

The Fortnightly Rant

Marvelous Monday

Monday was disorienting. A good day? But... isn't this still 2020?

Yes, it is, and so it's no time to let down our guard. But, as with November 3rd, it was a good day regardless: health care workers began receiving vaccinations against the plague, the worst Attorney General in U.S. history quit, and the Electoral College—perhaps the least-loved feature of that anachronistic contraption we call our Constitution—passed up a prime opportunity to bite democracy on the... posterior.

We who have escaped death by the virus—thus far, anyway—and resisted, perhaps, the siren call of the gas stove, bridge abutment, or tall building, owe it to ourselves to hold Monday, December 14th, in our hearts and cherish it forever. Because we're going to need it, and every other touchstone, fetish, talisman, and superstition we can muster in 2021, which is likely to be terrible, too.

It's good to know that the Justice Department will no longer answer to Barr; we just wish there was a way Barr could be made to answer to the Justice Department.

Presumably he'll retreat to his stately white mansion in McLean, Virginia. It's funny, but to look at this impeccably-maintained \$2.5 million showcase, you'd never guess that the owner's father wrote *Space Relations*, a science fiction novel about intergalactic oligarchs who rape teenagers,* and elevated the uncredentialed Jeffrey Epstein into the rarified circles of Manhattan society, thus launching his career as an overachieving child molester.

In real estate, they say location is everything. In this case, Chez Barr is a convenient ten-minute drive from the headquarters of his first employer, the Central Intelligence Agency. Not that we have any particular suspicions about the Agency or its former analyst and Congressional liaison; we just automatically assume they're up to something.

Why would Barr quit now, though, just a few work days before Christmas? Our guess is that he knows what's afoot—a wave of pardons which will make the incumbent's previous abuse of that presidential power look like jaywalking by comparison—and he doesn't want to get any of the legal residue on his Florsheims.

* Eight used paperback copies were on offer recently at Abebooks.com. Prices ranged from \$111.26 to \$517.43, depending on condition.

Besides, one of his grandest schemes was already in motion; he could sit back, surrounded by all the comforts of home, and watch it unfold from afar. It's not as if the warden needs him at Terre Haute to push the poison plunger.

It's really been quite an accomplishment. Thanks to Barr, the Justice Department—after what it referred to as a “nearly two decade lapse,” subtly making the point that killing people is a core function—is on track to kill 13 people before Joe Biden takes over and spoils the fun.

As achievements go, it lacked the more profound ramifications of steering Donald Trump between the Scylla and Charybdis of Robert Mueller and impeachment. One must give him credit, though: it isn't easy for an overweight, 70-year old man—especially a professedly-devout Catholic—to safely become a serial killer.

Barr is now gone, but fans of injustice need not fret; it's not as if he left the Department in good hands.

His deputy, Jeffrey Rosen, had been at the Transportation Department, where he generously rolled back tailpipe emission standards, enabling the mighty engines which drive our economy to once again breathe free. Humans? Not so much. The climate? Tough luck.

Moving from Transportation to Justice may seem an unlikely transition, but Rosen has shown that his values have remained intact. When the President's former campaign manager Paul Manafort was about to land in Rikers Island, Rosen stepped in and got him sent to a cushier federal lockup. And why not? All Manafort ever did was help tyrants and would-be tyrants achieve their goals: acquire a country estate with its own private lake, complete with galleon and nearby zoo; finagle the presidential nomination of a major U.S. political party...

Rosen understands that we face a grave threat to public order—namely, the public: random citizens joining together and claiming, for example, that Black Lives Matter. He wrote to federal prosecutors in September that it's time “to consider the use of a variety of federal charges when they may be appropriate, including seditious conspiracy.”

The Electoral College gave the victory to Biden Monday, but Tuesday made it official. This aspect of Constitutional law is often overlooked. If one party in a two-party system



goes for broke because it's demographically doomed, and the other lacks the gumption to make the it pay for its transgressions, then the Constitution says whatever the hell the first party says. Many assumed that the Constitution gave Barack Obama the right to fill a Supreme Court seat. The Senate Majority Leader had other ideas and gave himself a veto.

Now, somewhere in that cross-wired brain of his, even The Donald understands: for the last forty-seven months he's had a magical power which forced everyone to show respect... to his face, anyway. Now, he's lost it.

What does that make him? Some poor little wad of repressed neurons, buried deep in

his addled amygdala, is hissing at him, Gollum-like, “loser, loser...”

“In his moments of deepest denial,” CNN reported yesterday, “Trump has told some advisers that he will refuse to leave the White House on Inauguration Day, only to be walked down from that ledge.” He can't even legally use Mar-a-Lago as his residence—and, for once, the law could prevail. What's a would-be tyrant to do?

His team of cracked lawyers wants him to call “sedition” and invoke the Insurrection Act. Recently-pardoned General Flynn suggests seizing voting machines and holding another election. Don't relax just yet, folks.

The Alleged News®

The 6.8 Billion Dollar Daily Ripoff

The staff of the Marketplace Morning Report usually tries to make the economy interesting. It's not easy. The subject of the show, which airs weekdays on NHPR, is famously nicknamed “the dismal science.” On December 8th, though, we wonder if they soft-pedaled the story, for fear of insurrection.

It often seems that that day's topic—income inequality—has been beaten to death by now. In abstract terms, it has. Percentages, changes over time, blah blah blah. A little dismal science can go a long way towards combatting insomnia. This time, though, an interesting character decided to ask the right question the right way.

Early in his career, through shrewd investments in high tech, Nick Hanauer made ungodly sums of money. Readers will presumably have heard of a company called Amazon. His net worth is currently estimated at about a cool billion.

Somehow, though, Hanauer seems to have avoided being infected by the unchecked greed virus.

In 2012, he videotaped a talk in which he disputed what has been the basis of economic thinking for the past 40-some-odd years: jobs are created by cutting taxes on the wealthy. Now, one would think that, with so many people struggling to find work even before President Bloato brought on the 2020 Plague,

this hardly needed to be spelled out. Politics is a matter of perception, though, not facts.

Instead, Hanauer put forward this proposition: if an economy is to thrive, its workers must be able to afford to buy the products that they make. In other words, people making low wages should get raises. Not only that, people with high incomes should—drum roll, please—pay higher taxes.

Astonishingly, people with high incomes seemed to take this personally, and furiously attacked Hanauer. To his great credit, Hanauer has been undeterred. Indeed, he seems to be channeling the Roosevelts.

Teddy gave a famous speech in

1907, when he laid the cornerstone of the Pilgrim Monument in Plymouth. He said, in part, “Many men of large wealth have been guilty of conduct which from the moral standpoint is criminal, and their misdeeds are to a peculiar degree reprehensible, because those committing them have no excuse of want, of poverty, of weakness and ignorance to offer as partial atonement...”

“[I]t may well be that the determination of the Government...to punish certain malefactors of great wealth, has...caused these men to combine to bring about as much financial stress as possible, in order to discredit the policy of the Government and thereby secure a reversal

of that policy, so that they may enjoy unmolested the fruits of their own evil-doing.”

In 1936, at Madison Square Garden, FDR picked up where Teddy left off:

“For nearly four years you have had an Administration which instead of twirling its thumbs has rolled up its sleeves. We will keep our sleeves rolled up.

“We had to struggle with the old enemies of peace—business and financial monopoly, speculation, reckless banking, class antagonism, sectionalism, war profiteering.

“They had begun to consider the Government of the United States as a mere appendage to their own affairs. We know now that Government by organized money is just as dangerous as Government by organized mob.

“Never before in all our history have these forces been so united against one candidate as they stand today. They are unanimous in their hate for me—and I welcome their hatred.”

Huh...looks like some things never change. To Hanauer's credit, though, he's trying anyway. He came up with a clever way to extract from dismal statistics the flesh-and-blood consequences of economic policies. We've summed up the results in the headline to this piece.

Before we dig into this further, one brief caveat: because that figure \$2.5 trillion is so difficult to imagine, we've broken the annual theft down into daily doses. Any errors herein resulting from that calculations would be ours; the math is pretty simple, though. The bottom line, though, is this: every day, working people in this country are being ripped off to the tune of \$6.8 billion. Every. Damn. Day.

