

The Fortnightly Rant

No Justice Department, No Peace

Over the past few years we have been slowly developing a plan to sort this country out by exercising more fully our rights under the First Amendment.

Too slowly, it seems—it's starting to look like we need a Plan B. Before we get to that, though—and before we get hauled off to the hoosegow—we want to explain how Plan A was to have worked.

Let's begin with a couple of basic facts about newspapers—small newspapers. In our case, a very old small newspaper, but the principles cited here apply to upstarts just as well.

Printing eight-page tabloid newspapers is incredibly cheap. We know—we've been doing it for decades. What's more, as your press run goes up, your cost per copy goes down.

Also, if you give papers away, people will pick them up. Again: we know—we've been doing it for decades. To get more readers, just give away more papers.

These are not arcane and closely-held secrets. They are basic facts which are common knowledge in the advertising-flyer racket, whose shoddy works are only too ubiquitous. We have discovered something, though, over the past couple of decades, which, in combination with those facts, creates an intriguing possibility.

There are plenty of people who are more than willing to give up half an hour of their time once every fortnight in exchange for the thrill of seeing what a real free press can actually look like.

Accordingly, our Plan A was to use this spiffy revamped website to recruit enough volunteer distributors to make our paper readily available throughout New Hampshire's First Congressional District.

Every citizen in this most basic political unit of our shaky democracy could have, if they want it, a svelte, one-ounce packet of newsprint-based free speech—a hard copy, on paper, in the physical, three-dimensional world.

But why?

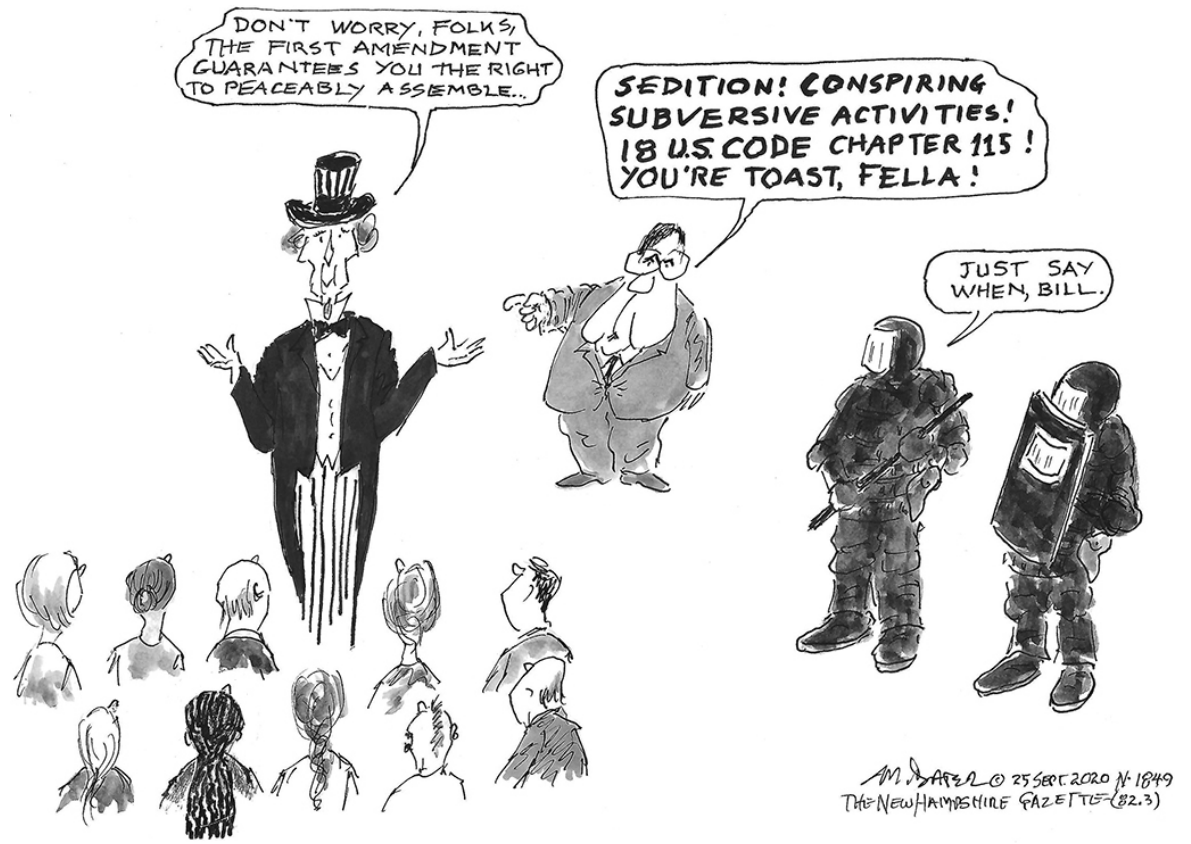
There would be no point in doing this if the only purpose was to provide a marketing platform for whatever useless plastic crap some corporation wanted to unload for a profit. We are already inundated with that junk, and it's killing us.

