

The Fortnightly Rant

Is There a Script Doctor in the House?

We blame screens. Think about it: how many of today's problems began with, or are made worse by, people gaping at screens?

As with so many things—automobiles, for example—the dire eventual consequences were not evident at first. Now they are so ubiquitous that eliminating them all would be impossible. Just imagine the disruption *that* would entail. But, given the level of chaos we're already experiencing, and likelihood that more is coming, it certainly won't hurt to at least assess this problem.

In accordance with our conservative tendencies, we shall begin at the beginning, namely, the Dutch Republic in 1659. Two years after inventing the pendulum clock, the absurdly prolific Christiaan Huygens* crafted the first magic lantern: a box, an oil lamp, a glass slide, and some lenses, which projected an image onto a screen.

"In the beginning, [magic lanterns] were mostly used to project scary images, like Death or skeletons. Huygens' first sketches of pictures that could be projected using magic lanterns were even a series of pictures of Death taking off its head. These scary pictures eventually became the core of horror shows called "Phantasmagoria," which were very popular throughout the 19th century."[†]

Not having evolved to any measurable degree in the intervening years, humans still found entertain-

ment in death and mayhem following the invention of motion pictures.

In fact, the first hit movie ever—the Edison company's 1903 opus "The Great Train Robbery"—ends with Justus D. Barnes, as a train-robbing outlaw, firing his Colt six-shooter directly at the audience.



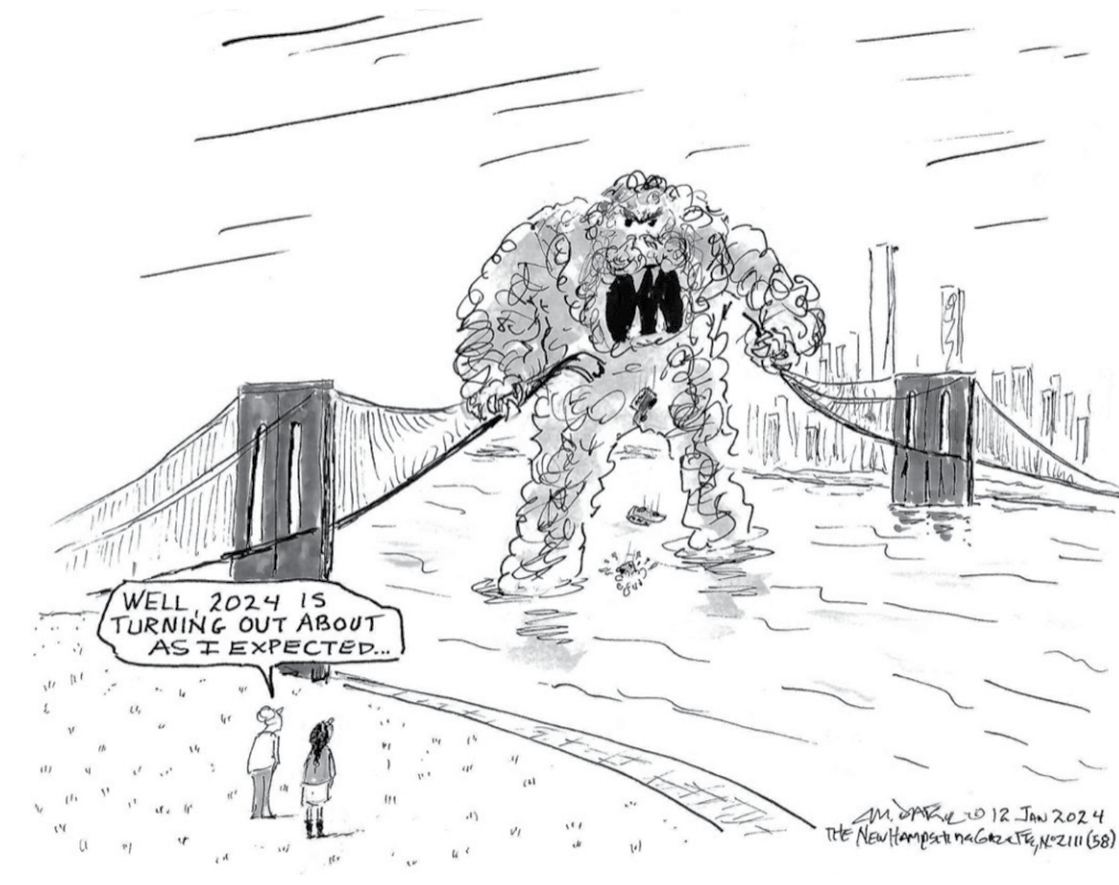
Pretending to kill the audience never took hold, but over the ensuing 120 years, across many genres—from cowboy shoot-em-ups and war epics to gangster movies and TV cop shows—few things have more reliably drawn an audience than one human killing another.[‡]

This leads us to suspect that there might be something going on here. Don't take our word for it though. Let's consult Ernest Becker, a leading expert on the topic of humans contemplating—or failing to contemplate—their own demise.

A nice Jewish boy from Springfield, Massachusetts, Becker would have been either 20 or 21 when, as a U.S. Army infantryman, he helped liberate a Nazi concentration camp. Following this memorable bit of military service, Becker became an administrator in the U.S. Embassy in Paris but soon began his true life's work as a student and a professor of anthropology.

"In his 1973 book *The Denial of Death*," his Wikipedia bio relates, "Becker came to believe that an individual's character is essentially

‡ Imagine we knew the total number of all the individual killings in all the movies and TV shows that were ever made. Now take the number of all the showings, and the size of the audiences. Multiply them and we'd have the number of times one human watched another human pretending to kill a third. Just for irony's sake, we're guessing it would come to about 117 billion—equal to the estimated number of all the humans who have ever lived.



formed around the process of denying one's own mortality, that this denial is a necessary component of functioning in the world, and that this character-armor masks and obscures genuine self-knowledge. Much of the evil in the world, he believed, was a consequence of this need to deny death."

The Denial of Death was widely praised and has never been out of print. It won the Pulitzer for non-fiction in 1974, a few months after Becker's death from colon cancer, at the age of 49.

His work is carried on by the Ernest Becker Foundation, founded in 1993. One aspect of that work is Terror Management Theory [TMT], the basic tenet of which is that the awareness of death "engenders potentially debilitating terror that is 'managed' by the development and maintenance of cultural worldviews."

Faced with the knowledge of their own inevitable demise, hu-

mans attain "[s]ymbolic immortality... by being part of a great nation, amassing great fortunes, noteworthy accomplishments, and having children."

Empirical research supports this theory. Experiments have shown that when a test subject's awareness of death is elevated, it "intensifies their strivings to defend their cultural worldviews." In addition, "non-conscious death thoughts come more readily to mind when cherished cultural beliefs or self-esteem is threatened."

So, in short, most humans are scared to death of death, and do their best to deny it. Rather than facing their existential dilemma and dealing with it, they will emotionally bind themselves to something larger and more enduring.

One consequence of this arrangement is that when they perceive that greater thing as being endangered, it rouses the very terror they have been trying to suppress.

Let us now leave aside the theoretical, and return to our mundane, day-to-day world—if we dare.

Let's flip on the radio and listen to Glenn Beck, Clay Travis, Buck Sexton, or Sean Hannity.

Or, we could add some visual razzle-dazzle, by tuning in to Fox News.

Not your cup of media? That's too bad, because no matter where you turn, you can't escape the constant fear-mongering. In any given hour on CNN, you'll find an array of Republicans throwing additional barrels of napalm on the dumpster fire that is our national dialogue.

The GOP has more think tanks than we can count. Judging from their *modus operandi*, at least some of their brainiacs must be familiar with Becker's work.

But even if they developed their strategy intuitively, it's clear that the GOP has perfected the art of finding, collecting, and further terrifying those who are already scared to death of death.

The Alleged News®

"MAGA Math Doesn't Add Up": Democrats Rebuked for Backing GOP Cuts to IRS

Welcome, dear reader, to a new year in which we will all be subjected to mass quantities of the same old... same old. That is to say, we may expect dire warnings from sober and serious conservatives, expressing deep concern about the nation's impending bankruptcy, due entirely to profligate spending by liberals eager to fritter away the hard earned money of widows and orphans. Never mind that said widows and orphans are about to be asked, by the aforementioned pillars of fiscal probity, to expect less from a Social Security system which exempts taxation on earnings above \$168,600.

And for God's sake, no one breathe a word about wave after wave of Republican tax cuts for the wealthy. Corporate sponsors hate that kind of talk.

— The Alleged Editor

by Julia Conley

Democratic leaders assured the U.S. public that a budget deal keeping non-military spending at its 2023 level would "protect key domestic priorities," but economists and economic justice advocates on Monday criticized the party for appeasing the GOP and permitting the inclusion of its top objective: accelerating cuts to the Internal Revenue Service in order to benefit wealthy tax evaders.

The deal, which provides \$772.7 billion for "non-defense discretionary funding," also includes a provision allowing \$10 billion in funding cuts to the IRS—which the GOP insisted upon last year in the so-called Fiscal Responsibility Act to raise the debt ceiling—to go into effect in 2024 instead of 2025.

Rebuking a statement from Sen-

ate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.), who said the deal will "maintain important funding priorities for the American people and avoid a government shutdown," the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) warned the agreement is "at best a funding freeze at a time when costs have risen, meaning that public services that people and communities count on will be cut."

Sharon Parrott, president of the progressive think tank, said that while Democrats rejected "further, deeper cuts that some House Republicans demanded"—a "critical" move—the acceleration of IRS funding cuts in the deal was "deeply unfortunate."

With the provision, said Parrott,

the deal puts "tax cheaters' interests ahead of honest taxpayers."

"Any further cuts to the IRS should be rejected," she added.

"House Republicans continue to create showdowns they claim are about spending and deficits, only to demand IRS funding cuts that would weaken tax enforcement, allow for more unlawful tax cheating, and increase the deficit."

Critics have warned that slashing IRS funding will not only make it more difficult for the government to stop tax evasion by the rich—costing an estimated \$38.1 billion in lost tax revenue, according to a Center for American Progress (CAP) analysis—but will also make it more difficult for working people to access IRS services.

