump, with the aid of his Republican accomplices in Congress, have assured that our governmental institutions will be damaged beyond repair for decades. Our entire political, economic, justice, diplomatic and health care systems will be severely compromised, and the polarization of the American people will continue to increase and threaten our democracy.

Congratulations Mr. Putin, your Trojan Horse has succeeded beyond all your expectations. Stalin would be very jealous.

Rich DiPentima
Portsmouth, N.H.

Rich:

As we write this President Trump has just announced that the U.S. will recognize Jerusalem as the capitol of Israel, which is going to make his son-in-law's job of bringing peace to the Middle East a whole lot harder.

We would suggest that Trump is not a complete horse—just the back end.

The Editor

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Rushing The Tax Bill Through

To the Editor:

There is good reason the Republicans are rushing the tax legislation: it is a lie. The longer the public has to review it the more it smells.

Firstly, it will cost the middle class. A very modest tax cut now is due to expire in a few years and middle class taxes will go up. The tax cut to the corporations, by contrast, is permanent.

Secondly, it will provide vast tax benefits to the wealthiest. They, not

you, me, or workers, are the great beneficiaries of the corporate tax cuts (and many others). Getting rid of the estate tax for example, a Republican priority, only benefits the wealthiest 2/1000ths of the population, the rest of us will pick up the slack.

Thirdly, it balloons the deficit by at least \$1.4 Trillion. Republicans will amazingly discover this deficit in ten years, blame it on Social Security and other safety net programs, and demand cuts!

Fourthly, just when it should get easier for middle and working class kids to get a college education, this bill increases costs associated with getting a higher degree.

Fifthly, this 550-page bill, introduced just a few days ago, includes many "special features" such as lower taxes on beer producers, for no particular reason! Just payoffs to Republican donors.

This tax scam, trickle down, has been proven wrong over and over: cut taxes on the wealthy and the economy will flourish, the deficit will go down, the middle class will do better. Lies!

Is it really possible that there aren't three Republican senators with the decency to vote against it?

Michael Frandzel
Portsmouth, N.H.

Michael:

The proof is in the roll call vote: only one Republican senator, and he was already on his way out the door.

The Editor

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A New Motto for the GOP

To the Editor

Under President Obama's presidency the unemployment rate dropped from 10 percent to 4.7 percent. The top tax rate on businesses was 35 percent for each of those seven years.

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Murph's Fortnightly Quote

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—John Lennon (1940-1980) from "Imagine" (1971)

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I Say No to Impeachment!

To the Editor:

This may seem crazy and way out of line with most thinking of liberals like myself, but I implore all self-respecting liberals and leftists to stop with the cries for impeachment of Trump.

The reason? What we'll get will be worse. Impeachment of Trump would leave us with Mike Pence as president. Just think about it. Pence has the persona of respectability, integrity, and calm. If he were to become President, the Republican Congress would rally around him like no other Republican President before. Everything on the Republican agenda would get passed. The opposition would not have a chance of stopping it.

Right now, because Trump is so outlandish, the progressives still have a chance of holding off the neo-conservative agenda. If we get rid of Trump, it's game over for the working people of America. The Republicans will easily finish the job that G.W. [Bush] didn't complete: the wholesale depletion of the U.S. Treasury, the biggest heist in history.

So, please leave Trump where he is and fight hard to keep him in stalemate for the next three years.

Erland Russell
Living in Tea-party Territory
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Erland:

Yours is a very sound argument. The thought of a President Pence is deeply disturbing.

Trump may be a disgusting, erratic, self-centered fool, but Pence has the soul of a fascist dictator.

Pence was deeply involved in the transition, though—maybe too close for his own good.

We're hoping the two of them are frogmarched out of the White House together in shackles.

The problem then becomes Paul Ryan. Esquire's Charles P. Pierce calls Ryan, "the zombie-eyed granny starver from the state of Wisconsin," who "never has earned a dime outside of the government-quasi-government bullshit industrial complex. He cares less about the poor than he does about Medicare, which he would like to shred, so that it no longer wrecks old people by keeping them alive."

That would leave us with Orrin Hatch, who is an arrogant, mean-spirited, old curmudgeon.

Being arrogant, mean-spirited, old curmudgeons ourselves, we could live with that.

The Editor

Morally Wrong and Economically Stupid

To the Editor:

Republican Senators rushed through their tax-cut bill faster, actually, than anyone could read the 534-page tome. Some changes were still being made, in longhand, while the votes were being recorded. Republicans say that they believe giving tax breaks to the very rich will stimulate the economy and create more jobs. That's just plain wrong.

Corporations are currently holding over a trillion dollars in cash rather than investing in new products and jobs. The tax bonus will simply go to stockholder dividends, now to be taxed at lower rates. The \$1.5-trillion-dollar benefit to the rich will be paid for by middle-class tax increases after the paltry tax-cut crumbs left on the table for middle-class taxpayers disappear in a few years, while corporate tax cuts will persist. That's morally wrong and economically stupid. The economy grows when more money is in the hands of middle-class people who spend it, rather than in the hands of the grabby rich who stash it in offshore banks.

