

*The Fortnightly Rant***Ain't That America?**

Since we last went to press—well, since we last published—two apparently deranged men have allegedly gone on separate killing sprees, in Atlanta, Georgia, and Boulder, Colorado. We regret having made that sentence less succinct than it might have been, but the nation's laws pertaining to libel are more stringent than those on guns.

It may be disconcerting, but it cannot be denied: America is getting back to normal. Democratic legislators are calling for a ban on assault weapons, while Republicans are focusing their attention on the Democrats' choice of words.

The Republicans do have a point here. A number of Democrats have called the Boulder shooter's Ruger AR-556 "an assault rifle." That's absurd—it's not a rifle at all.

True, the AR-556 is a semi-automatic firearm, the guts of which are based on the design of the familiar M-16, made popular by the Vietnam War. However, the barrel of an AR-556 is only 10.5 inches long.

Common sense would call that a short-barreled rifle, as would the National Firearms Act [NFA]. The NFA places certain restrictions on several categories of weapons: the aforementioned short-barreled rifles, similarly-truncated shotguns, full-auto machine guns, grenades, and the catch-all, "destructive devices."

That is why Ruger calls its AR-556 a pistol. If it was called a [short-barreled] rifle, would-be purchasers would not only have to pay \$200 for a special license, they'd have to pass a particularly rigorous background check. Ruger would never make its sales targets, and the Boulder shooter would still be waiting and wondering if he'd be cleared.

This nomenclature-based loophole raises an intriguing question: why doesn't some enterprising

grandmother open a bakery and sell "Grannie's Special Patriotic Pies?" With a home-poured cast-iron crust and delicious black powder filling, they'd live up any Fourth of July.

The standard AR-556, with a 16.1-inch barrel, was introduced in September, 2014. It quickly proved popular, having been used in mass shootings in Washington State (2016), Texas (2017), and New Zealand (2019).



The "pistol" version, shown here, came on the market in March, 2019. With an overall length some seven inches shorter, it is far more concealable, and thus bound to gain market share among the coveted mass-murderer demographic.

Lest we raise the ire of possibly-armed Republicans through careless word choice, let us now discuss the L-shaped dingbat on the left end of the image above. It looks like a buttstock, and it will function (poorly) as a buttstock. It's not a buttstock, though, because that would make this pistol a rifle.

A recent article in *The National Interest* explains this fine point: "pistols do not have buttstocks and are typically not fired from the shoulder. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms however recently declared arm braces on AR-15 'pistols' are in fact legal, even when the 'braces' are incidentally capable of firing (though not comfortably) from the shoulder."

Therefore it's an arm brace: a pair of flaps which allow the user to strap a firearm onto his or her forearm. Think Bruce Campbell, as Ash Williams in the *Evil Dead*, but with an AR instead of a chainsaw.

Sooner or later plastic surgeons will make these braces obsolete.



We would be neglecting our duty as a newspaper if we failed to cover the local angle on this story: Sturm, Ruger & Co. is one of this state's larger employers.

Founded in Connecticut in 1949, the gun maker established its Pine Tree Castings division in Newport, N.H. in 1963. About 1,200 employees work there.

Newport is among the towns which have been suing the state since 1990, in a dogged effort to make it live up to its constitutional responsibility to provide funding for an "adequate" education—because God knows you don't want to get too lavish or anything.

It's paradoxical, if you think about it. You can't get an adequate education in Newport, but the workers there, substituting rifles and pistols for waves and particles, can build you a gun demonstrating Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle.

If you think that's strange, con-

sider Sturm, Ruger co-founder Alexander McCormick Sturm. This polo-playing scion of the "Reaper Kings" was an OSS officer during WW II. Later he attended Yale, where, disdaining its Ivy League cafeteria, he wore custom-tailored suits and dined at the restaurants of New Haven's finest hotels. He married Teddy Roosevelt's granddaughter before dying of viral hepatitis at 28. But we digress.

Sensitive readers shuddering at the local connection with the Boulder AR-556 may be somewhat relieved to know that, though some of its components were probably cast in Newport, the pistol itself was assembled and finished in the company's plant in Mayodan, North Carolina.

The Ruger plant in Newport ships its parts south, but there are no indications that the jobs will follow—luckily for the town and the state. New England's textile jobs went south long ago; more recently our

shoe industry shipped off to Asia. Capital and guns both seem quite adept at eluding regulation.

Liability insurance is mandatory in nearly every state for owners of private motor vehicles—New Hampshire, of course, being one of two proud exceptions. Some have suggested that a similar arrangement for gun owners might help.

A Fox "News" poll in 2019—*Fox "News," mind you*—showed overwhelming support for legislative action. Ninety percent of respondents favored universal background checks, 81 percent supported taking guns from at-risk individuals, and 67 percent backed a ban on assault weapons.

Ain't this America, though? Between the Republicans' disdain for democracy and their lock on the Senate, smart money can only expect the madness to continue.

Wake us up, though, if somebody finally busts the filibuster.

*The Alleged News®***Happy National Vietnam War Veterans Day!**

Monday, March 29th will be National Vietnam War Veterans Day, as we all know.

"National Vietnam War Veterans Day," according to *Wikipedia*,* "is a U.S. holiday observed annually on March 29. It recognizes veterans who served in the U.S. military during the Vietnam War. It should not be confused with Veterans Day."

This particular day was chosen because "on March 29, 1973, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam

(MACV) was disbanded and the last U.S. combat troops departed the Republic of Vietnam."

MACV was the successor to MAAG, the Military Assistance Advisory Group, which was sent by Harry Truman, in 1950, to help the French hang onto what was then its colony of French Indo-China.

"The President claimed they were not sent as combat troops, but to supervise the use of \$10 million worth of U.S. military equipment to support the French in their effort to fight the Viet Minh forces. By 1953, aid increased dramatically to \$350 million to replace old military equipment owned by the French," *Wiki* says.

"The French Army, however, was reluctant to take U.S. advice, and would not allow the Vietnamese

army to be trained to use the new equipment, because it went against French policy. They were supposed to not only defeat enemy forces but to solidify themselves as a colonial power, and they could not do this with a Vietnamese army. French commanders were so reluctant to accept advice that would weaken the time-honored colonial role that they got in the way of the various attempts by the MAAG to observe where the equipment was being sent and how it was being used. Eventually, the French decided to cooperate, but at that point, it was too late." Dien Bien Phu was about to fall—see below.

In order to wrench ourselves out of this flashback, we'll try to sum up: on Monday, we're supposed to "recognize"—whatever that means—

those who willingly or not became entangled in a misguided effort to perpetuate colonialism, enrich drug kingpins, and prop up lying politicians—a bloody farce that lasted for 23 years.

Take that, Afghanistan, you stripling of 18 years.

In keeping with tradition, Monday will see those who dodged the draft during the 1960s, and have advocated for war ever since, publicly apologize for their hypocritical pusillanimity. Meanwhile, politicians of every stripe will visit the graves of those who died in vain to satisfy the fantasies of the misguided and pray for wisdom.

Haha—just kidding. In fact, hardly anyone is paying any attention. The Masonic Lodge at 1021 Turner St., Auburn, Maine will host

a Vietnam Veterans Day, and the Lowell, Mass. Vet Center is staging a Vietnam War Veterans Virtual Recognition Day, at which "a virtual pinning of Vietnam Veterans will take place alongside family members who attend the virtual event," which sounds virtually fantastic. For our part, we'll mark the event by recommending a few books:

The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia, by Alfred W. McCoy, Cathleen B. Read, and Leonard P. Adams II, Harper & Row, 1972: First McCoy *et al.* show how France used the profits from its opium monopoly in Vietnam to defray the cost of administering what amounted to one gigantic slave labor camp. The book

* *Wikipedia* is sometimes disparaged as a source of reliable information. In a nation which has elected the likes of Richard Nixon to its highest office, and where Fox "News" is bundled into every basic cable package, we reserve the right to treat an online free-content encyclopedia, written collaboratively by largely anonymous volunteers who write without pay, much as we would any other potential source of information.

The Alleged News®

from page one

then explains why the Viet Minh were able to win at Dien Bien Phu: French opium purchasers cheated indigenous sellers. The picture becomes complete as the authors show how the OSS's WW II collaboration with the Mafia evolved into CIA complicity in the heroin trade which spread from Vietnam—where top government officials profited—right back to our shores. Available in full, online at <https://renincorp.org/bookshelf/politics-of-heroin-in-south.pdf>.

