

The Fortnightly Rant

Sleepwalking Into Fascism

Another fortnight, another resounding “Thunk,” as Uncle Sam’s top-hatted noggin slams into yet another landing during his violent and interminable descent down the endless staircase leading to democracy’s crypt.

Did he fall? Or was he pushed?

Oh, please. We are the nation’s last living exemplar of a truly free press. Do not expect us to mimic our corporate competition by pretending to be even stupider than we actually are.

Following the incoherent barking of their malevolent leader, the members of Cult #45 have volunteered enough of their warm if not necessarily sapient bodies to give the Covid-19 virus the opportunity to develop a new mutation which has made it hyper-contagious and better able to evade our vaccines. As a result, our hospitals and health care workers, already pushed to their limits, may now look forward to a winter which promises only to get worse.

Due to the iron Law of Irony, the areas of the country which will suffer the most will be those where the Cult is strongest. Status used to be hard to get. It was largely obtained by accruing wealth. Now, in red states, status can be acquired by anyone, simply by refusing vaccines and masks.

One would like to think that Darwinism would eventually, if brutally, bring this episode—perhaps the greatest mass murder/suicide in human history—to a close. To quote Saint Ronald, “If it takes a blood-bath, let’s get it over with.”

If only it were that simple. The nation’s sharpest and most amoral political minds—which invariably sign on to the team with a winning track record—are using all their exquisite skills to assure that that

dwindling minority will continue to rule until climate change becomes so disruptive as to induce overall societal chaos, thus rendering our form of government moot.

We are humans, though. As Faulkner loved to remind us, somehow we will endure...for better or worse. The question is, how much will we have to endure? The answer seems to be, a lot.

Just last week a storm system stretching from Toronto to Houston spawned colossal tornadoes which erased a number of towns in Kentucky. On Wednesday, hurricane-force winds were predicted across the Plains states. In Oymyakon, in Siberia, where it’s -76° F—the coldest inhabited place on Earth—“zombie” peat fires now burn all year ‘round.

By now, everyone still capable of absorbing information understands the climatic changes which led up to these events. More recent environmental news makes it plain that, like old age, the future is not for sissies.

MIT reported troubling news Tuesday about the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Current [AMOC—the local stretch of which is called the Gulf Stream. We’ve long known that AMOC was susceptible to a “tipping point,” i.e., that certain climatic conditions could possibly cause that vital global current to dramatically slow or stop. Now scientists have found that their existing models of AMOC have been flawed by “a bias toward stability.” In other words, they have underestimated the chances that it might slow down or stop.

A recent study concluded the system could also be vulnerable to a lesser-known phenomenon: the rate-induced tipping point. If AMOC’s rate of flow changes too quickly, “one of the most important



forces in the planet’s climate system” could shut itself off.

Now, one last bit of environmental news before we return to the mire of politics.

The *Washington Post* reported Monday that the ice shelf where the Thwaites Glacier meets the Antarctic Sea “could shatter within the next three to five years.” Scientists are concerned, to employ an industrial-strength euphemism, because “when the shelf fails, the eastern third of Thwaites Glacier will triple in speed, spitting formerly landlocked ice into the sea. Total collapse of Thwaites could result in several feet of sea level rise, scientists say, endangering millions of people in coastal areas.”

Mankind has faced innumerable challenges since the day when our ancestors dropped from the trees and began exploring the great savannah. Of course, they did have one advantage: they had no idea what

they were up against. We’ve got a rough idea what’s coming, so we not only have to face it, we’re doomed to worry about it beforehand.

Worst of all, while most of us have a pretty good idea what needs to be done to reduce our future suffering, those who are in positions of power seem to be determined to do the wrong things.

If it were still just us folks, sitting around a fire, with wolves and worse howling off in the dark, we’d likely know exactly what to do: gang up on the troublemaker, beat the living crap out of him—because of course it would be a him—and send him off into the dark.

Now we’re civilized, and there are too many of us for that to work. And there’s one other problem.

Here’s an example of that problem in action: on Monday, the *New York Times* compared emails sent by the Democratic and Republican parties. Bowing to their self-pro-

claimed God of Objectivity, they jammed the issue into a “both sides do it” frame.

“Both parties delivered heaps of hyperbole in their emails,” readers were informed. “One Republican, for instance, declared that Democrats want to establish a ‘one-party socialist state,’ while a Democrat suggested that the party’s Jan. 6 inquiry was at imminent risk because the G.O.P. ‘could force the whole investigation to end early.’”

As writer Kaili Joy Gray tweeted, “Wait. How are these equivalent in any way? One is a lie and one is true.”

Now for the bad news. Due to its insidious nature, the Omicron variant is expected to sweep into this area like [insert historical precedent of choice]. That *could* render our current *modus operandi* inadvisable. If you don’t see us in the usual places—your own mailbox included—look for us at www.nhgazette.com.

Like Father, Like Son: A Tale of Two Sununu

by Richard T. DiPentima, BA, BSN, MPH

It may be a unique historical record: a father and a son, both elected Governor in the same state 36 years apart, holding office as global pandemics affect their state. As if to guarantee that distinction, both used the pandemic they were responsible for controlling to further their personal political ambitions. Too improbable for fiction, but true in the case of Governors John H. Sununu and Chris Sununu.

I observed—and participated—from a front row seat as the first Governor Sununu used the AIDS pandemic for his political gain at the expense of public health. To now witness his son Chris Sununu using the Covid-19 pandemic for his political gain at the expense of the public health, is simply surreal.

Allow me to walk you through this history, and compare these sad

events. In 1987, I was Assistant Director of Public Health for the New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services. I was in charge of the Office of Disease Prevention and Control, which was responsible for the bureaus of Environmental Health, Public Health Laboratories, and Communicable Disease Control.

The AIDS Pandemic, which was first recognized in 1981, was raging worldwide, and had hit New Hampshire by 1985. The Bureau of Communicable Disease Control was responsible for managing the AIDS response in New Hampshire. By 1996 there was a blood test to determine if an individual was infected with HIV, the virus that caused AIDS. The Public Health Laboratory was responsible for performing this new blood test. In

both situations, the effort to control AIDS and test for the virus had to be accomplished with no additional state funding, and federal funding was not yet available. Fortunately, at the beginning of the AIDS pandemic in N.H. our cases were low.

“...the first Governor Sununu used the AIDS pandemic for his political gain at the expense of public health. To now witness his son Chris Sununu using the Covid-19 pandemic for his political gain at the expense of the public health, is simply surreal.”

But, as the virus spread to more gay men, hemophiliacs, and injecting drug users, the number of cases began to rise quickly. From a public health perspective, our only available tools were education regarding how the disease was spread and not

spread, and targeted HIV testing once it was available. There was, and there is still, no AIDS vaccine, and antiviral drugs to control HIV were not yet available in the early days of the pandemic.

In an effort to expand our AIDS prevention and testing program, the Division of Public Health Services requested legislation that would provide the necessary funding to address this quickly expanding crisis. The legislation was drafted with our assistance and filed in January 1987. There was bipartisan support for the legislation, even with its \$300,000 price tag. The bill was moving quickly through the committees and appeared headed for passage and the Governor’s signature, until politics and Governor John Sununu blunted that optimism.