For the first thirty years after World War Two ended, wages grew at about the same rate as the economy, across all levels of income. That changed about 1975. Productivity kept going up. Stock prices kept going up. The cost of homes and college educations kept going up. Health care, &c., &c., *ad nauseam*. But wages for the bottom 90 percent stayed essentially flat, a phenomenon called “the great widening.”

Hanauer went to the Rand Corporation—that *rara avis*, a think tank that's not in the tank for the bank—and commissioned a study. He asked them to answer a question which had apparently never occurred to anyone before: what if that rising tide had continued to raise all boats—instead of just the yachts?

Many pages of abstruse calculations later, with charts breaking down the results by decile, and so forth, they concluded that Americans whose income falls among the lower 90 percent would be making a total of \$2.5 trillion more per year.

Do we repeat ourselves? Very well, we repeat ourselves. Because that's a number worth repeating. Or, dividing by 365, which is how we got that figure of \$6.8 billion per day. That's



Friday the 13th fell on a Sunday this month. Our Wandering Photographer took a highly uncharacteristic morning stroll to the river. He wanted to catch images of the Memorial Bridge in the fog. Incubation periods being what they are, it will be some time before we will know whether he also caught the covid in the process. Maskless members of the Death by Fitness Brigade were rather prevalent at that hour.

the amount the ghostly hand of Ronald Reagan is sneaking out of the till—every damn day.

In a separate interview, Marketplace's Peter Brancaccio asked what this means for a typical worker. “The median full-time worker in America today earns about \$50,000 a year,” he said. “If they had been held harmless by the last 45 years of neoliberal economic policy...instead of earning \$50,000 a year, they would earn between \$92,000 and \$100,000 a year.”

There's a lot of talk these days about the crippling burden of student debt. Of course, much of that money is owed to skeezy operations which were set up just to fleece the unwary. But if it were paid off—even to those crooks—a generation of Americans would be freed from their fetters—and they'd have money to spend on other things. The last we heard, the total amount of outstanding student debt is \$1.5 trillion.

What if some plucky successor to the Roosevelts—say, Joe Biden, for example—were to tell our billionaire class to go pound sand, and began paying, on his famous “Day One,” \$6.8 billion per day on that student

debt? The balance would be down to zero around August 27th.

GOP Senator to Americans: “Drop Dead” by Jake Johnson, staff writer, *Common Dreams*

Wisconsin Sen. Ron Johnson, who voted for President Donald Trump's deficit-exploding tax cuts for the rich in 2017, blocked fellow Republican Sen. Josh Hawley [Mo.] attempt Friday to pass legislation that would provide \$1,200 direct payments to U.S. adults and \$500 to children amid a devastating pandemic and ongoing economic collapse.

When Hawley requested unanimous consent to pass the direct payments bill—which he introduced last week with Sen. Bernie Sanders [I-Vt.]—Johnson objected, delivering a rambling speech complaining about the rising deficit.

Michael Linden, executive director of the Groundwork Collaborative, noted on Twitter following Johnson's objection that “another round of stimulus checks at \$1,200 would be roughly 1/7 of the size of the Trump tax cuts which Senator

Johnson happily supported.” “Needless to say,” Linden added, “\$1,200 to everyday people right now is way more economically useful than hundreds of billions to corporations.”

Ben Wikler, chair of the Wisconsin Democratic Party, also slammed Johnson for blocking direct relief. “Millions are falling into poverty,” said Wikler, “and Ron Johnson—who loves tax cuts for the rich—is blocking help.”

Hawley's attempt to pass stimulus checks in a standalone bill came as Congress continued working to finalize a roughly \$900 billion coronavirus relief package that, as it stands, would provide one-time \$600 direct payments to U.S. adults earning less than \$75,000 a year and \$600 to the children of eligible recipients.

The relief negotiations hit a snag after Sen. Pat Toomey [R-Pa.] demanded inclusion of language that would terminate emergency lending programs authorized by the CARES Act, a move critics warned would hamstring the incoming Biden administration's ability to address the economic crisis.

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Sometimes Old is Good

The Fechheimer Building, one of the finest examples of a cast-iron facade in Portland, Oregon, was built in 1885. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, it was restored in 1981 by Russell Fellows Properties, the principals of which enjoy a subscription to this newspaper.

“Happy to Support Progressive Journalism and The New Hampshire Gazette”

– Joe Keefe

Lawmakers are expected to work through the weekend, if necessary, in an effort to reach an agreement. Negotiators are also racing to avert a government shutdown, which will occur Friday night without passage of a sprawling funding bill or a stop-gap measure. Hawley and Sanders have both threatened to hold up an extension of government funding in order to push through direct payments.

In a speech on the Senate floor Friday, Hawley said the \$1,200 payments to adults and \$500 to children—modeled after the checks provided under the CARES Act—are “the least that we can do.”

“It should be the first thing that we can do,” said Hawley. “And as these negotiations drag on and on, fixated and focused and hung on on who knows what issues, let’s start with this. Let’s send a message to working families that they’re first, not last. That they are the most important consideration, not some afterthought.”

After Johnson blocked his request for unanimous consent, Hawley said Sanders will be on the floor later Friday to demand passage of the direct payments.

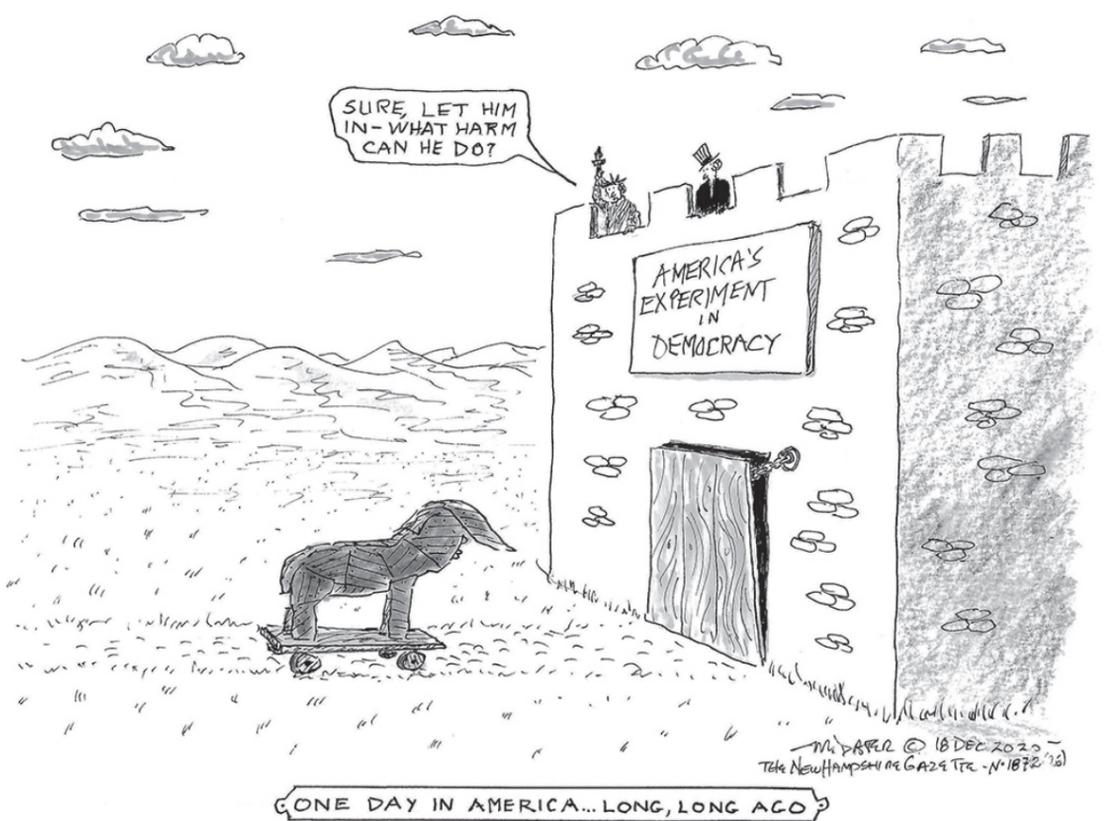
“This is not the end of this fight,” said Hawley. “I’m here right now

on this floor. Senator Sanders will be back in a matter of hours to ask again for the same measure... I’ve been proud to partner with him on this effort.”