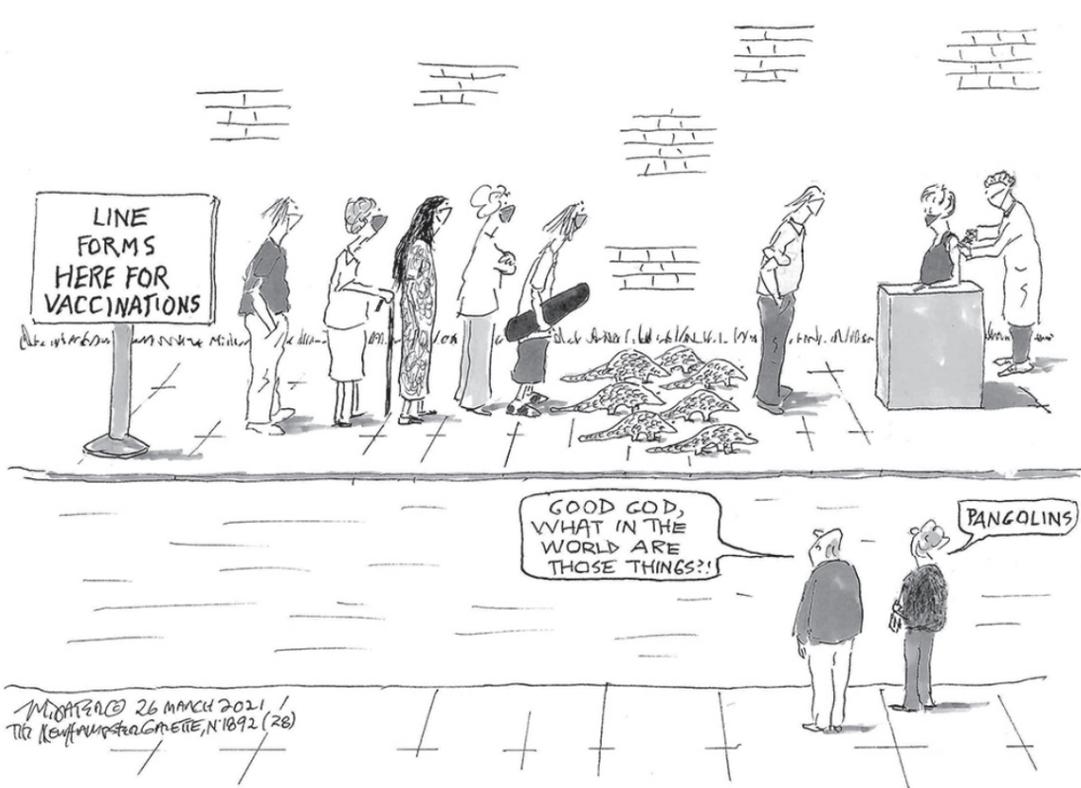
Chasing Shadows, by Ken Hughes, University of Virginia Press, 2014: The author uses Nixon's own tapes to create what the *Washington Post* called, "the best account yet of Nixon's devious interference with Lyn-

don Johnson's 1968 Vietnam War negotiations." It's impossible to say if Johnson's efforts would have brought peace. For all his earlier errors, though, it is clear that he was desperately trying to achieve it. It is equally clear that Nixon made sure he failed.

Fatal Politics, by Ken Hughes, University of Virginia Press, 2015: Knowing that the corrupt South Vietnamese government would fall soon after U.S. troops left, Nixon knowingly "kept American soldiers in Vietnam into the fourth year of his presidency, at the cost of thousands of American lives." Also drawing on the years Hughes spent listening to Nixon's tapes, this volume establishes how Nixon and Henry Kissinger created the myth that Congress was to blame for the fall of South Vietnam.



Once again the Flag Police find themselves in ambiguous circumstances. A violation has obviously occurred: the fly end of this flag is ragged and tattered from top to bottom. Who, though, is the perp? The pole in question stands in front of the former home of a popular quasi-governmental agency, which it was clearly intended to represent. At the end of August, 2019, however, that outfit was run out of town in a public/private real estate grab. Going after the former tenant would be adding insult to injury. Clearly it is the landlord which must be held to account. How can that be accomplished, though? Seventeen years ago that faceless federal bureaucracy announced its intent to "relocate the functions from this property to another location in Portsmouth." Five years ago it "officially began its disposal process, declaring the building to be surplus to its needs." And yet, there it stands: ugly as ever and almost entirely empty. Cite that agency and grow old waiting for a response? Or wait and risk legal retaliation from the bristly and litigious new owners? Decisions, decisions....



Meanwhile, Down At the Railyard...

We don't always read *Railway Age*, but when we do direct our browser to the monthly trade journal for the rail transport industry, it's to get the skinny on Pan Am, Portsmouth's Award-Winning Local Railway.

It's about time we did, too—the only railroad on Earth known to have usurped the name of a formerly-great, defunct airline has been on the market for about a year. If the transaction goes through, we will lose our excuse to write about its present owner, Timothy Mellon, who is a fascinating guy.

Railroad acquisitions are inherently rather complex deals and are subject to considerable regulation—even we know that. Curiously, the parties involved seem to have thought otherwise, judging from the latest Pan Am-related story in *Railway Age*, headlined "CSX-Pan Am Deal a 'Significant' Transaction: STB."

The story, by William C. Vantuono himself, *Railway Age's* Editor-in-Chief, cites a filing by the Surface Transportation Board in

the *Federal Register*, dated yesterday: "The submission is styled as an application for a 'minor' transaction seeking Board approval.... The Board finds that the Proposed Transaction would be a 'significant' transaction."

Surely "significant" means more regulatory hoops to jump through than "minor." Considering that last year Mellon donated \$10 million to the pro-Trump America First Action Super PAC, we're guessing that decision will raise Mellon's blood pressure—particularly since he seems to be from the class of persons used to getting their way without a whole lot of argument.

In 1957, when he was a teenager, "[his father,] Paul Mellon, his sister Ailsa Mellon-Bruce, and his cousins Sarah Mellon and Richard King Mellon, were all among the richest eight people in the United States, with fortunes of between 400 and 700 million dollars each (around \$3,600,000,000 and \$6,400,000,000 in today's dollars)." — *Wiki*.

His *Wikipedia* entry includes some choice selections from his

self-published autobiography. He characterizes social safety net programs as "Slavery Redux," writing that, "[f]or delivering their votes in the Federal Elections, [recipients] are awarded with yet more and more freebies: food stamps, cell phones, WIC payments, Obamacare, and on, and on, and on. The largess is funded by the hardworking folks, fewer and fewer in number, who are too honest or too proud to allow themselves to sink into this morass."

Now 78 years old, Mellon is apparently ready to take off his work gloves and dusty boots, lay down his pickaxe, and sit on the porch, reminiscing about the old days, working on the railroad.

=====
Collect From the Rich? Heaven Forfend! "High-Income Taxpayers Who Owe Delinquent Taxes Could Be More Effectively Prioritized," runs the exquisitely euphemistic headline of a March 10 report from the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration [TIGTA].

Bloomberg's Laura Davison, writing on March 15th, was a little more

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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.

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— Joe Keefe

direct: “The Internal Revenue Service has failed to collect more than \$2.4 billion dollars from wealthy individuals who owe the federal government back taxes. . .

“Auditors were only able to recoup about 39 percent of the more than \$4 billion in unpaid taxes owed by a group of rich taxpayers with an average annual income of nearly \$1.6 million, the report found. The findings suggest that the IRS should place more emphasis on a taxpayer’s income when determining whether to pursue an audit case. . .”

Surely the auditors just need a little more time to figure this problem out. It’s only been going on since the passage of the Sixteenth Amendment in 1913.

“The findings are the latest in a series of government accountability reports that recommend the IRS do more to pursue high-income taxpayers after audit rates dipped to historic lows in recent years. The dearth of examinations has prompted Democrats in Congress to pursue legislation that would mandate higher audit levels of businesses and wealthy individuals.” Those Democratic bastards probably grew up at the knee of Willy “That’s Where The Money Is” Sutton. . .

America the Broke

A company which we will not name, in order to avoid any potential libel suits, has sent us a press release about how people make ends meet when they’ve been denied unemployment benefits.

“When denied unemployment benefits,” the release says, “29 percent of people are going into credit card or loan debt to cover expenses.”

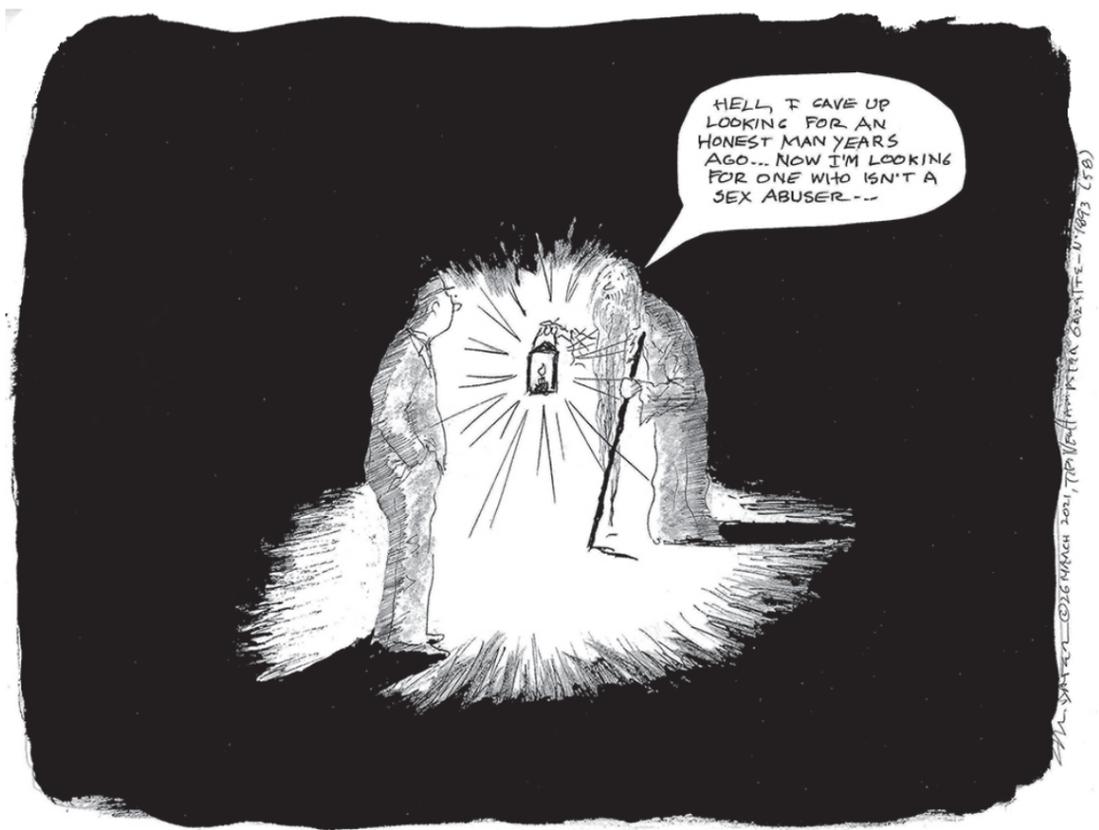
Here’s the kicker: “Maine (52.4 percent), New Hampshire (47.7 percent) and Missouri (46.2 percent) are the states most likely to have residents rely on credit cards or loans to meet spending needs.” And here we thought Yankees were supposed to be canny and frugal.