Without the knowledge of the

Director of Public Health, and without any input from public health personnel, the Governor called a press conference on April 7th to discuss the AIDS legislation. We had no idea what the Governor had in mind and why he was calling a press conference on the legislation.

The Governor, flanked by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, all Republicans, made an astonishing announcement. He stated that he was going to have the legislation amended to require that all couples seeking a marriage licence would be mandated to have HIV tests, and would veto any legislation without such a mandate. This mandate was similar to one that had, in previous decades, in New Hamp-

A Tale of Two Sununus

from page one

shire and most other states, required testing for syphilis before marriage.

At the time, no state had such a mandate. Sununu wanted New Hampshire to be first in the nation.

The Governor's actions created a firestorm of opposition from many, to say the least, but was supported by many Republicans. The public health and medical community responded that such a mandate was a waste of precious resources, and would not prevent AIDS. What's more, testing such a low risk population would result in a high number of false positive results, causing great emotional and personal harm to many individuals.

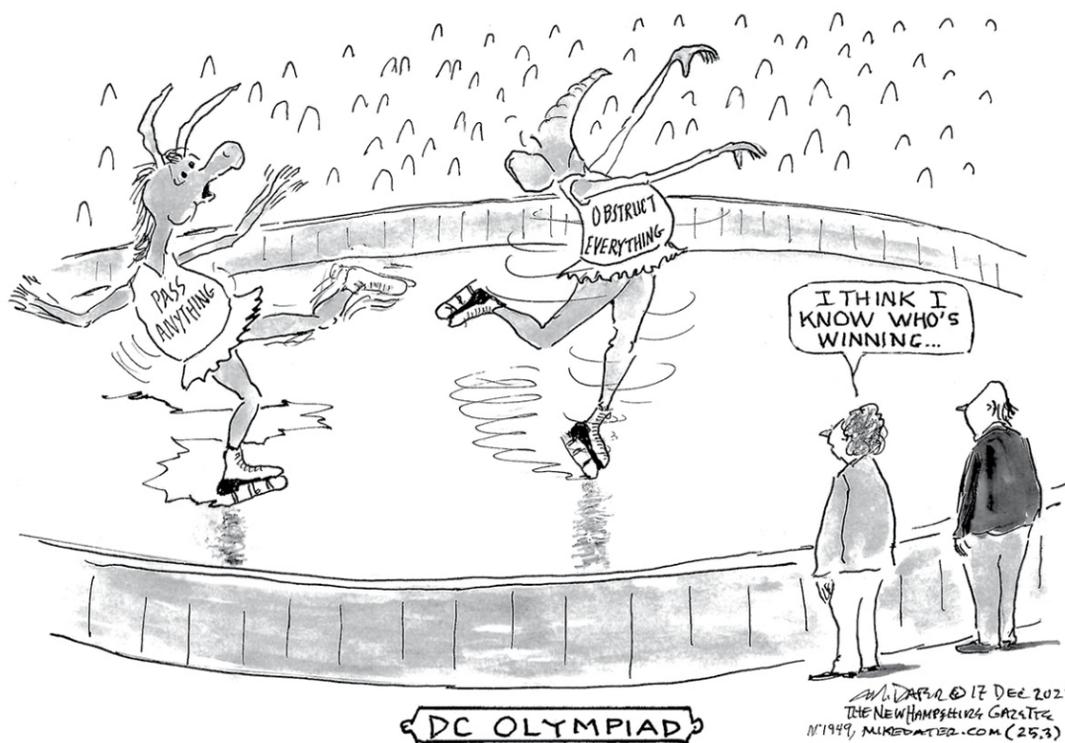
The Governor's amendment did not provide additional funding to perform the thousands of tests each year, thus it would take needed funds away from the important AIDS prevention programs, as well as overwhelm an already over stressed public health laboratory.

All efforts to convince the Gov-

ernor that his premarital testing amendment would be harmful, expensive, and counterproductive in terms of public health failed. In the end, the Legislature refused to pass his amendment, but as a result the entire AIDS Prevention legislation died.

It would be another full year before an AIDS prevention bill was passed, one without a premarital HIV testing mandate. An entire year without a comprehensive AIDS prevention program for New Hampshire resulted in an unknown number of preventable HIV infections and AIDS cases.

To fully understand Sununu's Premarital HIV testing initiative, it is necessary to understand its political context. George H.W. Bush was running for President. His campaign was not doing well. Governor Sununu was Bush's campaign chairman in New Hampshire—the state with the first primary election. If Bush won New Hampshire and became President, Sununu would be rewarded with a high political appointment.



Other flags in the area recently flew at half staff for the late Senator Bob Dole, but this one... well, as you see... This photo was actually taken two days before Dole died, but it was in the same condition—only wetter—last Saturday. We know, then, that for more than a week, the Thomas J. McIntyre Federal Building has had a U.S. flag ignominiously dangling from a single grommet. The Flag Police would be less perplexed if they knew exactly whom to cite. The General Services Administration? The National Park Service? Redgate/Kane? SoBow Square? The City Council?

The Governor's proposed HIV premarital testing initiative clearly had more to do with politics than public health. If Sununu could make New Hampshire the first state to require premarital HIV testing—a policy very popular among conservative Republicans—his political status would be enhanced.

At his April 7th press conference, "Veteran State House reporter Don Tibbetts, of the *Manchester Union Leader*, asked, with due respect for the state's three foremost political leaders, where were the medical people who supported or requested this measure. Governor Sununu simply repeated his claim that AIDS was not a medical issue."

In the end, George H.W. Bush won the New Hampshire Primary, became President, and made Governor John Sununu his Chief of Staff.

Four states went on to prove that premarital HIV testing was not an effective AIDS prevention policy. Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri, and Texas passed laws requiring premarital HIV testing. They all were repealed shortly thereafter because they were shown to be very ineffective com-

pared to targeted testing of high-risk populations—exactly the reason we advised against such legislation in 1987. (Connecticut Office of Legislative Research Report 98-R-0995, October 14, 2003.)

"Veteran State House reporter Don Tibbetts, of the *Manchester Union Leader*, asked, with due respect for the state's three foremost political leaders, where were the medical people who supported or requested this measure. Governor Sununu simply repeated his claim that AIDS was not a medical issue."

Fast forward to 2020: another Sununu is Governor of New Hampshire and the Covid-19 Pandemic is raging, across the globe and here in New Hampshire. As the pandemic continued to grow, the only available tools to control it were social distancing, face coverings, case isolation, contact quarantine, restrictions on group gatherings, &c. There would not be a safe and effective vaccine until January 2021.

In response to the pandemic, Governor Chris Sununu, son of the former Governor John Sununu,

issued an emergency order that limited certain activities. He also reluctantly issued a state-wide mask mandate, after much debate and criticism from anti-mask politicians and members of the public. New Hampshire was the last state in New England to issue a mask mandate, even though we had more cases than other states.

In New Hampshire, as across the nation, the Covid-19 pandemic became more of a political issue than one of public health. Politicians, news outlets, and social media spread and continue to spread all manner of false information about Covid-19, the effectiveness of masks, the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines—even calling the whole pandemic a hoax. Here in New Hampshire our legislature, which is controlled by Republicans in both chambers, takes action that will slow and even prevent certain public health actions. The legislature passed a bill that prohibits any government entity or quasi-governmental entity from requiring individuals to be vaccinated against Covid-19. Chris Sununu signed this

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legislation stating that he opposes mandates. For the same reason, Sununu has joined other Republican controlled states in two lawsuits that argue that the Covid-19 vaccination mandates issued by President Biden are unconstitutional.