No, the point to doing this would be to subvert the dominant paradigm. Hell, somebody's got to do it—look where that's gotten us.

We somehow got the notion that providing enough inconvenient facts about the Party of Business-as-Usual might help inoculate this district from, say, another Frank Guinta. And if we could do that here, what's to stop someone else from doing the same thing in District Two? Why, went the thinking, shouldn't every one of the country's 435 districts have a newspaper that's capable of printing the damn truth...for a change?

To our surprise we discovered, during the course of developing this scheme, that there's a whole school of thought on this subject. It sprang up after Jürgen Habermas wrote a little trifle in 1962 with the entrancing title, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit. Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* [*The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*].

Apparently, philosophers and political scientists have been arguing ever since about how shared public spaces—literal and metaphorical, but largely in print—effect societies. We don't try to keep up with that discussion. We're just trying to do it.



Such was the state of our beloved Plan A when the novel coronavirus began to spread.

Perhaps, if the cretinous buffoon in the Oval Office had done a few things right instead of everything wrong, we might still be visiting scores of locations in the Seacoast, and around Concord, and be expanding our readership from there. As it is, we cannot in good conscience ask anyone to go traipsing through a dozen or so places of small business to drop off our paper. Hell, we hardly leave the office except to gather supplies. What's more, looking at the situation from the perspective of our particular needs, there's no reason to expect conditions to change in the foreseeable future. As Ned Stark used to say, winter is coming.

We regret failing to act more quickly. There's at least one chance in, say, a hundred billion that we might have had some effect on February 9, 2016. But nooo....

Since then we have tried to keep abreast of the most egregious violations of public trust being committed by the winner of that First in the Nation™ Presidential Primary Election® and the assorted co-conspirators, running dogs, toadies, goons, and dupes who make his reign of terror possible. It has become increasingly clear that it's impossible to maintain any such inventory while accomplishing anything else.

It is far more practical to simply assume that until further notice the White House and the Executive Branch in general are determined to reduce this country to a lifeless hellscape. Public health resources will be devoted to making people sick. Environmental agencies will collaborate with industries to maximize the release of increasingly-potent toxins. And, as for law enforcement....

Commandante Bone Spur announced this week that for all practical purposes, he's done with

elections. We can hold 'em if we want, he's just not interested in the results. He either wins, or they're rigged. Either way, he stays.

In a functioning democracy, the Attorney General would have a brief talk with this guy, then slap on the cuffs and give him a perp walk. As with public health and the environment, however, that ain't gonna happen. If any uppity citizens dare to disrespect his boss, Billy the Bully Barr might just personally give 'em one upside the head.

All is not yet lost, though. We still have hope. Surely the Democratic Party will.... Wait a minute—this same bunch of timid, feckless folks who have been caving to this crowd since Newt Gingrich became Speaker of the House...?