"Says a lot that this is a top con-

servative priority," said Bharat Ramamurti, former deputy director of the National Economic Council.

The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act increased IRS funding, noted David Kass, executive director of Americans for Tax Fairness last week, cutting wait times and adding services for taxpayers "while simultaneously allowing the IRS to recoup funds from super-rich tax cheats."

Yet "Republicans continue to be laser-focused on a single issue—protecting the wealthiest from paying their fair share in taxes," Kass said. "Republicans continually shout about the size of the deficit, using it as an excuse to try to cut services that Americans rely on. Yet according to the Congressional Budget Office,

The Alleged News®
from page one

cutting the IRS budget costs our country billions. Why then, would Republicans work so hard to slash this funding and add to the deficit? We know the answer: to protect mega-rich tax cheats rather than helping hard working Americans."

Bobby Kogan, senior director of federal budget policy for CAP, pointed out that the deal finally reached by Republicans and Democrats includes about \$32.5 billion in "real spending offsets"—less than the amount of government revenues that are lost when the IRS loses funding to hold tax cheats to account.

"For every \$1 the IRS spends auditing wealthy tax cheats, America sees \$22 in return," said campaign group Groundwork Action. "MAGA math doesn't add up."

"Appeasing Republican extremists with cuts to the IRS," the group added, "is both fiscally and morally

irresponsible."

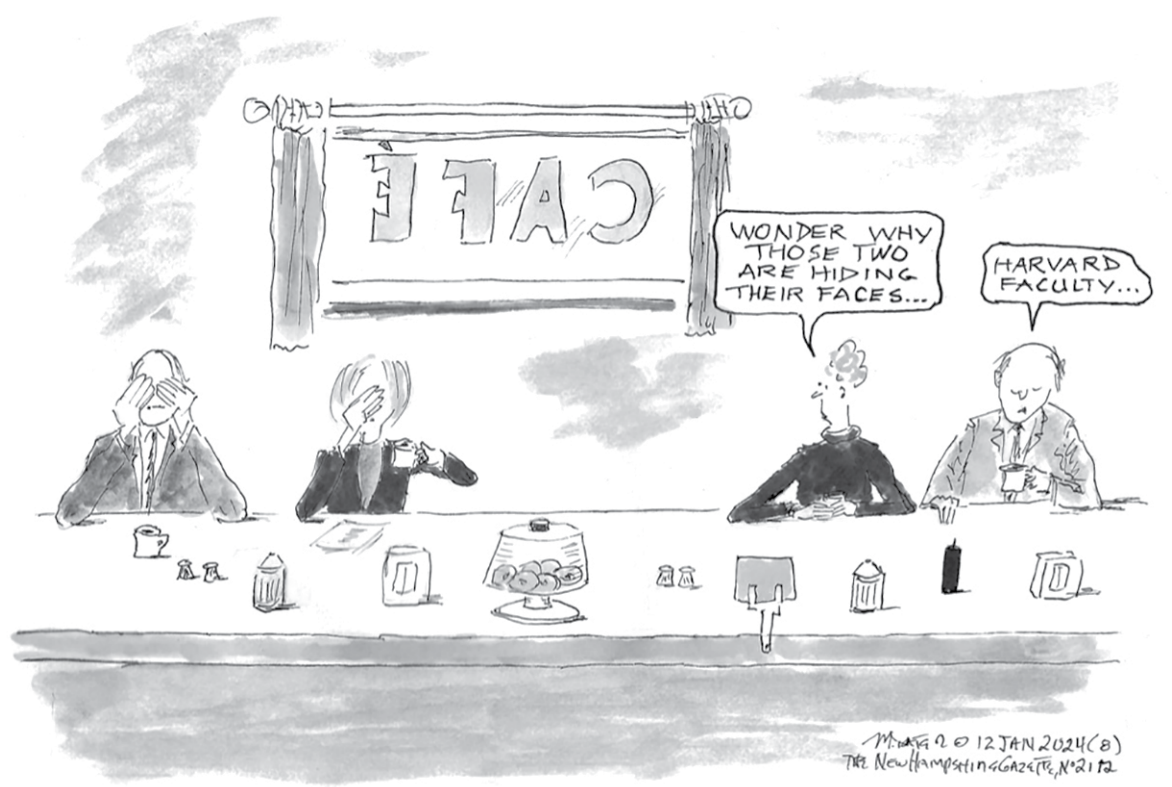
Julia Conley is a staff writer for Common Dreams. This work is licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0).

\$8.5 Trillion in Untaxed Assets:
Data Shows Why We Need
a Billionaire Income Tax

by Jake Johnson

An analysis released January 3rd shows that in 2022, the wealthiest people in the United States collectively held a "staggering" \$8.5 trillion in wealth that is not—and might never be—subject to taxation.

Examining recently released Federal Reserve data for 2022, Americans for Tax Fairness (ATF) found that the roughly 64,000 U.S. households with at least \$100 million in wealth—less than 0.05 percent of the population—controlled more than one in every six dollars of the country's "unrealized gains," profits that aren't taxable until the underlying asset, such as a stock position, is



The Yoken's sign, as it appeared on Friday evening, January 5th. The whale no longer spouts, and its tail wags no more. Its outline, always static, is mostly missing now. With its missing letters, the name is now legible only to those who knew it when... On October 22, 1987, for example, when a certain con man from Queens spoke here to a credulous Portsmouth Rotary Club, and, by his own account, due to their enthusiasm, began to think of running for president. In 2015, the sign was restored. It was a glorious thing to behold. The next year the con man was elected, and it's all been downhill since then. We're torn: should the sign get a tune-up? Or should it be allowed to decay, as a fitting memorial to the state of our democracy?

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"But the ultra-wealthy don't need to sell to benefit: They can live off low-cost loans secured against their growing fortunes. And once inherited, such gains disappear completely for tax purposes," ATF's Zachary Tashman and William Rice explained in the new analysis. "While most Americans predominantly live off the income they earn from a job—income that is taxed all year, every year—the very richest households live lavishly off capital gains that may never be taxed."

That small, ultra-rich fraction of U.S. society is sitting on more unrealized capital gains than the bottom 84 percent of the country—roughly 110 million households—combined, Tashman and Rice noted.

Most of the typical U.S. household's unrealized capital gains are in the form of their homes, which face state and local property taxes. But 93 percent of the unrealized gains of America's wealthiest are tied up in businesses, stock portfolios, and mutual funds, ATF found. As a result, mega-rich individuals such as Tesla CEO Elon Musk—the wealthiest man on the planet—wind up paying little to nothing in federal income taxes.

Between 2013 and 2018, leading U.S. billionaires paid an average federal tax rate of just 4.8 percent, ac-

cording to a previous ATF analysis.

"This is why we need a billionaire income tax," the group wrote on social media Wednesday, pointing to legislative proposals reintroduced late last year in both chambers of Congress.

Sen. Ron Wyden's (D-Ore.) Billionaires Income Tax would tax the tradable assets of individuals with more than \$100 million in annual income or more than \$1 billion in assets for three consecutive years, according to a summary released by the Oregon Democrat's office.

In the House, Reps. Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.) and Don Beyer (D-Va.) unveiled a bill that mirrors President Joe Biden's call for a minimum income tax for billionaires. The legislation would require ultra-wealthy households to pay a 25 percent annual tax rate on their income, including unrealized gains.

Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a case backed by right-wing groups aiming to preemptively outlaw any tax on unrealized gains. The justices—with the notable exception of Samuel Alito, who was urged to recuse from the case due to his connection to a lawyer representing the plaintiffs—appeared unlikely to issue the kind of sweeping ruling demanded by right-wing organizations such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

ATF's analysis found that the wealth of America's billionaires and centimillionaires has exploded in recent years as Republicans have enacted massive tax cuts for the rich while wealth tax proposals have languished in Congress.

"The cumulative \$8.5 trillion of unrealized capital gains held by America's billionaires and centimillionaires in 2022 has jumped by more than half—or \$3.2 trillion—just since the last Fed survey year of 2019," Tashman and Rice wrote. "That increase continues a decades-long upward trend among the richest households in the United States."

To begin reversing the trend and addressing the extreme and dangerous stratification of U.S. society by wealth, Tashman and Rice argued that Congress must "curb the economic and political power of the richest households by annually taxing their investment gains—whether realized or not—just as workers' wages are taxed now, every year, all year round."

"Without this necessary reform to our system of taxation," they warned, "the growth of untaxed income at the very top of our economy will continue to accelerate, to the benefit of a tiny few and the detriment of everyone else."

Jake Johnson is a senior editor and



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In 41 U.S. States, Richest One Percent Pay Lower Tax Rates Than Everyone Else
by Jake Johnson

Nearly every state and local tax system in the U.S. is fueling the nation's inequality crisis by forcing lower- and middle-class families to contribute a larger share of their incomes than their rich counterparts, according to a new study published Tuesday.

Titled "Who Pays?," the analysis by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP) examines in detail the tax systems of all 50 U.S. states, including the rates paid by different income segments.

In 41 states, ITEP found, the richest one percent are taxed at a lower rate than any other income group. Forty-six states tax the top one percent at a lower rate than middle-income families.

"When you ask people what they think a fair tax code looks like, almost nobody says we should have the richest pay the least," said ITEP

research director Carl Davis. "And yet when we look around the country, the vast majority of states have tax systems that do just that."