Republicans have excavated a multi-trillion-dollar deep debt just so their plutocratic benefactors can get

even richer and more powerful. Our country is in peril, and that's wrong.

Bruce Joffe
Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:

There is another way to look at it.

The U.S. has long consumed far more resources per capita than any other nation on Earth.

Once most of us have turned to picking through landfills for scraps of food, humanity's burden on the planet's ecology will have been greatly reduced.

The Editor

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Here Comes Fascism, Maybe

To the Editor:

"When fascism arrives it will be wrapped in the flag and carrying a cross."

I can't remember where I read that. Could it have been Sinclair Lewis? Any number of people these days could be thinking it to also be obvious. For four or five decades there have been conservative wingnut authoritarian types who each in turn have leapt into the political arena—making boasts of their superior abilities and spartan renovating designs and all the while making constant claims of faithful piety and pedantic patriotism. It is a real vote getter and a surefire game of bait and switch. That sort of con artist knows exactly where to go to find the gullible souls in outlying districts. There are people who cannot and to not want to think for themselves: people who are at the shallow end of the gene pool—and allow others to form and dictate their options. The hi-test fuel that can arouse hot tempers is the bigotry that can be just under the surface, whether it is religion or race. Before 2008, bigotry was comparatively dormant and quietly held as a personal token toward the futile attempt at self worth and pride where none could exist otherwise. After Senator Obama was elected President those poor dolts got furiously resentful that a mixed race, highly educated, intelligent man went to the White House—and left them sorely in need to find someone who could put that uppity black man down far enough for them to feel great again. And Donald Trump was

just the nasty, trashy mouth that became their hero. As long as he can tear down the whole legacy of the former black President, that impatient base can easily ignore the lies, ignorance, danger and filth that Trump has been displaying far and world wide. Since Mrs. Clinton has been politically connected to President Obama, she, too, has been the brunt of hatred and vicious lies. In spite of some nit-picking by some Democrats about her campaign and former federal service, she does remain in the opinion of many, due to her intelligence and experience, one of the best candidates ever to seek the presidency. Her majority vote in 2016 is proof positive. Our pretender POTUS is now simply the helter skelter monkey show—serving to distract media wonks while the real planners and mega donors work their clandestine machinations in the shadows. However, recent investigations have begun to crack their lock on secrecy. Our so-called POTUS did *not* choose the characters in his Cabinet. It was all done strategically by certain other duplicitous state "renovators"—we've all seen it happen—as a deliberately destructive movement to change the federal Constitutional U.S. State! We can guess what they intend to replace it with. Some of the Cabinet members have had to remove themselves from office due to expert investigations, but most of them are still dutifully responsive to the authoritarian proto-oligarchy that has been germinating for decades. However, they may find that a large majority of U.S. citizens are not morons like the Trumpites and their dear leader! We can always count on intelligent, free thinking, observant, intuitive real patriots who will overwhelmingly outnumber the primitive, backward voting bloc that has been so sadly up to no good. The fascist Russian regime that has vastly overstepped, with its rude, deadly dealings everywhere, and will eventually self-destruct, just as the Trump disaster will do in the inevitable time frame set by karmic justice. The November 7

Hate Mail, &c.

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The Northcountry Chronicle

Manuscripts

by William Marvel

I wrote my first “book” before I was twelve, during one of the ailments I faked to avoid much of the fifth and sixth grades. The narrative followed a peripatetic soldier of fortune through different theaters, and the brand-new *American Heritage Picture History of the Civil War* served as my principal research source. Using a bottle of Scheaffer ink with a dipping well and my mother’s Eversharp fountain pen, which still stands on my desk, I wrote on blue-lined white paper filched from school a dozen or so sheets at a time.

That manuscript disappeared more than half a century ago. Would that I had it now. For years I kept every draft of my various manuscripts, but space and weight ultimately required some incendiary reduction. When local schools experimented with the “Writing Process” I sometimes consented to lug 25 or 30 pounds of paper into a classroom to illustrate the progress of a book—from manuscript through original and copyedited typescripts to galley

proofs and, finally, page proofs. Most of those stages have been eliminated now. Ultimately I saved only the four jumbo legal pads containing the first draft of the last book I ever wrote by hand, in 1993.

I never owned or used a word processor, and came late to computers. When listeners on the speaking circuit first asked what writing hardware and software I used, I innocently described that Eversharp pen and the blue-lined paper. When they asked about my “writing program,” I initially mistook it for interest in my work schedule. Eventually I recognized that such questions merely reflected an electronic-age version of my own interest in the simpler mechanics employed by past writers.

Despite those 1940s dust-jacket photos of authors seated at their typewriters, for me the concept of writing always brought to mind someone putting a pen or pencil to paper. I always suspected that Ernest Hemingway’s typewriter adversely affected his writing by taking up most of his desk, which discouraged him from keeping a dictionary or

a thesaurus handy; hence his “economical” literary style.