However improbable, there is one thing they could do that really would give us hope: impeaching Attorney General Barr before he helps throw the election. Failing that, it's time for a general strike.

The Alleged News®

The Start of Our War in Vietnam

On September 26, 1945—75 years ago tomorrow—Peter Dewey, a Lieutenant Colonel in the American OSS, filed one final dispatch and headed reluctantly for Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport. General Douglas D. Gracey, a British officer, had ordered him to leave. The two men had disagreed over many things, but a small American flag was the last straw. Dewey had wanted to fly the flag on the bumper of his jeep. Gracey forbid that, and it cost Dewey his life.

Three weeks after Japan surrendered, Saigon was chaotic. The vast city was crowded with indigenous Vietnamese—or Annamese, as they were often called then—along with French colonials, Japanese soldiers, Chinese expatriates, British soldiers, Gurkhas, and, now, a handful of Americans.

Most of the Vietnamese hated the French colonials, and not without reason. Over the past half-century, the French had done what colonials do. Modestly naming the territory French Indochina, they proclaimed in 1887 that their presence was a gift—a *mission civilisatrice* undertaken for the benefit of backward and benighted peasants. That gift mostly took the form of rubber plantations. For a year of unrelenting labor, rubber workers were paid less than 50 piastres. Colonials spent three times as much to feed a pet dog. The literacy rate dropped from 80 to 20 percent.

Even these parsimonious measures, however, were not sufficient to adequately compensate the French for their largesse. So, they established official alcohol and opium monopolies. These didn't just provide revenue

to offset French expenses. In an early example of what we now call synergy, they also gave the laborers a bit of respite from their exhausting work. Finally, if addictive drugs failed to produce a sufficient level of compliance among the workforce, violence generally did the trick. An extensive intelligence apparatus was required to protect these enterprises from bootleggers, of course. The *Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure* succeeded in maintaining profitability, though it never was able to win the hearts and minds of the people.

When Hitler took France in 1940, Marshal Philippe Pétain's Vichy government collaborated with the Germans. A few months later, the French in Indochina reached a similar arrangement with the Japanese. Throughout the war the French in Indochina supplied Japan with rice

and rubber and pocketed a handsome profit. Granted, two million more Vietnamese died of starvation, but what of it?

By March of 1945, though, Vichy was history and the Japanese in Indochina were feeling frisky. They interned the colonial French forces, armed the Vietnamese, and let them form a puppet government. As the year progressed, though, things looked increasingly dicey for the Empire of Japan.

To the extent that he had paid attention to Southeast Asia—which was not very much, really—President Franklin D. Roosevelt wanted to see it de-colonized after the war, so it could enjoy his famous Four Freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

His successor, Harry Truman,

didn't much care about de-colonization anywhere. Mostly he wanted to contain communism. Thrust into the job six months earlier, still trying to get up to speed, Truman met in Potsdam, in August, with Stalin and Churchill, to talk about the postwar world. In one of many afterthoughts, it was decided someone had to disarm the Japanese in French Indochina. Truman agreed to let the British do it.

The job was assigned to the aforementioned Major General Douglas D. "Bruiser" Gracey, commander of the Twentieth Indian Division, composed of Nepalese Gurkhas and Punjabi Muslims. Frederick Logevall, in his *Embers of War: the Fall of an Empire and the Making of*

The Alleged News®

from page one

America's Vietnam, describes Gracey's arrival: "he walked straight past the Viet Minh delegation waiting patiently by the tarmac and departed in the company of a group of Japanese soldiers. Gracey refused to meet Viet Minh leaders in the days thereafter..."

Logevall quotes Gracey, referring to the Viet Minh, saying, "They came to see me and said 'welcome' and all that sort of thing. It was an unpleasant situation and I promptly kicked them out. They were obviously communists."

