

The Fortnightly Rant

Hope-ey New Year...?

What a predicament. With only a few hours left in this year, there's no way it can be salvaged. What's done is done. And look what's coming! Based on past performance, what are the odds of getting through this coming year intact? [Intact? You call our current state of affairs intact? That's a laugh!]

It's not easy, being the last freestanding print publication with the freedom to face reality with the blinders off. We're not complaining, mind you. We volunteered for this job. Hell, we *stole* this job. [Long story, no room for it here.] We're just pointing out that it's a challenge. How does the nation's most-senior news operation, operating with unlimited editorial freedom, sum up the state of affairs at year's end without sending its readers into an abyss of despondency?

Well, we've got approximately 330 minutes, and room for about another 850 words. Let's have at it and see what happens. First of all, if we hope to achieve anything meaningful here, we've got to assess what we're up against.

Most obviously, we've got a self-proclaimed would-be dictator, criminally indicted but as yet unconvicted, yet waaay the hell out in front in his presidential primary race. His whole shtick is based on outrage, yet some were surprised when he began delivering campaign speeches cribbing from Hitler.

When the candidate in question did that in Durham earlier this month, his fans seemed to love it. Meanwhile, in Iowa, 43 percent of Republican caucus goers said they were more likely to vote for a candidate who talked of "poisoned blood" and "vermin."

Despite the former guy's voluminous-ly-documented record of instigating a violent insurrection to stay in office, if he's nominated he actually stands a fair chance of being elected. The courts could, in theory, somehow knock him out of the race, but how effective has the legal system been so far on that front?

Oops. Almost forgot. (Wonder why...?) There are other candidates in the GOP primary.

Ron DeSantis, the closest thing to a challenger, has been steadily sinking in the polls all year. From the low-thirties, he's sliding towards single digits. He tried a new tack in a recent interview, letting his wife do all the talking. Even that didn't help. Soon there'll be nothing left but a painfully artificial smile suspended over an empty pair of cowboy boots.

The non-MAGA rump of the Republican

party is banking on Nikki Haley. Her cost-per-vote will end up on par with the greats, like Steve Forbes and Rick Perry. Likely, so will her vote count.

She and DeSantis both take the same approach in debates towards the front-runner: "Pay no attention to the fascist who's not up here behind a podium." This is not a coincidence. It's the only lane leading to second place on the ticket.

Chris Christie is the lone candidate denouncing the front-runner. He might as well put on armor, pick up a lance, mount a donkey, and go looking for windmills. He has no Sancho Panza, but he does have a PAC on his side. It's been reduced to making robo-calls attempting to lure an audience with promises of a free meal.

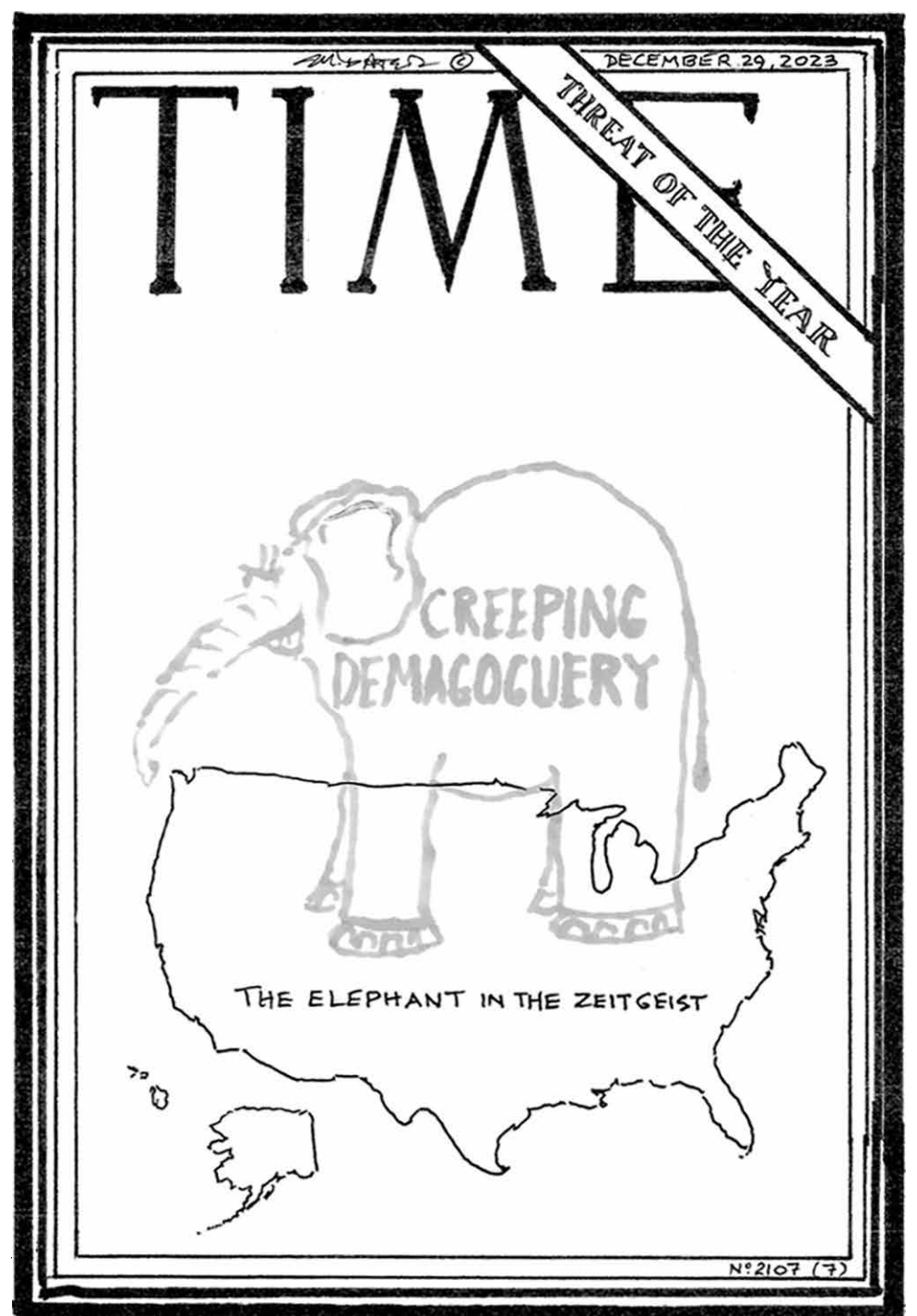
The incumbent president, for his part, is running what might generously be called a lackluster campaign. To make matters worse—as if he were forty points ahead, and was handicapping himself in a bid to be seen as sportsmanlike—his policies on student debt and support for Israel's treatment of Palestinians seem engineered to drive away the young voters on whom the election may hinge. And, as always, an assortment of mooks are milling around, happy to drain off votes.

So, the Executive Branch of the most powerful nation on Earth is a jump ball. The best we can hope for is a putatively benevolent geriatric white man. The worst—he might as well be Beelzebub.

Pretty fraught, right? What else we got going on here? We must be thorough. We only take up less than two percent of the Earth's surface, but we punch well above our weight—a metaphor that can also be taken literally.

Therefore, let us now consider the dictates of a bunch of rich, white, slave-holding men who died off two hundred years ago. The Senate they created, in which one Wyomingian is worth 68 Californians, has immense power. When in bold hands, it can lop years off a president's power to appoint Supreme Court justices. Or, as is more often the case, it can just flip a switch and turn Congress off entirely.

This powerful body is now in the hands—by the slimmest of margins, and subject to filibuster, of course—of the anti-insurrection party. Nearly half of its seats are at stake in the coming election, though. The bottom line: the "world's greatest deliberative body" may soon



either a) render the incumbent president nearly powerless in his second term, or, b) assist a would-be dictator on his second go-round as he tries to convert an ailing democracy into a fascist theocracy.

Further mystifying the mess we're in is our third branch of government. Might our past and potentially future President have the power to pardon himself for trying to overthrow the government? That is a question our Supreme Court may or may not end up deciding. Fortunately we can depend on the justices of that court to decide whether or not their decisions can be trusted.

Good lord. We're almost out of space already and we don't feel any better yet.

What, if anything, have we learned so far? Don't pin your hopes on the official cavalry. They may or may not arrive. Besides, if they do, but they don't like your looks, you may end up worse off than before.

As we cast about for a sliver of hope, only one thing comes readily to mind: the successful strike by the United Auto Workers. Whatever else may happen this coming year, they have shown that by standing together—and by standing up—ordinary working people may yet have a chance.

The Alleged News®

"To Be Sold: a Negro Man"

On Christmas Day, 1773, we published the advertisement seen below, alerting readers of their opportunity to purchase "a Negro Man." This ad, and others like it, helped our founder, Daniel Fowle, stay in business.