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How Race Plays Out in This Pandemic
Bree Newsome Bass, on Twitter [@BreeNewsome] lightly edited for punctuation: “Authorities and the media, hand in hand, make sure Black and Brown people are seen to be getting the vaccine. We already know there are going to be vaccine shortages, at the same time the outbreak is set to surge in the poorest communities [because] the government isn’t preventing evictions or providing relief. If leaders were truly trying to prevent deaths, they wouldn’t be allowing Covid-19 to surge before vaccine is available to us. They’d be preventing evictions and providing other relief.”

Be on the Right Side of History
“What side of history do you want to be on,” Charles DeGrandpre asked, “on the side of slavery, or on the right side?”
Many corporate executive were



asked that question, as Charles DeGrandpre, Esq., solicited sponsorships. DeGrandpre was a legendary patron of New Hampshire nonprofits, but most especially the champion of the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire [BHTNH].

Valerie Cunningham, an incorporator of the BHTNH, credits DeGrandpre with forging the ties which resulted in the creation of the Portsmouth Black Heritage Trail, Inc. and its expansion into a statewide organization.

Recently, JerriAnne Boggis, executive director of the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire, Inc., announced receipt of a generous legacy gift from the estate of Charles DeGrandpre, who died earlier this year.

“We would not be where we are today without him; his legacy lives on in our daily work,” said JerriAnne. Presented by his daughter, Libby Giordano, to JerriAnne and Valerie, the gift will be used for Charlie’s favorite Trail program—expansion of the nonprofit’s Statewide Historical Marker Program. The program,

which began with the iconic bronze site markers at 24 locations in Portsmouth, is one of the most visible and recognizable Trail programs and is seen as a foundational approach to expanding the nonprofit’s educational work across the state.

As principals of the Trail gathered in memory of Charlie, they spoke fondly of how integral he was to the organization—both when the Trail was in its early formative stages as a Portsmouth-centered organization, and later, becoming a nationally-recognized state institution, his firm provided the legal work such as establishing IRS nonprofit status for the Trail in Portsmouth, then later for the Black Heritage Trail of N.H.

Valerie said “Charlie was one of those concerned citizens who was so passionate about history. He—and his law firm—tactfully guided us through the process to become a real organization. He was always encouraging us to do our best. It was never about him. He’d see something in the newspapers and send a handwritten note or a little gift

because he knew we needed that encouragement. We had no money, just homegrown talent, but he made us feel that our efforts were worthwhile. He had other people invest in our endowment—it was small, but it made us feel significant and stable and helped others see us that way too. And, he became a personal friend, the big brother I never had.”

JerriAnne explained how the program to place markers across the state works. “An organization needs to submit an application to the Trail; upon approval, we’ll cover half the cost of the marker with the applying organization covering the balance.”

For more information about the Statewide Black Heritage Trail Historical Marker Program and how you can be a part of it, please send an email to info@blackheritagetrailnh.org.

“The man who is unwilling to wear a flu mask usually is of the kind who expects everyone to listen to him when he speaks.”

— Indianapolis Star, Nov. 22, 1918



Returning from his foolhardy trip to the river [see other photo], our Furtively Scuttling Photographer swung by Jay McCance Smith Park. It’s still there. So is the grandiose pile of bricks next door. According to the Hedge-Fund Owned Local Daily, it just sold for \$3,750,000.

Murph’s Fortnightly Quote
“The Electoral College has spoken. So today, I want to congratulate President-elect Joe Biden.”
— Senator Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky) accepting the results of the November 3rd election

“Senators were less ornamental than the dogwood or even the Judas-tree. They were, as a rule, less good company.”
Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*
john@wordpraxis.com

“There is a cult of ignorance in the United States, and there always has been. The strain of anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that ‘my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge.’”
— Isaac Asimov
— Not-So-Random Thoughts from an Oregon Subscriber

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About That Electoral College...

Dear Editor,
 "Everything was done in strict compliance with applicable law, under the advice of counsel and tax experts," said Alan Garten, the Trump Organization's general counsel, as quoted in the *New York Times* ("Manhattan D.A. Intensifies Investigation of Trump," December 11, 2020). That mantra is used to defend a man whose taxes and financial dealings are under investigation for fraud. That is the mantra for a self-proclaimed billionaire who is reported to have paid only \$750 in taxes in some years, and nothing at all in other years. Although he may have stepped over the line of legal activity, clearly, it indicates a genius in ability to work every possible loophole for his personal advantage.

Our electoral system is similarly rife with loopholes that Trump has been trying to exploit to reverse the resounding loss he suffered in November. Although he has failed, his efforts have exposed a previously unrecognized weakness. Nearly all elections have ended with the loser conceding to the winner. Both candidates shared a greater respect for our democracy than for their personal political victory. Not this time. Trump has tried every legal technicality, and many extra-legal strategies, including flooding us with a tsunami of disinformation that repeats lies that he won.

We must close the loopholes in our election system before a more competent demagogue comes along and successfully perverts our democracy. First on the list is removal of the Electoral College, either by constitutional amendment or with the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. This time, not only did just a few states get all the attention during the campaign, but they also were the target of post-election maneuvers that nearly overturned the results. Every voter's vote should count equally, but the Electoral College gives small-state voters over three times the impact of large-state voters. That just ain't right. *NationalPopularVote.com* has a solution to this threatening problem.

Bruce Joffe

Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:

We share your concern.

Assuming that the Zombie Party of Lincoln survives into 2024—which is to say, assuming that one-third of the nation remains in thrall to a worldview as accurate as that of Essex County, Massachusetts in 1692—it would be suicidally reckless to assume that whatever amoral goon it puts forward would be as inept as the incumbent fetid gasbag.

The future, if we let it, may prove Marx was wrong. The first time may have been the farce, the second could be tragedy.

Dang. Now you've got us so worked up about this we're going to have to write about it in the Alleged News®....

The Editor

Eat More Test-Tube Burgers

To the Editor,

If President-elect Joe Biden is serious about addressing climate change, he should support federal funding for cultured-meat research. For those who don't know, cultured meat is grown from cells, without slaughtering our fellow creatures. It will dramatically reduce the environmental damage caused by animal agriculture.

Cultured meat requires a fraction of the land, freshwater, and greenhouse-gas emissions that slaughtered flesh does. As Henning Steinfeld of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization said, "Livestock are one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious environmental problems. Urgent action is required to remedy the situation."

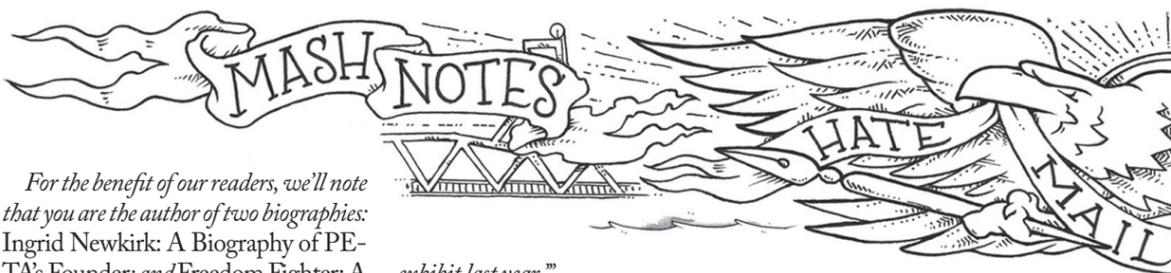
The truth is animal agriculture is a leading—if not the leading—cause of global warming. The incoming Biden administration should support development of cultured meat through funding for open-source research. This revolutionary protein will significantly benefit the environment, as well as animal welfare and human health.

Jon Hochschartner

Granby, Conn.

Jon:

Thank you—sincerely—for continuing to provoke us with a steady stream of letters supporting cultured-meat research.



For the benefit of our readers, we'll note that you are the author of two biographies: Ingrid Newkirk: A Biography of PETA's Founder; and Freedom Fighter: A Biography of Ronnie Lee, Founder of the Animal Liberation Front, as well as Puppy Killer, Leave Town: A History of Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty, a history of "an international, grassroots campaign dedicated to bankrupting a notorious vivisection firm."