Important If True

The following came directly from the Democratic Party. It must therefore be considered no more or less reliable than Hereditary Governor Chris Sununu’s Inescapable Weekly Covid-19 Blatherathons on NHPR.

That said, National Vietnam War Veterans Day is just around the corner. Surely such veterans make up a large proportion of the residents at the New Hampshire Veterans Home.

Concord, N.H., March 19th—Late



last night, Governor Sununu released a sham report that failed to investigate what caused the COVID outbreak at the New Hampshire Veterans Home. The outbreak led to the deaths of 37 veterans, and resulted in 93 residents—37 percent of the 250 residents at the facility—and 102 staff contracting the virus.

In a blatant attempt to avoid scrutiny, Sununu touted the sham report at a press conference without providing the actual document to reporters in advance. After outcry from the families of veterans and the public, Sununu had finally agreed to provide a report on the deaths at the Veterans Home, but he did not deliver one yesterday.

The so-called “report” does not even attempt to assess what could have prevented or mitigated the outbreak at the Veterans Home. Rather, it simply provides the results of an examination of the Veterans Home’s compliance with COVID protocols on one day—March 12, 2021—five months after the first reported death and seven weeks after the outbreak ended. Nowhere in the

report does it mention concerns about testing lags at the start of the outbreak, a lack of PPE, staffing shortages, or residents having to wait days for the COVID vaccine. It also does not address Sununu’s summer 2020 veto of HB 1246, a bill that would have provided \$25 million for long-term care facilities like the Veterans Home to prepare for COVID outbreaks. In fact, the report makes only passing mention of the deadly outbreak at all.

Though the report does not evaluate the State’s handling of the devastating Veterans Home outbreak, it still includes some alarming revelations. The report notes that, as of March 12th, less than half of Veterans Home staff had received the COVID vaccine, that Veterans Home staff still needed additional training on PPE use four months after the tragic outbreak, and the facility did not have basic cleaning supplies in the staff kitchen.

In contrast to Sununu’s eight-page sham report that does not assess what caused the outbreak at the Veterans Home, Massachusetts Governor Char-

lie Baker released a 174-page report from an independent investigation that thoroughly examines what caused a COVID outbreak at Soldiers’ Home in Holyoke. Sununu has ignored calls for an independent investigation into the outbreak at the Veterans Home, refusing to release documents regarding the state’s response to the outbreak at the New Hampshire Veterans Home.

“The sham report that Chris Sununu released, in lieu of an actual investigation, is a disgrace to our veterans, to their families, and to the staff at the New Hampshire Veterans Home who deserve answers on the outbreak that took the lives of 37 veterans,” said New Hampshire Democratic Party Chair Ray Buckley. “It’s absolutely shameful that Sununu has refused to actually investigate the cause of the outbreak and protect the health and safety of our veterans and nursing home staff—and instead is just trying to protect his political future and cover up his failure to mitigate the outbreak. Our veterans and their families deserve so much better from Chris Sununu.”



Given the lovely forecast, we suggested to our Wandering Photographer that Saturday, March 20th, would present a perfect opportunity for capturing the first day of Spring. Subsequently he submitted the image above: a reader in Market Square soaks up the last of the afternoon sun; true to form, metadata reveals that it was taken Sunday, March 21st.

Murph’s Fortnightly Quote
“I’m sometimes asked when will there be enough [women on the Supreme Court]? And I say when there are nine.”
 —Ruth Bader Ginsburg (1933-2020)

“Machiavelli...discussed depravity of manners as the last, irretrievable stage of political degeneration, when the corruption of the rulers has spread among the people as a whole.”
 —Lance Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion*
 john@wordpraxis.com

“Those who directed the state in the time of Solon and Cleisthenes did not establish a polity which...trained the citizens in such fashion that they looked upon insolence as democracy, lawlessness as liberty, impudence of speech as equality, and licence to do what they pleased as happiness, but rather a polity which detested and punished such men and by so doing made all the citizens better and wiser.”
 —Isocrates (436–338 BC), *Areopagiticus*
 —Not-So-Random Thoughts from an Oregon Subscriber

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Racism in Portsmouth, 2021

To the Editor:

When I moved to Portsmouth a few years ago I did not expect to encounter the ignorance of a white male in a truck pointing his index finger and thumb at me as if to shoot me while I was walking downtown, or a white woman knocking on my door because she could see that I was Black and questioned whether I had a right to be there, in my own home.

I had no idea I would experience racism while shopping with my grandson on March 14, 2021 shopping at Aeropostale in the Mall at Fox Run.

My grandson picked out some shirts rather quickly and I asked the retail representative (Michelle) if he could try a few things on. With an abrupt tone she replied that the store policy is that only two customers at a time are allowed in the fitting rooms and the rooms need to be sanitized before someone goes in. Note: Nothing is posted about the store policy of the fitting room restrictions. Unfortunately, Michelle doesn't acknowledge us or make any eye contact and a boy passes by us and goes back into the fitting room to try on more clothes.

After about five additional minutes this boy comes out and Michelle cashes out with his father. At this point the fitting room is free and I am waiting for someone to sanitize and allow us to use the fitting room. Michelle continues to ignore us and after approximately five minutes and I ask Michelle if we can use the fitting room. She does not make any eye contact again, but she looks to her left at a male associate who walks over and asks if I need assistance. I said I am waiting for Michelle to let us into a fitting room. As I am speaking with the other associate Michelle rudely interrupts by saying "just let them in" and I reply, "not until it's sanitized." I also reiterated to Michelle, "isn't that the policy you shared with me?" She does not respond and goes back to the counter.

I ask her if a manager is on duty. She responds by saying "I've been working all day." I respond by saying, "I asked if I could speak with the Manager on duty." She replies, "She's on break," and

proceeds to walk to the back office.

The Manager, Amelia, comes out. I explain our experience with Michelle, and how I feel it was blatant discrimination.

I said it was clear to me and my grandson that Michelle did not want to help us because we are Black and brown customers. Amelia apologizes for the experience but proceeds to protect Michelle by saying "I don't think she meant it that way." Amelia did not witness what we experienced, so she truthfully cannot say that.

I am angry having had this experience with my grandson. Living in New Hampshire continues to be a challenge from my perspective, being a Black female. The experience at Aeropostale is another example of being treated with disrespect. I agree with my grandson—Michelle should be fired.

Money is the same color no matter who is spending it. I will not spend my money where racism occurs. Enough is enough—when is the hate and racism going to stop?

Jackie Gadsden
Portsmouth, N.H.

Jackie:

We would bet that, if they were asked, the average New Hampshire resident would say "No, I don't think there's much racism in this state." Statistically, of course, that average resident would be white and would never have been subjected to this sort of treatment.

Thank you for writing. Your letter may help give our readers a better understanding of the state they live in. Of course, there's no reason why you should bear the burden of educating them.

When is the hate and racism going to stop? We're going to treat that as a rhetorical question, because we can't bear to answer it.

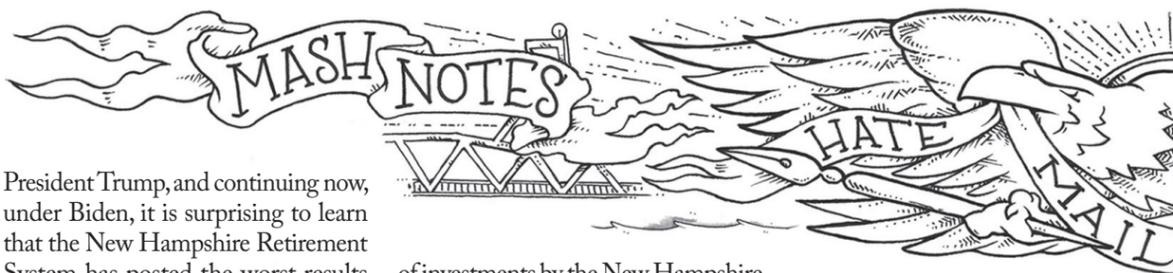
The Editor

**The N.H. Retirement System—
It's Pitiful—Don't Fix It!**

Dear Editor,

"New Hampshire State Retirement System ranks last in New England in 2020 annual investment returns!"

During a time when the stock market is booming under the leadership of



President Trump, and continuing now, under Biden, it is surprising to learn that the New Hampshire Retirement System has posted the worst results in annual investment returns (ROI's) with relation to other state retirement systems in New England, and elsewhere.