Writers submit “manuscripts,” after all, which for centuries meant something written by hand. Only in 1967 (according to my *Oxford English Dictionary*) did that word even begin to connote a submission that was not handwritten. When Mark Twain adjourned to his gazebo on summer days to compose some of our best-known tales, he carried only pencils and a sheaf of small notepaper, scribbling a few dozen words to the page. William Faulkner wrote a miniscule hand that crammed 400 words or more onto a single sheet. Thomas Wolfe, who stood six-foot-six, scrawled his sprawling prose at the rate of 10,000 words a day, often using a refrigerator for a desk; bewildered typists dragged bundles of his dog-eared manuscript pages from wooden crates and tried to put them in order for the editor.

Stephen Crane’s *The Red Badge of Courage* always rivaled *Huckleberry Finn* as my favorite American novel. Recently I found a dirt-cheap, mint copy of the 1973 facsimile edition of the final manuscript, complete with

cross-outs and corrections that revealed how mundanely some of the most memorable passages originally read; this was especially conspicuous in a preserved fragment from an earlier draft. Crane introduced a number of his more renowned literary devices only at the last moment, such as his tendency to lend his characters a touch of anonymous universality by seldom using their names: Henry Fleming and Jim Conklin did not become “the youth” and “the tall soldier” until Crane had neatly and legibly written all 193 pages in ink for the typesetter, whereupon he crossed out almost all the names and inserted common descriptors. He altered the title itself as though by afterthought, scratching out “Private Fleming: His various Battles.”

For nearly a quarter of a century now, most of my composing has been done on a computer screen. Having spent 61 straight days in 1991 typing the final draft of one book with a carbon copy, I appreciate the ease of digitized editing and printing; it helps greatly in an environment where word count is

the measure for compensation, but the pressure for additional content usually prevents the saved time from accommodating deeper thought. The medium evokes a sense of detachment from the writing itself, and ultimately from the reader.

Lately, arthritis in the wrists and fingers interferes with my penmanship. Sometimes the Advil has to kick in before I take up the old Eversharp, but writing by hand engenders an intimacy with language that computers have dulled. Watching words flow in unique patterns from a nib or pencil point a centimeter from the fingertips lends them an ownership that is compromised by pushing buttons to make block letters coagulate on a gelatinous surface two or three feet away. The method of electronic communication feels artificial, and that same artificiality often infuses the message. The clicking of keys imitates no human sound, but the passage of ink or graphite across a sheet of fibrous bond paper whispers a reminder of the writer’s own voice.

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from page five

election results indicate that it may have at last begun—hopefully!

Helen McKinney
Sapphire, N.C.

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The Donald and the Vlad

To the Editor:

The holidays are the traditional time to reflect on the man of the year. It would naturally be Donald Trump who last year prevailed against the entire establishment—Wall Street, the Military-Industrial-Surveillance Complex, the corporations, the banks, the corporate media, Hollywood, and the DNC—and, in the process, saved American Democracy when he beat

the establishment candidate.

However, Vladimir Putin might have even more spectacular achievements. It seems that using the Pokemon platform, and Poke Balls, he was able to capture and brainwash the electorate and force them to vote for Trump. Using the same methods he also succeeded in convincing the British public to vote for Brexit, and reduce the margin of victory for Angela Merkel, limiting her power to carry out her agenda. Then to top it off he was responsible for accusations of sexual abuse made

against George Takei.

Meanwhile, Mueller has secured indictments against individuals for charges unrelated to the accusation that Russia interfered in the election. This itself is proof that after a year, and forever more, there is no there, there.

Considering that one event was real, and the others only in the fevered minds of the liberals and other losers, my vote is for The Donald.

John Dente
Wilmington, Del.

Republicans Double-Down on Hypocrisy To the Editor:

In the first year of the Trump-led Republican majority, there have been two major legislative initiatives. The effort to repeal and replace Obamacare has been a signature failure while the proposal to reform tax policy appears to be successful. Both policies, however, have been supported by lies and hypocrisy promulgated by Republican supporters that objective analysis has debunked.

Regarding the three failed at-

tempts at healthcare reform, rhetoric from Trump and Republican leadership consistently claimed that their reforms would provide quality healthcare coverage for all Americans at lower cost. Republican claims, however, were rebutted by the analysis of the Congressional Budget Office. The CBO found that each of the proposals would have denied several million Americans healthcare insurance, many among the poor and elderly as Medicaid budgets were cut. Additional numbers of the working poor and middle class would lose coverage as Obamacare subsidies were eliminated and the cost of individual policies skyrocketed. Insurance rates for



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Why is the GOP pushing such a stinky tax bill?

by Jim Hightower

Sam Rayburn, a legendary Speaker of the U.S. House in the 1940s and '50s, offered this piece of ethical advice for lawmakers who were conflicted over whether to vote for the People or the lobbyists: "Every now and then," he said, "a politician ought to do something just because it's right."

Wow, ethics—how quaint! To-

day's House Speaker, Paul Ryan, has perverted Rayburn's ethics, advising his Republican majority to vote for anything just because it's Right Wing. Along with Donald Trump and Senate leader Mitch McConnell, Ryan is now trying to push America's tax law so far to the right that it's horribly wrong.

Tax proposals can be complex, but this 429-page monster is shockingly easy to understand: The Trump-Ryan-McConnell triumvirate intends

to take money from millions of working families and give it to the world's wealthiest people and richest multinational corporations.