We provide this background to give our readers some sense of your likely intent and sincerity. It seems to us your primary goal is to reduce the suffering of animals, and also to reduce the environmental harm done by factory farms and meat-processing.

Fair enough; for all we knew you might have been some Republican trying to promote a company in which you had a stake.

There does seem to be something about lab-grown meat that generates... weirdness.

Last month the New York Post ran a story under the headline, "Makers of grow-your-own human steaks say meal kit is not 'technically' cannibalism."

"The saying 'You are what you eat' may soon become a lot more literal.

"A 'DIY meal kit' for growing steaks made from human cells was recently nominated for 'design of the year' by the London-based Design Museum.

"Named the Ouroboros Steak after the circular symbol of a snake eating itself tail-first, the hypothetical kit would come with everything one needs to use their own cells to grow miniature human meat steaks.

"People think that eating oneself is cannibalism, which technically this is not," Grace Knight, one of the designers, told Dezeen magazine.

"Before you go running for your wallet, know this isn't a product available to buy. It was created by scientist Andrew Pelling, artist Orkan Telhan and Knight, an industrial designer, on commission by the Philadelphia Museum of Art for an

exhibit last year."

Having cleared that up, we'll add this: NPR reported recently that incorporating a small amount of red Australian seaweed into cattle feed reduces the volume of methane emissions from cows by some huge amount.

The Editor

The Republican Cult

To the Editor:

The refusal by the Supreme Court to consider Texas Attorney General Paxton's bogus suit to void the presidential election results for four battleground states was greeted with relief by most Americans. The decision should guarantee that the validity of Joe Biden's election will not be challenged by more baseless lawsuits. Few expect, however, that Trump will ever accept the fact that he lost the election and it is apparent that he will continue to loudly proclaim his fantasies of election fraud.

Trump's intransigence is no surprise. Many pundits including his psychologist niece had predicted that he would never acknowledge defeat and would attempt to overturn a valid election loss. His incessant and false claims of election trickery attest to the accuracy of those predictions. His behavior resembles that of a banana republic autocrat and constitutes a direct attack on democratic election processes.

Trump's behavior is reprehensible but as disturbing is that a majority of slavish Republican legislators on both the national and state level have supported and abetted his outlandish efforts. At the time of the Supreme Court decision, only 27 Republican congressmen had acknowledged that Biden had won the election and several publicly endorsed Trump's unproven accusations of widespread fraud. Over 100 Republican House members

supported the Texas Supreme Court suit. Several Republican state attorneys general filed amicus briefs supporting the false charges. The actions of these Republican officials attest to Trump's dominion over the Republican party. Such slavish behavior is more characteristic of a tribe or cult than a political party in a democracy. The complicity of Republican legislators in the attempt to overturn a free and fair election is a direct attack on democratic constitutional principles and constitutes a violation of their oath to uphold and defend the Constitution. Most Republican legislators are educated individuals who are not likely deluded by conspiracy theories concerning imaginary nefarious forces at work to subvert the election. Their primary motivation is the fear of retribution if they oppose Trump. Their sycophancy is a result of a moral failure in which their access to office and power is more important than upholding constitutional standards.

Trump's influence on Republican legislators ultimately is derived from the zealous support of his electoral base. A recent survey reports that over two-thirds of Republican voters believe Trump's bogus claims that the election was permeated by massive fraud. Threats against election officials and calls for armed resistance confirm that many Republican supporters are less of a rational electorate than a deluded cult. Many of the Trump base are deeply mired in crackpot internet conspiracy theories such as QAnon that explain any opposition to Trump as an evil "deep state" plot. It is chilling that a large proportion of Americans lack the critical thinking to see through unsupported lies and hare-brained conspiracy theories and are willing to support the overthrow of a

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fair and democratic election. We can all be relieved that Biden won the election but we cannot take consolation from the fact that Trump and his sycophants continue to undermine the electoral foundations of our democracy. Early in our history, George Washington warned of the dangers of extreme factionalism among political parties. When factionalism degrades to the level of a cult, only the perceived interests of the cult are relevant. This is where the Republican Party currently seems to be, making compromise for the common good impossible. Although the Republic seems to have held firm under the Trump onslaught, the pillars of American democracy have shown themselves to be fragile. The supporters of democracy must remain vigilant.

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“We have the best politicians that money can buy,” said Will Rogers 100 years ago, and it’s much worse now! Community rights organizing will help voters to make our elected officials accountable so they have to work for us instead of rich special interests. For assistance contact the New Hampshire Community Rights Network (info@nhcommunityrights.org).

Joe Hill said “don’t mourn, organize!” Now is the time for all of us to become active citizens and work together to clean up this mess! Don’t just sit by and let the ruling elite control our destiny; if the people lead, the leaders have to follow! Be a good example for our children and their future!

Peter White, NHCRN Board Member

Nottingham, N.H.

Peter:

Any friend of Joe Hill is a friend of ours.

The Editor

=====
Beware Heuristic Traps

Dear Editor:

I’ve just read Holderness resident Ty Gagne’s new book, *The Last Traverse: Tragedy and Resilience in the Winter Whites*. I bought additional copies for Christmas gifts, going to both Gibson’s in Concord and Innisfree Bookstore in Meredith. Other New Hampshire bookstores should carry it. Ty’s career is in risk management. His new book is about a hike gone tragically wrong on Mt. Lafayette. An earlier book, *Where You’ll Find Me: Risk, Decisions, and the Last Climb of Kate Matrosova*, emphasizes risk awareness. Both tell riveting stories of real people, and what can go wrong when terrible

weather conditions change everything during winter hikes.

Gagne writes well. I randomly open *The Last Traverse* and find: “The winds have a soulless brutality to them.” At one point in the book, as severe conditions threaten doom, hiker James Osborne realizes he’s let his hiking companion Fred Fredrickson do all the thinking and choosing. Here, Gagne brings up heuristic traps—ways of thinking that may increase our risk.

“The Acceptance Heuristic occurs because, according to Ian McCammon, we ‘have a tendency to engage in activities that we think will get us noticed or accepted by people we like or respect, or by people we want to like and respect us.’”

Another heuristic trap may explain why so many otherwise thoughtful Republican Senators, Mitch McConnell at the top of the pile, fall into line behind President Trump’s foibles. A Presidency comes with built-in urge to respect.

I buy this book (as I did Gagne’s first) with the idea that every relative or friend I give it to—people who do outdoors adventuring—may read it and pre-empt mistakes they could make by understanding what went wrong when even highly-qualified adventurers fail.

Lynn Rudmin Chong
 Sanbornton, N.H.

Lynn:

Majority Leader McConnell has finally acknowledged that the mantle of the Presidency will soon slip from the shoulders of a certain short-fingered vulgarian—only took him six weeks. Power—it’s a hell of a drug.

The Editor

=====
Don’t Withhold Hazard Pay

by Andrew Moss

As with many issues raised by this pandemic, the problem of hazard pay is fraught with deep, multiple ineq-

uities. Like the compensation that traditionally remunerated particularly dangerous work in such fields as military service, mining, or construction, hazard pay was introduced early in the pandemic to recognize the risks and dangers that frontline essential workers face every day.

This past spring, large retail chains like Walmart, Kroger, and Amazon introduced hazard pay under a variety of names (“Hero Pay,” “Appreciation Pay”), paying single bonuses or supplementing workers’ hourly wages by up to \$2 per hour. Then, over the summer, they quietly ended the practice.

There’s a triple injustice in these developments. Prior to the pandemic, millions of workers had been denied a living wage that could sustain a family. People employed as home health aides, nursing assistants, cashiers and retail salespersons, janitors and cleaners, security guards, and laborers had been making, on average, hourly wages below \$15 an hour. According to a Brookings Institution analysis, almost half the 50 million people who work in frontline essential jobs fall into this category.

Then there’s the racial inequity in frontline, essential work. As the Brookings researchers noted, Black and Latinx workers make up a disproportionate number of low-wage, frontline, essential workers (i.e. Black workers in 2018 constituting 13 percent of all workers, but 19 percent of low-wage workers; Latinx workers making up 16 percent of the U.S. workforce, but 22 percent of frontline, low-wage essential workers).