To be sold a NEGRO MAN
belonging to the Estate of the late Reverend ARTHUR BROWNE, by the Executors of said Estate.
Portsmouth, December 16, 1773.

We were reminded of this by Monday's tweet from The Adverts 250 Project [adverts250project.org], which bills itself as "An Exploration of Advertising During the Era of the American Revolution, 250 Years Ago This Week."

This abhorrent practice was routine at the time. Most papers did

it. On the day this ad appeared, the *South Carolina and American General Gazette* [1758 – 1782] published 21 ads related to the trade in people: slaves for sale, slaves wanted for purchase, and rewards for the return of runaways. Often these ads ended with the line, "inquire of the printer." In such cases the printers personally and privately steered buyers to sellers.

According to a spreadsheet generously shared by Jordan Taylor, a leading scholar on this topic, we published a total of 37 such ads in the years 1757 through 1779. But Daniel Fowle, our founder and a collateral ancestor of our editor, did more than just facilitate the slave

trade. He profited directly from enslaved labor through most of his career. He worked his African pressman so hard that Primus lost his ability to stand fully upright.

The Dublin-born Reverend Arthur Browne* [1699 – 1773] in the ad shown here was the first Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church, or-

* The Reverend's son, Arthur Browne, Jr., born in Portsmouth in 1743, joined the Army at 16 and became an artilleryman. He was at General Wolfe's side when he received his fatal wound on the Plains of Abraham. When Browne died in 1827, he was the last survivor of that battle. "Upwards of five thousand friends, gentlemen, and peasantry, were assembled to pay their last mournful respects to this inestimable veteran." — *Naval and Military Magazine*, June 1827

ganized in 1732. He seems to have had at least three enslaved servants, since, according to the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire [BHTNH], in addition to the nameless Negro Man in the ad, he also bequeathed one negro man each to his wife and his nephew. Fans of irony will be pleased to know that his former Rectory at 222 Court St. now serves as the headquarters of BHTNH.

It is an article of faith in certain political circles that acknowledging this truth is difficult or harmful, so much so that laws are being passed which outlaw the teaching of these truths in public schools in order to spare the feelings of school children.

According to this line of thinking—and given this newspaper's direct connection to the slave trade, and the lasting benefit it has brought to us—we should be too ashamed to show our face. To the contrary, though, we find reading this history and writing about it to be deeply rewarding. Such opportunities to illuminate both the past and the present don't come along every day.

The only shameful thing we see here is a transparent attempt by cynical adults to hold onto power by whitewashing history—hiding behind schoolchildren all the while.

The Alleged News®
from page one

What's New at the DLD?

For many years we mocked the *Portsmouth Herald* as “The Award-Winning Local Daily.” Then, at the suggestion of one of our volunteer distributors [Hiya, Murph!] we modified that bit of shorthand by dropping the no-longer-operative “Local.” New developments require a new acronym. We hereby announce DLD—short for the Dying Local Daily.

Now we are sad to speculate that the *Portsmouth Herald* may not be long for this world. Readers should, of course, bear in mind that, at 267 years and counting, we are accustomed to taking the long view. We have no inside track here. And we’re not suggesting that it’s time to start buying souvenirs. Certainly not at \$2.99 a pop!

No, the paper which was once the apple of Fernando Wood Hartford’s eye will stumble forward for some indeterminate time to come. But its odds of making it to the end of this decade look pretty slim.

Like his backer Frank Jones had

some nearly half a century earlier, F.W. Hartford [1872 - 1938] came to town in the 1890s and really shook things up. With Jones’s money he bought the *Penny Press*, which he later re-named the *Portsmouth Herald*. At the time the town had seven newspapers. By the time Hartford got through buying competitors and shutting them down, there were only two: The *Herald* and yours truly.

His motive was, of course, money. In Hartford’s heyday, and for decades after, newspapers were licenses to print the stuff. Their return on investment was the envy of other sectors. Why share? In addition to being the local media baron, Hartford served half a dozen terms as Mayor.

His son, Justin Downing Hartford, had grand plans when he took over, which seem to have largely been unrealized. His own demise resulted, a few years later, in the sale of the *Herald*—and the *Gazette*—to Canadian mogul Lord Kenneth of Fleet. But we digress....

In February of 2007, the *Herald* proudly announced that it was leaving its Maplewood Avenue digs—



Lurching around town as the solstice approached, our Wandering Photographer managed to steady himself long enough [1/1250th of a second] to capture this image of the North Church steeple, just minutes before sunset—which, on that day, December 16th, occurred at the ungodly hour of 4:08 p.m. Whatever other horrors may beset us in fortnights to come, for the next several months, nights will be shorter and days will be longer.

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purpose-built on land cleared by the North End Urban Renewal project it had touted in its pages—for a “new \$21 million, 70,000-square-foot facility at 111 New Hampshire Ave. in the Pease International Tradeport.”

Those shiny new Goss Magnums had their last run just sixteen years later, on March 19th of this year. Since then the paper has been printed in either Auburn, Mass., a little southwest of Worcester, or in Providence, Rhode Island. As a result, the time between deadline and delivery is stretched by about two hours. For a daily, that makes a difference—or it would, if the news was timely.

So, what is the latest in this sad saga? That “new \$21 million, 70,000-square-foot facility at 111 New Hampshire Ave.” has now been vacated completely. The paper’s news and advertising staff have schlepped over to Suite 330, 210 Commerce Way. For those unfamiliar with the Portsmouth Office Park, that’s behind the Market Basket on Woodbury Avenue.

That news was depressing enough, but what stirred us to write this premature obituary was the headline of an alleged news story published on the *Herald*’s website on Tuesday:

“Study Finds Amazon Has Lowest Online Prices.” The byline? Amazon.

For publishing such an insult to its readers, one could argue, the *Herald*’s right to exist should be declared null and void.

That may be a moot point, though. The current owner has long since fired most of the paper’s staff. Now it has sold off the real estate and pocketed the proceeds. What’s left but to discard the husk?

We see two possibilities here for bold, community-minded locals. They could raise some scratch and make an offer while the carcass is still twitching. Or, they could step in, unencumbered by history, deliver a coup de grâce, and start from scratch. What ever happened to the gang that put out that gorgeous one-off broadsheet in 1999 or thereabouts? What was it called? *The Piscataqua Times*? Bat Signal time!

But, make an offer to whom? Gannett? Or its owner, SoftBank Group, the \$300 billion Japanese holding company?

We say go directly to the top: SoftBank founder Masayoshi Son. “Known for his eccentricity and criticized because of his hubris,” according to Wikipedia, “his sanity

has been questioned in the media prompting him to reply with humorous assent.”

Sounds like a man with whom one might bargain.

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Ten Victories for the Working Class in 2023

From the picket lines to state houses to the White House, champions in the fight against inequality landed huge wins.

by Sarah Anderson

Looking for something positive to celebrate on New Year’s Eve? Consider lifting a glass to the hard-working people behind these inspiring victories of 2023.

1. The ‘Year of the Strike’

More than half a million American workers walked off the job this year. In October, companies lost more workdays to strikes than in any month during the past 40 years.

Big 3 auto workers, Hollywood writers and actors, Las Vegas and Los Angeles hotel staff, and Kaiser Permanente health care employees were among those who used strikes to score big bargaining table wins. For UPS drivers, the mere threat of a Teamsters strike was enough to secure historic wage hikes and safety

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protections.

After renewing contracts with Ford, GM, Stellantis, and UPS, the UAW and the Teamsters doubled down on efforts to organize the unorganized. The Teamsters picketed outside 25 Amazon warehouses, demanding a fair contract for unionized drivers at a California-based delivery service for the notoriously anti-union retailer. The UAW set their sights on non-unionized car companies, causing so much indigestion among Nissan, Toyota, Honda, and Hyundai executives that they immediately hiked wages for their U.S. employees.

2. Black workers organizing in the south

To move the needle on the country's dismally low 6 percent unionization rate, the labor movement will need to make inroads in tough territory, particularly in historically anti-union southern states that have been magnets for investment.

Two union victories in 2023 are the latest proof that this goal is not impossible. The United Steelworkers won an election at a Blue Bird bus factory in Georgia with nearly 1,500 predominantly Black work-

ers. In three Alabama cities, AT&T Mobility workers at In Home Expert hubs joined the Communications Workers of America.

3. A crack in the anti-union tech sector

The past year also saw union progress in another historically union-averse territory: the tech sector. Earlier this month, Microsoft forged an agreement with the AFL-CIO to remain neutral in organizing drives among their U.S.-based workers. This will make it easier for about 100,000 Microsoft employees to unionize, with potential ripple effects across the industry.

4. New trifecta states

In Michigan and Minnesota, pro-worker state legislators hit the ground running after Democrats won state trifectas in 2022.