The stock market performance during the Trump years in the White House skyrocketed from 18,000 points to over 32,000 + points, raising all sectors. One has to wonder where the money of New Hampshire retirees and active members like teachers, police, fire, municipal employees, and state employees is being invested by the "investment experts" of the New Hampshire State Retirement System?

Similarly, the Massachusetts State Retirement System reported a 13.0 percent Return on Investments (ROI) for 2020; Rhode Island State Retirement System reported an ROI of 11.87 percent; Maine State Retirement System posted an ROI of 8.0 percent; the Vermont State Retirement System earned 4.0 percent ROI; and the Connecticut State Retirement System boasted a 1.89 percent ROI. In last place is the New Hampshire State Retirement System with a meager 1.1 percent ROI! Even N.Y. posted a 3.5 percent ROI and Pennsylvania reveled in posting a remarkable 11.11 percent return on investments!

Why is this concerning to the taxpayers of New Hampshire? The first place legislators turn to make up for losses is—yes, you got it!—the taxpayer! And, that is exactly what's happening in New Hampshire!

Democrat Michael O'Brien (D) Hillsborough-36, (primary sponsor) Democrat Robert Cushing (D) Rockingham - 21, (co-sponsor) and Democrat Lucinda Rosenwald (D) Nashua - 13, (co-sponsor) have introduced legislation (HB 274) to "...require the citizens of New Hampshire to make up for the poor performance

of investments by the New Hampshire Retirement Board."

One hundred percent (100 percent) of the Democrats in the New Hampshire House of Representatives voted to support, to *PASS*, this incredulous legislation while ninety-one per cent (91 percent) of the Republicans voted to *KILL* this bill!

During similar situations in other states, benefits to recipients have been cut... a drastic measure, to be sure! But, you don't ask the average, hard-working, minimum-wage- working citizen to "bail out" the poor performance of "investment experts" (who represent union members' retirement monies!) when they screw up!

I urge Governor Sununu to veto this legislation should it get to his desk.

The other option is to seek "bail-out" money from the newly-enacted \$1.9 Trillion Biden/Harris/Pelosi/Schumer Democrat Stimulus/COVID bail-out legislation just passed in Washington by Senators Shaheen and Hassan and Reps. Kuster and Pappas as well as all the other Democrats in Washington. It seems we, in Conservative New Hampshire, have joined the ranks of "tax-and-spend" California, New York, and Illinois, to name a few!

Nick De Mayo, M. Ed.
Sugar Hill, N.H.

Nick:

Our lack of knowledge about the New Hampshire Retirement System is deep, wide, and profound. In such cases we must rely on heuristics.

You say all the Democrats, and nine percent of the Republicans, are for it? We'd lean towards supporting it, then. It's not as if Republicans have been bowling us over with their wisdom lately.

We'd want to know more before making any commitment. That ROI appears to stink, but perhaps there's some explanation.

Your solution stinks worse, though. Stick it to the workers? Nah. They earned their pension benefits. No way the state should screw them out of their money now.

The Editor

The Four-Plexes Are Coming!

To the Editor,

HB 341 was recommended "Inexpedient to Legislate" (ITL) by a vote of 10-9.

Write to the full House asking them to vote YES on ITL of HB 341: nhhouse@leg.state.nh.us.

We've seen many similar bills that attempt to "urbanize" rural towns in New Hampshire by favoring high-density construction over single-family homes. These bills should be sent to the trash bin.

At HB 341's hearing, two out-of-state lobbyists were allowed to testify in favor; one from Virginia, another from Portland, Oregon. They are indicative of the strong national push espousing the "new urbanist" scam, which is based on the idea people do not want to own their own homes and that parking is not needed as cars will just "go away."

The full list of lobbyists is available on the State website.

There is no assurance that "urbanization" will result in affordable housing, or that people will cease using cars.

Homeowners, especially those who cherish the rural flavor of small-town New Hampshire, should be troubled by out-of-staters with an agenda attempting to influence what happens in N.H.

This is why it is important to write to the Committees as they examine the bills, and further, to write to the full House and Senate to ask them to vote to support or oppose those rec-

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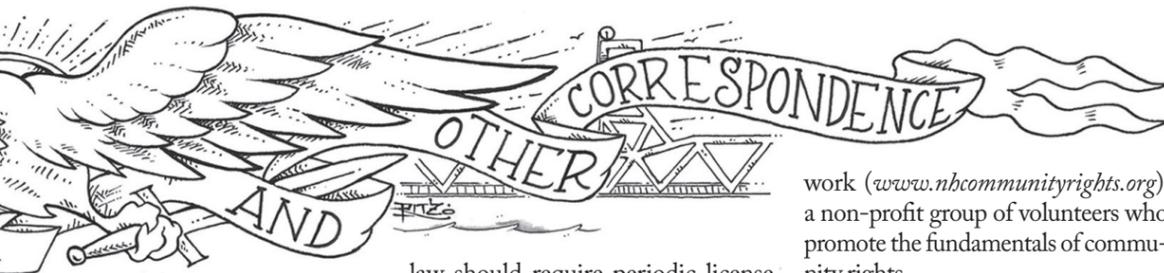
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ommendations.

Peterborough, N.H. residents were smart. They are glad that the citizens petitioned, and then voted, to have an elected Planning Board. Every Planning Board should be elected. And lobbyists should be sent packing.

Jane Aitken
Bedford N.H.
Jane:

Good Lord... "High-density construction"... "New Urbanism." Alarmed by your letter, we looked up HB 341, half expecting to find some diktat mandating a Statewide Housing Soviet, organized to strew concrete Brutalist tenements all across our bucolic landscape. It's nothing of the sort. It's a well-meaning effort to allow the creation or conversion of four-plexes. In other words, it appears to be an honest attempt to solve this state's desperate housing shortage.

The Editor

What Doesn't Work? A Republican!

Dear Editor,

"There's not a big appetite to do things that actually don't do anything to fix the problem," said Republican Senator John Thune (S.D.).

"I'm not attracted to something that doesn't work," said Republican Senator McConnell.

What doesn't work? Republican insistence on doing nothing about gun control doesn't fix the problem. Time after time, multiple people are being gunned down. Even before we can grieve over the last mass murder, another gun rampage has happened. Doing nothing, time after time, doesn't work.

Let's do better. Let's regulate gun use like we regulate automobile use: license gun owners to use their weapons after they pass a safety test, a background check, and gun inspection. The

law should require periodic license renewal, as well as insurance for any damage done by the gun owner.

Gun ownership is enshrined in the 2nd Amendment, yet, use of these weapons can and should be regulated.

Bruce Joffe
Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:
Self-fulfillment, anyone?
The Editor

Who Rules?

To the Editor:

Who holds the reins of government? Are We the People well read, self-determining, and able to understand what our elected representatives of this democratic republic are doing? No, most people do not even know the names of their "representatives," nor do they know what's really going on, and that's the biggest problem we have!

Our Representatives should look for our ideas and input to address the discussions between all parties and represent us. Instead they listen to lobbyists and rich special interests whose greed is destroying our Nation and planet.

We the People must be actively involved in order for our representative government to work for us. Only then can we thank ourselves and our representatives for our republican form of government. A house divided against itself will fall and We the People are ultimately most impacted by what happens.

The Pledge of Allegiance is a prayer that concludes with "liberty and justice for all," and that has to start in every town. The Barnstead Declaration asserts the Right to Local Self-Government and recognizes the Rights of Nature, protecting our health, safety and welfare. Information can be found on the website for the New Hampshire Community Rights Net-

work (www.nhcommunityrights.org), a non-profit group of volunteers who promote the fundamentals of community rights.

Douglas Darrell,
NHCRN Board Member
Ctr. Barnstead, N.H.

Douglas:

With the profit motive apparently driving an infinite number of entities bent on squeezing a dollar out of every conceivable component of creation, we mere mortals, and the natural world on which we depend, need all the defenders we can get. Keep fighting the good fight.

The Editor

Advice From Mr. Duffy?

To the Editor:

I don't know what has happened to my friend, Gerry Duffy. In the past I had considered him to be a reasonable and smart person. But the McIntyre project seems to have changed all of that. He was initially a supporter of both the first Redgate/Kane proposal, and the City Council that agreed to that plan. When the public rejected the plan and voted out all but one of the supporters of that plan, Mr. Duffy seems to have become a warrior against the new City Council, and a staunch advocate for the Redgate/Kane organization.

At the same time, he regularly expresses his concerns that our city would be sued by that organization, despite the fact that our city has its own lawyers. Even though he previously had taken part in Portsmouth Listens groups, he was skeptical of the need for this process when it came to the McIntyre project, even though support for it in the city was very strong. Even though Gerry has traveled in many European countries and must have noticed the how urban landscapes were preserved but beautified in a way that enlivened and enriched communities, nevertheless, when it came to Portsmouth, he

was content to support the original Redgate/Kane proposal. Judging from his almost weekly comments about the project, one could almost assume that he was employed as a PR man by Redgate/Kane.

Now that the Principle Group has presented several visual options to the residents of Portsmouth for consideration, Mr. Duffy seems to be a supporter of Option D, which coincidentally is also the option with the most additional new buildings (five) and the least amount of green space, while disparaging Option G, which only has one addition small building and the most green space. He has even suggested that choosing Option G would surely result in a lawsuit by Redgate/Kane.