As people struggle to get by on these inadequate wages, risking infection for themselves and their loved ones, the profits of many companies, particularly large retailers like Amazon and Walmart, have continued to soar, adding billions to the personal wealth of owners and major shareholders. And connected to this fact is the third inequity: that of exposure and risk. Chuck Collins, author and program director at the Institute for Policy Studies, said it best: “These billionaire owners are like military generals sitting in protected bubbles sending their workers

into the viral line of fire with insufficient shields.”

To be sure, hazard pay is a temporary measure that doesn’t address the long-term structural inequality that existed before Covid. But sufficient additional compensation (at least \$5 an hour extra) will help millions of people make ends meet, reduce food and housing insecurity, and help workers care for other family members who have been laid off during the pandemic. As the Brookings researchers described it, hazard pay is “a down payment on what should be permanent, lasting change through an increased minimum wage.”

Achieving this change won’t be easy. Continued pressure from the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), along with support from Senators Elizabeth Warren and Sherrod Brown, recently enabled thousands of grocery workers at several chains to obtain hazard pay retroactive to the summer (and, in some cases, modest bonus payments). But the effort to secure just compensation for millions more, along with the dignity and respect that goes with it, will require substantial, continued struggle—and a much deeper public understanding of the profound inequality affecting us all.

Andrew Moss, syndicated by PeaceVoice, is an emeritus professor (*English, Nonviolence Studies*) at the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

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Embracing Ecological Realism

by Robert C. Koehler

Our post-election hope couldn’t be more fragile.

Does Joe Biden see his mission as merely reclaiming “situation normal” from Donald Trump? How aware is he of the big, beyond-our-lifetimes future and the crucial need to address climate change? Is he able to acknowledge that human interests go well beyond national borders? And if so, how much political traction would he have to have before he could begin turning vision into policy?

Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.

to page six

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Robot farmers—E-I-E-I-O!

by Jim Hightower

How're you gonna keep 'em down on the farm after they've seen...Angus?

Not "Angus," the breed of cattle, but Angus, the 1,000-pound "farmer of the future." He is not actually a he, but an it: A robot, toiling away on an indoor hydroponic farm that is soilless, and—yes—soulless. Programmed by a multimillion-dollar Silicon Valley start-up named

Iron Ox, Angus' homestead is an 8,000-square-foot concrete warehouse in a San Francisco suburb.

The farm bot is more of a heavy lifter than a heavy thinker, wheeling around the warehouse to lift, move, and hand-off large pallets produce to another robot that, so far, hasn't earned a name. The human overseers of this robotic animal farm don't wear John Deere gimme caps, but clean-room hair nets, apparently to prevent anything organic from con-

taminating the edibles or the bots.

Started by a Google engineer, Iron Ox hopes to install duplicates of its faux farm in metro areas across the country. "If we can feed people using robots," he says, "what could be more impactful than that?" How about this: Reconnecting our food system to nature, a democratic economy, and humans? The roboticists brag that local warehouses can provide fresher lettuce than the mega farms ship from thousands of miles away.

But wait—local farmers markets do that, and the consumer dollars stay in the community, rather than being siphoned off to Iron Ox and the Wall Street financiers of Angus robots.

The robotic indoor farm hucksters quietly concede that their real business plan depends on "sidestepping" the cost of human labor and local farm owners. Instead of democratizing our food economy, their scheme concentrates food profits in a hand-

ful of absentee syndicators, rich investors, and technology giants.

Deep in his digital brain, even Angus must know that this is stupid.

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

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from page five

A recent bit of news: The House just voted overwhelmingly in favor of the 2021 Pentagon budget: \$740.5 billion. The vote was 335-78. More Democrats than Republicans gave it their blessing—in utter defiance of any sane recognition of true security, national or otherwise. This is situation normal in action, requiring nothing from a politician except limited thinking.

Waging war, preparing for war, worshipping at the altar of military-industrialism are precisely the opposite of what we must be doing. This is running away from—and intensifying—the real threat we face. Yet our political leaders do so with a shrug, and the corporate media follows suit with a shrug of its own.

The takeaway here is that the real election isn't over. As Margaret Klein Salamon, cofounder of The Climate Mobilization, put it in an interview with *Truthout*: "We need the most powerful social movement in history to put unbearable pressure on Biden and Congress to launch a full-scale climate mobilization."

"We need..."

That alone won't make it happen. What we also need is a shift in consciousness: socially, culturally, politically. It's not as if we need to move our attention—and our spending—from one war to another: from fighting terrorism and "evil" to fighting climate change. The one thing we do not need is another war,

certainly not against Planet Earth.

The first priority of the movement is a profound expansion of political thinking: beyond the clichés of war and security. Stewart M. Patrick, writing at *World Politics Review*, puts it with stunning clarity:

"The global environmental crisis, encompassing runaway climate change, collapsing biodiversity and the slow death of the world's oceans, has exposed the limitations of traditional political realism as a guide to statecraft in the 21st century. The time has come for the nations of the world to embrace a new approach to world politics that treats the preservation of the biosphere as a core national interest and a central objective of national security policy. Call this new mindset ecological realism."

The thinking that ecological realism must replace is something Patrick generously refers to as "political realism," which "depicts the international system as an inherently anarchic realm populated by independent states recognizing no superior authority."

This is worth a moment of reflection: the grotesque "realism" of the last 500 years or so of human history, or perhaps much further back than that, is that the planet is, in essence, an elementary school playground: an "anarchic realm" full of other kids, none of whom you can really trust,

some of whom are out to get you. I'd say we've reached a point that you could call grow up or blow up.

The overarching truth, demanding an upward shift in awareness—including the awareness of President Joe Biden—is that the human race has entered what scientists are calling the Anthropocene: the intertwining of human and natural forces. Human exploitation of Planet Earth has reached a point where what we do and how we live reverberates across the circle of life—and could destroy it, for every species, for all life.

Doesn't this seem like something the governments of the world should take seriously? How, oh how, do we move beyond the dead end of political realism?

This sort of thinking "loses its way," Patrick writes, when it faces "threats without a threatener," that is, "dangers arising not from geopolitical rivalry or malicious intent, but from human interactions with the environment, as with climate change or pandemic disease."

We must push our politics beyond the cul-de-sac of so-called political realism. We must have a president who can see beyond, and understands that our interests do not stop at, the national border. We must have a president who can see:

"the yawning chasm between our fragmented international system, composed of nearly 200 sovereign entities, and the integrated Earth system, a bio-geophysical unity that obeys no national boundaries."

I believe that Biden is capable of seeing this, but may well require the pressure of an unrelenting climate-and-sanity movement, linked to a racial-justice-and-sanity movement, before he is willing, before he is able, to acknowledge that he sees this—and begin pragmatically embracing ecological realism.

No more clichés about war, OK, Mr. President? The effects of war and the Industrial Revolution are what have brought us to where we are now: the Anthropocene. All it's taken is 75 years of nuclear testing, in conjunction with industrial pollution, agribusiness, the production of non-biodegradable plastic and more, and here we are, on the brink of unsustainability.

Politically, the problem is that leaders find it so much easier to get people to coalesce around belief in a common enemy. I'm sure the temptation for the president to do this is nearly irresistible. The movement that pushes national and global politics beyond this must be a movement declaring that the human race has grown up. Now it's time for the political system to do so.



Robert Koehler (koehlercw@gmail.com), syndicated by PeaceVoice, is a Chicago award-winning journalist and editor. He is the author of Courage Grows Strong at the Wound.

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'Nones' Elected Biden-Harris
by James A. Haught

Americans who say their religion is "none" delivered the White House to the Biden-Harris Democratic ticket in the 2020 election.

That's the conclusion of a top socio-political researcher, Dr. Ryan Burge of Eastern Illinois University.

"I think that Joe Biden should thank the 'nones' for being the president-elect right now," Dr. Burge wrote for the Religion in Public website.

"Nones" generally hold compassionate social values, thus they've become the largest faith segment in the Democratic Party base. Dr. Burge outlined how they're a powerhouse progressive-liberal political force in America.

"Half of white liberals today identify as religiously unaffiliated," he said. He said atheists and agnostics gave about 80 percent of their votes to Biden-Harris in key battleground states. Those who say their faith is "nothing in particular" went Democratic by two-to-one.