Minnesota passed a blizzard of pro-labor reforms, including paid sick leave for most workers, minimum pay and benefits for nursing home staff, and wage theft protections for construction workers. Teachers will be able to negotiate over class sizes and nurses will have a greater say in staffing levels. The new laws also ban non-compete



Towering forty feet above the usual horde of free-spending passersby, this magnificent conifer, a spruce, we suspect, has, like the proverbial lily, been gilded, as it were, with festoons of myriad lights. Whether they be the traditional incandescent sort, or newfangled light-emitting diodes, we are unable to say due to our own lamentable sloth. We can, however, assure our readers that the tree is, judging by the City's website, non-denominational.

agreements and "captive audience" meetings designed to undercut union support.

This year Michigan became the first state in six decades to roll back anti-union "right-to-work" laws. They also restored a "prevailing wage" law requiring construction contractors to pay union wages and benefits on state-funded projects.

5. Cities lead the way on low-wage worker protections

The federal minimum wage for tipped workers has been stuck at \$2.13 since 1991. In that vacuum, states and cities are taking action. This year, restaurant servers and other advocates in the nation's capital successfully beat back last-ditch industry attempts to undercut a victorious 2022 ballot initiative to phase out the local subminimum tipped wage. After a multi-year, hard-fought campaign, DC's tipped workers got their first raise this past summer, putting them on track to earn the full local minimum wage by 2027. The Chicago City Council also passed a five-year tipped wage

phaseout plan, set to begin in 2024.

App-based delivery drivers in New York City had to fight back in 2023 against Uber, DoorDash, and other corporations' efforts to block introduction of the nation's first minimum wage for their occupation. Gig companies finally lost their legal challenges to the pay rule in late November. Delivery driver pay rose to \$17.96 an hour on December 4 and will increase to \$19.96 when the legislation takes full effect in 2025.

6. College campuses as labor hotbeds

Organizing among graduate and medical students continued to explode in 2023, with the highest number of union elections among these groups than in any year since the 1990s. In the first four months of 2023 alone, over 14,000 graduate students on five campuses voted to join the United Electrical union — all by margins of over 80 percent. Campuses across the country coordinated organizing efforts through a series of teach-ins and other events under the banner of Labor Spring,

an initiative that will continue in 2024.

7. Stock buyback blowback

Many of the labor battles of 2023 skewered corporate executives for underpaying workers while blowing money on stock buybacks, a financial maneuver that artificially inflates CEO stock-based pay. Two precedent-setting federal policies to rein in buybacks also took effect in 2023. For the first time, corporations faced a one percent excise tax on buybacks. The Biden administration also began giving companies a leg up in the competition for new semiconductor subsidies if they agree to forgo all stock buybacks for five years. This important precedent should be expanded to all companies receiving any form of public funds.

8. Collective bargaining requirements on federally funded construction projects

With megabillions in new public investment flowing into infrastruc-

The Alleged News®
to page seven

Murph's Fortnightly Quote

"Two possibilities exist: either we are alone in the universe or we are not. Both are equally terrifying."
— Arthur C. Clarke (1917 – 2008)

"Without us, Earth will abide and endure; without her, however, we could not even be."

— Alan Weisman, *The World Without Us*

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A Few Damn Good Questions
Dear Editor,
From the Constitution of the United States, Article 1, Section 3, Paragraph 7:

“Judgement in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Judgement, and Punishment, according to the Law.”

Convicted or not by the Senate, the operative phrase, written in plain English, is... SHALL nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, etc....”

Senator Mitch McConnell, one day after the Senate failed to convict the Barking Yam in his second Impeachment, February 14, 2021:

“Impeachment, conviction, and removal are a specific intra-governmental safety valve. It is not the criminal justice system, where individual accountability is the paramount goal. “Indeed, Justice Story specifically reminded that while former officials were not eligible for impeachment or conviction, they were—and this is extremely important—“still liable to be tried and punished in the ordinary tribunals of justice.”

Put another way, in the language of today: President Trump is still liable for everything he did while he was in office, as an ordinary citizen, unless the statute of limitations has run out, he is still liable for everything he did while in office, and hasn't gotten away with anything yet—yet. We have a criminal justice system in this country. We have civil litigation. And former presidents are not immune from being held accountable by either one.”

Why, then, is our justice system constantly dithering over whether said Yam is immune from prosecution for the plethora of crimes he's already committed and the ones he commits seemingly on a daily basis?

Why do we always beat our chests about this country being a nation of laws and not of men when we can't just follow the law in this case and dispense with this traitor?

Why is this mastermind of the most recent insurrection against the government of the United States allowed to appear on any ballot in an election for the office of president (14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, Section 3)?

Why am I feeling compelled to even ask these questions?

John C. Ficor
Richmond, Va.
John,
First of all, kudos for “the Barking Yam.”

As to your questions, in reverse order, here are our best guesses.

You feel compelled to ask these questions because you have a brain and you're not afraid to use it.

Your “Barking Yam” will appear on ballots because this “Light of the World,” this “City on a Hill,” is actually a middle-school playground where bullies have the staff intimidated.

We have practiced overlooking injustice for so long—e.g., disparities based on race and the absurd white collar/blue collar crime distinction—that even this enormous travesty is well within our capability.

Finally, McConnell was able to pass the buck to the so-called justice system because he knew that, as Senate Minority Leader, he could utter whatever baffle-gab he pleased without being held to account by the same corporate media that rolled out a red carpet back in 2015 at the foot of that infamous gilded escalator.

The Editor

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Horried by Our Paper

To the Editor:
I was horrified that every article in this week's paper was written by those defending Hamas and their slaughter of Israelis. Of course, also denouncing Israel's entering Gaza to kill the Hamas terrorists, and demanding that all Jews be driven out of “Palestine.” Even the graphic cartoons were the utmost vile hatred.

Truth and humanity are always the first casualties in such blatant evil. The historical record of the area is that in the 500 years before the late 19th century, climate change stopped the rainfall in that part of the world, leaving

the area a mostly uninhabited desert. Go online & search the book *Innocents Abroad* by Mark Twain for a vivid picture of the area's desolation in 1869.

The only people living there were a few desert Arab Bedouin wanderers. The travelers found a small pathetic community around the Sea of Galilee, and almost no one on their trip to Jerusalem. Total desolation, Twain said of the whole area.

The historical record continues that a few Jews began entering the land in the 1880s turning swampland into productive farmland. Arabs began entering “Palestine” to work in the Jewish fields, soon trying to drive the Jews out.

In God's providence, the Moslom [sic] rulers stopped the violence and protected the Jews! The basic reality is that both the Jews and Arabs/Persians migrated into the land at the same time. In reality, there are very few native Arab Palestinians. All the rest are recent economic migrants.

Fast forward to 1948, the Jordanians drove all the Jews out of the West Bank. The United Nations built a very large number of towns there to lure the wandering Bedouin and people all over the region into the West Bank to occupy the land to prevent the Jews from returning.

These are the inconvenient truths the God-hating world does not want you to know about. Today's narrative is saying the Jews displaced the Arabs. As I have just shown, this is a lie from Satan and his minions.

Jerusalem has become “The Burdensome Stone” just as God said it would. “The time of Jacob's trouble” is upon the Jew, and tribulation upon the whole world... and the rapture for the Church.

Maranatha,
Lewis Brackett
San Diego, Calif.
Lewis,
Sorry to nitpick, but, “every article”? Because we consider anti-semitism to be

one of the first refuges of scoundrels, to refute your accusation we just spent an hour looking at the record, counting words, and analyzing what we found. Then, as we used to do with boring patches of Don Erwing's letters, we deleted about 200 carefully-chosen words from this reply.

Here's the short version: two news articles out of four, one essay, and one letter out of eight do not constitute “every article.” Justified criticism of Israel is not inherently anti-semitic.

One of Mike Dater's cartoons did show a synagogue. It employed satire. So did Mark Twain. Here's a quote from *Innocents Abroad*: “I tried [the legendary sword of the Crusader Godfrey of Bouillon] on a Moslem, and clove him in twain like a doughnut. ... if I had had a graveyard I would have destroyed all the infidels in Jerusalem. I wiped the blood off the old sword and handed it back to the priest. ...”

As much as we love Mark Twain, we consider the rest of *Innocents Abroad* to be similarly authoritative. So much for the 19th century. If you had cited a source for your claims about more recent times, we might be able to comment further. As it is, we can only say that we are baffled. The sequence you relate bears no resemblance to what little history we know of the time.

You say the narrative that “the Jews displaced the Arabs [is] a lie from Satan and his minions”? Everyone has heard of holocaust denial. This is the first example we have seen of Nakba denial. We refute it.

The Editor

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Love It or Leave It, Trump & Trumpians

Dear Editor:

With his lines so well practiced, Trump entertained 1,000 people at UNH on the weekend. “Witch hunt” we've heard for years now. Fairly recently, Trump's expressed a wish to be a dictator for our country. Maybe, re-

ally, “against” our country. He uses the Hitler playbook for his phrasing.