It should be noted that Sununu also signed legislation the same year mandating that women seeking an abortion must undergo a transvaginal ultrasound exam, which in most cases was not medically indicated or needed. While any Covid-19 vaccine mandated by the federal government would be free, the women would be required to pay for these unwanted and unnecessary exams.

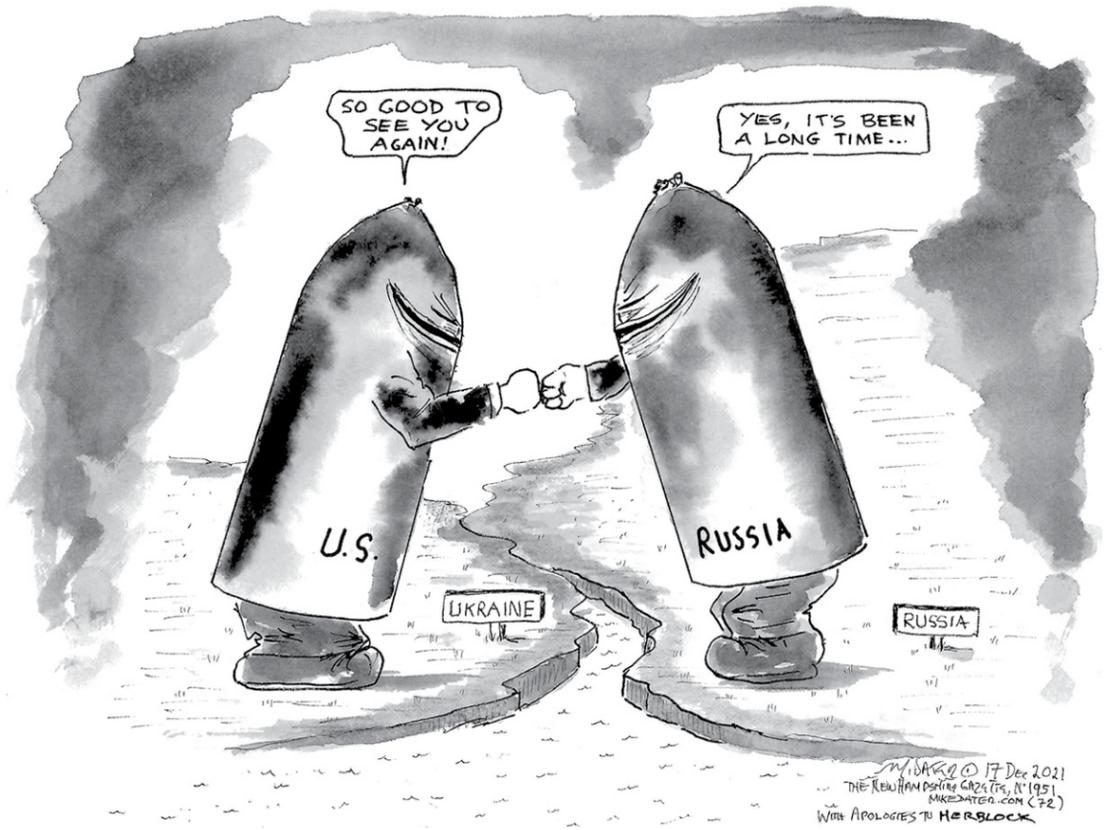
Once again, as in 1987, to appreciate the reasoning behind Governor Chris Sununu's decisions regarding his anti vaccine mandate stance, his very public announcements regarding joining the two anti-vaccine mandate lawsuits, and his reluctance to issue mask mandates, we need to understand the political context in which these actions took place.

While it is somewhat surprising that Sununu has decided not to run

for Senate in 2022, he will be running for a fourth term as Governor and he is young enough to consider higher office in the future, as he is considered a rising star in Republican politics, as witnessed by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell [R-Ky.] heavily recruiting him to run for the Senate. He may be holding out for a possible Vice Presidential selection or even a Presidential run in 2024 or later.

In any case, his political future is highly dependent on his winning reelection as Governor. As such, taking a strong anti-vaccine and mask mandate stance now is very popular among New Hampshire Republicans and will still help him in his reelection campaign. It is also very popular among large Republican financial donors, many of whom are anti-government vaccination and other government mandates.

At the time of this writing, the pandemic is soaring in New Hampshire. Our case numbers are higher than at any time since the start of the pandemic. The state has the highest case rate in the nation.



It was grim out there: cold, overcast, and raining hard at times. Oh, yes—and the plague remains unabated, too. Despite the inclement conditions, however, and the additional disincentive of an historic public health crisis, Americans reported to carry out their civic duty. We refer, of course, to spending. Voting is becoming increasing irrelevant. A few more cycles and only cranks will bother. Democracies may come and go, but markets are forever. So, too, is the American appetite for stuff. More stuff, new stuff, even better stuff, perhaps. It's what one might call an evergreen trait.

Chris Sununu is taking no politically risky steps, like issuing an emergency order or issuing a universal mask mandate. Just like his father before him, Chris Sununu's justification for his anti-vaccination and mask mandate position is not based on what is best for public health, but can only be explained based on politics and his political future.

If he has such a strong ideological opposition to government mandates that impinge on an individual's bodily integrity, why would he sign the transvaginal ultrasound mandate mentioned above? It has been shown that vaccine and mask mandates have already proven successful in reducing cases and severity of Covid-19 disease. Vaccination rates across the nation have grown by 20 percent since the mandates, while a transvaginal ultrasound mandate provides no public health benefits.

There is no public health justification for opposing mandates which leaves only political consideration.

If the Governor opposes the fed-

eral vaccination mandates based on Constitutional grounds, as expressed in the lawsuits, stating that it violates states rights, and believes that mandates should be done through state government, why would he sign legislation in 2021 that prohibits the state and any other government or quasi-governmental entity in N.H. from requiring Covid-19 vaccination in New Hampshire?

Again, the issue is not the mandates themselves, but the political opportunity provided by the mandates, either for or against.

The parallels between the two Governors Sununu, each facing an unprecedented public health crisis almost 40 years apart, is unique in history. Unfortunately, what is not at all unusual today is how politics, personal ambition, and the rejection of science can guide policies that are inconsistent with protecting public health at a time when they are most needed.

There is one interesting difference between Governor John Sununu's

HIV testing initiative, and Governor Chris Sununu's vaccine position: the former wanted a testing mandate, while the latter opposed any vaccine mandate.

This contradiction can be easily explained: the reasoning and rationale for both their positions were and remain guided by political considerations, not science or public health. They both exploited a tragedy for their own personal political interests, not the best interests of public health.

In that major respect the apple did not fall far from the tree.