War correspondent Clark Lee described what happened next in his book, *One Last Look Around* (1947):

"...Gracey, a self-proclaimed Tory and believer in Empire, was willing to use whatever means necessary to restore white supremacy and try to rebuild the shattered self-confidence of the French. In negotiations with Viet Nam prior to the landing of British troops, the British assured the Annamites that Gracey's mission was to disarm the Japanese and restore order. The Annamites were foolish enough to believe that story. Instead

of carrying out the promise, Gracey returned the Japanese troops to their posts, allowed them to keep their arms, and used them to attack the Annamites who were likewise using Japanese arms when they had any at all beyond sticks, clubs, and spears. Thus, as was to be the case in the Dutch East Indies, the British used their former enemies, the Japanese, to shoot down other Asiatics. If the Japanese were planning a comeback in later years in their 'Asia for Asiatics' campaign, they could not have asked for better propaganda ammunition.

"Gracey's defense was: 'What do you want? Do you think we will surrender European supremacy to the first group of outlaws that point guns at us?' In other words, the words not only of Gracey, but of his superior officers and the London Labour government, 'defend the Imperial system and the hell with these outlaws who believe in the Four Freedoms.'

"The French who saw us at first in Saigon cheered enthusiastically for the arrival of 'les soldats Américains.' They said openly, 'Now we can put these Annamite beggars back in their places.' They were crestfallen when we told them we weren't troops, but correspondents, and that no American forces



were coming to the colony.

"Actually, the American 'forces' consisted of Colonel Dewey and his mission, plus a group of eight Air Transport Command personnel headed by Major Frank Rhoades. Dewey jumped from a transport plane into Saigon right after V-J Day and quickly got the 136 American war prisoners out of their camps and headed home.

Then, instead of leaving, he got mixed up in a game that was too fast for him. 'I am remaining to protect American property,' he explained. What property? He had hung out the American flag from the offices of Standard Oil, Texaco, and Singer Sewing Machine. Also, he had intervened dramatically a few days before when Annamites had prepared to storm the Continental Hotel

and threatened to kill the French people sheltered there. Dewey had bluffed the Annamites into believing the hotel was American property, exhibiting a 'bill of sale' made over to him by the Corsican manager, and had waved the American flag to turn back the would-be attackers. Tragically enough, it was the lack of an American flag on his jeep that caused his death."



A moderate-sized crowd showed on Thursday, September 17th, to attend the opening of Trump Campaign Headquarters in Portsmouth. Epitomizing the event, one supporter had slung around his neck a two-dimensional "gun" cut out from a Trump campaign sign. Will the flimsy fake gun be a harbinger of the candidate's fortunes during what's likely to become Election Month? If we're lucky. Otherwise...prepare for Federalist Society "justice" on a gasping planet.

Large-Animal Serial Killer Opens Local Franchise of Dodgy Family Biz While Evading Law

Malt House Exchange, Portsmouth, N.H., Thurs., Sept. 17— Eric Trump visited the West End today and spent an undetermined amount of time schmoozing with local supporters of his father, Donald J. Trump—President, so to speak, of the Somewhat United States—at the opening of another franchise of the family business. Exactly which family business was not specified, and remains unclear.

Eric Trump is the executive vice president of development and acquisitions of the Trump Organization, according to Wikipedia. Politico reported last year that he also "acts as a [Presidential election] campaign surrogate when asked—and helps to keep an eye on the campaign finances." [Hmm...emphasis added.]

Earlier this month the *New York Times* reported that the campaign has blown through at least \$800 million. All expenditures were made "under the very close eye of the family," according to Brad Parscale. "No decision was made without their approval." A complaint before the FEC claims some of that money went to Eric's wife Lara, without being accounted for in FEC filings.

Approximately simultaneous with Trump's appearance at this staged, ceremonial, and therefore unnecessary event, his attorneys were claiming in a New York courtroom that their client was willing to be interviewed, but would not do so until after the Presidential election, because, the *New York Times* reported, "he did not want his deposition to be used

for political purposes."