Of course, when they talk publicly about their proposal, they claim it's all about "helping" you working stiffs. It's "real tax reform for everyday hardworking Americans," trumpeted our President. In private, though, they reveal to their biggest campaign donors that the plan lets them "help themselves" to the Peo-

ple's money, giving these corporate elites a huge windfall—"the biggest ever," bragged Trump. In fact, the 400 richest families in America would average \$5.5 million in new tax breaks. Meanwhile, if your income is under \$75,000 a year, you'll end up worse off.

Forget trickle-down economics, the GOP is practicing tinkle-down economics! Why would they push such an evil, shameful policy? Because it's not you common voters

they care about, it's the moneyed elites who fund their re-election campaigns. As one Republican pusher of this tax giveaway to the rich put it: "My donors are basically saying: 'Get it done or don't ever call me again.'"

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from page six

those with pre-existing and chronic conditions would greatly increase. Healthcare insurance rates would not go down because nothing in the Republican proposals addressed the base causes of ballooning healthcare costs – the cost of pharmaceuticals and the provision of health-related services. Despite the objective analysis of the CBO, Republicans continued to tout their healthcare plan as providing comprehensive coverage at reduced rates, revealing their hypocrisy.

Republican hypocrisy did not end with healthcare reform – it continued in their tax reform bill. Trump and Republican leadership touted the tax plan as a "middle class tax cut" that provided most of its benefits to the working class. Republicans also claimed that the plan would stimulate economic growth, create new jobs and increase wages of the working class. Once again, analysis by the CBO and the Joint Committee on Taxation has revealed Republican hypocrisy. Their reports indicate that the rich (including the Trump family) would be the primary beneficiaries of the tax bill. Moreover, some lower income and middle class groups will actually experience a tax increase as the provisions of the bill kick in over time. The overall effect of the bill will be to increase income inequality in the U.S. by providing exorbitant benefits



to the rich and paltry payments or tax increases to the middle class.

One of the most egregious claims of Republicans supporting the tax bill is that the large reduction in the business tax rate from 35 percent to 20 percent will result in an increase in business investment that will drive explosive economic growth. In turn, the working class will benefit as employment increases and wage rates rise. This is, of course, the infamous "trickle down" theory that has become part of Republican economic ideology. It has little basis in empirical data and relies on a simplistic interpretation of classical economic models. There is no guarantee in economic theory that income from tax cuts will be used by businesses to increase capital investment to increase growth. In fact, recent history illustrates that this is not necessarily the case. The large profits generated by U.S. business since the end of the 2008-09 recession have not been used for investment in new capital. Rather they have been used for providing stock dividends to shareholders, stock buybacks, acquisition activities or simply stored in investment accounts. There is no certainty that tax benefits to business will "trickle down" to the working class.

Why is it that Trump and the

Republicans can build rhetorical fantasy worlds refuted by fact and still expect their legislation to pass? An under-reported empirical study by Martin Gilens of Princeton and Benjamin Page of Northwestern may provide some insight into the reason. The authors analyzed 1,779 policy proposals considered by Congress to determine which social groups had the most influence on their adoption. Their findings are stark. Two groups had "substantial independent influence" on U.S. government policy. They were "economic elites" (top 10 percent of income) and organized groups representing business interests. Average citizens and mass-based interest groups had "little or no independent influence" on policy adoption. The predominant influence of the economic elite and business interests and the lack of influence of the average voter on policy adoption calls into question whether the U.S. can still call itself a democracy ruled by the majority. In the words of Gilens and Page, "if policymaking is dominated by powerful business interests and a small number of affluent Americans, then America's claim to being a democratic society are seriously threatened." The findings also indicate

that current Republican rhetoric is no more than propaganda, providing cover for their advocacy for the economic elites that finance their election victories.

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

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Ready, Set, Mega-Debt!

To the Editor:

"I tell you, it's a fool-proof plan", whispered Peter Pluto to his fellow conspirators Kelly Klepto and Olie Garch. "First, we bribe our beholden friends in Congress to concoct a crazy tax plan that will slash revenue and drive the government too deep in debt to recover. Next, we and our wealthy friends all invest billions in the U.S. bond market to buy up that debt. Once we do that, every time some poor slob down on Main Street pays his taxes, the cash will go straight into our pockets as interest!"

"Think about it, it's like armed robbery with someone else holding the gun! A risk-free gift from the American people that will never stop giving. How about it, fellas, are you onboard?"

"Oh, and by the way, too bad that creepy Rand Paul guy figured out what I'm up to and started shooting off his big mouth. Hope he feels better real soon!"

Rick Littlefield
Barrington, N.H.

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[Forty years before the Vietnam War, a British newspaper made the following observation about the relationship between uniformed combatants and the societies they purportedly serve. The feature distinguishing Vietnam from our other wars was its graphic immediacy, thanks to television and the Pentagon's policy of allowing journalists to actually do their work. The viewers, appalled by the mere simulacrum of what was being done in their name, rejected not just the war, but its combatants, too, because, through their association with that brutal spectacle, they had destroyed the illusion which had always been necessary for them to lift the civilian public above the common ways of their lives.—The Ed.]