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** New England Journal of Public Policy; Volume 4, Issue 1 (1988) Special Issue on AIDS; New Hampshire: The Premarital Testing Debacle, by Susan D. Epstein.*

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Murph's Fortnightly Quote
"I think of a hero as someone who understands the degree of responsibility that comes with his freedom."
 — Bob Dylan (1941-)

"None can love freedom heartily, but good men; the rest love not freedom, but licence."
 — John Milton
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 — Chapter heading from *On Tyranny*, by Tim Snyder
 — *Not-So-Random Thoughts from an Oregon Subscriber*

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Gun Totin' Gooftalls

To the Editor:

By now we've all seen the Massie Family's famous Christmas card and reacted with either mirthful delight or self-righteous disgust. Another shiny object tossed into the public arena to fuel the culture war and misdirect our attention.

Last week, lifelong Kentuckian and op-ed writer Berry Craig noted in *Peoples World* that politicians like Tom Massie, who came of age during the Vietnam War, would have ended up listed in the *New Hampshire Gazette's* Chickenhawk Database (a long-distance salute to Vietnam vet and *Gazette* publisher Steve Fowle).

According to Craig, Fowle's database was a compilation of "right-wing Republican pols and pundits who shared three qualities: bellicosity, public prominence, and a curious lack of wartime service."

Heads up Facebook, prepare to propagate a tidal wave of gun-toting copycats following Massie's jack-booted tribute to fantasy land.

If I may mimic Tucker Carlson for a moment, what we likely won't see are photoshops depicting prominent Republican politicians and their families splayed spread eagle on the ground, drenched in blood, their guns littering the political landscape around them.

Why is that?

Guess you'd have to ask GOP Representative and AOC slayer Paul Gosar. Apparently that honor is strictly reserved for uppity Democrats.

Rick Littlefield
Barrington, N.H.

Rick:

Thanks for this, comrade. We had no idea Peoples World knew we existed! Maybe Berry Craig's piece put the bee in Lee Bergman's bonnet.

The Editor

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Precious Lives

To the Editor:

I am part of that last endangered minority of victims—the ageing White North European Male of comfortable income and cheerfully secular education. It was great. I got promotions and raises just for showing up

and when I used my wife's credit card with her name on it the obliging shop "girl" would say only "yes Sir" and run the card.

Yeah, but.... After our second child was born (and I did work hard to make that happen) I got my vasectomy. Why? Respect for my wife's willingness to accept the traumas of childbirth—twice.

Today I support Fistula Foundation, an international non-profit organization dedicated to the repair of the gynecological injuries of childbirth. No one should be forced into childbirth against their will. I do not have much sympathy for anyone who is willing to have a body—not their own—torn apart to protect their religion. "Precious Lives" are already here. They are every woman you know.

Here is a simple and modest proposal: I'll call it the Woman's Protection Act: "The decision to start, continue, or end any pregnancy shall be the woman's, informed by such medical advice as she chooses and it shall be superior to any 3rd party claim."

A careful reader may note that this comes uncomfortably close to the state motto of New Hampshire—but that, of course, seems now only for men.

Larry Brown
Milton, N.H.

Larry:

There you go again—putting your principles into action, doing something for the benefit of others.... Will you never Get With The Program?

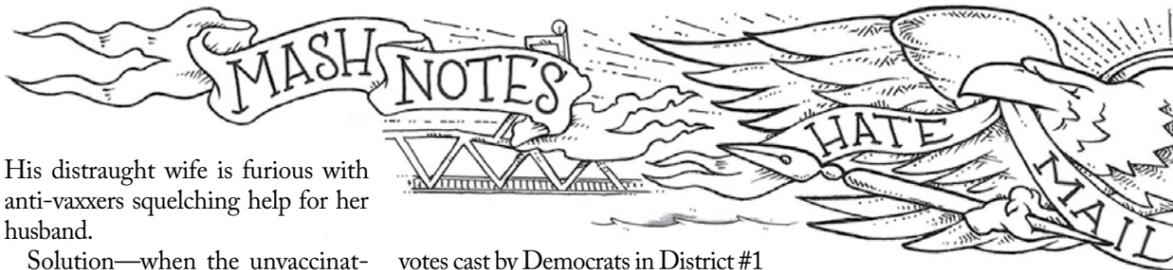
The Editor

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OK, Then—BE Independent

Dear Editor:

An acquaintance I'll call Pete was scheduled for heart surgery that was then delayed due to Covid-19 cases taking up his New Hampshire hospital's ICU beds. He received a new date. Did the night-before prep at home, went to his hospital, where staff did additional prep (washing, shaving, blood-draw). Waited 5 1/2 hours. Instead of being given the surgery he was sent home for another time, as yet unscheduled. No ICU beds would have been open for his post-surgical recovery, due to Covid-19 cases.



His distraught wife is furious with anti-vaxxers squelching help for her husband.

Solution—when the unvaccinated, who have disdained science, then show up at our hospitals for help, a thoughtfully-assembled supplies package should be given them for at-home care. To forgo vaccination against Covid-19's contagion and get it, then show up for our hospitals' staff's help, ignores the smart, old observation, "You don't change horses in the middle of the stream." They didn't want science's solution, so they shouldn't have science's help. They chose independence (they call it). Let them independently get themselves better. Period.

Lynn Rudmin Chong
Sanbornton, N.H.

Lynn:

In order to qualify as a good Republican these days you have to display what the lawyers call "depraved indifference" towards others.

The Editor

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Blatantly Patrisan Gerrymandering

Open Letter to Gov. Sununu:

Gerrymandering rigs elections to produce a desired result. The congressional district map crafted to produce a predictable outcome was approved in committee by the Republican majority, designed to fulfill the wishes of the Chair of the Republican State Committee, Stephen Stepanek, who infamously bragged on January 28th of this year: "Because of this [Republican majority] we control redistricting. I can stand here today and guarantee you that we will send a conservative Republican to Washington D.C. as a Congressperson in 2022." In announcing his support for rigging congressional elections, he knowingly and grossly undermines the political influence of Republican votes cast in District #2, representing one-half the state's population. Republican voters need be offended. As intended, the value of

votes cast by Democrats in District #1 is grossly diminished. This is not Democracy. This is election fraud. And its direct bias lasts for ten years.

I urge you to veto any district map that guarantees biased election results. Indeed, you publicly stated you would veto any map that doesn't first pass the "smell test." That's a subjective standard. You could decide that fair maps produce an objectionable odor. The congressional district map creates a profile of Pinocchio, who, with extended nose, has taken a whiff of this map and declared it unfit for passage into law. Gov. Sununu, follow Pinocchio's lead on this.

New Hampshire voters may decide next year whose sense of smell, integrity, and state leadership is preferred.

Bob Perry
Strafford, N.H.

Bob:

We don't have much hope that anything is going to dissuade the Governor or his party from their brazen power grab—but that's no reason not to raise all the hell we can about it.

In our view, the Republicans' disdain for just and equitable politics relieves Democrats—and Independents, and anarcho-syndicalists and antifa and whoever else—from nearly all restraints. Anything and everything not prohibited by the criminal code ought to be under consideration.

The Editor

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We're Backsliding

Dear Editor:

By now most Americans (and people around the globe) have learned that the United States (for the very first time) has been added to the list of "backsliding democracies" by the Stockholm-based International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. America has fallen victim to "authoritarian tendencies," the In-

stitute stated in its Global State of Democracy 2021 report. We have been "knocked down a significant number of steps on the democratic scale," a direct result of former President Donald Trump's baseless allegations of fraud in the 2020 elections and his efforts to pressure state election officials into changing vote totals and, lest we forget, the January 6th insurrection that evidence clearly shows, Donald Trump provoked and inflamed.