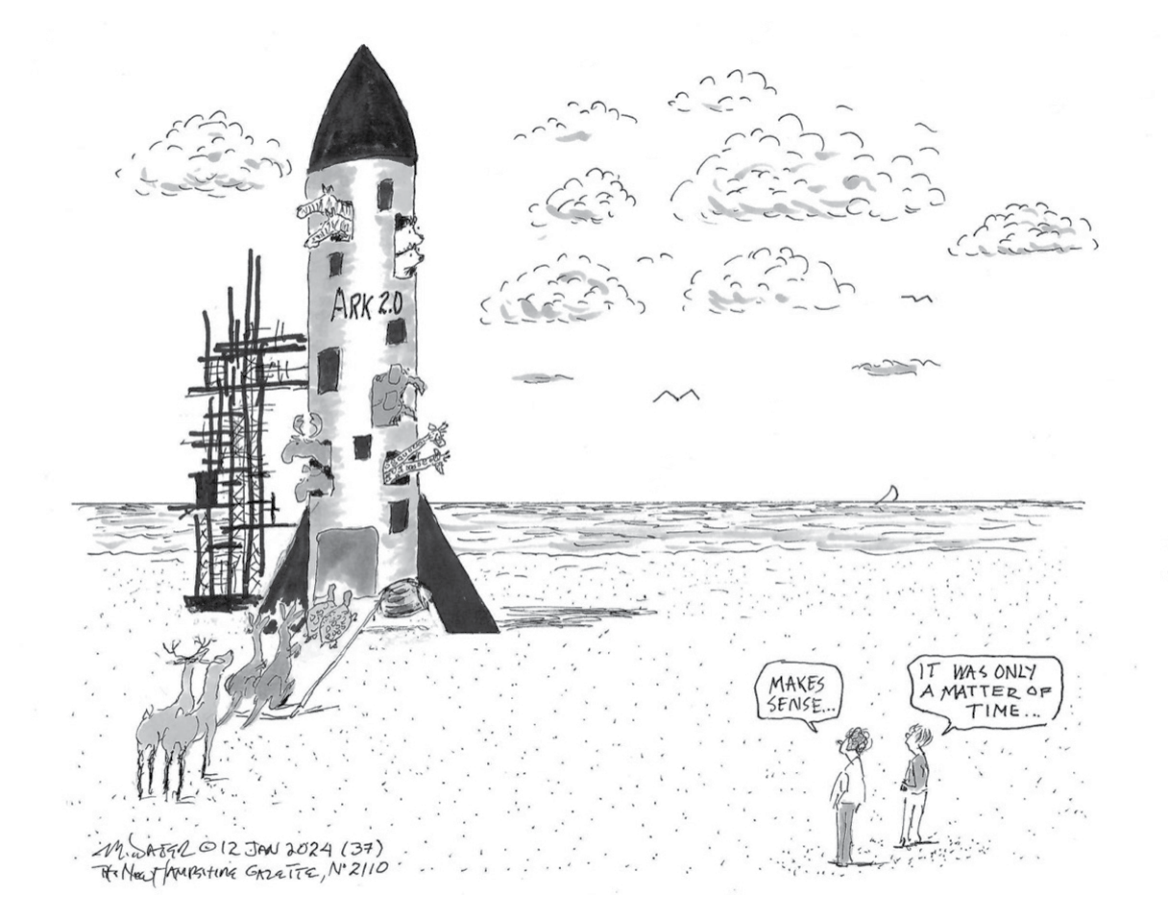
"There's an alarming gap here between what the public wants and what state lawmakers have delivered," Davis added.

In recent years, dozens of states across the U.S. have launched what the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities recently called a "tax-cutting spree," permanently slashing tax rates for corporations and the wealthy during a pandemic that saw billionaire wealth skyrocket and company profits soar.

A report released last week, as *Common Dreams* reported, showed ultra-rich Americans are currently sitting on \$8.5 trillion in untaxed assets.

According to ITEP's new study, tax systems in just six states—California, Maine, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, and Vermont—and the District of Columbia are progressive, helping to reduce the chasm between rich taxpayers and other residents.

Massachusetts, which has one of the more equitable tax systems in



Attempting to commit journalism these days can be a challenge. If you're not careful, the subject matter can lead to some rather dark thoughts [see photo on opposite page]. Fortunately our readers send us things from time to time which cheer us up immeasurably. Take this photo, for example, showing a pair of charming young gentlemen fortifying themselves during a game at the Wildcat Stadium in Durham. It's always heartening to see such civic engagement amongst the youth. Now, if you'll excuse us, we'll go down cellar and take turns banging our heads against the wall.

the nation, collected \$1.5 billion in revenue last year thanks to its recently enacted millionaires tax, a measure that improved the state's ranking by 10 spots in ITEP's Tax Inequality Index. Minnesota has also ramped up its taxes on the rich over the past several years while expanding benefits for lower-income families, ITEP's study observes.

But the full picture of U.S. state and local systems is grim. In 44 states, tax laws "worsen income inequality by making incomes more unequal after collecting state and local taxes," ITEP found.

Florida has the most regressive tax code in the U.S., with the richest one percent paying a mere 2.7 percent tax rate while the poorest 20 percent pay 13.2 percent.

Florida is among the U.S. states that don't have personal income taxes, which forces them to rely on consumption and property taxes that are "nearly always regressive," ITEP notes in the new analysis.

"Eight of the 10 most regressive

tax systems—Florida, Washington, Tennessee, Nevada, South Dakota, Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana—rely heavily on regressive sales and excise taxes," the study says. "As a group, these eight states derive 52 percent of their tax revenue from these taxes, compared to the national average of 34 percent."

Aidan Davis, ITEP's state policy director, said that "we've seen a lot of states shift their tax systems to become even more regressive in recent years by enacting deep tax cuts for the wealthiest."

The report points to Kentucky's adoption of a flat tax and repeated corporate tax cuts, which "delivered the largest windfall to families in the upper part of the income scale and have been paid for in part through new or higher sales and excise taxes on a long list of items such as car repairs, parking, moving services, bowling, gym memberships, tobacco, vaping, pet care, and ride-share rides."

Davis said that "we know it

doesn't have to be like this," arguing there is a "clear path forward for flipping upside-down tax systems and we've seen a handful of states come pretty close to pulling it off."

"The regressive state tax laws we see today are a policy choice," said Davis, "and it's clear there are better choices available to lawmakers."

Jake Johnson is a senior editor and staff writer for *Common Dreams*. This work is licensed under Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0).

'Twas Ever Thus
"...after the pestilence...servants, having no regard to the ordinance, but to their ease and singular covetousness, do withdraw themselves from serving great men and others, unless they have...wages double or treble of what they were...to the great damage of the great men and impoverishment of all the commonality."

— Britain, 1350

Murph's Fortnightly Quote
"I have noticed even people who claim everything is predestined, and that we can do nothing to change it, look before they cross the road."
— Stephen Hawking (1942-2018) physicist, author

"Congress is so strange; a man gets up to speak and says nothing, nobody listens, and then everybody disagrees."
— Will Rogers
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**The “Palestinians
Were Immigrants” Canard**

To the Editor:

Lewis Brackett refers to the “inconvenient truths” that Palestinian Arabs were immigrants, and that Palestine was a desert until Zionists fixed it up. Actually, only extremely uninformed people still consider these hoary myths to be “truth.”

The “Palestinians were immigrants” canard has been demolished by Norman Finkelstein, Bill Farrell, Albert Hourani, and others. A number of people, such as Howard Sachar and Yehoshua Porath, have put immigrants at a twelfth of Palestine’s population in 1948. What does Brackett make of recent DNA testing, reported by Haaretz, that indicates half of Palestinians have roots going back to the Canaanites?

The desert business is a partial truth. In 1947 the United Nations Special Commission on Palestine reported that half the country was desert. They also stated that Arab agriculture had made considerable strides. According to Don Peretz, in the area that became Israel there were 30,000 acres of Arab-owned citrus groves, and 90 percent of the olive groves were Arab-owned.

Since Brackett cites Mark Twain, we should perhaps recall Twain’s remark about how fast a lie travels.

Aaron Carine
Dover, N.H.

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“Satan and His Minions”

Dear Editor,

Regarding Lewis Brackett’s letter in the December 29th issue, I hope I’m not getting too personal here, but as soon as anyone starts talking about “Satan and his minions,” I know I’m dealing with a religious zealot. Synonyms for zealot include fanatic, extremist, radical, diehard, bigot, sectarian, maniac, and nut. Indeed, the original zealots were a group of Jews who imagined they could topple the Roman Empire and set up a world Jewish theocracy.

Bill Ehrhart
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania

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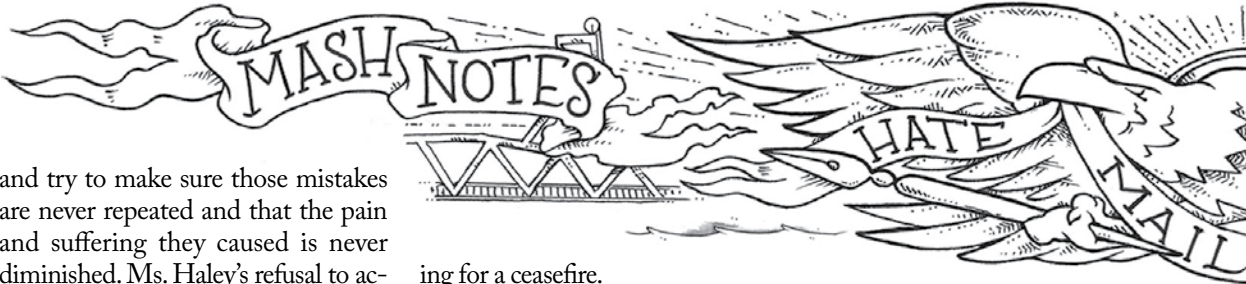
There Are None So Blind...

Dear Editor:

In a recent visit to New Hampshire, presidential candidate Nikki Haley did not mention slavery as a cause of the Civil War when asked by a local citizen. She cited other reasons such as “states rights,” the federal government, etc. Of course these were factors, but the overriding issue was the fear that the federal government would abolish slavery. States rights was a code word for the south’s desire to maintain slavery and even expand it to new states joining the union. In fact, South Carolina, the first state to secede and Haley’s own state, stated in its declaration of secession that “an increasing hostility on the part of non-slaveholding states to the institution of slavery,” was a major factor cited for secession. It is also noted that every state that seceded listed slavery in their declaration of secession. To ignore, deny, forget or otherwise try to diminish the role of slavery as a cause of the Civil War is an insult to those who died fighting to end this abomination, including over 4,000 N.H. Union soldiers.