"Serving the hero is so splendid and comforting that it is in itself one of the major joys of life. Millions discovered this during the war. They found opportunities for cherishing some soldier or sailor or airman, and were made glad by that service. They obtained also a part in the sacrifice which the man was offering, and felt that they were united with him. We have an abiding need of heroes to lift us above the common ways of our life."

— Daily Express, May 23, 1927, cited in Eksteins, Modris. *Rites of Spring: the Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age.*

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Admiral Fowl e's Piscataqua River Tidal Guide (Not for Navigational Purposes)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sunday, December 10	Monday, December 11	Tuesday, December 12	Wednesday, December 13	Thursday, December 14	Friday, December 15	Saturday, December 16
<p>2011—The gundalow <i>Piscataqua</i> is launched on the eponymous river.</p> <p>2004—Gary Webb, who exposed the CIA-Contra drug connection, dies from two gunshots in the face. The coroner calls it suicide.</p> <p>2001—At a White House menorah lighting ceremony, George W.[MD] Bush says, "I couldn't imagine somebody like Osama bin Laden understanding the joy of Hanukkah."</p> <p>1998—House Judiciary Committee debates impeaching Pres. Clinton for lying about his lewd behavior.</p> <p>1992—Sen. Bob Packwood (Lecher-Ore.) apologizes for being a serial groper but refuses to resign.</p> <p>1987—Murderer Stanley Draper and gangster John Kendall are sprung from a British prison by a pal in a hijacked helicopter.</p> <p>1976—In a memo to President-elect Carter, pollster Pat Caddell makes the case for a "permanent campaign."</p> <p>1971—The Senate, buying Wm. Rehnquist's lie disavowing a letter supporting racial segregation, confirms him for the Supreme Court.</p> <p>1966—In Vietnam, 16 U.S. Marines are killed and 11 are wounded by "friendly fire."</p> <p>1967—Trying to lower the cost of natural gas, the U.S. government explodes an A-bomb in N.M.</p> <p>1937—G.P. Thompson gets the Nobel for Physics for proving electrons are waves. His dad won it in 1906 for demonstrating that they're particles.</p> <p>4:27 4:47</p> <p>10:28 11:02</p>	<p>2006—On national TV, President George W.[MD] Bush denies that he was ever "a knee-walking drunk."</p> <p>2000—The Supreme Court hears <i>Bush v. Gore</i>.</p> <p>1998—President Clinton begs forgiveness for his sins. Instead he gets three Articles of Impeachment.</p> <p>1985—At a Manchester, N.H., dinner honoring the late William Loeb, Veep George H.[H.]W. Bush abases himself by reading Loeb's most scurrilous attacks against him.</p> <p>1981—Soldiers of the U.S.-backed Salvadoran government murder 900 villagers at El Mozote.</p> <p>1960—Seeing at the last minute that JFK has his wife and kids with him, Belmont, N.H. resident Richard Pavlick defers his plan to crash into the President-elect's car with his dynamite-laden Buick.</p> <p>1951—A few days after slipshod coal dust removal techniques are approved by state inspectors, the New Orient mine in West Frankfort, Ill., blows up, killing 117 miners.</p> <p>1920—British soldiers set fire to Cork, Ireland. Irish firefighters are ineffective due to British gunfire. Five downtown acres become rubble.</p> <p>1917—Court-martialed after a Houston police riot, 13 black soldiers are found guilty and hanged in unison.</p> <p>1838—The House of Representatives passes Rep. Charles Atherton's (D-N.H.) "gag rule" prohibiting discussion of slavery.</p> <p>5:30 5:53</p> <p>11:35</p>	<p>2006—The <i>Portsmouth Herald</i> misquotes Sen. Barack Obama [D-Ill.], who, the day before, in Portsmouth, did <i>not</i> say, "The moral arc of the universe bends at the elbow of justice."</p> <p>2005—"I think we are welcomed [in Iraq]," says George W.[MD] Bush, "but it was not a peaceful welcome."</p> <p>2000—The Supreme Court selects George W.[MD] Bush as the 43rd President of these disunited states.</p> <p>1998—For good measure, Congress whups a fourth article of impeachment on Pres. Clinton.</p> <p>1985—Arrow Air Flight 1285 crashes at Gander, killing 248 U.S. paratroopers and eight crew. Islamic Jihad claims credit, which a sketchy U.S. investigation attempts to deny.</p> <p>1984—Georgia prison officials electrocute Alpha Otis Stephens a second time, after their first effort fails.</p> <p>1983—Nancy Reagan sits on Mr. T's lap and kisses him on the scalp.</p> <p>1983—At a Boston trade show, "New Trends in Missiles," anarchists turn up the loose 1,000 cockroaches, symbolizing the winners of a nuclear war.</p> <p>1950—Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-Bushmills) kicks columnist Drew Pearson in the groin.</p> <p>1942—The <i>Queen Mary</i>, carrying 16,082 GIs—the most passengers ever recorded on one vessel—is hit broadside by a rogue wave estimated to be up to 92-feet high. It rolls 52 degrees; three more and it would have capsized.