I can see that from a developer's viewpoint, five additional buildings are financially more lucrative than only one building, but which option provides the greater public benefit? That is what should be our goal with this project.

Rep. Peter Somssich, District 27-Ward 3, Portsmouth
Portsmouth, N.H.

Open Letter To 404 Members Of The European Parliament

To the 404 Members:

The European Parliament, of which you are a member, is the only body of the European Union elected by all citizens. You represent the will of the people and you represent me because you represent democracy. Without democracy, the European Union makes no sense. On March 8th the European Parliament voted "yes" to lifting the immunity of three of your colleagues: Ms. Clara Ponsatí, Mr. Toni Comín, and Mr. Carles Puigdemont. Of the 693 MEPs voting that day, 404 (58 percent) were in favour of the waiver, while 42 percent of MEPs voted "no," or blank. The vote fell far short of the 95 percent affirmative vote that is customary in parliamentary immunity requests.

As you know very well, the Spanish Supreme Court requested the lifting of the immunity of your three Catalan colleagues because it wants to try them

for having organised a referendum on October 1, 2017. Your vote on March 8th was by secret ballot and I assume that you, the 404 MEPs who voted "yes," did what your conscience dictated. In relation to that, I have a personal story to share with you and a question about democracy.

My mother is 94 years old and gets around in a wheelchair. I live in Switzerland, but on October 1, 2017 I was in Barcelona, at her home, and I told her I would take her to the polling station. We were having breakfast when we watched in disbelief on live TV the attacks by the Spanish police on voters at the school where Carles Puigdemont, then president of Catalonia, was expected. After a while my sister, who was queuing at the polling station in our neighbourhood, phoned: "The police can come at any moment, they don't respect anything or anyone, it's dangerous, do not come, mother!" Despite what she had seen and the warnings, my mother asked me to take her to vote, and so I did. Seeing us arrive with the wheelchair, the neighbours queuing to vote stepped aside to let us in. Inside, my mother showed her ID card at the polling station and voted. It was the first ballot that went into that box. When we came out all the people waiting outside applauded her. I was very moved. My mother had done something profoundly democratic: she had voted despite threats and fear.

On the March 8th you voted, comfortably from a chair, that Clara Ponsatí, Carles Puigdemont and Toni Comín, MEPs like you, should be tried for allowing my mother to place a vote in a ballot box. Are you convinced that you supported true democracy with your vote?

Mara Montserrat Canela
Geneva, Switzerland
Mara:

We don't know how we came to be receiving these updates on issues relating to Catalonia, but we are grateful.

If, through some surreal turn of events, we unexpectedly were to find ourselves in Barcelona, we would hope to be able to meet your mother.

The Editor

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HOWLER'S PILE AND HUMOR

What do we choose to remember with memorial markers, buildings and community projects?



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Will You Settle for Returning to Politics as Usual?

by W.D. Ehrhart

It took Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr., Commander-in-Chief #46, only about five weeks to start dropping bombs on other countries. And he's decided that he's not going to penalize Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for ordering the brutal murder and dismembering of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi. And so I was very quickly reminded of why I voted for Uncle Joe: he's not Cadet Bone Spur.

It isn't all bad, of course. Biden's cabinet appointments have been nothing short of historic: a gay secretary of transportation, a Native American secretary of the interior, a Black secretary of defense, a secretary of education who's actually an educator, an attorney general who Moscow Mitch and Graham Cracker wouldn't even let the senate vote on for a Supreme Court appointment.

And a whole raft of executive orders reversing—for now at least—some of the damage done by C-in-C #45 to environmental protection, immigration, voting rights, transgender military service, collective bargaining for federal workers. Biden has rejoined the World Health Organization and the Paris Climate Accord, and canceled the Keystone XL pipeline.

But dropping bombs on Shiite militias in Syria to “send a signal” to Iran is simply a return to pre-Trumpian politics as usual. Refusing to treat the ruler of a medieval country run by Sharia Law like the murdering tyrant he is because he and his country are useful to Biden in dealing with another medieval country run by Sharia Law is pre-Trumpian diplomacy as usual.

The simple fact is that Joe Biden, though infinitely preferable to his predecessor, is part and parcel of the same stale, unresponsive, we-respond-to-the-folks-with-the-mon-

ey, dysfunctional political system that led to the election of a congenital liar and criminal grifter in the first place. Between 1972 and 2016, millions of Americans came to believe—with very good reasons—that neither major political party cared about them or was looking out for their interests.

By the third year of Bill Clinton's presidency, the Democratic Party had made itself over as Republican Lite, and Joe Biden was a part of that transformation. When Barack Obama became president, he appointed to key positions many of the same Wall Street playmakers who had helped to bring on the Crash of 2008. His secretary of state was Hillary Clinton, who subsequently gave highly paid speeches to Wall Street firms in which she tacitly approved of cuts to Social Security and praised unfettered international trade. Need I remind you who was Obama's vice president?

And then there is this photo of former vice president Biden giving the Liberty Medal to former president George W. Bush:

This just boggles the mind. The medal Biden is putting around Bush's neck is not just for “work with veterans” as the original caption said, but for work with disabled veterans in particular, veterans disabled in the wars of aggression waged by the Bush administration under false pretenses and outright lies. Does Biden not understand the irony here? Surely he could have gracefully declined to participate in this charade, which is about as hollow as giving Donald Trump a Purple Heart for his bone spurs.

And speaking of gracefully declining, does Biden really have to end every public speech with: “May God bless our troops?” For what? Waging forever war in Iraq and Afghanistan? Dropping drone missiles on wedding parties and school buses? I assume Biden is referring to the Old Testament God who killed

off the entire human race aside from Noah and his family. The God of Joshua who flattened the city of Jericho. The God of Lot who obliterated Sodom and Gomorrah.

Surely Biden can't mean the Father of Jesus of Nazareth, the Lamb of God, the Prince of Peace, the man who healed the sick and broke bread with sinners, the guy who said turn the other cheek and love thy neighbor. Any God who would bless me for what I did as a U.S. Marine in Vietnam ought to go talk to a priest.

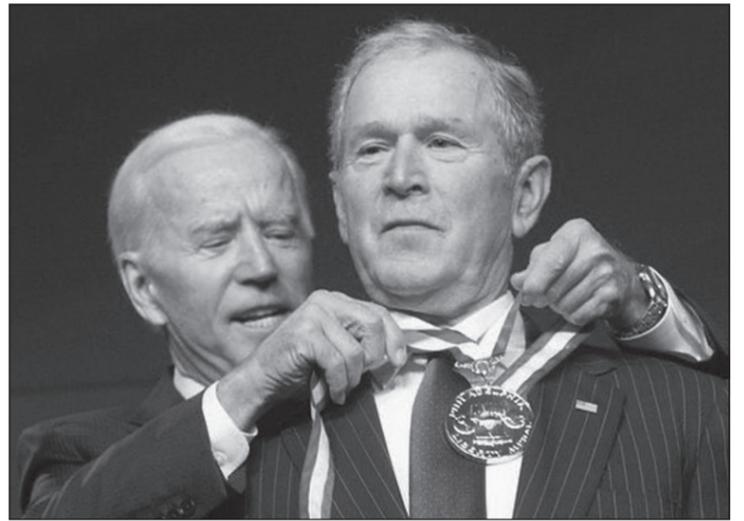
So where does all this leave us? Soon after last November's election, I wrote in an essay titled “The Democratic Party Has One Last Chance”:

“This is no time to sit back and gloat, or even bask in the relief so many of us are feeling, as if we are finally out of the woods. Our task now is to put pressure on a Biden Administration to keep its promises and act on progressive issues like climate change, health care, racial justice, and income inequality.

“My own daughter voted for Biden only with extreme reluctance, believing—rightly so, in my opinion—that Biden represents the kind of politics-as-usual that led to the election of Donald Trump in the first place. The Democratic Party has this one last chance to make itself worthy of my daughter's vote.

“As fervently as I wished for the defeat of Donald Trump, I hope Joe Biden and his party understand this and act accordingly.”

Now it's Showtime, and while we are seeing some improvements over the previous four years, so far we haven't seen much to suggest that “politics as usual” are no longer acceptable. It is time to start delivering on changes that will benefit ordinary Americans and restore faith in the Democratic Party as the party of working people: affordable health-care; increases in living wages and the standard of living for the 99%; fair and equitable taxation; decent housing; withdrawal of American



Former Vice President Biden giving the Liberty Medal to former President George W. Bush, November, 2018. The annual award is administered by the National Constitution Center of the United States “to recognize leadership in the pursuit of freedom.” The National Constitution Center is a nonprofit institution devoted to the Constitution of the United States, created by the Constitution Heritage Act on September 16, 1988.

military forces from many—perhaps most—of the one hundred and fifty countries where they are now stationed; reduced spending on a grotesquely outlandish “defense” budget and corresponding increases in spending for education, mass transit, highway and electrical infrastructure; consumer protection and regulation of financial marketers and investment firms.

Think this is too much to ask, let alone expect? I'm no clairvoyant, but I'm willing to bet that if a Biden/Harris administration doesn't start delivering on a significant portion of such an agenda, the Retrumplian Party will be back in the saddle by 2024.

So what can you yourself do about any of this? When is the last time you wrote to your U.S. senator, your U.S. representative, your state senator, or your state representative? If you already have, write to them again. And again. And again. How about your county commissioner? Your town councilperson? All politics, after all, really is local. And get

involved with at least one public action group:

Veterans for Peace (<https://www.veteransforpeace.org/>),

Ready for 100 (<https://www.sieraclub.org/ready-for-100>),

Everytown for Gun Safety (<https://everytown.org/about-everytown>),

Black Lives Matter (<https://blacklivesmatter.com/>).