Unfortunately, the denial or rewriting of uncomfortable history, banning books, punishing teachers, disenfranchising voters, taking away women’s rights, demonizing LGBT people, immigrants and others has become the unwritten platform of the Republican Party. And candidates like Nikki Haley are either too cowardly to speak the truth, or they have bought into this Trumpian/DeSantis version of historical reality. This is especially hypocritical coming from someone like Haley. A child born to immigrants who were not citizens when she was born here, yet she became a citizen at birth, something her party wants to deny other children born to immigrants. A child whose father, an immigrant from India, was denied employment by two South Carolina Universities because of his dark skin, but was hired by a historically black university in South Carolina. Did Ms. Haley forget this history as well?

America needs leaders who do not try to erase or minimize our historical mistakes, but acknowledge them



and try to make sure those mistakes are never repeated and that the pain and suffering they caused is never diminished. Ms. Haley’s refusal to acknowledge important history that still impacts our nation demonstrates her lack of the necessary integrity, character and courage for the position she seeks.

Rich Dipentima
Portsmouth, N.H.

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Do Nation-States Even Have Rights?

Dear Editors,

I really appreciate your thoughtful reporting on the genocide in Gaza. I was surprised reading the following line in W.D. Ehrhart’s recent piece, Let’s Get Real: “The simple fact is that the state of Israel exists, has now a right to exist, and isn’t going to stop existing. Israel is a fact.” Nope. People have rights. But no nation-state has a right to exist. Nation-states are power systems established by violence. A nation-state has no rights according to international law. It has never been custom to attribute nonexistent rights to a state, apart from the case of Israel where this seems to be a media talking point used to hush up those who say, “Hey wait, maybe Palestinians have rights, too?”

I also take issue with the idea that any nation-state is here to stay forever—they’re often militant and expansionist resulting in shifting boundaries and labels, and things sure have changed over the years—heck, remember Empires? It seems clearer than ever that displacing an entire population of people and taking away their rights in order to create an ethnostate doesn’t work, and can’t exist perfectly in perpetuity.

Let’s not ascribe nonexistent rights to nation-states—especially one committing a genocide and charting a course toward ethnic cleansing while the U.S. supplies its state-of-the-art killing machines and most of the world watches in horror. Here’s hop-

ing for a ceasefire.

P.S. I haven’t seen my favorite “War is Theft” ads in a while, I hope they haven’t been hijacked.

Ali Egizi
Exeter, N.H.

Ali:

Thanks for this truly eye-opening take on the matter.

Our “War is Theft” advertiser is alive, well, and at liberty, we’re happy to say—just temporarily deploying assets elsewhere. Care to pitch in? Could probably be arranged....

The Editor

=====

Ewing Attempts a Come-Back

To the Editor:

Is public education’s main purpose to provide jobs or to prepare children for productive futures?

[Approximately 250 pedantic and misleading words deleted. — The Ed.]

The [Education Freedom Account] program should expand until all N.H. students are provided a quality education in public or alternate schools.

Don Ewing
Meredith, N.H.

Don:

Nice try, but no. Your “alternate schools” are an attempt to hijack public funds, indoctrinate children, and undermine the union movement. We’re not having any of that.

The Editor

=====

**Spain’s Judges Do Not Want To Be
Investigated For Their Actions
Against Catalan Independence**

To the Editor:

From the outside, it is usually said that Catalonia and Spain should negotiate to find a way to continue together. But from Catalonia we have tried many times, since Spain subjugated Catalonia by force in 1714, and we have come to the conviction that there is no possible understanding and that

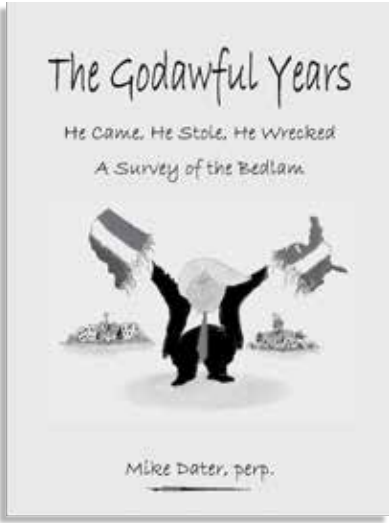
the only solution is for everyone to go their own way. After General Franco’s 40 years of dictatorship, the international situation forced a transition to a system that is democratic as long as the unity of Spain is not questioned. And that has been translated through the alternation of two parties in government: the Popular Party founded by seven former Franco ministers and the PSOE, a social democratic party but as nationalist as the PP. In 2004, Catalonia made a last attempt with a new Statute to find a way to recognize Catalonia as a nation within the Spanish state, but the PP, the PSOE and the Constitutional Court cut back the Statute until it became clear that Spain does not want to favour plurinationality or recognise Catalonia, but that its nationalism seeks the opposite path: to dilute Catalonia in order to homogenise Spain.

That is why, in 2010, a powerful movement for the independence of Catalonia arose, which has organised the largest demonstrations in Europe, year after year, until today, and in the absence of dialogue, a referendum was even self-organised in 2017. The reaction, both from the PP government, and later from the PSOE government, has been repression with a combined action by judges, the police, the secret services, the State sewers and the entire political and media network. Very serious things have been done against Catalonia and we hope that they will now come to light and will not be discredited as in the past.

And this could become possible because there has been a big change due to the election result last July. The PP won, but did not have a majority to form a government with the extreme right, so its adversary, the PSOE, could form a government if it received the support of the other parties. Then, the

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pro-independence supporters of Junts, Carles Puigdemont's party, demanded an amnesty for those persecuted by the justice system and negotiations in Geneva, with an international mediator, to address the right to self-determination. Pedro Sánchez's great lust for power has led the PSOE to accept conditions that are diametrically opposed to what it had defended until now.

Puigdemont had also set another "small" condition: to create three parliamentary commissions to investigate Operation Catalonia (a clandestine operation by the secret services, police and judges to destroy the Catalan independence movement by inventing false evidence, accusing corruption, bribery...), another commission on the jihadist attacks in Barcelona in 2017 (he wants to investigate how the Spanish police had the head of the jihadist group on their payroll?), another commission on the jihadist attacks in Barcelona in 2017 (how come the Spanish police had the head of the jihadist group on their payroll? Why didn't they prevent the attack if they were spying on the terrorists' phones? And why didn't they warn the Catalan police?) and another commission on illegal spying with the Israeli software Pegasus (the Canadian university centre Citizen Lab discovered that at least 67 phones of pro-independence politicians, activists and lawyers had been spied on with this illegal software).

In order to justify these commissions of enquiry, the PSOE has had to admit that there has been "lawfare" (dirty war using the justice system to destroy political opponents) against Catalan independence, something it had denied until now. And this has set off alarm bells within the right-wing parties and the judiciary, because until now the pro-independence movement

denounced these lawfare practices, but in Spain it was said that they were lies and the pro-independence movement was criminalised by inventing stories that were disseminated with great media power. That is why Spanish citizens are reacting with astonishment, disbelief and anger at the fact that they are making a pact with those they had been told were coup plotters and terrorists.

The PSOE has recognized the "lawfare," because it wants the support of the independence movement, but it would not have done so if it were not true, and the General Council of the Judiciary, the judges of the Supreme Court and the corporate bodies of the judges have come out in a whirlwind to criticize the fact that they want to investigate them and that they are summoned to testify in parliament. And they have even asked for the disqualification and conviction of the deputy Míriam Nogueras who, in the Spanish Congress, pointed out the magistrates, according to her, most involved in the "lawfare": Carlos Lesmes, Manuel Marchena, Pablo Llarena and Carmen Lamela. Until now they had had impunity to do and undo in everything that went against Catalan independence, but now they feel that this impunity could end and they are exposed. They believed that, because they are judges, they could not be prosecuted and they refuse to be held accountable.

We do not know how far Pedro Sanchez will go because of his need for pro-independence votes, but at last there is a juncture that makes the truth of what has happened in Spain emerge. Europe should be attentive and not succumb to the temptation to cover it up or justify it to help an EU member, on the contrary it should help to clarify the truth and press for Catalonia to be able to exercise the right

to self-determination that it deserves. The truth and a straight and democratic action will also help Europe.

Jordi Oriola Folch
Barcelona, Catalonia
Jordi:

On receiving your lengthy dispatches we ask ourselves, "How can we shorten this?" Then we read, realize that a fascinating and complex topic has just been made wonderfully clear, and publish them as they come. Granted, you write as a Catalan, not an objective observer. However, your account is sufficiently detailed for any reader to discover other perspectives. Thank you.

The Editor

Let Them In—We Need Them

To the Editor:

In the first week of December, I called the garage I always use for my state inspection. Instead of being given a date two to four days away I was told the first opening was January 3rd. The next Friday my boiler failed leaving me with no hot water for bathing. I went to Planet Fitness to get a monthly membership to use their showers only to find they were closed on the weekends because they did not have the staff. These are just two symptoms of America's labor shortage.

America lost 1.1 million people to Covid. People close to retirement decided to leave the workforce early rather than risk their lives serving others who refused to wear masks or get vaccinated. This country has shortages of teachers, bus drivers, nurses, doctors, nursing home and day care workers, truck drivers and many other professions.

Businesses have responded by raising workers' pay by 20 and 30 percent and more for those at the bottom of the pay scale. Still, they cannot find enough workers. One reason is that workers can now earn the same amount working 40 hours at \$15/hour as they did working 60 hours at \$10/hour. Thus, they are less willing to

work two or three jobs at low pay.

The GOP's response to this labor shortage has been to chant "build a wall" and stop asylum seekers from coming into this country. It is amazing that those who scream the loudest about inflation also scream the loudest about stopping immigrants from coming here.

The time has come to admit America needs the people coming to our border and invite them in.

Walter Hamilton
Portsmouth N.H.
Walter:

Republicans stopped caring long ago about the nation's real needs. All they care about is their own power.

The Editor

Trump, the Hitler-Cribbing Loser

Dear Editor,

It should be obvious to every responsible journalist that anything the Loser of the 2020 election says ought to be fact checked. The number of Trump's documented lies while President exceeds 30,000. By printing the AP story ("Trump Claims Ignorance About Hitler Comparisons") without doubting Trump's word, the editors lend credence to his claim of ignorance.

While Trump is undoubtedly ignorant about many things a President ought to know, Hitler's speeches would not be on that list. *Vanity Fair* magazine reported in September, 1990 that ex-wife Ivana Trump told her lawyer that Donald "reads a book of Hitler's collected speeches, *My New Order*, which he keeps in a cabinet by his bed."