Here's a possibility: Those who want to live under a dictatorship vote with your feet! Fifty-some despots and/or dictators rule on our planet. Trump himself could go to Cuba, Chad, Tibet, Iraq, Guinea, or Algeria, to name a few. The French were quite satisfied with Algeria until the end of the Algerian War leading to its independence in 1962. Algeria is at the “top” of Africa, so it may be as pleasant physically as Spain, and, then, for the disenchant-

ed-with-democracy, it has a dictator. Some of you elderly Trump supporters, what do your grandkids and great-grands say about living without the benefits and liberalism of democracy, compared to dictatorship? Would they go with you?

Lynn Rudmin Chong

Sanbornton, N.H.

Lynn,

We endorse this suggestion without reservation. Sadly, though, some of these nations might decline to admit Trumpians—and who could blame them?

The Editor

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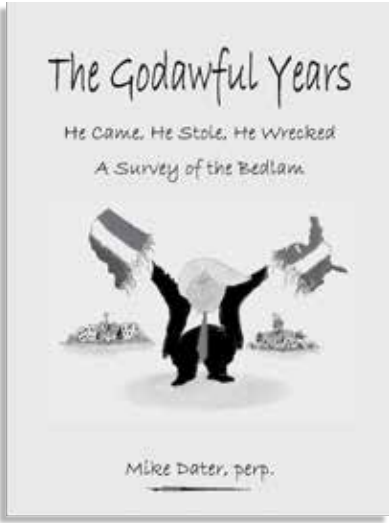
Ayotte Values Gun Lobby More Than Kids

Dear Editor,

Yesterday was the 11th anniversary of the Sandy Hook School shooting when 20 children ages 6 and 7 and six staff were slaughtered. The 20-year old killer used an AR-15 assault-style weapon to fire many rounds of ammunition to quickly perform his carnage. As a result of this massacre over 90 percent of Americans supported expanded background checks on gun purchases. Unfortunately the Senate killed that legislation. One of the votes against the legislation was cast by New Hampshire Senator Kelly Ayotte. The same Kelly Ayotte who is currently running to replace Governor Sununu

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a compendium of drawings by Mike Dater most of which first appeared in
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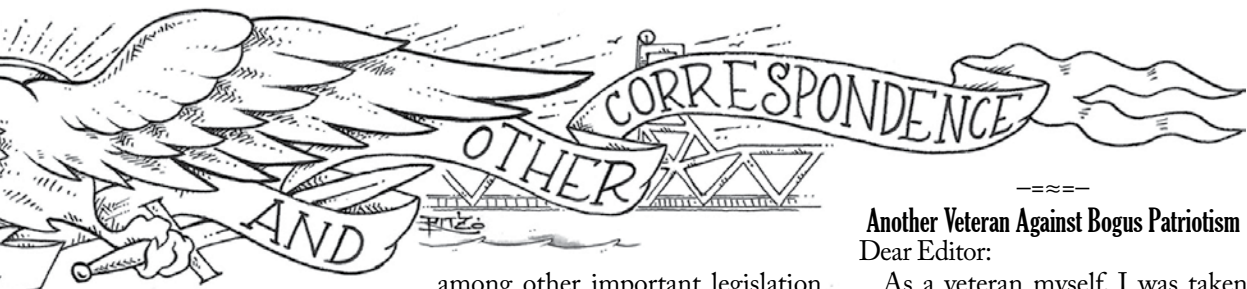
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in November.

I am sure that Ms. Ayotte would like us to forget that horrible vote 11 years ago. Unfortunately for the families of the Sandy Hook massacre victims and for all the families of victims of all the mass shootings involving AR-15's since then, they will never forget or be free of the pain and suffering they have endured. For those of us who were not directly impacted by this senseless epidemic of gun violence, especially those of us in New Hampshire, we should never forget how then Senator Ayotte put the interests of the gun lobby ahead of the will of the people and the safety of our children. We need to hold Kelly Ayotte accountable for her actions. She should not be nominated as the Republican's candidate for Governor, but if she is, she should not be allowed to become our next Governor.

Hon. Rich DiPentima
Portsmouth, N.H.
Rich,
An excellent point. Thanks for reminding us. With all the foofaraw about the White House, it's easy to forget the State House.
Ayotte should not be nominated by the Republicans, you say. It's impossible to disagree. It's unlikely, though, that Chuck Morse would win the primary. And, if he did, he'd be no improvement.
The Editor

=====
No Dictatorship, Thank You Very Much
To the Editor:

If you're planning to "vote your pocketbook" or your age biases in the upcoming presidential primary, think again. President Joe Biden and his policies are looking out for our *long term* economic health. These are not obvious at first examination. Biden has been instrumental in passing the American Rescue Plan, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the CHIPS Act

among other important legislation. Biden's administration has introduced negotiating prescription drug prices, has shown an awareness of serious environmental problems and has strengthened alliances such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to deal with foreign policy crises without sending U.S. troops abroad to fight wars. Biden is often the "adult in the room."

While I do not agree with Biden all the time, I certainly don't want to live under a Trump "dictatorship." Trump promises to conduct a "vengeance tour" if elected again despite his 91 indictments including criminal acts endangering our country in the world and encouraging insurrection on January 6th.

Trump has let loose many people who hate others. Trump called for the former Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley to be executed. Presidential candidate Nikki Haley's (recently endorsed by our governor Chris Sununu) television ads call for "catch and deport" undocumented immigrants which Heather Cox Richardson, a historian from Boston College who publishes a daily letter on current events, says could affect 10 million people. And Alabama Senator Tommy Tuberville held up the promotions of hundreds of military officers in his bid to prevent women from getting the healthcare they needed. These are only some of the Republican leaders. There are many others.

I certainly hope Joe Biden is reelected.

Judy Ullman
Portsmouth, N.H.
Judy,
Joe Biden is no Jack Kennedy, nor is he a Bernie Sanders.
But neither can letting Trump win by default be called the act of a patriot.
The Editor

=====
Another Veteran Against Bogus Patriotism
Dear Editor:

As a veteran myself, I was taken with W.D. Ehrhart's "I Pledge Allegiance" column on flag-waving, bogus patriotism in your December 15th issue. Among other things, I liked the way he made the connection between our obsessively fetishized flag waving in professional sports, from football to NASCAR, and our larger national fetish. In professional and college sports, the corporate sponsors have attached our coopted flag to their products.

Another veteran, Norman Mailer, who served as a rifleman in a reconnaissance platoon (often behind enemy lines) in the Pacific Theater during World War II, pointed to the same problem of bogus patriotism in two books near the end of his life—*Why Are We at War?* (2003) and *The Big Empty* (2006). What could be easier than being a mere flag-patriot? No sacrifice, no hard time, no danger, no critical thinking. Mailer: "We have to keep reminding ourselves that just because we've been a democracy, it doesn't guarantee we're going to continue to be one. Democracy is existential. . . . It changes all the time. That's one reason I detest promiscuous patriotism. You don't take democracy for granted. It is always in peril." He added, "You take a monarchy for granted, or a fascist state. You have to."

Compulsive flag-waving was to Mailer no better than "compulsive adoration of our leaders," which adoration Mailer called "poison" for democracies. He argued that if you love your country indiscriminately, "critical distinctions begin to go. And democracy depends on those distinctions." You can love your country, you can put your life at risk defending it, and you can still be critical of its failures and follies. It is precisely because, as Mailer said, democracy is "beautiful" and "noble" that it is always endangered, always perishable.

"I think the natural government for most people," Mailer wrote, "given the uglier depths of human nature, is fascism. . . . Democracy is a state of grace attained only by those countries that have a host of individuals not only ready to enjoy freedom but to undergo the heavy labor of maintaining it." Mere vacuous flag waving is not enough to keep democracy alive; indeed, it has the opposite effect. It is a facile substitute for the heavy labor required.

Back to the sponsors of televised sports in closing. For Mailer, one of the biggest threats to democracy is the "megacorporation," ever doing its best "to appropriate our thwarted dreams with their elephantiastrical conceits," a threat to America Mailer first had identified in the 1950s and 60s as "corporate totalitarianism." Maybe we should think of that too the next time the sport we are watching is teeming not only with sponsors' logos but with ubiquitous flags, patriotic songs, and roaring jet-fueled fly-overs.

'Umble Servant,
Bob Begiebing
Newfields, N.H.
Bob,
A writer as prolific as Mailer inevitably leaves a mountain of words. Some of his have aged better than others. His assault on bogus patriotism is ageless.
The Editor

=====
Write In Biden, People
To the Editor:

As New Hampshire prepares for its primary, the absence of President Biden's name on the ballot presents an unusual challenge. Given the critical stakes for reproductive freedom in this election, it's imperative that we voice our support for a leader who firmly upholds these values. The GOP presidential candidates have openly committed to a national abortion ban, a stance deeply at odds with New Hampshire's strong pro-choice sentiment. In contrast, President Biden has been a steadfast defender of reproductive rights.