Letitia James, the Attorney General of the State of New York, is conducting an investigation, the AP reports, into "whether the Trump Organization lied about the value of its assets in order to get loans or tax benefits." Investigative reporting by the *New York Times* produced a voluminous report suggesting the likely answer. Nevertheless, reports AP, "the investigation is civil, not criminal, in nature and investigators have yet to determine whether any law was broken."

James has been trying since July to get Trump to comply with subpoenas like an ordinary citizen, but it seems he's too busy hanging out behind the Pic'n'Pay.

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Sometimes Old is Good

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

"Happy to Support Progressive Journalism and The New Hampshire Gazette"

— Joe Keefe

The *sangfroid* he displayed at the Continental was characteristic of Dewey. The year before, he had led a 10-man OSS team that parachuted into occupied France and spent six weeks transmitting reports from behind the lines on German troop movements.

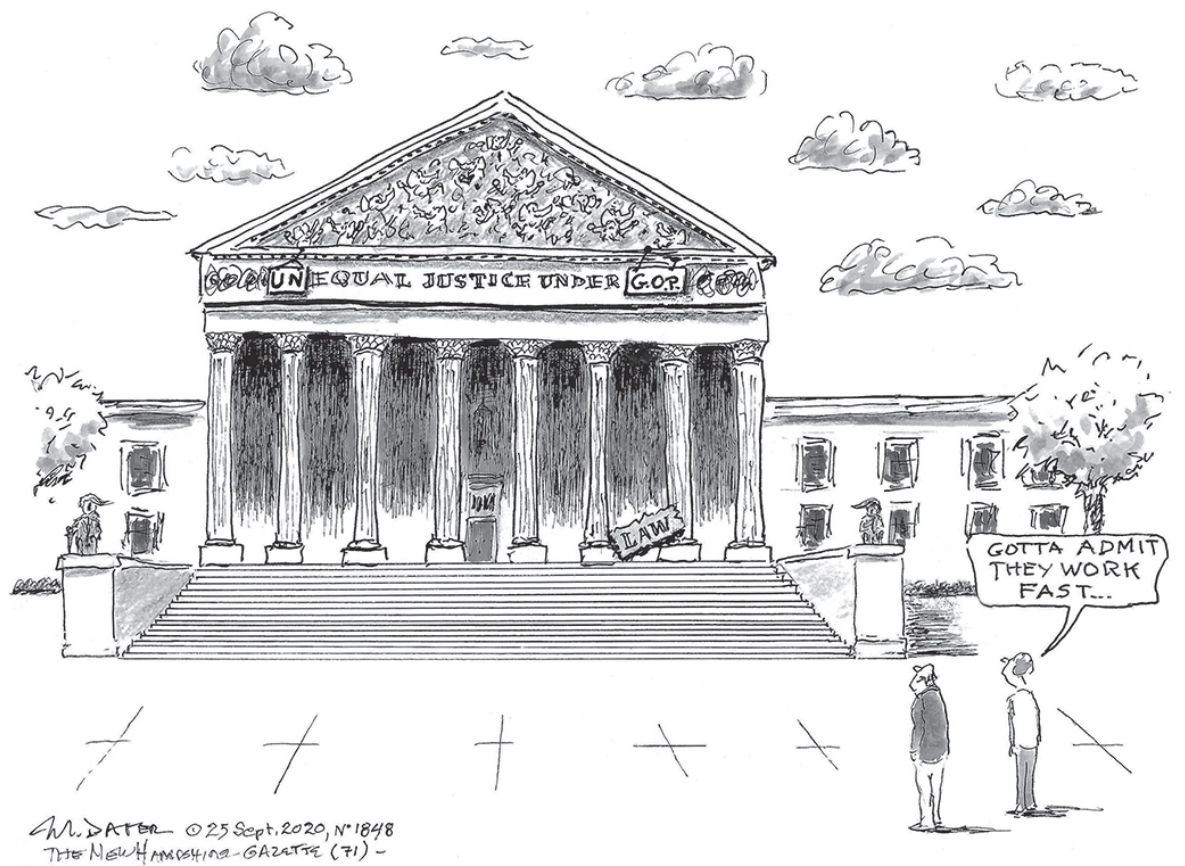
The son of Charles S. Dewey, a wealthy real estate developer, Congressman, U.S. Treasury official, and financial advisor to the Polish government, Albert Peter Dewey attended St. Paul's School in Concord, N.H., before graduating from Yale. He reported from Paris for the *Chicago Daily News* for a time, then accepted a commission as a Lieutenant in the Polish Military Ambulance Corps. After the French defeat, he escaped through Spain and Portugal before signing on with the OSS.