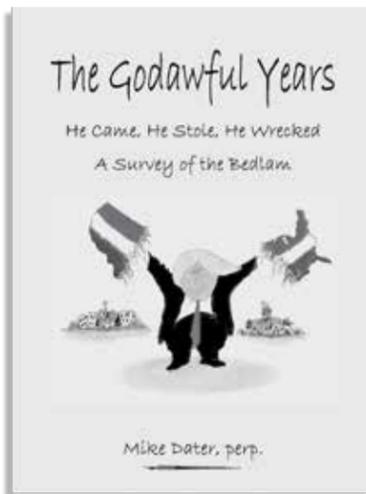
The report added there were "spillover effects" around the world, an "anti-democratic model followed by political actors in Brazil, Mexico, Myanmar and Peru," to name a few. It should come as no surprise that the destruction of our democracy will have a deleterious domino effect throughout the free world. Talk about giving "aid and comfort to the enemy," we've done this to ourselves, no help needed from foreign adversarial powers, the leaders of which are dancing in the streets while we suffer, struggle and bleed democracy with every passing day.

It is imperative, absolutely essential that our leaders immediately acknowledge and respond to the most direct and dangerous threat to our republic since WW II. If they don't, the loss of our independence, our sovereignty and our democracy, beyond a shadow of a doubt, will trigger worldwide repercussions and consequences.

Make no mistake, Americans can no longer trust or take anything for granted. Donald Trump (endorsed and aided by the Republican leadership and Party majority) has rendered a previously functional democratic government—impotent. Approximately two and a half centuries after declaring our independence we have finally witnessed an American citizen proving himself (thus far at least) im-

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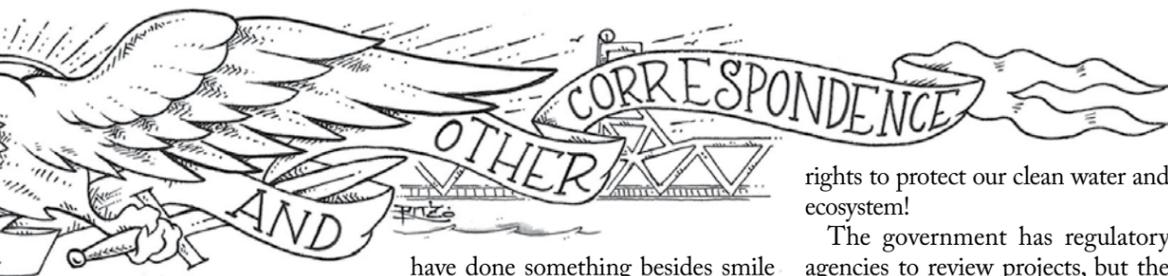
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Our grand experiment appears to be working. It may not seem like that big a deal, but in fact it's a revolution.
Now we're ready to add another town or two. Our candidates are Durham, Dover, Newmarket, and Rollinsford. The tricky thing here is that each town will require a team.
We need someone who drives regularly between one of those towns and Portsmouth, and someone in that town willing to distribute.
If you think you might be interested, please email us at editors (at) nhgazette.com
* Well, we're excited by it.

Rule by corporation is not democracy.



mune to and above the law. “Law and order” (as we conceived it) is essentially an illusion; “checks and balances, a figment of our collective imaginations; “representative government,” a pipe dream, and our Constitution, simply meaningless dialogue from a bygone era.

If we, the American people, cannot convince our leaders to honor and respect their oath, to put our nation’s well-being and prosperity above party politics and their own self-interest and do the jobs they were elected to do, right now this very day, then we aren’t going to have much of a country left worth defending and the American experiment, that countless numbers of men and women have sacrificed so much blood and treasure for, will be lost forever.

David L. Snell
Franklin, N.C.
David,
It’s good to see someone still upholding old fashioned civic virtue.
The Editor

Guns and Abortions

To the Editor:
Dems are so naive.
California Governor Gavin Newsom thinks he can adopt a Texas Abortion-style law for guns and the Supreme Court will have to allow it like they did the Texas law.
Supreme Right will just show him what Partisanship looks like.

These folks stood by when Obama nominee was held up because “late in term” and then said nothing when Trump got one more in as a bonus at the very end of his term.
Not sure they had anything to be afraid of in Merrick Garland (who, despite being a high-level judge, seemed content with his s__t sandwich. One expects a person of his stature could

have done something besides smile and say it tastes great.

Newsome’s a lawyer. He ought to know that not all crimes get prosecuted and not all lawbreakers get prosecuted for the all the crimes that they do.

People, not laws, decide who goes to jail or not.

I expect that every reasonable argument used to oppose the Texas abortion law will be used to declare a similar California gun law unconstitutional.

Because that’s what partisanship looks like.

Tom Laperriere
Rochester, N.H.
Tom:
As Lily Tomlin might say, we believe you’re almost cynical enough.
The Editor

Another Error Corrected

To the Editor:
Thursday, Sept. 11 column, last item: “1779—John Paul Jones takes the British ship *Serapis* as the *Bonhomme Richard* sinks under him.”

Nein—the *B.R.* did not sink until 1.5 days later and JPJ took command of the *S.*
J.K. Folmar I
California, Pa.
J.K.:
You are probably right as usual, but it’s a complex issue and we won’t be conceding today. Watch for our Volume 266, No. 26, to be published September 9, 2022.
The Editor

The 2nd Amendment & Community Rights

To the Editor:
The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution recognizes the right for well-regulated militias being necessary for the security of a free state, to protect our freedom and Bill of Rights. However, we have no recognized local

rights to protect our clean water and ecosystem!

The government has regulatory agencies to review projects, but the laws and permit process are written by the same corporate polluters that are supposed to be regulated so all they have to do is fill in the blanks. Who regulates the regulators? The same rich special interests who bribe our politicians with PAC money!

The New Hampshire Community Rights Network (info@community-rights.org) has assisted a dozen towns to pass local rights-based ordinances that protect the health and safety of people and the environment, so local folks can act to protect their town. We must amend the New Hampshire Constitution to make sure that every town has the right to act to protect their children and clean water!

Article 10 of the New Hampshire Constitution enumerates the Right of Revolution to reform the old, or establish a new government, when the existing government no longer acts in the best interests of We the People. If our Founders were here today they would be leading the way!

Peter A. White, Treasurer, NHCRN and Nottingham Water Alliance
Nottingham, N.H.

Peter:
You mean to tell us that you actually believe that communities ought to have more rights than soul-less corporations? What a coincidence—so do we!
The Editor

Flatlander Questions N.H.’s Legal Logic

Dear Editor:
Many of us here in Massachusetts wonder why you folks in New Hampshire, even though you live free or die, can still go to jail for smoking pot.
Rufus Meyerbeer
Boston, Mass.
Rufus,
It’s a pleasure to hear from you again. Your last letter, about two years ago, had a similarly philosophical bent to it. Will this

be a biennial tradition? Why not cut loose and make it biannual?

Your question is a good one. Allow us to give you the answer. This being, as you note, the “Live Free or Die™” state, our explanation of this seeming paradox carries as much legitimacy as anyone else’s, and thus may be taken as gospel.