</p> <p>6:31 6:59</p> <p>12:03 12:42</p>	<p>2009—Ever-helpful Sen. Joe Lieberman [I-Conn.] nixes a proposal to let people buy into Medicare.</p> <p>2003—U.S. troops drag Saddam Hussein out of a hole in the ground, so final victory in Iraq must be imminent. U.S. death toll so far: 547.</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—An eager public finally gets its first Susan B. Anthony dollars.</p> <p>1974—Defecting oceanographer Slatava Kurilov leaps from a Soviet cruise ship, swims for three days, and reaches the Philippines safely.</p> <p>1951—J. Edgar "Mary" Hoover spooks Harry S Truman into purging "disloyal" government workers.</p> <p>1949—An American League proposal to legalize the spitball fails.</p> <p>1937—The Nanjing Massacre begins.</p> <p>1932—In the visitors gallery of the U.S. House, deranged sporting goods store clerk Martin Kemmerer brandishes a .38 revolver and demands twenty minutes to speak. Rep. Melvin Maas (R-Minn.) talks him into dropping the gun.</p> <p>1864—Paraguay declares war on Brazil; its population is soon halved.</p> <p>1774—Paul Revere rides to Portsmouth with news that the export of powder and arms to America have been prohibited.</p> <p>7:29 7:59</p> <p>1:02 1:43</p>	<p>2012—N.H.-born Adam Lanza shoots his gun-enthusiast mother, six other adults, and 20 kids at a Newtown, Conn. school.</p> <p>2008—"This is a farewell kiss from the Iraqi people, you dog," yells Muntadhar al-Zaidi, as he flings his shoe at George W.[MD] Bush.</p> <p>2005—George W.[MD] Bush blames his Iraq War on "faulty intelligence." He doesn't say whose.</p> <p>1987—Chrysler admits it sold thousands of used cars as new ones.</p> <p>1986—Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager begin a nine-day, non-stop, around-the-world flight.</p> <p>1981—Interior Secretary James Watts, defending taxpayer-funded cocktail parties he's held at the Lee Mansion, says "Mr. Reagan has the White House. I have Arlington."</p> <p>1973—Richard Nixon personally thanks the U.S. head of Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church for his support.</p> <p>1972—The last men on the moon leave.</p> <p>1942—The second of two giant Soviet propaganda planes crashes, again due to misadventure.</p> <p>1907—The seven-masted schooner <i>Thomas W. Lawson</i> runs aground off Cornwall, resulting in the world's first major oil spill.</p> <p>1906—The <i>UT</i>, Germany's first submarine, goes into service.</p> <p>1774—Local militiamen seize powder and arms from Fort William and Mary, near Portsmouth.</p> <p>8:22 8:54</p> <p>1:57 2:38</p>	<p>2003—A Robinson R22 helicopter loses power over Redlands, Calif., and crashes onto a city street. Miraculously, only the pilot dies.</p> <p>2000—Sen. Phil Gramm gives Enron the energy futures deregulation it wants, hidden in an appropriations bill. One year later Enron is bankrupt.</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>1989—Sicilian-born sculptor Arturo Di Modica installs a 16-foot long, 3.5 ton bronze bull in the middle of Broad Street in New York, in front of the Stock Exchange—without a permit.</p> <p>1986—Bill Casey, CIA director, suffers a handy seizure, preventing him from testifying about Iran/Contra.</p> <p>1983—Ed Meese denies Ebenezer Scrooge exploited Bob Cratchit.</p> <p>1969—The Mormon Church reaffirms its "no black priests" policy.</p> <p>1967—A 2.5 mm-deep defect collapses the 39 year-old Silver Bridge over the Ohio River, killing 46.</p> <p>1966—Walt Disney dies in Los Angeles. Contrary to rumor, his remains are burned, not frozen.</p> <p>1960—Palm Beach police arrest N.H. resident Richard Pavlick before he can kill John F. Kennedy with his dynamite-laden Buick.</p> <p>1922—The President of Harvard defends its policy of banning black students from dining rooms and residence halls.</p> <p>9:10 9:43</p> <p>2:48 3:28</p>	<p>2005—The <i>New York Times</i> reports that the NSA has been tapping U.S. telephones without a warrant.</p> <p>2001—U.S. troops at Tora Bora ask for help catching Osama bin Laden. Donald Rumsfeld denies their request; Osama kills.</p> <p>1988—Bush #41 nominates notoriously boozy womanizer Sen. John Tower [R-Texas] to run the Department of Defense. His confirmation hearings do not go well.</p> <p>1988—Rochester, N.H.'s most famous native, perennial Presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, is convicted of tax and mail fraud.</p> <p>1970—Big Milk offers Nixon a \$2 million "campaign contribution" if he'll cut milk imports. A fortnight later Nixon imposes milk import quotas.</p> <p>1965—Gen. Westmoreland, already commanding 200,000 men in Vietnam, asks for another 243,000.</p> <p>1960—Two airliners collide over Manhattan killing a total of 134.</p> <p>1944—Hitler overrules his generals and mounts a massive attack in the Ardennes Forest. He shoulda listened.</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—New Madrid, Missouri, is hit by the first of a series of powerful earthquakes.</p> <p>1773—"Sons of Liberty" disguised as Mohawks dump 342 chests of tea into Boston Harbor.</p> <p>9:54 10:28</p> <p>3:33 4:12</p>