Of course, in any election, victory can be attributed to several voting blocs. Biden-Harris also couldn't have won without Black votes, or labor union votes, or Hispanic votes, &c. But it's significant that the

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We are the first de-indigenized culture on Earth—and the last

by Jean Stimmell

We take pride in our modern civilization for being advanced and forward-thinking while judging indigenous people as primitive and backward. According to Anthropologist Wade Davis, what we have accomplished is a “stunning innovation in human affairs, the sociological equivalent of the splitting of the atom.”¹

For the first time in history, we have created “a new and original culture” that celebrates personal freedom over community and consumption as a way of life over sustainability. Our stunning innovation is an illusion comparable to looking at the world through the wrong end of a telescope.

As the world’s first de-indigenized culture, we have broken with all human history, according to this 2013 article in *Yes Magazine*. But it has come at an exceptional cost. Utilizing the external muscle of fossil fuels while extolling selfish individualism, we are the first society on earth not to be “enmeshed within networks of communities and relations with the land.”

Unfortunately, the consequences of our ground-breaking experiment are now coming due. Radical individualism has now reached the point where it has paralyzed our government and endangered our citizens; we can see this in our deadlocked Congress that is unable to

agree upon a desperately needed Covid rescue package while, at the same time, in the name of freedom, hoards of demonstrators are protesting government mandates to wear masks, one of the few proven methods to slow down the corona carnage until a vaccine arrives.

Our roads and bridges and public transportation have decayed until they resemble that of a third world country. Of course, the 800-pound gorilla in the room is catastrophic climate change, which our president, a fitting one for a de-indigenized nation, calls fake news.

Human greed and selfishness have corrupted our democracy and plundered our planet of its precious living resources. We are becoming a huge blazing meteorite, lighting up the sky in technicolor, still puffed up with how great we are, until, in one last colossal blast of fireworks, we will plummet through the atmosphere to our death and that of our beloved spaceship Earth.

What can be done? In my grief, I turn to Joan Halifax, born in Haver, New Hampshire in 1942. She is a wise woman who has earned her laurels in celebrated careers as an anthropologist specializing in indigenous cultures, hospice caregiver, ecologist, and Zen Buddhist teacher.²

She offers an antidote to our de-indigenous culture, which has stolen our soul and replaced it with a computer algorithm on a chip,

programming us with a single task: shopping until we drop. Our only hope, she says, is to regain our indigenous wisdom.

Indigenous people, along with Buddhists, reject the notion that we are separate, isolated atoms. Instead, they assert we are all connected souls, immersed in a great, flowing river going back to the beginning of time: “Just as our mother and father live inside us, so do generations upon generations of mothers and fathers before them.”

The root of the problem we face today is that we have lost touch with the souls of our ancestors and, in the process, lost our own. Our survival and our sanity depend on learning to honor where we came from, not only venerating our human ancestors but all life forms. As Halifax poetically describes it:

“We are connected to the dead in ways not commonly remembered. The bones of the ancestors lie in the body of Earth and are transformed into the bodies of plants and creatures, including ourselves.”

“The great trees of tropical and temperate forests, by feeding on the decaying remains of countless plant and animal species, literally translate the past into our atmosphere... [supplying us] the very air we breathe.”

Indigenous people venerate their ancestors because they understand all beings are integral parts of our existence—past, present, and future—interconnecting and inter-



Petroglyph of a couple, possibly Neolithic, in Sarmishsay, Uzbekistan. Detail of a photo by Stephanieadams99; from commons.wikimedia.org; Licensed under creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/.

penetrating in the great river of life.

Halifax says that until we get out of our heads and give birth to our ancestors, Earth cannot be redeemed from its suffering. “To exclude, consciously or unconsciously, any species from the continuum of existence is to deny a part of ourselves.” And to spell our doom.

Benjamin Franklin expressed this wisdom with a different metaphor during our American revolution: “We must, indeed, hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.”

1 - <https://bit.ly/385IZ1v>
2 - <https://bit.ly/2Wk6NIw>

from page six

churchless now are a mighty political machine.

“We represent maybe 30 percent or so of Democratic voters,” says Harvard and MIT humanist chaplain Greg Epstein, who headed Humanists For Biden-Harris, sponsored by Secular Democrats of America. Other skeptic groups also pushed get-out-the-vote efforts among the godless.

Naturally, white evangelicals continued their overwhelming support for President Trump and Republicans in 2020—but religion is fading so rapidly in America that their



power is reduced.

Ever since The Enlightenment, Western progress has hinged on liberal reformers defeating entrenched conservatives—wiping out slavery—letting women vote—letting couples use birth control—giving Social Security pensions to retirees—providing unemployment compensation to the jobless—halting segregation of Blacks—creating Medicare for retirees and Medicaid for the poor—halting persecution of gays—&c.

Will this progress continue? Will universal healthcare become a human right for everyone? Will college become affordable without monstrous debt? Will climate disaster be averted? Will white police be restrained from killing unarmed Black men? Will women’s right to choose remain secure? Will the rest of the progressive agenda be attained?

Much depends on whether churchless “nones” continue rising as a major left-wing force in Amer-

ica. We in the secular community should pursue this goal in every way possible.

Meanwhile, it’s heartening to see the 2020 Democratic victory attributed to Americans who have no religion.

James Haught, syndicated by *Peace-Voice*, is editor emeritus of *West Virginia’s largest newspaper*, *The Charleston Gazette-Mail*, and author of 12 books.

How The Declaration Dethroned God

“The Declaration of Independence announces the sublime truth, that all power comes from the people. This was a denial, and the first denial of a nation, of the infamous dogma that God confers the right upon one man to govern others. It was the first grand assertion of the dignity of the human race. It declared the governed to be the source of power, and in fact denied the authority of any and all gods. Through the ages of slavery—through the weary centuries of the lash and chain, God was the acknowledged ruler of the world. To enthrone man, was to dethrone God.”