Trump certainly knows he lifted Hitler's vile language into his recent campaign speeches. He was following the example of a master propagandist and genocidal ogre.

Editors who republish AP stories, need to fact check that source as well.

Bruce Joffe
Piedmont, Calif.

Bruce:
The draft-dodging traitor hides his fascism in plain sight, and his minions eat it up.

The Editor

Write In Joe Biden

Dear Voters,

January 23, 2024 is an important date! It is the New Hampshire primary! On this day we will decide the Democratic nominee for President of the United States. I urge everyone to make time to vote and **Write In Joe Biden** for president.

Jamie Marston
North Hampton, N.H.

Israel Has Much to Answer For

To the Editor:

To readers that defend Israel's massive, ongoing bombardment of Gaza and believe Israel is a peace-seeker to rabid Palestinian intransigence:

A reality check. In 1947 Britain was ending its control of Palestine. What followed, according to the UN Charter, should have been Palestinians voting to form their own state. Instead, powerful U.N. members acceded to the Zionist movement and gave half of Palestine over to Jewish control (Jews were a minority and many were recent European immigrants). This decision ripped apart the bonds of Palestinian society as Jewish identity was privileged over Palestinian identity.

The new state, Israel, quickly established a Jewish majority through expulsion of 700,000 Palestinians. Look up Plan Dalet, Benny Morris, and Deir Yassin. This is the foundational dispossession that fuels the Palestine/Israel conflict. Many of the expelled Palestinians were forced into Gaza and were never allowed to return.

Within Israel, complex, discriminatory laws keep indigenous non-Jews as second-class citizens. See Israel's Adalah Project and the 2018 Nation-State law.

Far from offering peace, Israel's ever-expanding settlements in the West Bank are pure aggression, displacing and dispossessing more Palestinians. These settlements are illegal under international law.

Israel clearly states its intent to erase Palestine from the map. Prime

Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.

to page six

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from page five

Minister Netanyahu stated in 2015 that no Palestinian state would be allowed under his administration. His party's founding platform stated "...between the Sea and the Jordan [River] there will only be Israeli sovereignty." Sound familiar? How can anyone claim that Israel wants to make peace with Palestinians?

As Israel kills over 21,000 Palestinians and buries children in the rubble of their homes, who is threatened with annihilation? As Israel pummels Gaza, destroying homes, churches, mosques and schools, who is threatened with extinction?

I condemn Hamas for committing atrocities but Israel has much to answer for.

Tricia Saenger
U.S. Army veteran
Temple, N.H.

Democrats' Ulterior Motive?

Dear Editor,
It's time that clueless young Democrats get a history lesson.
Democrat Presidents have been responsible for the great preponderance of the foreign carnage America has bestowed upon the world since the beginning of our republic.

Democrat warmongers have included James Polk (Mexican War), Woodrow Wilson (World War I), Franklin Roosevelt (World War II), Harry Truman (Korean War), John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson (Vietnam War), Bill Clinton (Bosnia and Yugoslavia) and now Joe Biden (Ukraine and Gaza).

Republican warmongers include William McKinley (Spanish-American War), and the two Bushes who gave us the Afghanistan, Gulf and Iraqi wars.

Anyone venture a guess why Democrats are such voracious warmongers and Republicans are less so?

Here's your answer. Republicans busy themselves with monopolizing private enterprise. Democrats work hard to monopolize the public sector. Foreign wars historically provide the fastest way to permanently grow



the federal government and enable Democrats to take over state and local health, education, criminal justice, and welfare programs.

War takes away self-determination everywhere.

Kimball Shinkoskey
Woods Cross, Utah
Kimball:

Considering the Democrats' apparent failure to perceive, much less defend, themselves and the nation against the Republicans' Long March to capture the Judicial Branch, we are flabbergasted that you credit them with so much agency.

The Editor

Where is Republican Honor?

Dear Editor:
I recently finished reading Liz Cheney's book *Oath and Honor*. Liz Cheney represented Wyoming in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2017 to 2023. She held the third-ranking position in House Republican leadership from 2019 to 2021 and served our nation honorably in other vital capacities, not the least of which, as vice chair of the Select Committee (at then Speaker Nancy Pelosi's request) to investigate the January 6th attack on the United States Capitol. For accepting what she considered an honor and her duty, she sacrificed her seat in Congress and has been receiving death threats ever since.

It's a well-written book, encompasses 368 pages and contains quite a bit of American history, much of which Cheney's family seems to have made a significant contribution to. It's a hard book to put down once you start.

I was reminded that Thomas Jefferson was the first president to take the oath of office in Washington, DC, March 4th, 1801. Four years earlier, President George Washington had handed power to President John Adams (both Federalists) but this was the first time the presidency had passed from one party to

another. Those who observed that occurrence well understood how miraculous it was for power to change hands *absent* the "confusion, villainy, and bloodshed" that usually accompanied transfers of power.

Some of us recall such peaceful transfers; Truman to Eisenhower, Eisenhower to Kennedy, Johnson to Nixon, Ford to Carter. President Ford had lost his voice so his concession was read to President Carter over the phone by Ford's Chief of Staff, Dick Cheney (Liz Cheney's father). The concession read: "As one who had been honored to serve the people of this great land—both in Congress and as President—I believe that we must now put the divisions of the campaign behind us and unite the country once again in a common pursuit of peace and prosperity. May God bless you and your family as you undertake your new responsibilities."

As Liz Cheney reminds us, from George Washington in 1801 until January 2021 (220 years) every American president had fulfilled his solemn obligation to safeguard the peaceful transfer of power.

Donald Trump changed all that and practically the entire Republican Party, who by their active participation or by their silence, and with unconscionable indifference, helped and allowed him to do it and thus far, be held unaccountable. Do we, who live in Western North Carolina, hear any voices in the Republican Party rise to condemn the former president for his behavior or speech? At the town, county, state or federal level, do we hear one word of condemnation from the party responsible? No, not a peep.

In a just world, a man who mobilized a violent assault on his own Capitol, attempting to overturn an election he knew he'd lost, would have no political future in a free society.

We believed (erroneously, it appears) that our system of laws, of checks and balances, our constitutional system, would constrain Trump. Such is not the case. Donald Trump has repeatedly attacked

the judiciary and ignored the rulings of dozens of courts. Anyone who seeks to hold Trump accountable for his many crimes, they and their families are immediately subjected to death threats by deplorable people claiming they're only trying to "make America great again."

Donald Trump's actions violated the law and the oath he swore to the Constitution. Those of us who serve (or served) in uniform took a similar oath. I took it five times and served under six presidents.

In November 1800, John Adams wrote to his wife, Abigail, after he had spent his first night in the White House. The letter read, in part, "May none but honest and wise men ever rule under this roof."

Donald Trump is not such a man and history will not be kind to those who took an oath to protect our way of life but support a twice-impeached former president facing four criminal indictments across four states (91 total charges) who seems bent on destroying the country he swore to protect. Our country cannot survive such a man.

Oath and Honor is the title of Liz Cheney's book. The Grand Old Party once knew what taking an oath meant, respected and considered honor of vital importance, and highly valued the rule of law. I will dare to hope they will find the courage to do so once again—very soon.

David L. Snell
Franklin, N.C.

The Union [Mis]Leader

To the Editor:
Letters printed in newspapers often employ mis-information and dis-information.

A letter in the *Union Leader* on December 26, mentioned gang rapes by Hamas, babies burned alive in their beds, Israelis tortured, then killed, slaughter of "kids" at a music festival, called Nova Rave. The writer called Hamas "butchers," "monsters," and she used the word "slaughtered" four times, and "butchered" three times.

Might that word "slaughtered" also be applied to the 20,000+ Palestinians killed, including 10,000

children in Gaza?

A simple search reveals there is no evidence of gang rapes or that Hamas ordered any. (Source: Journalist Jonathan Cook, *Middle East Eye*, December 15th). Interestingly, not a single Israeli woman released by Hamas said anything about rape or other abuse. Moreover, the report of babies being "burned" and "50 beheaded" is false, (Source: *Washington Report*, November, 2023, and Rami Khouri, Al Jazeera, November 13th). President Biden later retracted his earlier comment on this topic.

What is not mentioned is that Israeli authorities have admitted that in a "counter attack," Israeli Apache helicopters fired missiles during the Hamas attack at the "Rave" and it is estimated that some 400 Israelis were killed by Israeli military forces. (Source: Asa Winstanley says "Israel admits to "immense" amount of "friendly fire" on October 7th, *Electronic Intifada*, November 22nd).

Perhaps, in the future, the *Leader* may wish to require letter-writers to list sources where they obtained their sources and not print hearsay.

Will Thomas
N.H. Veterans for Peace
Auburn, N.H.

Will:
Perhaps pigs will fly.
The Editor

**Energy Policies in
Portsmouth Need Revisions**

To the Editor:
The recent controversy regarding Ms. Moody's effort to install solar panels on her roof in the South End has resulted in many voices speaking up. These include Ms. Moody, the Historic District Commission (HDC), City Council and Ms. Lusky in a recent letter to the paper.

Each of these voices bring up very valid issues.

Considering the minimal actions that our city has undertaken so far to encourage solar energy generation, is it any wonder that Ms. Moody took the initiative to install panels on her home? That initiative was rejected by the HDC, although the panels were on the back side of her home not visible from the street. Then the City Council weighed in to suggest that the HDC should not be deciding Climate Change actions and solar energy related dis-

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Unsung & Oversung Heroes

by W.D. Ehrhart

I was reading a book recently by Jerry Mikorenda called *America's First Freedom Rider*. It tells the story of Elizabeth Jennings, a young school teacher in New York City who on a Sunday morning in 1854, while on her way to the church where she was the organist, was physically hurled by the conductor and the driver from the streetcar she tried to board because she was African American.

Jennings, who later became Elizabeth Jennings Graham by marriage, hired a lawyer, sued the streetcar company, and won. The young lawyer who took her case was Chester A. Arthur, then an idealistic and progressive thinker (who, sadly, later became a protégé of New York politician Roscoe Conkling and somewhat of a political hack).