Sunday, December 17	Monday, December 18	Tuesday, December 19	Wednesday, December 20	Thursday, December 21	Friday, December 22	Saturday, December 23
<p>2010—Street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi sets himself afire, thereby igniting the Tunisian Revolution and the subsequent Arab Spring.</p> <p>2006—On "Fox News Sunday," Bill Kristol predicts "Barack Obama is not going to beat Hillary Clinton in a single Democratic primary."</p> <p>1998—Pres. Clinton attempts to distract from his impeachment by using up half the Pentagon's inventory of cruise missiles in Iraq.</p> <p>1996—In Lima, Peruvian guerrillas crash a party at the Japanese embassy, take hostages, and stay four months.</p> <p>1967—Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt goes for a swim in heavy surf and disappears.</p> <p>1960—A U.S.A.F. C-131 hits a Munich steeple, then falls onto a trolley. All 20 on the plane die, along with 18 in the trolley, and 11 on the street.</p> <p>1951—Black Americans petition UN officials in Paris and New York for relief from genocidal U.S. domestic policies. They're ignored.</p> <p>1944—Adm. "Bull" Halsey sails the 3rd Fleet into a typhoon. Three destroyers sink; nine other ships are damaged, 100 aircraft are lost, and 790 sailors die, mostly by drowning.</p> <p>1927—The U.S. sub <i>S-4</i> is rammed and sunk off Provincetown by Coast Guard destroyer <i>Paulding</i>, which is hunting rum runners; 40 are lost.</p> <p>1862—Gen. Grant issues General Order No. 11, barring "Jews and other unprincipled traders" from his district.</p> <p>10:35 11:10</p> <p>4:16 4:53</p>	<p>2005—"Not only can we win the war in Iraq—we are winning the war in Iraq," says George W.[MD] Bush, 962 days after "Mission accomplished."</p> <p>2004—"America's Most Wanted's" John Walsh says he most wants Jahbir and Alfonso Fowle caught.</p> <p>2000—"If this were a dictatorship," says George W.[MD] Bush on CNN, "it'd be a heck of a lot easier, just so long as I'm the dictator."</p> <p>1996—G-Man Earl Pitts is arrested for moonlighting for the KGB.</p> <p>1972—Richard Nixon begins Operation Linebacker: 12 days of B-52 strikes against North Vietnam. SAMs shoot down three Stratofortresses on the first night.</p> <p>1957—The first watts of nuclear-generated electricity begin lighting up used car lots and neon signs.</p> <p>1946—Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker flies over Broadway scattering Damon Runyon's ashes.</p> <p>1941—Outnumbered 10 to one, 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>1867—Differing track widths cause a train to derail in Angola, N.Y. One wooden car drops 40 feet and catches fire; 49 passengers burn to death.</p> <p>1865—The 13th Amendment is ratified: slavery and involuntary servitude are abolished in the U.S.</p> <p>11:13 11:48</p> <p>4:55 5:31</p>	<p>2007—A fire breaks out near "Dick" Cheney's office. Probable 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 coal miners are killed in Utah.</p> <p>1974—Norris Cotton finagles a bill giving New Hampshire's senior Senator the right in perpetuity to commandeer Daniel Webster's old desk.</p> <p>1973—Johnny Carson makes a joke about a non-existent toilet paper shortage, inadvertently causing one.</p> <p>1946—The Viet Minh take on the French in Indo-China.</p> <p>1944—Primarily due to bad generalship, two-thirds of the 106th Infantry, comprising 8,000 men, must surrender during the Battle of the Bulge.</p> <p>1941—Ex-corporal Hitler takes direct command of the German Army.</p> <p>1910—Spurred on by the <i>Baltimore Sun</i>, that city mandates the racial segregation of residential areas.</p> <p>1907—A coal mine explosion kills 239 in Jacobs Creek, Pa.</p> <p>1865—South Carolina passes a law requiring all black "servants" to sign contracts with their "masters" and be "polite" while working dawn-to-dusk.</p> <p>1777—Washington's army arrives at Valley Forge, Pa.</p> <p>1776—Thomas Paine's <i>American Crisis</i> is published; "These are the times that try men's souls..."</p> <p>11:49</p> <p>5:32 6:07</p> <p>6:08 6:42</p>	<p>2002—The ten largest U.S. brokerage houses cough up \$1.44 billion in fines rather than risk a trial over charges that they fleeced their customers.</p> <p>2002—Sen. Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) steps down after lamenting Strom Thurmond's failure to win the Presidency on a racist platform in 1948.</p> <p>1989—The U.S. invades Panama to arrest ex-CIA asset Manuel Noriega.</p> <p>1983—Once and future Defense Secretary Don Rumsfeld visits Baghdad to shake mass murderer Saddam Hussein's hand and convey Ronald Reagan's best wishes.