The State of New Hampshire heightens the uncertainty of life for tens, possibly hundreds of thousands of people by criminalizing the consumption of a naturally-occurring herb. This uncertainty hones their awareness, thereby making them more alive.

As you see, it’s quite simple, really.
The Editor

When They Come for You

To the Editor:
While many fanatic Trump supporters come off as harmless rubes, a dangerous minority don’t fit that mold. Hang around a gun store or target range long enough and you’re likely to meet a few.

Case in point, at a recent meet, I stood behind a plump matronly middle-aged woman at the firing line who was checking out a new variant of the AR-15. I then watched in awe as she pulled it to her shoulder and emptied the clip at a small round metallic target 100 yards down range—ding, ding, gading—every round hitting home. Another onlooker nudged her husband and said, “Wow, you better be nice to her!”

In the event of an insurrection, we may have to be nice to her, along with her crack-shot husband and circle of like-minded friends. Friends who enthusiastically mix their love for shooting sports with a strong political agenda. Then, there are the decidedly unfriendly folks who pose an even greater threat to life and limb.

Yes Virginia, they’re out there, trained, practiced, skilled, exceptionally well-armed, and not likely to offer folks with a liberal lean much in the way of compromise should America’s culture war spill into the street. Some openly admit they can’t wait for the fun to begin.

Am I paranoid? I sure hope so because I have no practical strategy in

mind for protecting against hostel vigilantism in my community. Do you? Do your town officials?

The temptation to avoid confronting this issue is strong. Nobody wants to face it and it could be political dynamite. But it’s a legitimate public safety matter—and it’s time!

Rick Littlefield
Barrington, N.H.
Rick:
A lot of left-of-center people have led relatively sheltered lives. Some of them may think you’re overstating the case. Our own experience suggests that you’re not.
The Editor

Odd Trump Cult Behavior

Dear Editor:
Can’t the Trump following quit their get-even charade and take their vaccination opportunities seriously? Today, December 9th as I write, New Hampshire, Michigan, and Minnesota lead the country in the most Covid-19 cases per capita. Color charts showing the Northeast show that only New Hampshire is seriously impacted. Our Governor, a Republican hopeful for re-election, cowers at the thought of a mask mandate because he hears the New Hampshire Republicans disdaining that level of protection. He’s following the anti-vaxxers/anti-maskers in their poor reasoning, securing his vote, or so he thinks.

What’s up? We need outside medical help and National Guard help in our hospitals. It needn’t be.
The Trump cult makes me think they’d tie plastic bags over their heads and dial 911 for someone to come and remove the bag-trap they made for themselves. It is so lame to not vaccinate, not wear a protective mask.

Lynn Rudmin Chong
Sanbornton, N.H.
Lynn:
Every hour spent with your brain marinating in GOP talking points kills off a certain number of neurons. Eventually your logic circuits no longer function.
The Editor

Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.
to page six

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

To learn more about memorials and what else we choose to remember go to PortsmouthGenome.org
Join the conversation.
A Portsmouth Peace Treaty Forum project.

HUD-VASH HELPS VETERANS GET AND STAY HOUSED. YOU CAN HELP, TOO.

HUD-VASH is a partnership between the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the VA’s Supportive Housing unit. It helps homeless Veterans with housing, employment, recovery (both mental health and substance abuse) and independent living.

HUD-VASH is no longer accepting donations of used furniture, &c. The Homeland Heroes Foundation in Salem, N.H. does: homelandheroesfoundation.org.

HUD-VASH does have a dedicated fund for purchasing new items veterans may need. Donations to that fund may be sent to The VA Medical Center, 718 Smyth Rd., Manchester, N.H. 03104-7007. HUD-VASH should be included on the subject line. Every penny will go into home goods for veterans.

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Will we teach our children facts or fear?

by Dan Weeks

On a recent afternoon drive through Jefferson, New Hampshire, with the majestic Presidential Range in view, my ever-inquisitive five year-old son wanted to know about our nation's third president.

I paused and recalled what I had learned about Thomas Jefferson as a boy some thirty years ago. I thought of the towering bronze statue of Jefferson, encircled by marble columns beneath a limestone dome, that I would gaze upon in wonder during early trips to Washington, D.C.

I remembered those timeless words he penned in the Declaration of Independence, which I proudly learned in school and hung on my wall: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

I thought of Jefferson's many lasting contributions as president, from doubling the territorial expanse of the United States through the Louisiana Purchase to building up the Library of Congress to abolishing the international slave trade in his final year.

And I recalled my early visit to

Jefferson's Monticello plantation in the late 1980s: how I marveled at the exquisite architecture and furnishings and inventions while learning almost nothing about the human beings he enslaved to establish and sustain not only his estate but also his family. (Years later, as an adult, I learned the truth about Sally Hemings, the enslaved teen-aged girl who Jefferson first raped while she accompanied his daughter in France and who became the mother of at least six of his children in a decades-long liaison that the Thomas Jefferson Foundation finally declared "a settled historical fact" in 2018.)

Should I keep things simple and introduce my kids to the storybook Thomas Jefferson I encountered as a boy? Or should I reveal the darker side of one of America's most admired Founding Fathers and tell them of a rapist and enslaver whose policies as president paved the way for the removal and even annihilation of countless Native Americans? Would they take a greater interest in a pristine statue or a man?

As the sun was setting over Mts. Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison, I told the kids that President Jefferson was a brilliant writer and thinker and inventor who did many good things and also did evil by enslaving human beings with

darker skin. We talked again about how there is both good and bad in everyone, as well as in our nation, and how our purpose in life is to do good and stop bad whenever and however we can, with God's help.

In that moment, I made the fateful decision that my children should know Jefferson and the Founding Fathers as more than merely heroes, but as the complex forces they were in the many-sided story of America.

Then we reached our destination and talk of Jeffersonian ethics gave way to dinner! But I should not have been surprised when, a few days later, my son asked me if his mom had been enslaved? And why, for that matter, had people with darker skin who looked like them been mistreated by people who looked like me, as their children's books about Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King revealed? As I attempted to assure him that Mama was never in chains and then convey, in simplistic terms, the inter-generational sin of racism not just between individuals but in our systems too, I thought of the dilemma New Hampshire's teachers now face in the aftermath of the infamous "divisive concepts" law, not to mention a recently-introduced "teacher loyalty bill".

Under the former, teachers and state agencies are barred from teaching that racism and sexism (whether

conscious or unconscious) exist between groups in our society, contrary to the longstanding and well-documented truth about individual and institutional bias. Although Governor Chris Sununu pledged to veto the measure, his eventual support of the amended language in this year's budget was in keeping with his public denunciation of the term "systemic racism," which Republicans claim (against the evidence) does not exist in New Hampshire.

Meanwhile, the new "teacher loyalty bill" would up the ante by making it illegal for teachers to impart "any doctrine or theory promoting a negative account or representation of the founding and history of the United States of America in New Hampshire public schools," according to the official text—a demonstration of fear over facts.

As it stands today, if someone believes a New Hampshire teacher has taught that groups exhibit inherent, unconscious racism or sexism in our society, they can sue the school district for damages. What's more, the State Board of Education can terminate any teacher it deems in violation of the ban and can even strip them of their teaching license (and livelihood). As one New Hampshire social studies teacher told ABC News, "It's a form of psychological warfare against educators." No wonder it is

now being challenged in court.