Jennings, who I had never heard of before, spent a lifetime fighting for equal rights for African Americans. One of only two Black women to pass a rigorous teacher training program, she and the other woman were not allowed to participate in the public awarding of diplomas along with their seventy white classmates. But she persevered as a teacher and educator. As late as 1895, she was instrumental in creating the first kindergarten in New York City for African American children.

American history is filled with women and men like Jennings, who we should know about and be inspired by, but have never heard of. How about James William Charles Pennington, the first African American to attend Yale, though he was not allowed to enroll officially, and who could not speak in class or borrow books from the library? He later earned a doctorate from Heidelberg University in Germany.

Ever heard of James McCune Smith, the first African American to receive a medical degree? Or Charles Reason, the first Black professor at a white college? One can well imagine the insults and humiliations and obstacles each of these men faced in order to become the "first" in his field.

Then there was Henry Ossian Flipper, the first Black graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, whose fellow cadets made it clear he was not welcome. A few years after his graduation, he was court-martialed on trumped up charges and dismissed from the army for "conduct unbecoming of an officer." (In 1976, the Assistant Secretary of the Army issued Flipper a Certificate of Honorable Discharge, and in 1999 President Clinton pardoned Flipper's court-martial conviction. Better late than never, I suppose.)

One of my favorite unsung heroes is Eugene Bullard, an African American who joined the French Foreign Legion in 1914, and fought in the trenches of the Western Front until he was wounded for the third time and invalided out of the infantry, whereupon he learned to fly and flew twenty combat missions with the French Air Corps. He was awarded both the *Croix de Guerre* and the *Medaille Militaire*, but when he tried to transfer to the American Air Corps after the U.S. entered the Great War, the Americans wouldn't take him. Guess why. His final job, before he died in 1961, was as an elevator operator at Rockefeller Center, where no one had any idea he had once been known in France as "the Black Swallow of Death."

And how about E. D. Nixon, the Alabama civil rights leader and union organizer, without whom there probably would have been no

Montgomery Bus Boycott? Or Madonna Thunderhawk, co-founder of Women of All Red Nations and organizer for the Lakota People's Law Project? These are people we should know about.

Conversely, learning the darker side of people we already know about and may admire can be uncomfortable. I realize that no one is perfect. We are all human and subject to human frailties and foibles. But here is some history about American heroes that few Americans know:

Susan B. Anthony, that champion of abolition and women's rights, said in 1866, "I will cut off this right arm of mine before I will ever work or demand the ballot for the Negro and not the woman." Well, okay, maybe she'd be willing to work for enfranchising both Black men and women of either color. We'll never know.

But her suffragist ally, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, left no wiggle room when asked if Black men should have the vote, replying, "What will we and our daughters suffer if these degraded black men are allowed to have the rights that would make them even worse than our Saxon fathers?"

Then there's Theodore Roosevelt, whom most historians identify as "progressive." Indeed, he is the embodiment of the Progressive Era, according to standard history texts, which don't record that he thought it "a rather good thing" when a mob lynched eleven Italian immigrants in New Orleans after they'd been acquitted of murder at trial. Nor do most texts report that as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, TR declared, "I should welcome almost any war for I think this country needs one," before eagerly collaborating with Henry Cabot Lodge and William Randolph Hearst to start the Span-

ish-American War.

Closer in time is Madeleine Albright, the first female U.S. Secretary of State and later UN Ambassador, who Bill Clinton described as "a passionate force for freedom, democracy, and human rights," and Joe Biden called "a force for goodness, grace, and decency." But when asked if the deaths of half a million Iraqi children was a fair price to pay for imposing sanctions on Saddam Hussein, she replied, "The price, we think, the price is worth it."

As I said, and readily acknowledge, no one is perfect. Even Jesus lost his temper on at least one occasion, and roughed up the money-changers in the temple. And He was Jesus. The rest of us are mere mortals.

Still, American history—all history, I am sure, but we're Americans—is replete with a plethora of heroes we ought to know more about. On the other hand, many of our most prominent and honored heroes are not quite what we're taught they are. What I've discussed here is only a tiny sampling, a teaser if you will.

And it matters because history explains who we are, and how we got to be who and where we are, and where we are likely headed. You have only to consider the number of our fellow citizens who believe the myths and falsehoods and drivel spouted by Dolt .45, Tucker Carlson, Sean Hannity, and their ilk to understand how dangerous a faulty grasp of history can be.

Ignorance is not bliss, and while knowledge may be power, inaccurate knowledge can be powerfully destructive.

—==—

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

Forget Millionaires. A Few Billionaires Are Now Stealing Our Country

by Jim Hightower

In the serious business of politics, a little humor can be your best friend.

I saw its impact 30 years ago in Austin when a group of young, irreverent democracy activists decided to try limiting corporations that were drowning our local elections in their special-interest campaign cash. The upstart group named their grassroots effort a name that was a bit whimsical, yet pointed: "Austinites For A Little Less Corruption."

It caught on. Even though the entire corporate, political, and media establishment united in furious opposition to the reform, 70 percent of voters rather joyously shouted, "YES!"

Now, more than ever, we need to rally grassroots Americans in a high-spirited, openly-rebellious campaign to save our people's historic democratic values. An autocratic coterie of plutocratic supremacists with unlimited corporate funding already dominates our elections, public policy, agenda, and our highest courts. It's not a secret conspiracy—they're quite open about it!

But forget the days of million-dollar donors—the arsenal of the systemic corruptors has now been nuclearized. For example, Charles Koch has just injected \$5 billion in his 2024 political operation. Tim Dunn, an ultra-right-wing Texas oil baron and extremist GOP sugar daddy has just sold his fracking empire for \$12 billion, gaining a new gusher of cash to weaponize his intention to impose laissez-faire rule over America.

It's hard to visualize how much more anti-democratic firepower one gets by spending billions instead of mere millions. Think of the difference not in terms of dollars, but time. If you have a million seconds, that's 11 days. But a billion seconds—that's more than 31 years!

We can have no progress — no democracy — without getting corporate money out of America's political system. For info and action, go to citizen.org.

—==—

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Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.

from page six

putes. Finally, Ms. Lusky, in a letter to the *Herald*, pushed back insisting that the HDC needs to perform its mission of protecting the historical character of our city.

I would suggest that all parties have good ideas to contribute.

As a scientist with many years of energy-related experience and a member of the Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee (PEAC) I believe that the HDC should do a

comprehensive review of its energy related regulations.

We all now live in the 21st century which is why our historic district enjoys electricity, water and sewer services, and indoor plumbing (not exactly historic characteristics). At the same time many historic buildings in that district from homes to churches are prohibited from using some modern materials and technologies to improve energy efficiency and comfort, e.g., triple-pane windows, insulated outer doors, and super-insulation of building enve-

lopes.

I doubt very much that the residents of 18th century Portsmouth insisted on living in drafty, poorly ventilated and energy inefficient homes. They did not have a choice, but we do.

Many European cities have much older historic buildings (e.g., 2000-year-old Strasbourg, France). Nevertheless, their historic buildings are energy efficient and preserve their external historic character.

Our HDC can do the same, and at the same time support Climate

Change efforts and combat energy inefficiency.

Peter Somssich

Portsmouth, N.H.

Peter:

Considering the ways Portsmouth's history, hydrology, and economy interact, it's to be expected that its adaptation to a climate that gets weirder every year will hit a few rough spots.

Fortunately, the people working on this issue locally seem far more trustworthy than those in Congress.

The Editor

—==—



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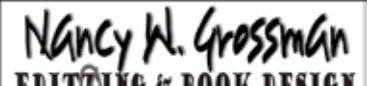
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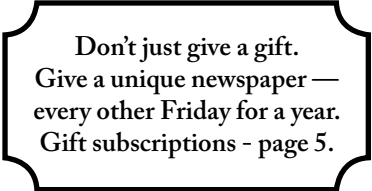


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ADMIRAL FOWLE’S PISCATAQUA RIVER TIDAL GUIDE (NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES)

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

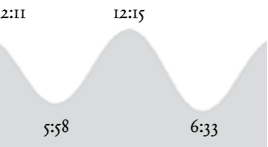
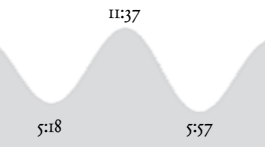
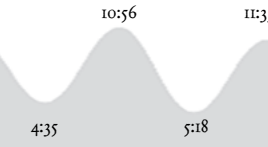
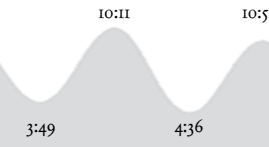
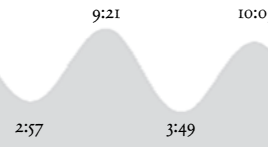
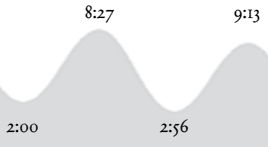
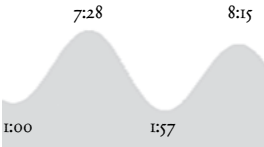
moves from the mouth of the river, up past New Castle, around the bend by the old Naval Prison, under Memorial Bridge, past the tugboats, and on into Great Bay. This can best be seen when the tide is rising.