</p> <p>1979—The <i>Washington Post</i> publishes a correction: National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski did <i>not</i> unzip his fly during an interview with a female <i>Post</i> reporter.</p> <p>1978—Richard Nixon's former Chief of Staff H.R. "Bob" Haldeman is released from prison after 18 months.</p> <p>1960—CIA chief Allen Dulles meets with bigwigs from Standard Oil, Texaco, ITT, Domino Sugar, and other big U.S. corporations, who instruct him to overthrow Fidel Castro.</p> <p>1786—Hannah Ocuish, a cognitively-impaired 12-year-old Pequot Indian girl, thanks the executioner for his kindness before she's hanged.</p> <p>1669—In the first jury trial in Delaware, Marcus "The Long Finn" Jacobson is sentenced to be flogged, branded on the face, and enslaved for insurrection.</p> <p>12:24 12:24</p> <p>6:46 7:18</p>	<p>2008—Todd Carmichael reaches the South Pole after traveling 692 miles on skis and on foot, solo.</p> <p>2006—Saparmurat Niyazov's term of office ends. Turkmenistan's President for Life leaves a legacy of many golden statues... of himself.</p> <p>2004—In Fort Valley, Ga., Larry Taylor refuses to give his cell phone to a would-be thief, who then shoots him in the head. Taylor walks two miles to his mother's home, only to find she has moved to a nursing home. Despite this setback, he survives.</p> <p>2001—"All in all," says George W.[MD] Bush three months after 9/11, "it's been a fabulous year for Laura and me."</p> <p>1996—After two years of denial, Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) admits to ethics violations.</p> <p>1989—Vice President J. Danforth Quayle sends out 30,000 Xmas cards in which "beacon" is spelled "beakon."</p> <p>1988—PanAm Flight 103 explodes over Lockerbie; 270 perish.</p> <p>1970—At the White House, Elvis gives Tricky Dick a chrome-plated Colt .45; Dick gives Elvis a Narcotics Bureau badge.</p> <p>1968—The <i>Apollo 8</i> astronauts become the first humans to leave Earth's gravitational field.</p> <p>1962—The U.S. exchanges \$53 million in medical supplies for 1,113 Bay of Pigs prisoners.</p> <p>1956—Montgomery, Ala. buses desegregate—the boycott worked.</p> <p>12:59</p> <p>1:00 12:59</p> <p>6:46 7:18</p>	<p>2001—Richard Reid's shoe-bomb fails to down American Airlines Flight 63. Regardless, all footwear must now be X-rayed pre-flight.</p> <p>1984—Asked for money on a New York subway, Bernhard Goetz responds with lead instead. Then he flees to New Hampshire. Of course.</p> <p>1981—Ronald Reagan gives the poor 30 million lbs. of moldy cheese.</p> <p>1965—Henry House becomes the first U.S. soldier court-martialed for protesting the Vietnam War.</p> <p>1944—To a German demand for surrender, surrounded General Anthony McAuliffe replies, "Nuts."</p> <p>1937—Hotel clerk and author Nathanael West and his wife Eileen McKenney die in a car wreck during their honeymoon.</p> <p>1891—Edward L. Bernays, Freud's nephew & PR's dad, is born in Austria.</p> <p>1849—Fyodor Dostoevsky, half-naked and tied to a pole, is presumably pleased to learn he's going to Siberia for four years instead of being shot.</p> <p>1882—Thomas Edison makes the first string of electric Xmas lights.</p> <p>1813—Eighteen acres in downtown Portsmouth, N.H. burn, from Daniel Street to Court Street, and Fleet Street to the river; 272 buildings are destroyed.</p> <p>1757—In Portsmouth, N.H., a mob hundreds strong, incensed by British press gangs, drags <i>HMS Enterprise's</i> longboat from the harbor, hauls it two miles inland, and probably burns it.</p> <p>1:36 1:36</p> <p>7:24 7:56</p>	<p>2015—Portsmouth hits 63°.</p> <p>2004—NASA reports that the asteroid Apophis has one chance in 233 of hitting Earth in 2029.</p> <p>1994—Tipped off by a Boston FBI agent that he's about to be arrested, James "Whitey" Bulger takes a powder. He's on the lam for 16.5 years.</p> <p>1986—The airplane <i>Voyager</i> lands in California, having circumnavigated the world nonstop.</p> <p>1985—Cops in north Georgia find a black bear dead amid 40 open plastic containers showing traces of cocaine.</p> <p>1982—The EPA puts an end to Times Beach, Mo., due to massive corporate dioxin contamination.</p> <p>1981—Basement digging causes the Foye Building, next to the Portsmouth Athenæum, to partially collapse.</p> <p>1972—Rescued survivors of an Andean plane crash enjoy a dietary change.</p> <p>1955—James Kutcher, a legless WW II vet, has his disability payments cut off, too, because he's a member of the Socialist Workers Party.</p> <p>1953—In Korea, 21 American POWs refuse to go home. In response the CIA starts a mind-control program.</p> <p>1948—Japan's General Hideki Tojo is hanged as a war criminal.</p> <p>1927—Two policemen are mortally wounded when a bank in Cisco, Texas, is held up by a gang whose leader wears a Santa Claus suit. A standing \$5,000 reward for shooting bank robbers inspires a gun battle: four more die and eight are wounded.</p> <p>2:14 2:16</p> <p>8:06 8:37</p>

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