George Wickes, a cryptographer on the OSS team in Saigon, wrote about his commanding officer:

"[W]hat impressed me most was Dewey's interpretation of the complicated political maneuverings of the different individuals and factions represented in Saigon, which he frequently explained to me. He was obviously contemplating a diplomatic career, and he encouraged me to do so too. I was 22 at

the time and beginning to think about what I would do after leaving the army. Dewey had established contacts with the Viet Minh and perhaps other Vietnamese organizations. Because he was well known to the French and the British, both of whom objected to his contacts with 'the enemy,' he could not very well meet with any Vietnamese without being observed. So he sent me several times to meet with them in the evening. The streets were dark, there were still many former prisoners of war floating about, and I would dress as they did in order to escape notice. I would go to a house on a quiet street and there meet for perhaps two hours with three or four men who were obviously deeply committed to the liberation of their country.

"I have a very clear memory of those meetings but unfortunately no recollection of the names of the Vietnamese I met and only a general recollection of our conversations, which were conducted in French. I know that they were leaders in the independence movement and wanted us to let Washington know that the people of Vietnam were determined to gain their independence from France. During the war they had listened to Voice of America broadcasts which spoke of democracy and liberty, and they regarded the United States



not only as a model but as the champion of self-government that would support their cause.

"Three months later I learned that the French had put a price on my head, though in reality they had attached my name to Dewey's head. The description was of a balding man with a mustache who was six inches shorter than me. Obviously this was Peter Dewey, and the only reason my name was involved was that someone must have learned of my meetings with members of the Vietnamese independence movement. I don't believe I was ever in any danger, but clearly Dewey was persona non grata on account of his sympathy with the Vietnamese cause. As a matter of fact, all members of our mission shared his views, and our messages to Washington predicted accurately what would eventually happen if France tried to deny independence to Vietnam. This is only one of the many ironies of Saigon 1945."

Dewey was clearly trying to realize FDR's vision of a de-colonized Southeast Asia, but "Bruiser" Grac-

ey wasn't having any of that. On September 26th Dewey drove an un-flagged jeep to Tan Son Nhut, only to learn that the expected plane from Bangkok was late. According to Wickes, "the pilot got drunk the night before and failed to appear on schedule." Dewey and Captain Herbert Bluechel decided to go to the OSS villa, just northeast of the airport and eat lunch while they waited. Wickes goes on:

"Dewey had wanted to fly the American flag on the jeep, but General Gracey had forbidden it, saying that only he as commanding officer had the right to fly his flag. Thus there was no way for the Vietnamese to know that this was an American jeep or that these were American officers. No doubt they took Dewey to be a Frenchman, and when he shouted at them, they opened fire with their machine gun, killing him instantly. The jeep overturned, but Bluechel was able to get away, running to our villa. The Vietnamese pursued him and attacked the villa, but though only three of us were able to shoot back,

we succeeded in driving them away. At the same time Frost radioed an SOS, and the British sent a troop of Gurkhas to the rescue. They proceeded as far as the roadblock, which had been abandoned by then, but did not find Colonel Dewey's body or the jeep. In fact, the body was never found, though it was my grisly task for some time afterward to peer into newly dug graves where it was alleged to be buried. I will not claim that Colonel Dewey could have influenced American policy on Vietnam, though of all the Americans in Saigon in 1945, he was the one with the best political connections in Washington both through OSS and through his father, who was a member of Congress. But it was a tragic mistake that he should have been killed by people he was trying to help and a terrible irony that he should have died in what he called 'a pop-gun war' on the day he was supposed to go home after surviving all sorts of dangers during World War II."