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, JANUARY 14	MONDAY, JANUARY 15	TUESDAY, JANUARY 16	WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17	THURSDAY, JANUARY 18	FRIDAY, JANUARY 19	SATURDAY, JANUARY 20
<p>2000—“This is still a dangerous world... of madmen and uncertainty and potential mental losses,” warns George W.[MD] Bush.</p> <p>1969—After warnings from enlisted men aboard the nuke-powered USS <i>Enterprise</i> go unheeded, the exhaust of a flight deck tractor cooks off a Zuni rocket. It hits an F-4’s fuel tank, causing a fire which detonates 4.5 tons of bombs. This goat rodeo kills 27, injures 85, and nearly sinks the ship.</p> <p>1967—The First Human Be-In is held—in San Francisco, of course.</p> <p>1963—Standing on a gold star marking the spot where Jefferson Davis was sworn in as president of the Confederacy, George Wallace, being sworn in as Governor of Alabama, vows, “segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever.”</p> <p>1942—A B-18 crashes on Mt. Water-nomee, two die. Future Gov. Sherman Adams, 43, helps rescue five survivors.</p> <p>1878—The U.S. Supreme Court rules that railroads may provide unequal levels of service on the basis of race.</p> <p>1850—Anarchist Mikhail Bakunin is sentenced to death at 35. That sentence suspended, he spends years in a dungeon, contracts scurvy, is sent to Siberia, escapes, travels the world making trouble for authorities, and eventually dies in Switzerland at 62.</p> <p>1794—In Edom, Va., Dr. Jesse Bennett performs the first successful Caesarean section in the U.S., by candle-light, on his own wife.</p> <p>12:56 1:07 6:51 7:29</p>	<p>2001—Wikipedia goes live.</p> <p>1992—Veepster George H.[H.]W. Bush, trolling for votes in N.H., says “[W]e are blessed. So don’t feel sorry for... don’t cry for me, Argentina.”</p> <p>1989—TV guest Donald Trump asks host Larry King, “Do you mind if I sit back a little...your breath is very bad.”</p> <p>1989—The Gipper, on MLK Day, says some civil rights leaders are “doing very well... keeping alive the feeling that they’re victims of prejudice.”</p> <p>1977—Bill Murray makes his debut on SNL; the host is Ralph Nader.</p> <p>1970—The <i>Washington Monthly</i> tells U.S. citizens 1,000 U.S. Army spies have been watching them since 1965.</p> <p>1968—SP/5 Dwight H. Johnson earns the Medal of Honor in a firefight near Dak To. Back in Detroit, in 1971, he’s shot dead in a suicidal robbery.</p> <p>1968—Former Rep. Jeanette Rankin [R-Mont.], 87, who voted against WW I and WW II, leads a march against the Vietnam War.</p> <p>1965—Cuba deports Alan Ginsberg for calling Che Guevara “cute.”</p> <p>1943—Future Senator Strom Thurmond [R-S.C.] has backseat sex with murderer Sue Logue as she’s being driven to the electric chair.</p> <p>1919—In Boston, a badly-built tank collapses, releasing a flood of molasses—a raw material for war munitions; 21 die, 150 are injured.</p> <p>1885—W.A. “Snowflake” Bentley makes the first successful photograph of a snowflake in Jericho, Vermont.</p> <p>1:46 2:00 7:45 8:18</p>	<p>2020—The Senate starts trying The Former Guy, but the jury’s been fixed.</p> <p>2018—White House physician Dr. Ronny Jackson claims Donald Trump a) passed a cognitive test, and b) might live to be 200 if he had a healthier diet.</p> <p>2014—Unable to acquire their standard poison, Ohio’s official kill team tries a new drug combo. A witness later says seeing Dennis McGuire gasp and snort for 15 minutes was “ghastly.”</p> <p>2008—Bushian “Point of Light” Earl Paulk confesses to perjury and adultery: he <i>did</i> sleep with his sister-in-law. Also, his “nephew” is really his son.</p> <p>1986—The DOE announces a seven-year, 26-contestant game show: loser gets a nuclear waste dump. One potential site: Hillsborough, N.H.</p> <p>1981—Jeanne Kirkpatrick is made Ambassador to the UN. Within days she’s griping: her office, limo, staff, and security are all “inadequate.”</p> <p>1972—Vesna Vulović falls 33,000 feet from a bombed DC-9, lands on a snow-covered slope, and lives.</p> <p>1936—Serial killer and cannibal Albert Fish is executed at Sing Sing.</p> <p>1917—German Foreign Secretary A. Zimmermann telegraphs his ambassador in Mexico proposing a German/Mexican alliance and offering the return of Texas, Ariz., and N.M.</p> <p>1865—Gen. Wm. Tecumseh Sherman issues Special Field Order No. 15, granting the formerly enslaved 40 acres and a mule. President Andrew Johnson later reverses the order.</p> <p>2:37 2:55 8:40 9:08</p>	<p>2014—NRA Board Member Ted Nugent, on TV, calls President Obama a “mongrel,” and says liberals should be prosecuted for treason.</p> <p>2003—George W.[MD] Bush tells wounded troops at Walter Reed we “must provide the best care” for veterans—the same day the VA cuts off health care for 164,000 veterans.</p> <p>2003—Gertrude Janeway, the last known widow of a Union Civil War veteran, dies at 93. When they married, he was 81 and she was 18.</p> <p>1986—Ronald Reagan, 74, has polyps removed and authorizes the secret (and illegal) sale of weapons to Iran.</p> <p>1968—George W.[MD] Bush scores just 25 percent on Texas’ Air National Guard’s pilot aptitude test, but passes.</p> <p>1966—An Air Force tanker and a B-52 collide over Spain, dropping H-bombs & scattering radiation.</p> <p>1962—An executive order gives federal workers the right to strike and plutocrats a reason to want JFK dead.</p> <p>1961—Ike warns, don’t give the “Military-Industrial Complex” any “unwarranted influence.” Oops.</p> <p>1961—At the CIA’s request, Katangan rebels murder deposed Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba.</p> <p>1953—A “red letter” day—the first issue of <i>I.F. Stone’s Weekly</i> is published.</p> <p>1920—Prohibition kicks in, except for Andrew Mellon. Harding’s Treasury Secretary issues Old Overholt—which he owns—a special permit to sell “for medicinal purposes.”</p> <p>3:31 3:53 9:39 10:02</p>	<p>2018—So-called President Donnie Trump tells the Pentagon he wants a parade just like Emmanuel Macron’s.</p> <p>1990—Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry is busted in a drug sting.</p> <p>1983—Ronald Reagan hosts Roy Cohn and Rupert Murdoch in the Oval Office. That’s it: we’re doomed.</p> <p>1983—Taking time out from dissing gays in the <i>Dartmouth Review</i>, Laura Ingraham pleads <i>nolo</i> to shoplifting.</p> <p>1969—Peace talks begin in Paris between U.S. and Vietnam.</p> <p>1968—At the White House, Eartha Kitt has the gall to speak her mind about the Vietnam War. Her career begins to recover a decade later.</p> <p>1943—The Red Army breaks the 890-day Nazi siege of Leningrad.</p> <p>1909—The National Guard can suspend <i>habeas corpus</i>, says the high court.</p> <p>1884—Five die and many are injured when a steam boiler explodes at the Wallace Brothers Shoe factory in Rochester, N.H. Its safety valve had been weighted down with bricks.</p> <p>1863—Apache chief Mangas Colorado, having entered Fort McLane, N.M. under a flag of truce, is manacled, tortured, then shot. His skull is sent to a phrenologist.</p> <p>1676—Accused of high treason during the Great Swamp Fight, Rhode Islander Joshua Tefft, the Algonquin-speaking widower of a Wampanoag woman, becomes the only Englishman ever drawn and quartered in North America.</p> <p>4:27 4:56 10:41 10:58</p>	<p>2004—Weeks after telling Chris Matthews, “we’re going to break up the giant media enterprises,” Howard Dean addresses a screaming crowd in Iowa. Video techs create a clip using sound from his mike only, making him sound unhinged. It will aired 633 times over the next four days.</p> <p>2001—On his last full day in office, Bill Clinton admits he perjured himself when he denied having sex with “that woman,” Monica Lewinsky.</p> <p>1989—Frank F. Fowle III, an actor whose favorite <i>Iliad</i> line was “Let me not then die ingloriously and without a struggle,” succumbs to stab wounds suffered during a fight with a thief.</p> <p>1985—At the Houston Astrodome, 35,000 watch as Canadian daredevil Karel Soucek’s 180-foot barrel drop goes wrong; he dies hours later.</p> <p>1968—To placate Howard Hughes, a wealthy weirdo who has been complaining about all the rattling, the AEC tries a new test site 90 miles further away. Project Faultless, a one-megaton H-Bomb, proves the ground is unsuitable due to faults.</p> <p>1920—The ACLU is founded.</p> <p>1915—Two Britons are killed and three are injured during the first Zepelin attack of WWI.</p> <p>1915—Factory guards in Roosevelt, N.J. shoot 20 rioting strikers.</p> <p>1847—Charles Bent, the first Governor of the New Mexico Territory, is scalped at his Taos home in front of his wife and children.</p> <p>5:26 6:03 11:47 11:58</p>	<p>2017—After D.J. Trump gives his “American Carnage” speech, George W.[MD] Bush says to Hillary Clinton, “Well, that was some weird shit.”</p> <p>2009—“If I ever run for President,” says Donald Trump, “please shoot me.”</p> <p>2009—The GOP’s top Members of Congress gather to plot against the newly-inaugurated President.</p> <p>2009—Swearing in President Obama off the top of his head, Chief Justice John Roberts blows his lines.</p> <p>2005—J.P. Morgan Chase admits two banks it swallowed had taken enslaved people as collateral years before.</p> <p>1981—Awakened at 9:00 a.m. and reminded that he’ll soon be inaugurated, Ronald Reagan asks, “Does that mean I have to get up?” He will go on to trade arms for hostages, bankroll al-Qaeda, rob Social Security, bust unions, and triple the national debt.</p> <p>1981—As per arrangement with the GOP, Iran releases 52 U.S. hostages.</p> <p>1953—Ike blurs the line between church and state by beginning his inaugural speech with a prayer.</p> <p>1944—Against advice from subordinates, Gen. Mark Clark orders two regiments of the 36th to cross the Gari River in Italy. They’re slaughtered.</p> <p>1936—England’s King George V is euthanized with an injection of cocaine and morphine, timed so his death could be reported in the more-dignified morning newspapers, rather than the evening rags. His last words are, “God damn you.”</p> <p>6:27 7:11 12:53</p>