With fundamental freedoms under threat, writing in "Joe Biden" on our ballots is more than a symbolic act; it's

a decisive statement for safeguarding reproductive freedom. Other primary contenders lack the broad support necessary to counter the threat posed by a potential Trump reelection. Joe Biden, on the other hand, has beaten Trump before and will do so again. Sitting out this primary or lodging a protest vote can only tilt the scales toward Trump.

It's simple: just find the "write-in" line, fill in the bubble, and write "Joe Biden." Let's ensure our voices are heard and our values represented. Democrats and Independents, this is not the time to sit out. Join me in this vital write-in campaign. Our choice on the ballot is not just about a candidate; it's about protecting our rights and our future.

Alex de Geofroy
Rochester, N.H.
Alex,
Your point would seem self-evident—but why take chances?
The Editor

=====
'Tis the Season for Ecclesiastical Fine Print
To the Editor,

On December 18th, the Holy See's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (formerly the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; aka the Holy Office) offered Catholics something of an early Christmas present. Its purpose, according to the document "Fiducia Supplicans" ("Supplicating Trust," aka "On the Pastoral Meaning of Blessings" . . . pastoral exigencies of blessings. . . the second of five "dubia" posed by five Cardinals (¶3) . . . [435 words of ecclesiastical detail deleted, in favor of cutting to the chase – *The Ed.*]

The independent Catholic Society of Apostolic Life to which I belong, the Society of Christ the King, is open to all people regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, marital status, race, or sexual orientation. . . .

Reverend Pius Charles Murray,
SCR, OCR
Society of Christ the King
Somersworth, N.H.
Charles,
We did what we could.
The Editor

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

Origins Story

In 1623, David Thomson settled at Odiorne Point. 2023 celebrates 400th Anniversary

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.

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

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from page three

ture projects, it's critical that the administration ensure these taxpayer dollars support good jobs. This week, Biden officials took an important step forward by finalizing regulations requiring the use of "project labor agreements" between employers and workers for large federal construction projects. The terms of these pre-hire collective bargaining agreements must cover all parties — contractors, subcontractors, and unions. This important rule should be expanded beyond construction to contractors that provide goods and other services.

9. Trashing "junk" fees

Working class Americans fork out tens of billions of dollars every year on deceptive, hidden charges that raise the cost of banking and internet services, concerts and movies, rental cars and apartments, and more. In October, President Joe Biden announced a plan to put these "junk fees" where they belong—in the trash.

Under the plan, the Federal Trade Commission aims to force companies to disclose the total price of goods and services up front and slap violators with big fines. This will mean no hidden fees — and more money in working families' pockets.

10. NLRB rulings on Amazon and Starbucks

Anyone wondering whether our labor laws need fixing need look no further than the fact that Starbucks and Amazon have been able to get away with refusing to negotiate with workers who voted to unionize for well more than a year. (Two years for the path-breaking Buffalo, New York Starbucks workers). On the positive side, Biden appointees at the National Labor Relations Board seem to be making the most of their current authority and capacity.

In August, the labor board issued a ruling that will make union-busting harder in cases where a majority of workers have signed union cards but the employer still demands an election. Under the ruling, bosses

who engage in unfair labor practices in these situations will now be forced to recognize and bargain with the union without an election.

In the meantime, the NLRB is continuing to try to hold Starbucks and Amazon accountable for rampant labor rights violations. The board has 240 open or settled charges against Amazon in 26 states and they've issued more than 100 complaints against Starbucks, covering hundreds of accusations of threats or retaliation against union supporters and failure to bargain in good faith. Most recently, the NLRB ordered the reopening of 23 Starbucks cafes, alleging the company had closed them to suppress union activity, in violation of federal law.

Reflecting on 2023, Starbucks barista and union organizer Shep Searl marveled at how diverse workers, "from Teamsters to actors," demonstrated that there are many ways to win through collective action.

"Every day, we've been absorbing that information and utilizing it in our mobilization and escalation plan," Searl told Inequality.org. "We aren't going anywhere and so much of that is inspired by the other campaigns. If we stand together, there's no mountain we cannot climb."

Sarah Anderson directs the Global Economy Project and co-edits Inequality.org at the Institute for Policy Studies. This work first appeared at <https://inequality.org/>, and is published here under a Creative Commons 3.0 License.

The National Debt,
Tax Farming, and Patent Monopolies
by Dean Baker

It increasingly looks like the Fed and the Biden administration have nailed the notoriously difficult soft landing, with inflation rapidly falling towards the Fed's 2.0 percent target and the unemployment rate still under 4.0 percent. All the signs are that the economy will continue to grow and create jobs at a healthy pace in 2024 and that inflation will remain

moderate for the foreseeable future.

With near-term economic prospects looking pretty damn good, we can be sure that the deficit hawks will soon be coming out of the woodwork. We can count on being regaled with talk of unprecedented levels of debt and deficits. We will hear of the need for cutting Social Security and Medicare, or cries for the creation of another deficit commission, which is the backdoor way of cutting Social Security and Medicare.

Since we all know what's coming, we should arm ourselves with knowledge of tax farming. You're probably wondering what tax farming is, and what it has to do with our current debt and deficit situation. In an odd way, it can tell us a great deal about how we should think about our deficits and especially our debt.

Tax farming was the practice of selling off the right to collect a specific tax. It was a common practice in pre-revolutionary France and in many other countries in prior centuries. The idea was that the government set a tax, say a customs duty on the goods that came through a specific port, and then sold off the right to collect the tax to a specific person. This gave the government an immediate infusion of cash, although it meant that it did not have access to the future revenue from the tax.

We actually still have similar practices. For example, back in 2008, Chicago's then mayor, Richard M. Daley, sold off the right to collect revenue from city parking meters for the next 75 years for \$1.16 billion. This gave Daley money to pay the bills in 2008 but cut off a stream of revenue to the city for the next seven and a half decades.

What is neat about the practice of tax farming is that the loss of revenue does not appear as debt on the ledgers. Obviously, if we are doing long-term projections of the city's finances we would have to take account of the lost revenue stream, but the money the city got for selling the right to collect revenue from park-

ing meters does not appear as a loan and add to the city's debt. Nor do the payments going to the parking meter company count as an expenditure by the city, as would be the case with interest on a loan, so they do not directly add to the deficit from that side.

If we were looking at the city of Chicago's budget the way we typically look at the federal budget, selling off the revenue from the parking meters was an absolutely brilliant move. The city effectively got a \$1.16 billion loan without adding to its debt. That means the people yelling about an exploding debt or rising debt to GDP ratios would have nothing to say on this one. The debt did not rise.

Similarly, we don't have to pay interest on this loan. That means when we are complaining about the rising interest burden, and how interest is becoming the largest item in the federal budget, we're good with the parking meter deal. There are no interest payments here.

From Parking Meters to Government-Granted Patent Monopolies

I trust that even economists can understand how selling off the revenue from parking meters was effectively a loan to the city, but we managed to keep it off the books so that it doesn't give deficit hawks anything to complain about. It turns out that government-granted patent and copyright monopolies are largely the same story.

At the most basic level, a patent monopoly or its cousin, copyright monopoly, is a way that the government pays people to do things. In the case of a patent monopoly, we are paying people to innovate. We tell them if they develop a new product or process, the government will give them a monopoly for a period of time, so that they can charge much more than the free market price. With copyrights, we are paying them to do creative work, like write a book, sing a song, or make a movie, or develop software. (Due to changes in the law in the 1990s, software is eligible for both patent

and copyright protection.)

In this sense, these monopolies are different from the parking meter revenue sale, but in a way that should get the deficit hawks even more concerned. The parking meter revenue sale did not involve any direct economic activity, except for the relatively small number of people involved in negotiating the deal and transferring the money. It did not add \$1.16 billion to GDP in 2008.

By contrast, patent and copyright monopolies actually do directly stimulate economic activity. We are giving out these monopolies precisely because we want people to spend time and money innovating and doing creative work. They do add to GDP.

This should matter a great deal to people worried about deficits. Remember, the problem with a large deficit is that it creates too much demand in the economy. The economy can't produce enough to meet the demand being created by the deficit. This means that either we get inflation, or the Fed has to raise interest rates to reduce demand.

If government-granted patent and copyright monopolies are boosting demand, that should make us every bit as concerned as if the government was boosting demand with a large deficit. Incredibly, the deficit hawks literally never say a word about the demand created as a result of patent and copyright monopolies.

Patent and Copyright Monopolies and Government Debt

The value of these government-granted monopolies also doesn't appear on the books as part of the government-debt. This means, incredibly, that we could double the length of all patent and copyright monopolies (even retroactively to ones already granted, as we have done repeatedly with copyrights) and not add a dollar to the government debt.