Eric Trump—who, according to his aunt, retired Federal Judge Maryanne Trump Barry, is "a moron"—strides past Portsmouth Police Chief Robert Merner. Unconfirmed rumors passed along by a shady character suggested that Merner may have been on hand to count the silverware after Trump's departure.

Murph's Fortnightly Quote
"If there was one decision I would overrule, it would be Citizens United."
 —Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (1933-2020)

"For me an object is something living. This cigarette or this box of matches contains a secret life much more intense than that of certain human beings."
 —Joan Miró
 john@wordpraxis.com

"If you don't complain, you condone."
 — Charles M. Blow, *New York Times*, September 14, 2020
 — Not-So-Random Thoughts from an Oregon Subscriber

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As soon as it's safe for them to do so, our volunteer distributors will resume bringing this newspaper to following locations:

Concord:
 The State House Visitor's Center,
 Gibson's Book Store, 45 S. Main St.
 Concord COOP Grocery Store, 24 S. Main St.
 Concord Public Library, 45 Green St.
 Franklin Pierce Law School, 2 White St.

Hanover:
 Hanover Public Library, 13 South St.

Keene:
 Keene Public Library, 60 Winter St.

Lebanon:
 Lebanon Public Library, 9 E. Park St.

Disability, Discrimination, and Libel
To the Editor:

As a person with a federally recognized disability in the form of a mental illness, I continue to experience discrimination in my local community. Since November, 2013, this has been my unfortunate experience with a small, privately-owned business in downtown Rochester, New Hampshire.

Despite the stigma and stereotypes of mental illness, at no point in time did I become violent or threatening towards the owner of the business in question. Paradoxically, it was the business owner who descended to the level of discourtesy, profanity, personal put-downs, and threatening me with violence.

When I called my local police to report his threat, he then banned me from ever entering his store. Should he change his mind in the future, so as to allow me to enter his store as a regular paying customer, he would not need to make any accommodations whatsoever for my disability, except to allow me to politely and respectfully buy products and services with cash in hand.

Discrimination, it turns out, can sometimes be perfectly legal, at least in certain cases. Even if the business owner in question issues a threat of violence, it can still be perfectly legal—as long as the discrimination is practiced by a privately-owned business, as long as the threat of violence does not cross a specific and well defined line, as described by New Hampshire statute, and as long as the business in question does not explicitly state on a conspicuously posted sign, for example, "People with mental illness are not allowed to enter this store."

Even if you've been on good terms for several years with a small, local business, you can suddenly find yourself facing unjust discrimination, as I have, after you disclose to the business owner that you have a mental illness. It's apparently next to impossible to prove in a court of law that ongoing discrimination is disability-based and thus illegal, if the reason for the discrimination was never explicitly stated by the business in question, even if the

customer had previously been on good terms with the business owner for many years and the beginning of the discrimination coincided time-wise with the customer's matter-of-fact disclosure of her or his disability.

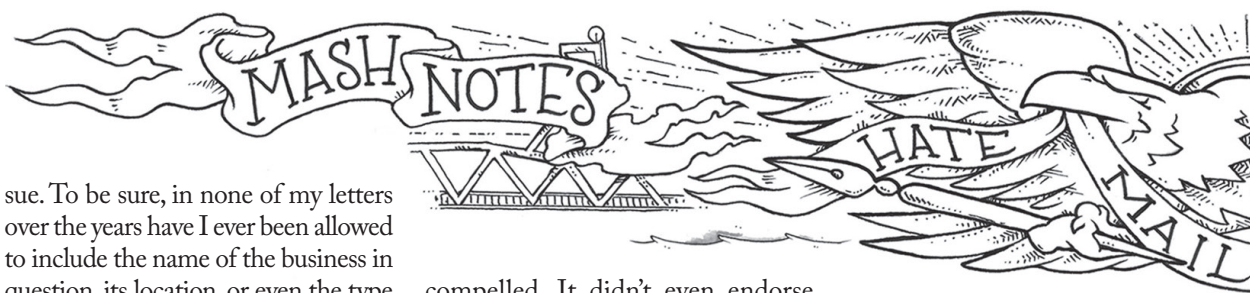
Besides, who's going to give the benefit of the doubt to a person with a mental illness who's written letters to the editor in which he proclaimed he was the second coming? Even with time and date stamped emails clearly showing hostility and vulgarity on the part of the business owner, I face an uphill climb, just trying to get the local news media interested.