There are dozens, perhaps hundreds, of ways you can become engaged locally, regionally, and nationally. The last four years have been a nightmare, but the next four years are likely to determine the future of this country for all time to come. President Biden and his party need to be pushed, poked, prodded, and pestered into recognizing that politics as usual is no longer acceptable, affordable, or allowable.

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W.D. Ehrhart is Editor-at-Large for the Veterans for Peace National Newsletter and a member of the VFP Philadelphia-area Thompson Bradley Chapter 31.

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The Advantages of Being Useless

by Jean Stimmell

This essay is about learning how to be useless. As such, it dovetails nicely with a recent piece I wrote on these pages about striving for idleness. I agreed with Mark Taylor's Buddhist notion that "idleness allows time for the mind to wander to places never before imagined and to return transformed."¹ Being useless, like idleness, is often equated with being old. And, indeed, that is what I am. I spend a lot of time in reverie, which most would call idleness. I have to keep pulling myself back to the present. However, I'm not meditating but practicing what has been called the curse of the old.

I forget where I put my keys. I can't remember where I left my glasses. I walk into the kitchen from my office and then stand there perplexed, wondering: what was it I came here to do?

Barry Magid suggests that's okay in a piece called "Uselessness: the koan of just sitting."² His take is, rather than racking your brain to remember what you think you're supposed to be doing, just kick back and enjoy the moment. He writes that feeling useless can be a profound experience that we Americans rarely have. Instead, we feel compelled to keep busy doing things: Racing around earning money, having fun, helping others, whatever it may be. We are convinced that everything

must have a purpose. It doesn't.

To *just be*—what modern society calls uselessness—means forgetting what we are doing, or in the words of the artist Robert Irwin, "Seeing is forgetting the name of the thing one sees." According to Magid, this kind of seeing "involves a loss of boundaries" and a letting go of ourselves as separate observers, "placing us within the midst of the the very landscape" we usually feel separate from. Buddhism calls this intermixing of self and world: "being actualized by myriad things."

By dissolving these boundaries, we become whole, developing a personalized sense of place, within a community of neighbors, geographical topography, and the more than human world around us. We overcome the curse of our Western

heritage that artificially separates our thinking mind from the outside world. That, to me, is the essence of what it means to be alive. Charlene Spretnak in *The Resurgence of the Real*, reinforces this notion, warning us that our hypermodern world is robbing us of our three most critical birthrights: our bodies, nature, and our sense of place.³

As I sit here on my deck writing this, breathing in deeply the almost erotic, earthy scent of spring, I feel one with my body within my sanctuary of place. Meanwhile, so many around me spurn the only flesh and blood body they will ever have, yearning instead for the perfect body projected on the screen of their mind by advertisements and social media. Nature becomes just another accessory, a movie reel backdrop to

soap opera lives. Worse yet, as more and more of us scurry around, always looking for the next best place, we are chopping off the roots that make us human.

Indigenous people have always understood that sense of place is the sacred scaffolding upon which one grows a meaningful life. Perhaps, like it or not, that will be the final rallying cry of us Baby Boomers: To promote the importance of sense of place while extolling the benefits of idleness and uselessness.

====

1 <https://tricycle.org/trikedaily/idleness-waiting-grace/>

2 <https://tricycle.org/magazine/uselessness/>

3 *The Resurgence of the Real*, by Charlene Spretnak: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company: 1997.

Whatever Happened to War?

by James A. Haught

For millennia, it was considered normal for strong tribes to conquer, pillage and subjugate weaker ones.

After Macedonia annexed Ancient Greece, Alexander the Great launched a conquest machine that dominated much of the known world.

Soon afterward, the Roman Empire spread via military force as far as the British Isles. Eventually, associated with his desire to gain battle victories, Constantine was the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity.

After Islam developed, holy war-

riors spread the faith into Asia and across North Africa, up into France.

Then the Golden Horde of Genghis Khan entered Europe as far as Poland.

War became more religious when Christian Crusades attacked Muslims in the Holy Land—and scores of Catholic-Protestant wars erupted in the Counter-Reformation, even to Scotland's Jacobite uprisings in the 1700s.

Missionaries often preceded military invasion establishing colonies. Indeed, one indigenous commentator remarked ruefully, "When they came, we had the land and they had the Bible. Now we have the Bible and they have the land."

Napoleon waged armed conquest as far as Moscow, killing millions for no real gain.

Hitler did likewise, with the same result.

But now, strangely—wonderfully—warfare has almost vanished from the world. No nations are attacking each other. All that remains are civil wars and a few local uprisings, often by hidden Muslim fanatics using terrorism in a futile attempt to create a holy Caliphate. (If they ever get nuclear devices, the story of war could change hideously.)

The end of warfare is a long-sought goal of secular humanism, the progressive struggle to improve life for all people without resort to supernatural religion. What changed in civilization? Why was war once

common (and horrible), but now virtually gone? What brought this magnificent improvement?

In his landmark book, *The Better Angels of Our Nature*, Steven Pinker showed how violence of all sorts dropped incredibly—from a global war death rate of 300 per year per 100,000 during World War II to less than one in the 21st century. Human values and beliefs—the patriotic sense of "glory" in war by "heroes"—seems to be altered.

I wonder: Does the rapid erasure of war have any connection to the rapid erasure of religion, which swept western civilization at the same time? Does the relentless advance of human logic—the intelligent, practical, sensible, beneficial, scientific mindset—factor into these

profound changes?

Millions have lost belief in magical gods, devils, heavens, hells, miracles, prophecies, etc. Are such people less inclined to plunge into murderous war? I don't know. Just asking. I hope researchers inquire.

Correlation isn't causation. When two trends happen together, it doesn't necessarily mean that one caused the other.

All we can say is that two gigantic phenomena are occurring: War is dying and religion is dying. Hallelujah on both counts.

====

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

====

Now, Robots are Coming for White-Collar Jobs

by Jim Hightower

In CorporateSpeak, there are no "job cuts." Instead, firings are blandly referred to as "employment adjustments."

Now, though, corporate word-smiths will need a whole new thesaurus of euphemisms, for masses of job cuts are coming for employees in the higher echelons of the corporate structure. Don't look now, but an

unanticipated result of the ongoing pandemic is that it has given cover for CEOs to speed up the adoption of highly-advanced RPAs (Robotic Process Automation) to replace employees once assumed to be immune from displacement. As one analyst told a *New York Times* reporter, "With RPA you can build a bot that costs \$10,000 a year and take out two to four humans."

Prior to the COVID crisis, many

top executives feared a public backlash if they pushed automation too far too fast. But, ironically, the economic collapse caused by the pandemic has so discombobulated the workplace and diverted public attention that corporate bosses have been emboldened to rush ahead. While the nationwide shut-down of offices and furloughing of employees has caused misery for millions, one happy purveyor of RPA systems notes that it has "massively raised awareness among executives about

the variety of work that no longer requires human involvement." He cheerfully declares: "We think any business process can be automated," advising corporate bosses that half to two-thirds of all the tasks being done at their companies can be done by machines.

Conventional corporate wisdom blithely preaches that all new technologies create more jobs than they kill, but even those pollyannish preachers are now conceding that this robotic automation of

white-collar jobs is being imposed so suddenly, widely, and stealthily that losses will crush any gains. "We haven't hit the exponential point of this stuff yet," warns an alarmed analyst. "And when we do, it's going to be dramatic."

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

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

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

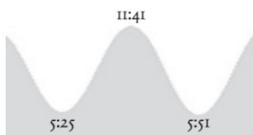
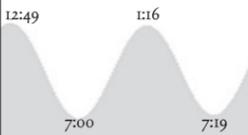
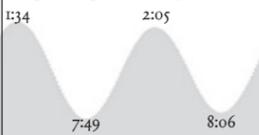
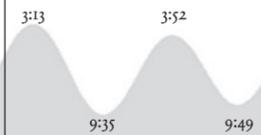
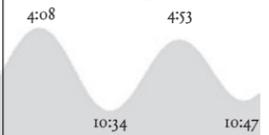
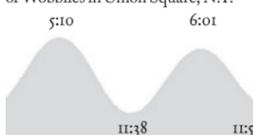
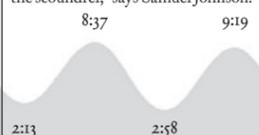
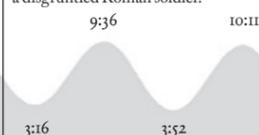
drags about seventeen billion gallons of seawater — enough to fill 2,125,000 tanker trucks — up the river and into Great Bay. This creates a roving hydraulic conflict, as incoming sea and the outgoing river collide. The skirmish line