As if that weren't enough, a national right-wing group with deep ties to the Florida Republican party recently announced it would pay a \$500 "bounty" to the first New Hampshire family that "catches" a public school teacher violating the "divisive concepts" law. The organization, Moms for Liberty, purports to speak for parents like me who seek to "stoke the fires of liberty" in our kids. Sadly, theirs is a freedom from facts that stands in opposition to "all men are created equal" and renders our children ill-equipped to engage uncomfortable truths and grow into free-thinking adults. Neither their bounties nor the abhorrent laws that inspire them have any place in New Hampshire. They should be roundly rejected by Republicans and Democrats alike.

It's time that liberty-loving moms and dads stood up to the denial and intimidation of a fearful few and embraced the noble, never-ending work of shining light in the dark places to ensure "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" for all.

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Dan Weeks is the author of *Democracy in Poverty: A View From Below* and vice president of *ReVision Energy*. He lives in Nashua with his wife and three kids.

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from page five

Chickenhawks, Digitization, and Honor

To the Editor:

I am an honorably discharged Vietnam veteran. I have been a straight reporter, and, some time ago, worked as a Seacoast reporter.

I would like to know why the Chickenhawk List is no longer posted on your site. This is part of the record. Please answer honorably.

Lee Bergman
New York, N.Y.

Lee:

Since we share so many experiences,

we were naturally prepared to respond warmly to your letter—right up until that insult at the end.

Forgive us, please, for going off on you here, but we aim to be honest—and how could we be honorable if we are not honest?

"Please answer honorably." Making such a request suggests that 1) left to our own devices, we might do otherwise, and 2) you have some right or power to control our behavior. We refute both

those assumptions unequivocally.

Now, not being complete cranks, we'll leave that matter there and go on to answer your question.

While we were not the first to use the term, we are proud to have been the first national newspaper to attempt to assemble a reasonably comprehensive list of chickenhawks—cheerleaders for war who, when offered an opportunity to fight themselves, discovered that they

"had other priorities."

It was a Sisyphean task—there were so many! It was also a technical challenge. We posted a couple of iterations, none of which were fully satisfactory for a variety of technical reasons.

Within a matter of months an essential point had been made. The lack of military experience among the warmongers of the Bush #43 administration became a common topic of conversation. That was amusing,



and therefore gratifying. It was not, however, satisfying. Preventing the damned war would have been satisfying.

Our most recent iteration of the Chickenhawk Database was incompatible with our most recent site renovation. Having made our point—and having limited resources—we have not, and likely will not, rebuild the thing yet again.

We hope that satisfies your thirst for honor. If not, let us know. Come prepared to mix it up a little bit.

The Editor

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You Want to Serve Your Country?

by W.D. Ehrhart

I recently received the following e-mail: “First off, Mr. Ehrhart, thank you for your service. My main question is this: what wisdom do you think you have gained from experiencing the Vietnam War? Do you think that younger generations could learn something from you and your experience?”

“Thank you for taking the time to write,” I replied. “What wisdom have I gained from experiencing the Vietnam War? What could younger generations learn from me? I hope I don’t sound too cynical, but what I learned was to question *everything* I’m told by those in authority. Donald Trump lied to the American people multiple times a day for four years, and is still doing it with his “stolen election” bullcrap, but he didn’t invent lying.

“The Vietnam War was created out of lies. The Vietnamese were supposed to hold unification elections in 1956, but the Eisenhower Administration went along with Ngo Dinh Diem in refusing to hold those elections; the excuse was that you couldn’t have democratic elections with a communist—Ho Chi Minh—in control of half the country, but the real reason was that Ho Chi Minh would have won a free and fair election easily.

“Lyndon Johnson jammed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution through Congress in the summer of 1964—the legal authorization for everything that happened afterwards—with only two dissenting votes by claiming that North Vietnamese torpedo boats had attacked two U.S. destroyers in international waters without provocation. Johnson knew at the time that the U.S. ships were in North Vietnamese territorial waters operating in support of South Vietnamese commando raids on North Vietnamese facilities, and that the second attack never even happened, but the Johnson Administration lied to the American people and even to Congress.

“Consider this: after 9/11, the U.S. first invaded Afghanistan, and then Iraq. But the men who attacked the U.S. on 9/11 were 15 Saudi Arabians, one Egyptian, one Lebanese, and two men from the UAE. Neither Afghanistan nor Iraq had anything to do with 9/11. So why did we invade those two countries?”

“I could go on at great length. But suffice it to say that our government leaders still continue to lie to us. For 20 years, we were told that the U.S. was making progress in Afghanistan when government documents unearthed by the *Washington Post* make it clear that U.S. officials knew from the very start that we had no chance

of ever “winning” in Afghanistan, yet year after year they continued what they knew was a losing effort through the Bush, Obama, and Trump Administrations. Biden’s decision to withdraw is the first good decision this country has made about Afghanistan since 1978.

“I would say to young people: do not be fooled by the patriotic displays at the beginning of NFL football games and NASCAR races, by the Military Appreciation Nights at NHL hockey games, the apparent reverence for all things and all members of the military. I call it “Crocodile Patriotism.” Your government does not care about the military men and women who die doing the government’s bidding. Lyndon Johnson knew—and said in a recorded conversation in 1964—that we could not win the Vietnam War...and then he proceeded to send millions of young Americans to Vietnam, thousands of them coming home dead. Fewer Americans have died in Afghanistan, but every one of them died while their government knew we would never win there.

“You need to understand that those a nation sends into war are those the government and their fellow citizens have deemed expendable. ‘We can get along without you. If you die, we’ll be fine. We don’t need you.’ And all the flag-waving

hot-air patriotic blather is simply to disguise this truth. The war in Afghanistan cost the American people \$3 trillion. But that money didn’t just disappear. It ended up in the pockets of corrupt Afghan politicians and war lords, and it ended up in the bank accounts of American arms manufacturers. It was and is a transfer of wealth from ordinary Americans to the Merchants of Death and their accomplices, to those who already have more wealth than they know what to do with.

“You thanked me for my service. Why? Who did I serve? I went halfway around the world to kill, maim, and make miserable people who had never done me or my country any harm, nor ever would or could. Do you really want to thank me for that? What was I fighting for? American freedoms and our way of life? But we lost the Vietnam War, and yet you can still worship at the church of your choice, marry whoever you want, and speak your mind. So what were we really fighting for in Vietnam?”

“Here is what I would say to young people: you want to serve your country? Learn to be critical of what you see and read and hear. Seek out alternative sources of information like *Salon*, *Counterpunch*,

TomDispatch, *The Atlantic*, *The Nation*. *The New Hampshire Gazette* for goodness sake. Even BBC radio and television news, which is far better than any mainstream U.S. network news source.

“Get involved in the politics that impact your life: can you even name your U.S. senators, your U.S. representative, your state senators and representatives, the members of your local government? Become informed. Learn what is being done in your name and with your tax dollars at the local, state, and federal levels. Yes, this takes time and effort, but corruption and deceit and dishonesty and injustice thrive on the ignorance of the people.

“You want to serve your country? Get engaged. Become teachers, general practitioner doctors, EMTs, firefighters, nurses. Heck, be the best damned check-out clerk in the grocery store. Be polite to people. Be tolerant. Treat others the way you’d like to be treated. Try always to do the next right thing. That’s how you can serve your country.”