— Robert Green Ingersoll (1833 – 1899)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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<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>1986—Chased by a mob of young white men, Trinidadian Michael Griffith is run over and killed in Howard Beach, Queens, New York.</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>1973—Basque terrorists detonate a bomb which sends a Dodge Dart over a five-story building. Inside was Spanish Prime Minister Luis Carrero Blanco, aka "Spain's first astronaut."</p> <p>1960—CIA chief Allen Dulles meets with bigwigs from Standard Oil, Texaco, ITT, Domino Sugar, and other major U.S. corporations, who instruct him to overthrow Fidel Castro.</p> <p>1946—Businessmen Charles Luciano, Meyer Lansky, Frank Costello, Vito Genovese, Joseph Bonnano and others confer in Havana, Cuba.</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>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>1956—Montgomery, Ala. buses desegregate—the boycott worked.</p> <p>1921—After robbing a Paris bank, the anarchist Bonnot Gang drives off in a stolen Delauney-Belleville limousine—the world's first getaway car.</p> <p>1919—Emma Goldman is deported for speaking out against the draft.</p>	<p>2001—Richard Reid's shoe-bomb fizzles, but all air passengers must now remove shoes before boarding.</p> <p>1989—RIP Samuel Beckett.</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>1974—Seymour Hersh exposes the CIA's Operation Chaos in the <i>New York Times</i>; 10,000 Americans under illegal surveillance since 1967.</p> <p>1967—The CIA hands LBJ the second of four reports on its illegal surveillance of anti-war activists. Because it, too, refutes his belief in foreign influence, he rejects it and demands another.</p> <p>1944—With his 101st Airborne surrounded in Bastogne, and Germans demanding surrender, General Anthony McAuliffe replies "Nuts."</p> <p>1937—Hotel clerk and author Nathanael West [<i>Miss Lonelyhearts</i>] and his wife Eileen McKenney die in a car wreck during their honeymoon.</p> <p>1909—Belgians boo their sovereign, King Leopold II, at his funeral.</p> <p>1813—In downtown Portsmouth, N.H., 18 acres burn, from Daniel to Court Streets, from Fleet to the river; 272 buildings are destroyed.</p> <p>1757—A Portsmouth mob, hundreds strong, incensed by British press gangs, drags <i>HMS Enterprise's</i> longboat two miles inland and burns it.</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>1988—The FCC bans indecency on radio and TV; somehow, though, they still report on war and politics.</p> <p>1986—The airplane <i>Voyager</i> completes its nonstop circumnavigation.</p> <p>1981—Basement digging causes the Foye Building, next to the Portsmouth Athenaeum, to partially collapse.</p> <p>1971—With a million from the Mob in his pocket, President Nixon springs Jimmy Hoffa from federal prison; the Teamsters soon endorse Nixon.</p> <p>1963—FBI officials begin scheming to "neutralize" Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with wiretapping, bugging, infiltration, sabotage, and blackmail.</p> <p>1955—James Kutcher, a legless WW II vet, has his disability payments cut off, too, because he's a Socialist.</p> <p>1953—In Korea, 21 American POWs refuse to go home. In response, the CIA starts studying mind control.</p> <p>1941—Three sailors trapped below-decks in the sunken <i>West Virginia</i> since the 7th finally succumb.</p> <p>1888—Rachel, a prostitute, declines Vincent Van Gogh's proffered ear.</p> <p>1849—Tied half-naked to a pole, Fyodor Dostoevsky is presumably pleased to learn he'll be going to Siberia for four years, instead of being shot.</p>	<p>2003—Responding to "credible intel," Mike Hayden tells his British counterpart to take over his NSA duties if al-Qaeda nukes D.C. on Xmas.</p> <p>1992—George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush pardons Caspar "Cap" Weinberger, Bob McFarlane, and 4 other Iran-Contra creeps, coincidentally protecting his own sorry self.</p> <p>1979—The Soviet Army enters Afghanistan to prop up the Marxist government. Oops. They correct their mistake after just nine years.</p> <p>1971—Her airliner having fallen apart after being hit by lightning two miles above the Amazon, Juliane Koepcke, 17, falls into the jungle. She survives with minor injuries.</p> <p>1963—Top CIA counterspy and Friend-of-the-Mob James Jesus Angleton shuts down the Agency's investigation of Lee Harvey Oswald.</p> <p>1926—Eight Americans die and 60 are hospitalized after President Coolidge says, "poison all alcohol."</p> <p>1913—During a union Christmas party at the Italian Hall in Calumet, Mich, thugs hired by copper bosses yell "Fire;" 73 die, 59 are kids.</p> <p>1883—Increasingly deranged since his stabbing by John Wilkes Booth during Lincoln's assassination, Maj. Henry Rathbone murders his wife.</p> <p>1865—Six ex-rebels, boozing it up in Pulaski, Tenn., form the KKK.</p> <p>1814—The Treaty of Ghent ends the War of 1812; it accomplished nothing—the <i>status quo ante</i> prevails.</p>	<p>1989—Romania celebrates Christmas and freedom by putting former President Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife Elena before a firing squad.</p> <p>1956—In Birmingham, Ala., civil rights activist Fred Shuttlesworth survives the bombing of his home.</p> <p>1951—In Mims, Fla., a bomb explodes under the home of NAACP leaders Harry T. and Harriette Moore on the night of their 25th anniversary. Both die; no one is indicted; the state concludes 55 years later that four long-dead Klansmen did it.</p> <p>1946—Demonstrators at the White House demand the release of jailed conscientious objectors.</p> <p>1914—German and British troops leave trenches, sing Christmas carols, shake hands, and share smokes.</p> <p>1868—President Andy Johnson unconditionally pardons all those involved in the "Southern Rebellion."</p> <p>1837—At Lake Okeechobee, Seminoles under Billy Bowlegs trounce Zachary Taylor's regulars.</p> <p>1826—One-third of the Cadets at West Point stage a drunken "Egg Nog Riot;" 20 end up court-martialed.</p> <p>1802—In Portsmouth, N.H., 132 buildings are destroyed by fire.</p> <p>1793—After gathering the scattered bones of hundreds of soldiers massacred two years earlier by Indians and burying them in a massive pit, troops under General "Mad Anthony" Wayne build Fort Recovery, Ohio, atop the mass grave.</p>	<p>2002—Americans learn a new euphemism from the <i>Washington Post</i>: "extraordinary rendition" means kidnapping and torture.</p> <p>1996—From a pool of 1,500 candidates, the press selects JonBenet Ramsey as the most important child murdered in the U.S. this year.</p> <p>1991—The Supreme Soviet meets one last time and dissolves the USSR.</p> <p>1971—Disgruntled Vietnam veterans occupy the Statue of Liberty.</p> <p>1969—Having fought a shifting cargo of bombs, missiles, and mines for nine days in heavy seas, the crew of the freighter <i>S.S. Badger State</i> abandons ship in mid-Pacific after a bomb explodes and blows a hole in the hull. Out of 40 crewmen, 11 survive.</p> <p>1966—<i>Time Magazine</i> names "The Younger Generation" the "Man of the Year," further exacerbating a pandemic of unwarranted self-esteem.</p> <p>1919—Harry Frazee sells Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees.</p> <p>1913—Writer and perennially-disgruntled Civil War veteran Ambrose Bierce allegedly pens one final letter before vanishing in Mexico.</p> <p>1908—Jack Johnson becomes the first Black heavyweight boxing champ.</p> <p>1862—Under orders from President Lincoln, the U.S. Army hangs 39 Santee Lakota Sioux on one huge gallows.</p> <p>1787—In Carlisle, Pa., an anti-Federalist mob welding barrel staves bludgeons and nearly kills Constitution-framer James Wilson.</p>
<p>3:18 3:29</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9:11 9:48</p>	<p>4:13 4:27</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10:10 10:42</p>	<p>5:10 5:28</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:12 11:37</p>	<p>6:06 6:29</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:13</p>	<p>7:00 7:28</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:31 1:12</p>	<p>7:50 8:21</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1:23 2:06</p>	<p>8:36 9:10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2:11 2:54</p>
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27	MONDAY, DECEMBER 28	TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29	WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30	THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31	FRIDAY, JANUARY 1	SATURDAY, JANUARY 2