SUNDAY, JANUARY 21	MONDAY, JANUARY 22	TUESDAY, JANUARY 23	WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24	THURSDAY, JANUARY 25	FRIDAY, JANUARY 26	SATURDAY, JANUARY 27
<p>2001—With George W.[MD] Bush duly sworn in, Paul Wolfowitz, Ahmad Chalaby, Doug Feith and other neocons meet at Richard Perle’s home to plot a regime change in Iraq.</p> <p>2001—Ignoring the jeers of 20,000 demonstrators, the <i>New York Times</i> “reports” George W.[MD] Bush may usher in a “new era of... social justice.”</p> <p>1997—Newt Gingrich becomes the first Speaker of the House to be disciplined for unethical behavior.</p> <p>1996—Bill and Monica enjoy their fifth illicit encounter.</p> <p>1981—National Security Advisor Dick Allen does Nancy Reagan a favor, intercepting gifts from a Japanese reporter the law prohibits her from accepting. She repays the favor by exploiting that act to get Allen fired.</p> <p>1977—Pres. Carter issues a blanket pardon to all Vietnam draft dodgers.</p> <p>1968—The NVA begins a 78-day siege of U.S. Marines at Khe Sanh. Outnumbered five to one and suffering 737 KIA/MIA, Marines prevail.</p> <p>1968—A heater SNAFU ignites unauthorized foam seats aboard a B-52 over Greenland. It crashes, scattering parts of four H-bombs—which are barred by treaty with Denmark.</p> <p>1946—The largest strike in U.S. history: 750,000 steelworkers walk out.</p> <p>1867—A San Francisco cop foolishly arrests Emperor Norton I; civic unrest naturally ensues. The Police Chief apologizes to the Emperor, and officers begin to salute him on the street.</p> <p>7:28 8:15 1:00 1:57</p>	<p>2008—The Center for Public Integrity documents 935 instances of “orchestrated deception” by President George W.[MD] Bush and seven top officials leading up to the Iraq War.</p> <p>1997—Walking in a Tulsa park, Lottie Williams is hit on the shoulder by a small falling chunk of a Delta rocket.</p> <p>1987—Pennsylvania Treasurer Budd Dwyer, charged with fraud, blows his brains out on live TV.</p> <p>1973—The Supreme Court issues its <i>Roe v. Wade</i> decision.</p> <p>1959—Illegally ordered to dig coal from under the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania with nothing to gauge their clearance, twelve miners drown when the river breaks through.</p> <p>1958—The FBI, developing a program to read Americans’ mail, discovers the CIA is already doing that.</p> <p>1957—George “The Mad Bomber” Metesky, stiffed on a worker’s comp claim, is arrested in New York for planting 30 bombs over 16 years.</p> <p>1945—Arthur Kasherman becomes the third muckraking Minneapolis newspaperman in 11 years to be shot dead on the street.</p> <p>1932—El Salvadoran authorities begin settling a peasant uprising; over six months they murder 25,000.</p> <p>1920—Civil libertarians report that the Army is torturing conscientious objectors on Alcatraz.</p> <p>1862—President John Tyler is buried in Richmond, Va.; his coffin is draped with a Confederate flag.</p> <p>8:27 9:13 2:00 2:56</p>	<p>2016—The Republican nominee, in Sioux City, Iowa, says “I could stand in the middle of 5th Avenue and shoot somebody and I wouldn’t lose voters.”</p> <p>1986—After getting a FOIA request from the son of the Agency’s former station chief in Mexico City, the CIA destroys audio tape of Lee Harvey Oswald talking on the phone to the Soviet Embassy there.</p> <p>1973—President Nixon claims his “peace with honor” deal doesn’t betray allies, abandon prisoners, or let the war in Vietnam go on. It does all three.</p> <p>1968—North Korea seizes the USS <i>Pueblo</i> for spying within its waters.</p> <p>1957—Klan members in Montgomery, Ala. force Willie Edwards Jr. to jump from a bridge. A judge quashes the indictment of 3 men 19 years later, saying “forcing a person to jump from a bridge does not naturally and probably lead to the death of such person.”</p> <p>1870—On the Marias River in Montana, Maj. Eugene Baker’s soldiers massacre 173 Blackfoot women and children. Chief Heavy Runner dies holding a U.S. flag given to him to assure their safety.</p> <p>1795—Fourteen ships of the Dutch Navy are captured by French cavalry and infantry on the frozen Zuiderzee.</p> <p>1570—James Stewart, Earl of Moray and Regent of Scotland, is passing through Linlithgow in a cavalcade when he’s shot from a window with a carbine, making him the first head of state to be assassinated with a firearm.</p> <p>9:21 10:05 2:57 3:49</p>	<p>2015—The winter’s first snow falls in Portsmouth. It will not be the last.</p> <p>2001—GOP hack Rich Galen reports (falsely) that outgoing Gore staffers slashed all the power cords in the Office of the Vice President.</p> <p>1999—Reading the crawl on “Date-line NBC,” Joe DiMaggio is disturbed to learn that he has died.</p> <p>1992—Gov. Bill Clinton flies to Arkansas so the execution of self-lobotomized cop-killer Ricky Ray Rector—who asks jailers to save the desert from his last meal “for later”—will enhance his campaign for President.</p> <p>1963—The tail falls off a B-52 flying over Maine at 500 feet—one-seventieth of its design altitude—and it crashes into Elephant Mountain. Two men survive the crash, seven don’t.</p> <p>1961—A disintegrating B-52 releases a pair of 3.8 megaton H-bombs over Goldsboro, N.C. One parachutes “safely”—a single safety switch prevents detonation. The other falls freely, and remains 180 feet underground.</p> <p>1955—RIP Iwo Jima flag raiser Ira Hamilton Hayes, of exposure, at 32.</p> <p>1946—President Truman, swearing in Rear Admiral Sidney Souers to head the Central Intelligence Group, presents him with a cloak and dagger.</p> <p>1856—Pres. Pierce declares Kansas’ anti-slavery government illegitimate.</p> <p>1692—French priest Louis-Pierre Thury and hundreds of indigenous Abenaki raid York, Maine killing 100 settlers and taking 100 hostage.</p> <p>10:11 10:51 3:49 4:36</p>	<p>2005—Conservative columnist Maggie Gallagher admits she got \$21,500 from the government for plugging Bush Administration proposals.</p> <p>2004—Senator John McCain confirms to Vermin Supreme that Karl Rove dynamited the Old Man of the Mountain “in a fit of anger” over McCain’s defeat of George W.[MD] Bush in the 2000 N.H. Primary.</p> <p>2002—White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales advises the Bush Administration that it’s legal to ignore the Geneva Conventions.</p> <p>2002—Veep Dick “Dick” Cheney asks Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle to limit investigations into the events of 9/11.</p> <p>1996—Billy Bailey, the 19th of 23 children raised in a two-room shack, is hanged by the State of Delaware, the last American to go out that way.</p> <p>1995—Aides to notorious drunkard Boris Yeltsin, getting a message about a rocket test gone wrong, hand him Russia’s “nuclear suitcase.”</p> <p>1979—At a Ford plant in Flat Rock, Mich., Robert Williams, 25, becomes the first human killed by a robot.</p> <p>1927—J. Frank Norris of Fort Worth, a Baptist preacher who fatally shot an unarmed man, is acquitted of murder.</p> <p>1926—In Passaic, N.J. 16,000 textile workers go out on strike.</p> <p>1911—Sam “The Banana King” Zemurray’s mers kill 600 Honduran troops at the Battle of La Ceiba. Their machine gun tactics are soon copied.</p> <p>10:56 11:33 4:35 5:18</p>	<p>2015—Another two feet of snow fall on Portsmouth, New Hampshire.</p> <p>2006—On Sunset Blvd., Joaquin Phoenix is rescued from his rolled, gas-reeking car by Werner Herzog.</p> <p>2005—Gay hustler and accredited White House correspondent Jeff Gannon asks Pres. G.W.[MD] Bush how he can work with insane people like Harry Reid and Hillary Clinton.</p> <p>2001—Britain’s <i>Guardian</i> reports [falsely] that Air Force One was “stripped bare” in “an orgy of pilfering” by outgoing Clinton staffers.</p> <p>1998—The Project for a New American Century sends a letter, signed by E. Abrams, J. Bolton, W. Kristol, R. Perle, D. Rumsfeld, & P. Wolfowitz, to Bill Clinton, urging him to overthrow Saddam Hussein. He’s busy denying he had “sex with that woman.” Her name’s Monica Lewinsky.</p> <p>1979—Ex-Veep Nelson Rockefeller, 70, alone in his townhouse with 26-year old Megan Marshak, dies of a heart attack. An hour later his corpse is found by a security guard, five blocks away at Rockefeller Center.</p> <p>1943—Famine-fighter, agronomist, and geneticist Nikolai Vavilov, imprisoned due to criticism from quack Trofim Lysenko, dies of starvation.</p> <p>1940—R. Reagan marries J. Wyman in a chapel at Forest Hills Cemetery.</p> <p>1894—Illinois drops George Painter. The rope breaks and he lands on his head. Bleeding profusely, he’s hanged a second time for good measure.</p> <p>11:37 11:57 5:18 5:57</p>	<p>2015—It snows so hard in Portsmouth that mail carriers fail to make their appointed rounds.</p> <p>2008—The NSA warns that a malfunctioning satellite as big as a bus is about to fall out of orbit.</p> <p>2005—Veep Dick “Dick” Cheney wears a down parka and ski cap to a memorial ceremony at Auschwitz.</p> <p>2005—<i>Salon</i> reveals that hack writer Michael McManus has been paid \$10,000 to promote Bush programs.</p> <p>1973—Eleven hours before a cease fire takes effect, an artillery shell makes U.S. Army Col. William B. Nolde the last official American combat casualty of the Vietnam War.</p> <p>1972—White house “plumber” G. Gordon Liddy presents Attorney General John Mitchell with a plan to disrupt the Democratic Convention using “mugging squads, kidnapping teams, and prostitutes.” The plan is rejected—because it’s too expensive.</p> <p>1970—Nixon’s Palace Guard gets new uniforms: white with gold buttons and aiguillettes, topped by comic opera hats. They last two weeks.</p> <p>1967—“How are we going to get to the moon if we can’t talk between two or three buildings,” asks Gus Grissom during an Apollo launch rehearsal, minutes before a fire kills him, Ed White, and Roger B. Chaffee.</p> <p>1957—Martin Luther King’s home is bombed for the second time.</p> <p>1820—The Russian sloop <i>Vostok</i> makes the first sighting of Antarctica.</p> <p>12:11 12:15 5:58 6:33</p>



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