W.D. Ehrhart is an ex-Marine sergeant who holds a PhD in American Studies from the University of Wales at Swansea, and taught for many years at the Haverford School for Boys.



The Problem With Plastic...Is Plastic

by Jim Hightower

In a world that’s clogged and choking with a massive overdose of plastic trash, you’ll be heartened to learn that governments and industries are teaming up to respond forcefully to this planetary crisis.

Unfortunately, their response has been to engage in a global race to make more plastic stuff and to force poor countries to become dumping grounds for plastic garbage. Leading

this Kafkaesque greedfest are such infamous plunderers and polluters as Exxon Mobil, Chevron, Shell, and other petrochemical profiteers. With fossil fuel profits crashing, the giants are rushing to convert more of their over-supply of oil into plastic. But where to send the monstrous volumes of waste that will result?

The industry’s chief lobbyist outfit, the American Chemistry Council, looked around last year and suddenly shouted: “Eureka, there’s Africa!”

In particular, they’re targeting Kenya to become “a plastics hub” for global trade in waste. However, Kenyans have an influential community of environmental activists who’ve enacted some of the world’s toughest bans on plastic pollution. To bypass this inconvenient local opposition, the dumpers are resorting to an old corporate power play: “Free Trade.” Their lobbyists are pushing an autocratic trade agreement that would ban Kenyan officials from passing

their own laws or rules that interfere with trade in plastic waste.

Trying to hide their ugliness, the plastic profiteers created a PR front group called “Alliance to End Public Waste.” But—hello—it’s not “public” waste. Exxon and other funders of the alliance make, promote, and profit from the mountains of destructive trash they now demand we clean up.

The real problem is not waste, but plastic itself. From production

to disposal, it’s destructive to people and the planet. Rather than subsidizing petrochemical behemoths to make more of the stuff, policymakers should seek out and encourage people who are developing real solutions and alternatives.

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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, DECEMBER 19	MONDAY, DECEMBER 20	TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21	WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22	THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23	FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24	SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25
<p>2007—A fire breaks out near "Dick" Cheney's office. Probable cause: spontaneous inhuman combustion.</p> <p>1998—As Bill Clinton is being impeached for some hanky-panky, Speaker-elect Bob Livingston resigns to cover up a bit of his own.</p> <p>1984—Due to a work speedup, 27 coal miners are killed in Utah.</p> <p>1974—Norris Cotton finagles a bill giving New Hampshire's senior Senator the right in perpetuity to commandeer Daniel Webster's old desk.</p> <p>1973—Johnny Carson makes a joke about a non-existent toilet paper shortage, inadvertently causing one.</p> <p>1946—The Viet Minh take on the French in Indo-China.</p> <p>1944—Primarily due to bad generalship, two-thirds of the 106th Infantry, comprising 8,000 men, must surrender during the Battle of the Bulge.</p> <p>1941—Ex-corporal Hitler takes direct command of the German Army.</p> <p>1910—Spurred on by the Baltimore <i>Sun</i>, that city mandates the racial segregation of residential areas.</p> <p>1907—An explosion kills 239 coal miners, many minors, in Smithton, Pa.</p> <p>1865—South Carolina passes a law requiring all Black "servants" to sign contracts with their "masters" and be "polite" while working dawn-to-dusk.</p> <p>1777—Washington's army arrives at Valley Forge, Pa.</p> <p>1776—Thomas Paine's <i>American Crisis</i> is first published; "These are the times that try men's souls..."</p>	<p>2002—The ten largest U.S. brokerage houses cough up \$1.44 billion in fines rather than risk a trial over charges that they fleeced their customers.</p> <p>2002—Sen. Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) is forced to step down after lamenting Strom Thurmond's failure to win the Presidency on a White Supremacy platform in 1948.</p> <p>1989—Ex-CIA boss George H. [Hoover] W. Bush 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—Donald 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—With a bullet in his head for refusing to give up his cell phone, Georgian Larry 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—The Oval Office: Elvis gives Tricky Dick a chromed Colt. 45; Dick gives Elvis a Narcotics Bureau badge.</p> <p>1956—Montgomery, Ala. buses desegregate—the boycott worked.</p> <p>1921—The anarchist Bonnot Gang robs a Paris bank then steals a limo—the world's first getaway car.</p> <p>1919—Emma Goldman is deported for speaking out against the draft.</p> <p>1907—The Chilean Army breaks a strike by machine gunning 2,000 Chilean nitrate miners.</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>1973—"Dick" Nixon's paranoid agitation at a Joint Chiefs of Staff meeting leaves four-stars wondering, "did he just ask us if we'd back a coup?"</p> <p>1967—The CIA hands the President the second of four reports on its illegal surveillance of anti-war activists. Because it, too, refutes his belief in foreign influence, LBJ 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>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 gives odds of 1 in 233 that an asteroid will hit Earth in 2029.</p> <p>1994—Tipped off by a Boston FBI agent that he's about to be arrested, James "Whitey" Bulger takes a powder. He's on the lam for 16.5 years.</p> <p>1986—The airplane <i>Voyager</i> 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>1944—Lax security combines with German industry: 25 Nazis escape from Phoenix's Papago Park POW camp through a 178-foot tunnel hacked out of rock-hard caliche.</p> <p>1924—The world's biggest manufacturer of light bulbs form the secret Phoebus cartel. Its aim: shorten the life-span of light bulbs by 60 percent.</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 Ceaușescu 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; 55 years later the state concludes 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 Okechobee, Seminole 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>
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26	MONDAY, DECEMBER 27	TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28	WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29	THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30	FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31	SATURDAY, JANUARY 1
<p>2010—H. Kissinger apologizes for having told R. Nixon in 1973, "[if the Soviets] put Jews into gas chambers... it is not an American concern. Maybe a humanitarian concern."</p> <p>2002—Americans learn a new euphemism from the <i>Washington Post</i>: "extraordinary rendition" means kidnapping and torture.</p> <p>1996—Of 1,500 candidates, Jon Benet Ramsey is named "most important child murdered this year in the U.S."</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 38 Sioux on one huge gallows.</p>	<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 to be 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—A legendary stagecoach driver "One-Eyed Charlie" Parkhurst, 67, is prepared for burial in Watsonville, 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>2019—Health authorities in Wuhan, China send hospitals an alert and begin investigating a rise in pneumonia.</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>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 Steunenberg 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>1974—What a coincidence! Two columns defending the CIA's illegal spying on U.S. citizens share a dateline. [Their writers, Bill Buckley and Tom Braden, are both covert CIA assets.]</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>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 <i>N.H. 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 tag Cuba.</p> <p>1957—The U.S.A.F. and AEC begin work on a nuclear ramjet cruise missile which could would fly for months—and leave a radioactive wake.</p> <p>1880—Elmer J. McCurdy is born in Washington, Maine. He robs banks and trains before he's shot dead in 1911, then becomes as a sideshow attraction and movie prop.</p> <p>1877—Three Medal of Honor recipients are partying in Brackettville, Texas. One, a sheriff, is supposed to arrest the second for murder, but shotguns him in the belly instead. The third splits on a stolen horse.</p> <p>1863—President Lincoln proclaims emancipation—in the Confederacy.</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>

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