<p>1986—In San Diego, Cara Evelyn Knott is strangled by on-duty Highway Patrolman Craig Alan Peyer.</p> <p>1981—Supreme Court Associate Justice William H. Rehnquist checks into a hospital to kick his Placidyl™ habit and end the hallucinations.</p> <p>1953—Mass. bans EC Comics' version of "The Night Before Christmas." Illustrated by Will Elder, it features a just-divorced Santa driving a Cadillac sled and giving away poison.</p> <p>1900—Carrie Nation hatchets-up her first saloon, at the Carey Hotel, in Wichita, Kan.</p> <p>1895—In Bill Curtis's St. Louis saloon, William "Billy" Lyons foolishly—and fatally—grabs "Stagger Lee" Shelton's brand new Stetson hat.</p> <p>1827—Georgia proclaims "the lands of Georgia belong to her absolutely. The Indians are tenants at her will." Indulgent solons give the indigenous inhabitants three years to get west of the Mississippi.</p> <p>1763—Sixteen of the few living Conestoga Indians, huddled for protection in the Lancaster, Pa. workhouse, are mysteriously deserted by their guards. A mob known as "the Paxton Boys" hacks 14 of them, mostly children, to death. There is no investigation; no one is ever charged.</p> <p>1739—A large crowd gathers to witness New Hampshire's first executions: Sarah Simpson and Penelope Kenny are hanged in Portsmouth for infanticide.</p>	<p>2013—Congress ends long-term unemployment benefits to 1.3 million Americans, damaging the economy to the tune of an estimated 240,000 jobs.</p> <p>1986—Terry Dolan, Republican critic of gay rights, dies of AIDS.</p> <p>1983—Dr. George Graham, of President Reagan's Task Force on Food Assistance, says Black children are "probably the best-nourished group in the U.S."—citing athletes as proof.</p> <p>1973—In space, the crew of Skylab goes on strike to protest over-work and micro-management. NASA meets the demands of the astronauts.</p> <p>1973—The Akron, Ohio Chamber of Commerce denounces the Soap Box Derby as a cheat and a fraud.</p> <p>1971—At the White House, 88 'Nam vets are busted for protesting their war.</p> <p>1948—A DC-3 disappears with 32 on board in an area soon known as the Bermuda Triangle.</p> <p>1945—Congress recognizes the "Pledge of Allegiance," authored by Christian Socialist Francis Bellamy.</p> <p>1936—Sit-down strikers close Cleveland's General Motors plant.</p> <p>1917—H.L. Mencken publishes a phony history of the bathtub, now widely accepted as gospel.</p> <p>1879—As legendary stagecoach driver "One-Eyed Charlie" Parkhurst, 67, is prepared for burial in Watonsville, Calif., it becomes clear that he was a she—namely, Charlotte Darkey Parkhurst, born in Lebanon, N.H. in 1812.</p>	<p>2006—The UK pays off its \$100,000,000 WWII debt to the U.S.</p> <p>1989—Playwright Vaclav Havel becomes President of Czechoslovakia.</p> <p>1975—Eleven people are killed and 74 wounded when a bomb explodes in a storage locker at LaGuardia Airport. The crime remains unsolved.</p> <p>1972—Operation Linebacker II, which R. Nixon will call "my terrible personal ordeal," ends. U.S. losses: 15 downed B-52s, 12 other aircraft, 43 KIA, & 49 POWs.</p> <p>1930—Fred Newton arrives at New Orleans after swimming 1,826 miles down the Mississippi.</p> <p>1916—Poisoned, stabbed, beaten, shot three times, and thrown unconscious into the freezing Neva River, the Russian Tsarina Alexandra's favorite faith-healer Grigori Yefimovich Rasputin dies by drowning.</p> <p>1900—Harvard professor Albert B. Hart says states where lynching is prevalent should legalize the practice to maintain order.</p> <p>1890—The 7th Cavalry massacres about 300 Lakota Sioux men, women, and children on their reservation at Wounded Knee. For this, a grateful nation bestows 20 Medals of Honor.</p> <p>1876—A poorly-designed, uninspected railroad bridge collapses in Ashtabula, Ohio, killing 92.</p> <p>1837—In Buffalo, N.Y., Canadian militiamen burn the U.S.S. <i>Carolina</i>, which has been caught running guns to revolutionaries.</p>	<p>2015—At the North Pole, the temperature rises above 32° for six hours.</p> <p>2006—Saddam Hussein's inelegant demise is captured by cellphone.</p> <p>1994—In Brookline, Mass., John Salvi lives out his "pro-life" creed by killing two health care workers.</p> <p>1978—A House Select Committee concludes that conspirators "probably" helped kill JFK and MLK.</p> <p>1971—Daniel Ellsberg is indicted for having set free the truth.</p> <p>1970—An unsafe Kentucky coal mine explodes, killing 38 miners.</p> <p>1969—American coal miners get protection for their lives and safety through a law signed by R. Nixon.</p> <p>1947—Irgun fighters kill six Arabs and wound 42 in a grenade attack at a Haifa oil refinery. Arabs retaliate by beating 39 Jews to death.</p> <p>1936—The General Motors sit-down strike spreads from Cleveland to Flint.</p> <p>1922—Godless Commies establish the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the ruins of a pious Empire.</p> <p>1905—Idaho's ex-Governor Frank Steuneger opens his front gate; a bomb planted by miners blows him up.</p> <p>1903—At 3:15 p.m. fire breaks out in Chicago's new, "fireproof" Iroquois Theater. By 3:30, 600 people are dead.</p> <p>1828—In Dover, N.H., protesting a women-only wage cut, 400 "mill girls" conduct the first all-woman strike.</p> <p>1768—Teacher Ruth Blay, 31, is hanged in Portsmouth for concealing the birth of her illegitimate child.</p>	<p>1997—Quaker Oats pays \$1.8 million to settle a lawsuit over their secret feeding of radioactive oatmeal to developmentally-disabled kids.</p> <p>1995—Bill and Monica enjoy their third tryst in a White House study.</p> <p>1970—Congress repeals the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution.</p> <p>1970—Associated Milk Producers, Inc. gets \$100 million in price supports in exchange for its \$2 million donation to the Nixon campaign.</p> <p>1969—Hitmen hired by United Mine Workers President Tony Boyle murder his rival, Joseph "Jock" Yablonski, along with his wife and daughter.</p> <p>1952—The Tuskegee Institute reports that for the first time since 1881, a year has passed without a lynching.</p> <p>1947—The Israeli paramilitary outfit Haganah kills 20 to 70 Arabs in retaliation for the previous days' Arab retaliation against an earlier Irgun attack against Arabs at a Haifa refinery.</p> <p>1929—"I see nothing in the present situation that is either menacing or warrants pessimism," says Treasury Secretary Andrew W. Mellon.</p> <p>1904—At midnight, for the first time, a ball drops in Times Square to mark the New Year.</p> <p>1901—This year's U.S. lynching toll: worst ever—105 Blacks, 25 whites.</p> <p>1879—Edison shows off the first practical electric light bulb.</p> <p>1761—Lydia (Hall) Fowle, wife of N.H. <i>Gazette</i> founder Daniel Fowle, dies in Portsmouth at the age of 36.</p>	<p>2006—Speaking to amputee vets of his Iraq War, George W.[MD] Bush says "I have an injury myself [from] combat with a cedar. I eventually won."</p> <p>1994—NAFTA screws unions, farmers, and the environment, but the Zapatistas stand up to fight back.</p> <p>1975—Nixon cronies H.R. Halderman, John Ehrlichman, and John Mitchell are convicted of felonies.</p> <p>1959—Castro's commies take Cuba.</p> <p>1880—Elmer J. McCurdy, a miner, soldier, and bank and train robber, is born in Washington, Maine. Shot dead in 1911, he then begins a longer career as a sideshow attraction and movie extra. He's buried in 1977.</p> <p>1877—Three Medal of Honor recipients, Claron Windus, Adam Paine, and Isaac Payne, attend a party in Brackettville, Texas. Deputy Sheriff Windus was supposed to arrest Paine for murder, but killed him instead with a shotgun blast to the belly—or back. Payne splits on a stolen horse.</p> <p>1863—President Lincoln proclaims emancipation, but only in states which had seceded.</p> <p>1804—Haiti proclaims independence as the world's first Black republic, the result of a successful revolution.</p> <p>1781—Troops at Morristown, N.J. seize artillery and march to confront Congress, seeking back pay.</p> <p>1636—Fishermen on Richmond Island, Maine, including the editor's 10x great-grandpa William Freethy, stage the second strike in North America.</p>	<p>1996—At Bill Clinton's invitation, Monica Lewinsky drops by the Oval Office. Sequestered in the bathroom, they violate his marriage vows.</p> <p>1972—During a one-hour interview on CBS, Richard Nixon tells Dan Rather that the bombing in Southeast Asia had been "very, very effective." Next day in a note to Hank Kissinger, he tells the truth: "The result = zilch."</p> <p>1970—The Supreme Court nixes Gen. Hershey's effort to reclassify all draft protestors as 1-A, or draftable.</p> <p>1967—In Florida, 72 men are arrested, thwarting an invasion of Haiti financed by CBS in exchange for exclusive film rights of the landing.</p> <p>1962—Outnumbered four to one, vastly outgunned, without helicopters or armor, 350 Viet Cong defeat U.S.-advised ARVN at Ap Bac.</p> <p>1946—King Zog of Albania, the only head of state to have fired back at a would-be assassin, abdicates.</p> <p>1923—As evidence of his corruption mounts, Interior Secretary Albert Fall resigns. President Harding then offers him a seat on the Supreme Court.</p> <p>1920—U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer has thousands of alleged subversives arrested.</p> <p>1905—The I.W.W., aka The Wobblies, "organize" in Chicago.</p> <p>1882—Standard Oil reorganizes so as to allow John D. Rockefeller to keep his oil monopoly; laws be damned.</p> <p>1872—Brigham Young is arrested for having 24 wives too many.</p>
<p>9:18 9:54</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2:56 3:37</p>	<p>9:57 10:34</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3:37 4:18</p>	<p>10:34 11:12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:16 4:56</p>	<p>11:11 11:49</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:55 5:33</p>	<p>11:49</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5:33 6:12</p>	<p>12:28 12:29</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:14 6:53</p>	<p>1:08 1:11</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6:57 7:35</p>

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