The payments that result from these monopolies are similar to the payments made to the parking meter company or the tax farmers. They are effectively taxes imposed on the population, although they are not collected by the government.

And these taxes can be very large. In the case of prescription and non-prescription drugs alone, these



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Let's Get Real

by W.D. Ehrhart

Yes, the surprise attack on Israel by Hamas on October 7th was unspeakably brutal, inhumane, merciless, without a shred of mitigation. War crimes were committed, crimes against humanity. There is no way to justify or excuse what happened that day to thousands of innocent civilians, some 1,200 murdered, another 240 kidnapped, countless others forever traumatized.

Meanwhile, between October 7th and the day I'm writing this (December 18th), NBC News reports almost 20,000 Palestinians killed by the Israeli military in response to October 7th, 70 per cent of them women and children. The Israeli military admits to accidentally killing three of the hostages it claims to be trying to free, and shooting to death two women who were taking refuge in a Catholic church.

All of these deaths may only be "collateral damage," not deliberate acts of violence specifically directed at helpless civilians, but simply what happens when an army undertakes a major military assault against one of the most densely populated areas on the face of the planet.

But that does not make innocent Palestinians any less dead than innocent Israelis. And the grotesquely disproportionate ratio of dead Palestinian civilians to dead Israeli civilians occurs over and over again, decade after sad decade. In the most recent outbreak of violence a few

years ago, for instance, Israeli forces kill 2,251 Palestinian men, women, and children, while Palestinians kill 71 Israelis, 67 of them soldiers.

What constitutes a war crime? When I was serving as a Marine infantryman in Vietnam, if I sighted in on a Vietnamese civilian threshing rice beside his house and shot him dead, I would have been committing a war crime. But if a jet fighter pilot had dropped a napalm bomb on that man's house in response to a call for an airstrike against a sniper in the hamlet, killing the same man, the pilot would not have been charged with a crime. Indeed, the mission would have counted toward his next Air Medal. Yet either way, an innocent and unarmed man is dead.

Google "Destruction in Gaza," and then click on "Images," and see what you get. What you will see is destruction on a par with German and Japanese cities by the spring of 1945. Total destruction. Indiscriminate killing of the people who lived in those cities. No less a figure than General Curtis LeMay said after that war that if the Americans had lost, those responsible for the bombing would have been tried as war criminals.

Moreover, though I heard an Israeli spokesman say that Gazans are receiving airdropped leaflets telling them where they can find "safe areas," neutral observers on the ground in Gaza are consistently reporting that in fact there are no "safe areas" in Gaza. Palestinians simply

have nowhere to go to escape the destruction and death; they cannot hide, and few of them can leave. Over two million of them have been displaced, and according to independent observers, half of those are facing starvation.

I recently wrote about the Palestinian poet Mosab Abu Toha, who was arrested by the Israeli army, detained and beaten, but finally released. He and his immediately family have now managed to get to Egypt safely, but only because he has powerful supporters in the international literary community. His parents, siblings and their children are still in Gaza, along with tens of thousands of others because they have no prominent supporters able to advocate for them.

As I've written previously, the history of this part of the world is an intellectual minefield. I am not going to try to go back and argue that Israel has no right to be where it is, or that Palestinian claims are without foundation. Anyone who tries to "prove" that the land really belongs to the Jews, or really belongs to the Arabs, or maybe even belongs to the Canaanites, is going to open, or at least re-open, a debate that can never be won.

The simple fact is that the state of Israel exists, has now a right to exist, and isn't going to stop existing. Hamas and Hezbollah and the Islamic Republic of Iran may all wish for Israel to cease to be, but that ain't gonna happen. It just isn't. Not in

my lifetime or any other time in the imaginable future. Israel is a fact.

But so are the Palestinians of Gaza. Unless Netanyahu and his minions really do manage to kill them all—which is just as unlikely as the destruction and removal of the nation of Israel—when all this current death and destruction finally come to an end, the Palestinians will still be there. And I can only wonder how many more recruits among young Palestinians the Israeli military has already generated in the past two months.

And to question Israeli military strategy in the current circumstances, or even Israeli policies toward Palestinians in general, is neither antisemitic nor anti-Jewish nor anti-Israeli. Both the immediate history of the Middle East, and world history in general, make it perfectly clear that there can never be a military solution to the conflicting claims of Israel and Palestine. There can only be a political solution, one that allows Israelis to live in safety and peace, and one that allows Palestinians to live with dignity and basic human rights. How many more wars, how many more deaths, how much more destruction must occur before that reality finally sinks in?

=====

W. D. Ehrhart is a retired Master Teacher of History & English, and author of a Vietnam War memoir trilogy published by McFarland & Co.

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Mike Says That God Says He's Our New Moses

by Jim Hightower

Mike Johnson, bless his heart, says he doesn't "wanna get too spooky on you," but it was God who made him the new Speaker of the U.S. House.

He's not asserting the fairly common belief, held by many Christians, that the Almighty plays a direct role in shaping people's lives. No, no—Mike's claim of divine selection is more singular, grandiose... and spooky. In a recent speech to a sect of Christian Nationalists, he confided that just prior to being chosen Speaker, God Hizownself had been awakening him every night for three weeks "to speak to me" about campaign strategy. Johnson says that while 13 other Republicans vied for the office, "the Lord kept telling me to wait, wait, wait." Then God finally said, "Now step forward" and claim the gavel of power.

Why him, you might ask? Well, explains the ultra-right-winger, American culture has become "so dark and depraved it almost seems irredeemable." So, says Mike, God needed a Christian purist to be "a new Moses" willing to lead America from the wickedness of abortion, gay marriage, and what the religious nationalists call "the ungodly effort to undermine our culture by Leftists."

Mike went further, explaining that "[God] had been speaking to me about this, and the Lord told me very clearly to prepare and be ready." But, says Mike, he was told not merely to take the nation's third highest political office, but ready to guide the nation, Moses-like, through "a Red Sea moment." So, all of us should get ready, for we now have a Trump-supporting, holy-rolling congress critter who actually believes he's been chosen by God to part the perilous waters and take us from a diverse democracy to his theocratic Christian wonderland.

God help us—and please hurry!

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The Alleged News®

from page six

implicit taxes likely cost us close to \$500 billion a year, as we pay over \$600 billion for drugs that would likely cost less than \$100 billion if sold in a free market. That comes to over \$4,000 a year for an average family. If we add in the higher costs for medical equipment, computers, software and a range of other items, we are almost certainly looking at implicit taxes of well over \$1 trillion a year. In other words, real money.

If we think of how these implicit taxes affect the economy, it is similar to how the parking meter payments affect the economy of the city of Chicago. They amount to money pulled out of people's pockets. That makes them less well off directly and also less able to bear the burden of other taxes.

In the case of prescription drugs, there is the additional issue that a large share of the patent rents are actually paid by the government. Roughly a third of drug spending directly comes from the federal government through Medicare, Medicaid and other government programs. Another 15 percent is paid by state and local governments.

This makes the deficit hawks' decision to ignore patent and copyright monopolies all the more absurd. If the government borrowed another \$120 billion a year to replace the patent supported research done by the pharmaceutical industry, they would all be yelling and screaming about the big increase in the deficit. (This would be in addition to the more than \$50 billion in annual research spending already supported by the National Institutes of Health and other government agencies.)

But they would completely ignore the future savings from being able to buy drugs at the free market price rather than the patent-protected price. That may make sense in Washington, but not for anyone who actually cares about the future of the economy.

Government-Granted Patent and Copyright Monopolies Are Part of the Debt, or You're Not Serious

The basic story here is that we have to recognize that granting patent and copyright monopolies are a way that the government pays for things. They are an alternative to direct spending. We have to recognize their economic impact if we want to do serious accounting of debts and deficits. The fact that their impact is almost universally ignored speaks to the seriousness of the current debate.

=====


Dean Baker is Senior Economist and co-founder of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, where this article first appeared. We publish it under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

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"It's like I grew a set of antennae over there. When I returned, my reception equipment was different."

— Henry Threadgill, American composer, saxophonist and flautist. Threadgill was a member of the U.S. Army Concert Band at Fort Riley, Kansas until a Catholic archbishop called his arrangement of a medley of national classics including "God Bless America" and "The Star-Spangled Banner" blasphemous. He served the remainder of his enlistment with the Fourth Infantry Division in Pleiku.