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

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

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

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 28	MONDAY, MARCH 29	TUESDAY, MARCH 30	WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31	THURSDAY, APRIL 1	FRIDAY, APRIL 2	SATURDAY, APRIL 3
<p>2007—Phyllis Schlafly explains to Bates students that a married woman "has consented to sex, and I don't think you can call it rape." 2003—Two U.S.A.F. A-10 "Wart-hogs" mistakenly strafe British tanks in Iraq. One soldier is KIA. 2003—"The enemy we're fighting [in Iraq]," General William S. Wallace admits, "is different from the one we'd war-gamed against." 1979—After a stuck valve dumps too much coolant, an emergency cooling system kicks in, but it's overridden by operators who fail to see a hidden indicator light. The nuclear reactor core at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania partially melts, releasing 43K curies. 1967—The RAF bombs the <i>Torrey Canyon</i> to mitigate an oil spill in the Channel; mostly they miss. 1920—On Palm Sunday, 38 tornadoes in eight states kill 380 people. 1904—Western Miners Federation president Charlie Moyer is arrested in Colorado for flag desecration. He's so ticked he helps found the IWW. 1884—A mob in Cincinnati tries to lynch a white murderer. Thwarted, the mob grows to 10,000. Gunbattles rage. Order is restored by the State Militia: 56 dead and 300 wounded. 1757—"The day will be hard," says Robert-François Damiens as he's hauled from his cell. For trying to kill Louis XV, his arms and legs are pulled off by horses. His still-living torso is then burned at the stake.</p>	<p>2003—<i>Newsweek</i> publishes a poll saying 74 percent of Americans think the Bush administration has "a well thought-out military plan." 1995—Rep. Dan Burton [R-Ind.] says the U.S. "should place an aircraft carrier off the coast of [land-locked] Bolivia and crop dust the coca fields." 1973—Army Master Sergeant Max Beilke becomes the last U.S. combat soldier to leave Vietnam. He will die at the Pentagon, a civilian, on 9/11/01. 1972—Anticipating a \$100,000 "contribution" to the Nixon re-election campaign, the EPA lays off enforcement of a lead smelter in Idaho. 1971—A court martial for 22 murders makes Lt. W. Calley the scapegoat for My Lai; he gets "life in prison," does three years home confinement. 1960—For reasons which are unfathomable, France launches a nuclear sub. 1956—Mississippi creates a State Sovereignty Commission. Its \$250K/yr. budget buys PR, then surreptitious surveillance of civil rights groups. 1929—Abdulaziz ibn Abdul Rahman Al Saud's army defeats Ikhwan rebels at Sabilla, demonstrating the obsolescence of camel-mounted cavalry and the efficacy of machine guns. 1849—In Richmond, Va., friends nail Henry Brown, an enslaved Black man, into a box. Shipped as freight to Philadelphia, he's free 27 hours later. 1843—As the Cabinet meets, War Sec. Spencer lunges at Navy Sec. Upshur, but Pres. Tyler stops the fight.</p>	<p>2008—As he throws out the first pitch at Washington's new National Park, George W.[MD] Bush is met with a resounding chorus of boos. 2003—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announces "we know where" Iraq's WMDs are: "the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south, and north somewhat." 2003—During a live Fox "News" broadcast from Iraq, Geraldo Rivera reveals the 101st Airborne's current location, where they're going to attack next, and when. 2000—Fred Trump III, whose son is chronically ill and needs special care, learns his family's health care is being terminated by his uncle Donald. 1981—John Hinckley Jr. empties a six-shooter at Pres. Ronald Reagan. A ricochet off the armored limo hits Ronnie. Al Haig announces he's "in control here." In Denver, John's older brother cancels dinner with V.P. George H.[H.J.W. Bush's son Neil. 1972—Hanoi's Easter Offensive sends 200,000 PAVN soldiers across the DMZ; the mightiest attack since China crossed the Yalu. 1965—A Viet Cong car bomb explodes outside the U.S. Embassy in Saigon killing 22 and injuring 183. 1964—Senators (18 Democrats and one Republican) begin a 74-day filibuster of the Civil Rights Act. 1870—The 15th Amendment passes, giving the right to vote to all, regardless of race. All males, that is.</p>	<p>2016—Darcie Rae Hall, 36, of Troy, N.H., is arrested in Keene for selling "Donald Trump" brand heroin. 2004—Four American contractors are ambushed and killed in Fallujah, their bodies displayed from a bridge. 1980—The American banking industry is deregulated with bipartisan support. What could possibly go wrong? 1969—By his orders, the body of Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower is carried by baggage car, like any other G.I., to its final resting place in Abilene, Kan. 1968—LBJ says he won't run for re-election. Millions rejoice, having no inkling of who will replace him. 1966—In New York City, 200,000 gather to protest the Vietnam War. 1960—A B-47 explodes over Little Rock, Ark. Three on board die, and two on the ground; two homes and an apartment building burn. 1959—John Birch Society head Robert Welch, author of a book calling Pres. Eisenhower "a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy," denies he ever called Ike a "Card-Carrying Communist." 1950—The U.S. Gov't. burns copies of the <i>Scientific American</i> because they carry an article about the A-bomb. 1929—PR pioneer Edward Bernays, working for the American Tobacco Co., pays women to publicly smoke Luckies in New York's Easter Parade. 1854—Commodore Perry's cannons persuade Japan's Tokugawa shogunate to open two ports to foreign trade.</p>	<p>2013—In Portsmouth Harbor, the tanker <i>Harbour Feature</i> allides with the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge. 2004—Britain declassifies "Blue Peacock," a 1957 plan to bury nukes in Germany with live chickens keeping the electronics warm. It's not a joke. 2003—Bush administration propagandists claim Special Forces have "rescued" PFC Jessica Lynch. It's a lie. 1997—A blizzard dumps 18 inches of snow on Portsmouth. 1994—Steve Bannon, accompanied by federal marshals, arrives via limo to manage Biosphere 2, an ecological experiment in the Arizona desert. A break-in, lawsuits, and failure ensue. 1974—Sitka residents are alarmed by smoke rising from Mount Edgecumbe, a nearby volcano thought to be dormant. No eruption, just "Porky" Bickar having fun with burning tires. 1971—Texas legislators honor Albert de Salvo for "unconventional techniques involving population control." 1966—RIP Brian O'Nolan, aka Flann O'Brien, aka Myles na gCopaleen. 1957—The BBC reports that Swiss farmers are struggling to cope with "an exceptionally heavy spaghetti crop." 1920—Five New York legislators are expelled for being socialists. 1865—Gov. John Milton [D-Fla.], a descendant of the poet, shoots himself in the head because, "Death would be preferable to reunion." 1671—A blizzard leaves six-foot drifts of snow in Portsmouth.</p>	<p>2014—In <i>McCutcheon v. FEC</i>, the Supreme Court rules that rich folks deserve to have more influence in elections than the unwashed proletariat. 1982—U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Jeane Kirkpatrick dines at the Argentine embassy hours after Argentina invades the Falklands. 1970—Massachusetts passes a law stating its citizens may not be forced to fight an undeclared war. 1969—President Dwight D. Eisenhower is buried in an \$80 G.I. coffin. 1969—Chicago riots are quelled by National Guard troops. 1963—Martin Luther King, Jr. leads a voter registration drive in Birmingham. Police Chief "Bull" Connor responds with dogs and fire hoses. 1958—San Francisco columnist Herb Caen introduces his readers and the world to the term "beatnik." 1942—Three soldiers, two black and one white, are shot to death, and five are wounded, near Ft. Dix, N.J., in a fight over use of a payphone. 1937—Workers at Hershey start a sit-down strike. For six days, it goes well. 1917—In his office, Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge (R-Mass.), 67, punches constituent Alexander Bannwart. 1865—In Richmond, Confederate troops burn the city to the ground as President Jefferson Davis flees. 1863—In Richmond, women riot in the streets over bread until dispersed at bayonet point by troops directed by President Jefferson Davis.</p>	<p>2014—Sen. Jerry Moran [R-Kan.], whose top contributor is Koch Industries, reads into the <i>Congressional Record</i> a <i>Wall Street Journal</i> op-ed in which Charles Koch defends his right to spend millions buying elections. 2004—Asked to name his biggest mistake, George W.[MD] Bush is unable to supply an answer. 2003—U.S. Marines cross the Tigris River on their way to Baghdad. 1996—Ted "Unabomber" Kaczynski is arrested in his Montana cabin. 1974—Hit by 148 tornadoes, 13 states lose 315 people; 5,484 are injured. 1973—The first mobile phone call is made, on a 2.4 lb. device, by a Motorola employee to a rival at AT&T. 1968—"I may not get there with you," says Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. to Memphis sanitation workers and eternity, "But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!" 1967—Ron Jones' 10th graders in Palo Alto are introduced to new rules imposing strict classroom discipline. 1966—In South Vietnam, 3,000 troops protest against the Ky gov't. 1964—In a Cleveland speech, Malcolm X says, "1964 threatens to be the most explosive year America has ever witnessed." He's right, of course. 1954—In Wisconsin, a strike begins at the Kohler bathroom fixture factory. Six years later the workers win. 1936—Bruno Hauptmann gets the chair in the Lindbergh baby case.</p>