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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 31	MONDAY, JANUARY 1	TUESDAY, JANUARY 2	WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3	THURSDAY, JANUARY 4	FRIDAY, JANUARY 5	SATURDAY, JANUARY 6
<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—Two syndicated columns appear defending the CIA’s illegal spying on U.S. citizens. Coincidentally, the writers, Bill Buckley and Tom Braden, are both covert CIA assets.</p> <p>1970—Congress, a bit late, 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>1907—For the first time, the ball drops at midnight in Times Square, marking 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>1:57 1:59</p> <p>7:44 8:16</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. Halde-man, John Ehrlichman, and John Mitchell are convicted of felonies.</p> <p>1959—Castro’s commies take Cuba.</p> <p>1945—Secret mission is kept too secret: German troops mistakenly shoot down 300 German planes. It’s the Luftwaffe’s worst day of the war.</p> <p>1880—Elmer J. McCurdy is born in Washington, Maine. A bank and train robber until 1911 he changes careers, becoming a sideshow attraction and movie prop after he’s shot dead.</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 hero lights out 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> <p>2:35 2:40</p> <p>8:26 8:57</p>	<p>2021—Sen. Romney warns Majority Leader McConnell that insurrection-ists want to burn down his home and storm the Capitol, and the guy who can stop it is the one who started it.</p> <p>2021—Georgia Sec. of State Brad Raffensperger refuses Dolt #45’s demand that he “find 11,780 votes.”</p> <p>1996—At Bill Clinton’s invitation, Monica Lewinsky drops by the Oval Office. Sequestered in the bathroom, he violates his marriage vows.</p> <p>1972—During a one-hour interview on CBS, Richard Nixon tells Dan Rather that the bombing in Southeast Asia had been “very, very effective.”</p> <p>Next day in a note to Hank Kissingner, he tells the truth: “The result = zilch.”</p> <p>1970—The Supreme Court nixes Gen. Hershey’s effort to reclassify all draft protestors as 1-A, or draftable.</p> <p>1967—Gov. Reagan is sworn in at 12:10 a.m. ‘cause Jupiter’s at its zenith.</p> <p>1967—In Florida, 72 men are arrested, thwarting an invasion of Haiti financed by CBS in exchange for exclusive film rights of the landing.</p> <p>1963—Outnumbered four to one, vastly outgunned, without helicopters or armor, 350 Viet Cong defeat U.S.-advised ARVN at Ap Bac.</p> <p>1923—As evidence of his corruption mounts, Interior Secretary Albert Fall resigns. President Harding then offers him a seat on the Supreme Court.</p> <p>1920—U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer has thousands of alleged subversives arrested.</p> <p>3:18 3:26</p> <p>9:14 9:40</p>	<p>2021—Dolt #45 tries to replace Acting AG Rosen with Jeffrey Clark, who’s more likely to back his coup.</p> <p>2006—Hotshot Republican lobbyist Jack Abramoff pleads guilty to three felony counts for defrauding Indian tribes and bribing officials.</p> <p>1967—Jack Ruby conveniently dies in prison while awaiting retrial.</p> <p>1966—Ronald Reagan announces for Governorship of California, claiming it leads in bankruptcies and has 40% higher unemployment than the rest of the country, neither of which is true.</p> <p>1966—Navy vet and civil rights activist Samuel L. Younge, Jr., 21, is murdered in Tuskegee, Ala., by a white, 68-year-old gas station attendant who is later acquitted by an all-white jury.</p> <p>1961—In Idaho, three enlisted military technicians are killed in a steam explosion at a nuclear reactor.</p> <p>1955—The U.S. government announces that over 3,000 federal employees have been sacked to quell Joe McCarthy’s paranoia.</p> <p>1943—SSgt. Alan Magee falls 22,000 feet from a doomed B-17 without a parachute and crashes through the roof of a St. Nazaire rail-road station. He dies in 2003 at 84.</p> <p>1931—Fearing insurrection, merchants in England, Ark. hand over food to a mob of 500 hungry people.</p> <p>1924—British brigand Howard Carter loots Tutankhamen’s tomb.</p> <p>1891—L. Frank Baum calls for “total extermination” of Native Americans.</p> <p>4:03 4:16</p> <p>10:04 10:24</p>	<p>1971—George Mellendorf, in Vietnam, mails a letter to the White House complaining of slow mail delivery. His answer arrives in 1978.</p> <p>1965—Having forced UC Berkeley Regents to drop their ban on political speech, the Free Speech Movement holds a rally that’s legal for a change.</p> <p>1960—During a Minimum Interval Takeoff at Pease AFB, the second in a flight of three B-47s crashes and burns; four crewmen die.</p> <p>1958—In a New York cab, ex-Commie, ex-McCarthy aide, and ex-editor of <i>Confidential</i> Howard Rushmore shoots his wife, then himself.</p> <p>1956—A Senate Internal Security Subcommittee begins investigating newspapers, including the <i>New York Times</i>, for alleged Commie influence.</p> <p>1955—The U.S. agrees to pay Japan for nuking the Marshall Islands.</p> <p>1933—Farmers in Primghar, Iowa throw a rope around a banker’s neck and threaten to lynch him unless he promises to end foreclosures.</p> <p>1903—Topsy the Elephant, unjustly accused of being a killer, is fitted with copper sandals, fed carrots laced with a pound of cyanide, and electrocuted by the owners of Luna Park at Coney Island. An Edison crew films the fun.</p> <p>1882—John McCarton, ship’s printer aboard the USS <i>New Hampshire</i>, leaps overboard off Newport, R.I. to save Musician 2nd Class Jabez Smith from drowning. McCarton is later awarded the Medal of Honor.</p> <p>4:49 5:10</p> <p>10:58 11:12</p>	<p>2021—As Dolt #45’s alleged brain-trust schemes at the Willard, the FBI ignores a dire warning from its own Norfolk office, predicting violence.</p> <p>2011—Freshly-minted Rep. Frank Guinta [R-N.H.] assures David Koch he’ll show fealty attend a party later.</p> <p>1970—Kenneth Yablonski discovers his dad, UMW presidential challenger Joseph “Jock” Yablonski, his mom, and his sister dead. All were murdered in their sleep five days earlier on orders of incumbent UMW president “Tough Tony” Boyle.</p> <p>1968—Feds indict Dr. Spock for expressing concern about the health of his ex-patients now in uniform.</p> <p>1968—The FBI starts bugging MLK.</p> <p>1942—Mutual Broadcasting’s John B. Hughes begins an anti-Japanese-American radio campaign that results in the establishment of U.S. concentration camps.</p> <p>1937—The Abraham Lincoln Brigade is formed to fight fascism—“prematurely,” some say.</p> <p>1914—To reduce his 370% turnover rate, Henry Ford offers \$5 for an 8-hour day—to workers who comply with his rigid behavioral standards.</p> <p>1781—Benedict Arnold helps the Brits burn and plunder Richmond, Va.</p> <p>1776—New Hampshire ratifies the nation’s first state constitution.</p> <p>5:38 6:07</p> <p>11:54</p>	<p>2021—A misguided mob of purported patriots attacks the Capitol to subvert democracy and install a dictatorial doofus. Five die, many are injured, but Dolt #45’s <i>autogolpe</i> fails; the Republic is spared by ineptitude.</p> <p>2018—Pres. Donald J. Trump asserts that he is a “very stable genius.”</p> <p>2006—George W.[MD] Bush OKs \$20 million for a celebration of “success” in Iraq and Afghanistan.</p> <p>2005—A switching error causes a 2:40 a.m. train wreck in Graniteville, S.C.; 60 tons of chlorine gas escape, killing nine immediately and one months later.</p> <p>1986—One person dies and 100 are injured in an accident at Kerr-McGee’s nuclear fuel plant in Oklahama.</p> <p>1951—U.S.-backed South Korean security forces torture and massacre between 212 and 1,300 unarmed suspected commies in Ganghwa.</p> <p>1947—Callahan, Calif. school kids find a Black man lynched near their one-room schoolhouse.</p> <p>1946—Thousands of GIs storm HQ in the Philippines, protesting slow re-deployment back to the U.S.</p> <p>1944—RIP Ida Tarbell, pioneering muckraker, in Bridgeport, Conn.</p> <p>1895—Ex-Queen Liliuokalani is arrested in Hawaii after a failed coup against Sanford Dole.</p> <p>1853—President-elect Franklin Pierce and his wife Jane survive an Andover, Mass. train derailment, but, with two sons dead already, see their third son dead, nearly decapitated.</p> <p>6:29 7:05</p> <p>12:02 12:50</p>
SUNDAY, JANUARY 7	MONDAY, JANUARY 8	TUESDAY, JANUARY 9	WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10	THURSDAY, JANUARY 11	FRIDAY, JANUARY 12	SATURDAY, JANUARY 13

2015—Two brothers, Wahhabi extremists, kill 12 and wound 11 at *Charlie Hebdo*’s offices in Paris.

1999—The Senate tries Bill Clinton for lying about canoodling with a young intern. His prosecutor: Rep. (and adulterer) Henry Hyde [R-III].

1998—*The Washington Post* reports that George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush lied: he did attend meetings about arms sales to Iran.

1980—San Franciscans hold a grand bash to honor Emperor Norton I on the 100th anniversary of his demise.

1948—Captain Thomas F. Mantell, a Kentucky Air Guard ace, takes his F-51 too high pursuing a UFO; hypoxic and unconscious, he crashes.

1945—USS *Hovey*, named for Portsmouth-born Ensign Charles Emerson Hovey, is sunk by kamikazi and torpedo attack off Luzon.

1931—Inspired by the Jan. 3rd “food riot” in England, Ark., Will Rogers begins a campaign for federal assistance—helping to topple Hoover.

1861—Mayor Fernando Wood, a Democrat, proposes that New York City secede from the Union.

1851—“That a war of extermination will continue to be waged...until the Indian race becomes extinct,” Gov. Peter H. Burnett informs the California legislature, “must be expected.”

1806—Cherokees in Tennessee and Alabama cede 7,000 square miles of land to whites. In exchange they reap the benefit of not being killed.

7:20 8:01

2020—Reacting to the U.S. drone-strike assassination of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani in Baghdad, Iran fires missiles at bases in Iraq; 64 U.S. troops suffer traumatic brain injuries. Trump denies any were injured.

2007—The USS *Newport News*, submerged, collides with a Japanese oil tanker near the Strait of Hormuz.

2005—The USS *San Francisco*, submerged, collides at flank [top] speed with an undersea mountain near Guam. One sailor dies, 98 are injured.

2003—“The war on terror involves Saddam Hussein,” explains George W.[MD] Bush, “because of the nature of Saddam Hussein, the history of Saddam Hussein, and his willingness to terrorize himself.”

1992—At a formal dinner in Japan, Pres. George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush turns his head to P.M. K. Miyazawa and vomits in his lap.

1982—Reagan’s White House grants tax-exempt status to racially-segregated colleges. (That lasts 4 days.)

1973—Five employees of President Nixon plead guilty to burglary.

1958—An accident at the Che-lyabinsk plutonium plant in the U.S.S.R. kills hundreds.

1956—Indigenous Hoaroanis in Ecuador register their annoyance with missionaries by spearing five to death.

1811—Enslaved Blacks on Louisiana’s German Coast attack a plantation owner, take up arms, and march east towards New Orleans.

8:10 8:54

2002—Future A.G. Al Gonzales writes that parts of the Geneva Conventions are “obsolete” and “quaint.”

1980—Sixty-three participants in the 1979 seizure of the Grand Mosque at Mecca are beheaded with swords in the public squares of eight Saudi cities.

1967—Calculations show ARVN desertions at 5.7 x the rate of the NVA.

1964—Panama suspends relations with the U.S. after U.S. troops kill 21 anti-American protesters.

1952—In Phenix City, Ala.—“Sin City” to Ft. Benning GIs—an anti-vice crusader’s home is bombed.

1939—In Missouri’s “Bootheel,” 1,700 homeless sharecroppers, Black and white, stage a sit-down strike in the middle of Highways 60 and 61.

1918—The 10th Cavalry and Yaqui Indians conduct the last battle of the Indian Wars at Bear Valley, Ariz.

1913—Richard Milhous Nixon is born in Yorba Linda, Calif.

1861—Mississippi declares it’s seceding because “none but the Black race can bear exposure to the tropical sun...[and] a blow to slavery is a blow at commerce and civilization.”

1811—The number of enslaved but armed Black men marching on New Orleans rises into the hundreds.

1805—Ohio passes “Black laws”—no Blacks may testify in court.

1766—A “grand mob” in Portsmouth relieves stamp master George Meserve of his commission and raises the colonies’ first “No Stamp” flag.

9:00 9:44

2017—CNN reports on the Steele dossier; *Buzzfeed* publishes it.

2002—George W.[MD] Bush denies ever meeting Enron CEO Ken Lay, his largest campaign donor.

1992—A busted shipping container releases 28,000 floating toy animals in the mid-Pacific, which are then tracked by oceanographers; the gripping tale is told in *Moby Duck*.

1984—Responders to a false alarm about an accidental missile launch at Warren AFB, Wyo. park an armored car atop the silo as a precaution.

1967—School dropout and pickaxe-handle-dispensing restaurateur Lester Maddox becomes Gov. of Ga.

1957—Four Black churches and homes of two Black leaders in Birmingham, Ala. are bombed.

1946—“I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can, only as one who has seen its brutality, its stupidity,” says Ike in Ottawa, Canada.

1880—Emperor Norton’s funeral draws 20,000 in San Francisco.

1860—The Pemberton Mill in Lawrence, Mass., overloaded with machinery to boost profits, collapses killing 145 and injuring 166: the worst industrial disaster in state history.

1855—The last 88 Clackamas Indians sign away the best timberland in Oregon for \$500 and some food.

1811—The rebellion on Louisiana’s German Coast ends in bloodshed.

1776—Anon [T. Paine] publishes *Common Sense*, eschewing royalties.

9:50 10:33

2008—“There will be a signed peace treaty [between Israel and the Palestinians] by the time I leave office,” says George W.[MD] Bush.

2003—“You can count on this,” Donald Rumsfeld tells Saudi Prince Bandar, showing plans for the Iraq War. “This is going to happen.”

2002—To take full advantage of recent memos declaring torture OK, the Department of Defense opens a secret detention center at Guantanamo Bay.

2000—“Rarely is the question asked,” says George W.[MD] Bush, “is our children learning?”

1986—The CIA polygraphs Ollie North’s co-conspirator Manucher Ghorbanifar. Two answers out of 15 are true: name and birthplace.

1974—Joint Chiefs Chair Admiral Moorer is reported to have spied on the executive branch to get secret info on U.S. diplomatic initiatives.

1943—Carlo Tresca, influential editor of an anarchist newspaper, is shot dead on 5th Ave. Carmine Galante likely did it for Generoso Pope. Pope wanted it done as a favor for his pal, Mussolini. Pope’s son Generoso Jr., 20, founds the *National Enquirer* ten years later.

1917—Fire consumes 39 buildings comprising a munitions plant in Lyndhurst, N.J. Switchboard operator Tessie McNamara’s warnings help 1,400 workers escape.

1912—In Lawrence, Mass., 32,000 women and children strike for bread—and roses, too.

10:38 11:21

2021—In light of the recent failed insurrection, all eight members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff warn active duty personnel not to do anything treasonous.

1991—Congress authorizes the first Bush vs. Hussein War.

1984—Reagan Deputy Secretary of Defense W. Paul Thayer resigns after being charged with insider trading. He ends up in the can.

1971—Rev. Philip Berrigan is indicted for conspiring to kidnap Henry Kissinger and bomb federal buildings.

1968—Lima Site 85, a tiny USAF navigational facility on a remote mountaintop in Laos, is rocketed, bombed, and strafed by two NVA-piloted, Soviet-built Antonov biplanes. One, damaged by groundfire, crashes. A flight mechanic in a CIA Huey shoots down the other with an AK-47.

1962—U.S. helicopters fly their first combat mission in South Vietnam.

1951—For bombing an airliner, Albert Guay goes to the gallows in Canada, saying, “At least I die famous.”

1943—Federal bureaucrats announce that hot dogs will henceforth contain less meat and more soybeans, and be called “victory sausages.”

1932—Ms. Hattie Wyatt Caraway (D-Ark.) becomes the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate.

1931—Raymond Gunn, 27, accused of killing Maryville, Mo. school-teacher Velma Colter, is chained to the roof of her schoolhouse, which is then set ablaze.

11:27

5:09 5:53

2018—Hawaiian authorities issue an alert: “BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT INBOUND ... THIS IS NOT A DRILL.” A retraction comes 38 minutes later.

2017—N.H. State Rep. Carolyn Halstead [R-Milford] drops a loaded handgun on the floor during a packed public hearing at the State House.

1987—Lee Atwater calls Reagan’s drug war a “fad issue, a classic really. It came and went in three weeks, max.”

1975—The *N.Y. Times* reports that USAF Maj. Harold L. Hering was discharged for asking, during Minuteman training, “How can I know that an order...to launch my missiles came from a sane president?”

1964—The tail falls off a B-52, which crashes in Barton, Md. with two nukes aboard. Four crewmen bail out alive, but two of them die of exposure, one just 800 yards from a streetlight.

1957—Frisbees go on sale.

1946—In Paris, 500 GIs adopt a radical *Magna Carta* demanding complete reform of the officer/enlisted setup.

1929—Wild West gunman Wyatt Earp, 80, dies in bed of a bladder infection in an L.A. bungalow.

1874—N.Y.C. Police Commissioner Abram Duryée says 1,600 cops beating unemployed demonstrators was “the most glorious sight I have ever seen.”

1842—Riding into Jalalabad alone is William Brydon, sole survivor of the 4,500 British soldiers who began a retreat from Kabul one week earlier.

12:08 12:17

6:00 6:41

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