 <p>11:41 5:25 5:51</p>	 <p>12:05 12:28 6:13 6:35</p>	 <p>12:49 1:16 7:00 7:19</p>	 <p>1:34 2:05 7:49 8:06</p>	 <p>2:22 2:46 8:41 8:55</p>	 <p>3:13 3:52 9:35 9:49</p>	 <p>4:08 4:53 10:34 10:47</p>
SUNDAY, APRIL 4	MONDAY, APRIL 5	TUESDAY, APRIL 6	WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7	THURSDAY, APRIL 8	FRIDAY, APRIL 9	SATURDAY, APRIL 10
<p>1989—In her Porsche, reaching for her cellphone while speeding to the bank she owns, Wal-Mart heiress Alice Walton hits and kills Oleta Hardin, a 50 year-old Arkansas cannery worker. Walton is not charged. 1984—Congress nixes Contra funding. President Reagan sells arms to the Ayatollah to make up the difference. 1975—Operation Babylift begins with a C-5A flight out of Tan Son Nhut. It crashes into a nearby rice paddy killing 154, including 78 kids. 1972—His EPA having OK'd lead poisoning in Idaho, Nixon's reelection campaign duly collects its \$100K. 1970—On the National Mall, 50,000 followers of a radio evangelist hold a "March for Victory," protesting the Vietnamization of the Vietnam War. 1968—Martin Luther King, Jr. is murdered in Memphis, perhaps by James Earl Ray; if so, with help from others who are still unknown. 1967—In Palo Alto, Robert Jones' students adopt a cross-chest salute and form a movement, "The Third Wave." 1967—Martin Luther King, Jr. denounces the Vietnam War and calls for common cause between civil rights and antiwar movements. He is then denounced by 168 major newspapers. 1953—Busy CIA head Allen Dulles OKs plans to (a) knock over Iran's elected government, and (b) study controlling people's minds with drugs. 1914—Mounted cops attack 1,000s of Wobblies in Union Square, N.Y.</p>	<p>2014—Jack Kimball, ex-Chairman of N.H.'s GOP, calls upon Arizona's Sheriff Joe Arpaio to put President Obama "in an orange suit...and drag his butt out of that White House." 2010—W.Va.'s non-union Upper Big Branch coal mine explodes, killing 29 miners. After a year in prison, its owner, Don Blankenship, will run for the U.S. Senate as a Republican. 2006—Texans in Waco boo Bill Nye the science guy for saying the Bible's wrong to say the Moon emits light. 1995—Sen. Bob Smith [R-N.H.] presciently asks, "How do you stop an elephant if it goes berserk on the grounds of the Capitol?" Alas, his motion to ban pachyderms is defeated. 1967—In Palo Alto, as Robert Jones' students embrace the Third Wave movement, others clamor to join. 1962—LBJ cronny Billy Sol Estes is indicted for selling fake mortgages on fake fertilizer tanks. 1956—A hired thug throws acid and blinds Victor Riesel, New York newspaper columnist and crusader against labor racketeers. 1955—The Farmers Home Administration announces it will issue mortgages on home bomb shelters. 1952—H. Hughes briefly shuts down MGM—all 11 movies in production are scripted by suspected commies. 1943—The U.S. destroyer <i>O'Bannon</i> defeats the Japanese sub <i>Ro-34</i> in close battle, partly by pelting its deck gunners with spuds.</p>	<p>2016—For each of the 29 miners killed in his death trap, coal mine owner Don Blankenship is sentenced to serve 12.5 days in jail. 2009—A year before it blows up, BP's Deepwater Horizon gets relief from oppressive federal over-regulation. 1992—Donald E. Harding gasps, moans, and makes obscene hand gestures for five minutes before dying in Arizona's gas chamber. 1977—"If the president does it," Richard Nixon tells David Frost, "that means it's not illegal." 1968—Oakland police shoot it out with the Black Panthers. Bobby Hut-ton, 18 and unarmed, dies. 1967—Knocked onboard three miles off North Vietnam, U.S. sailor Doug Hegdahl is saved by fishermen. Two years later he's set free, with memorized details of 256 POWs. 1967—In Palo Alto, Robert Jones announces a Third Wave Presidential candidate will speak the next day. 1954—"The time has come," says JFK, "for the American people to be told the truth about Vietnam." 1917—Former peace candidate W. Wilson declares war on Germany. 1909—Matthew Henson, black share-cropper's son, is the first non-Inuit to set foot on the North Pole. Admiral Peary stays in the sled but later takes credit. 1712—Twenty-three enslaved Africans revolt in New York, killing nine whites and injuring six others; 21 are convicted and hanged.</p>	<p>2013—A new heel is inducted into the professional wrestling Hall of Fame: bankrupt blowhard Donald J. Trump. 2003—U.S. troops take Baghdad. It is a great victory. 1990—Once and future Bush appointee John Poindexter is found guilty of multiple Iran/Contra felonies; he later wriggles out on appeal. 1972—"Nam vet Richard McCoy, Jr. hijacks a 727 with a toy grenade and an empty pistol, then parachutes out the back with \$500K. A National Guard chopper pilot, McCoy is arrested days later while searching for himself. 1970—California's Governor Reagan announces a nuanced position regarding student demonstrations: "If it takes a bloodbath, let's get it over with." 1967—In Palo Alto, Robert Jones tells his students that they've been part of an experiment in fascism, then screens a documentary about Nazis. 1966—The U.S. discovers an H-bomb it had lost off the coast of Spain. 1954—In a news conference, like-able 'I'ke erroneously characterizes Southeast Asia as a row of dominos. 1926—In Rome, Violet Gibson, 49, the tiny, frail, and deranged daughter of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, shoots Mussolini in the face. 1860—Challenged by Rep. Roger Pryor [D-Va.], Rep. John F. Potter [R-Wisc.], proposes dueling with bowie knives; Pryor's seconds decline. 1775—"Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel," says Samuel Johnson.</p>	<p>2018—Fox "News" accidentally broadcasts a graphic showing results of a poll: Fox is the least-trusted network. 1984—R. Nixon gripes, "It's the media's responsibility to examine the President with a microscope...but when they use a proctoscope, it's going too far." 1974—Hank Aaron breaks Ruth's homer record; death threats ensue. 1956—USMC recruits are marched into a Parris Island swamp for disciplinary purposes. Six of them drown. 1952—With the steel industry adamantly opposing wage increases, Truman orders its nationalization. 1947—Frederick von Hayek, Ludwig von Mises, Milton Friedman, <i>et al.</i> issue a manifesto at Mont Pelerin; it disguises their neo-feudal intent. 1947—After 18 days of excavation, Langley Collyer is found dead in his junk-crammed Harlem townhouse. 1945—Allied planes hit a German ammo train next to a train full of prisoners going to Bergen-Belsen; 100s of survivors are shot trying to escape. 1917—At the U.S. Embassy in Bern, future CIA head Allen Dulles gets a call from I.V. Lenin, begging for an immediate meeting. Dulles, who has a date with buxom Swedish twins, puts him off. Lenin boards a train to Petrograd and starts a Revolution. 1885—U.S. troops invade Panama, "to defend our national interests." 217—As he pisses against a wall, Emperor Caracalla is stabbed to death by a disgruntled Roman soldier.</p>	<p>2018—Other networks report that the FBI raided the office of President Trump's lawyer; Fox reports that pandas—a non-native species, let's recall—are aggressive and sex-crazed. 2006—"Scooter" Libby says "W" OK'd leaks of secret CIA intel. 1967—"We appeal to North Vietnam," says a veteran-bought ad in the <i>N.Y. Times</i>, "if they really want peace, to stop bombing the United States—or else get the hell out of Vietnam!" 1961—The two top planners of the Bay of Pigs invasion, now eight days off, tell their boss Dick Bissell that it is bound to fail. He says do it anyway. 1927—In Massachusetts, death sentences issued against Nicolas Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti are upheld. Judge Webster Thayer, during their trial, called them "anarchist bastards." 1923—The Supreme Court says a minimum wage would violate women's rights to negotiate their own terms with employers. Yes, you read that right, the Court just decided it wrong. 1892—In a Wyoming cabin under fire from 22 "Regulators" hired by cattle barons, Nate Champion writes to friends between killing four attackers. Cabin torched, he comes out shooting and dies with 28 slugs in him. 1865—Gen. Robert E. Lee surrenders his Army to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse. 1553—Rabelais dies, leaving this will: "I have nothing. I owe much. I leave the rest to the poor."</p>	<p>2018—Goldman Sachs warns clients of a downside to gene therapy: there is no cash flow from a cured patient. 2017—The State Street Saloon burns. 2005—Huge mobs of Iraqis mark the 2nd anniversary of Saddam Hussein's fall, shouting "No, No to Satan!" and demanding that U.S. troops leave. 1972—Crooked financier Robert Vesco slips \$200,000 to Nixon's re-election campaign; Attorney General John Mitchell cuts him slack. 1970—Dick "Dick" Nixon's lawyers backdate a deed giving his papers to the National Archives so he can claim an illegal tax deduction. 1963—Lee Harvey Oswald takes a shot at U.S. Army General Edwin Walker because he's leader of a "fascist organization." He was not wrong. 1963—The <i>U.S.S. Thresher</i> implodes 220 miles east of Boston killing 16 officers, 96 sailors, and 17 civilians. 1947—Actors Guild head Ronald Reagan rats out members to HUAC. 1945—Doctors at Oak Ridge inject Ebb Cade, a Black car wreck victim, with plutonium to see what happens. 1928—Illinois holds the "Pineapple Primary," named for the 62 bombings which preceded the balloting. 1919—Deceived by a colonel being blackmailed by a general, Emiliano Zapata is ambushed. His killers are cheated of half their bounty. 1865—Rioters in Portsmouth destroy the office of Joshua Foster's Copperhead newspaper <i>The States and Union</i>.</p>
 <p>5:10 6:01 11:38 11:53</p>	 <p>6:19 7:12 12:47</p>	 <p>7:30 8:19 1:04 1:55</p>	 <p>8:37 9:19 2:13 2:58</p>	 <p>9:36 10:11 3:16 3:52</p>	 <p>10:29 10:56 4:10 4:40</p>	 <p>11:15 11:37 4:58 5:21</p>

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