When, in 2013, I first brought this issue to the attention of the editor of the *Rochester Times* (now defunct), which was owned by *Foster's Daily Democrat*, I was informed by the editor that my concerns would be of no interest to local readers. The editor deemed the issue to be a "private party dispute," rather than an issue worthy of investigation and reporting.

Additionally, the Rochester police still see it as their duty and responsibility to protect the business owner in question from the likes of me, by arresting me for trespassing, should I decide to practice nonviolent civil disobedience by, for example, simply entering the front door of the business in question to politely and respectfully buy a product. That's unjust, yet perfectly legal in Rochester.

To make matters worse, one of my city councilors told me to simply shop elsewhere, upon my explaining the problem to him, rather than support me in my efforts to overcome the discrimination. He was, and still is, part of the problem, in that he lacks the courage and the backbone to be part of the solution, because he turns a blind eye to the discrimination, thereby enabling it to continue.

It should also be pointed out for the record that the same news editor who deemed my concerns to be of no interest to local readers wrote a glowing editorial in the *Rochester Times*, in which he specifically included the name of the business in question, as well as its location, and did so shortly after he published my first letter about this is-



sue. To be sure, in none of my letters over the years have I ever been allowed to include the name of the business in question, its location, or even the type of business, lest my letter be censored, ostensibly due to concerns about libel, or so I've been told.

Concerns about libel, I believe, should ideally include not only what's in the news, but also what's been intentionally left out of the news. What's truly newsworthy isn't always what's covered by the news, it's also what's been covered up.

Alex J. Boros
Rochester, N.H.

Alex:

Having access to only one side of this story, we're not going to choose a side here. However, based on the textual evidence before us, we will say this: when faced with a person who is highly articulate and obviously intelligent—particularly one with a disability that may hinder his or her ability to masquerade as a "regular person" (i.e., one of average intelligence)—some people are going to feel insecure, and may react negatively.

Unfortunately our poor powers are limited to understanding your dilemma. Because our society is devoted, above all else, to providing ever-greater opportunities for a tiny slice of already overly-privileged individuals to invest their capital in ways that provide an ever-higher return, we see little hope for a reordering which would bring meaningful change.

Not that it's any consolation, but picture the plight of those face similar mental health challenges, without even the ability to articulate their situation. No wonder the jails are full.

The Editor

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Where And How Will You Vote?

Dear Editor:

Scientific American magazine, for the first time in its 175 years, has endorsed a presidential candidate—Joe Biden. Trump is so anti-science that the highly-respected magazine feels

compelled. It didn't even endorse Abraham Lincoln, as Steven Colbert pointed out on "The Late Show." Trump, in regular self-delusion, compares himself to Lincoln. Trump also thinks C.D.C. head Robert Redfield is "confused," that Redfield publicly disagrees with Trump. Redfield states that a Covid-19 vaccine won't be available until the 2nd or 3rd quarter of 2021. Trump wistfully wants it here by the Nov. 3rd election, as he projects himself the winner. He even has the soldiers he sweepingly calls "suckers and losers" lined up to administer it in time for the election.

Speaking of Colbert and Nov. 3rd—"The Late Show" has an online, every state, guide to the various voting rules. My old UNH roommate, Catherine, however, realizes that with colleges trying to be open, but some faltering, students need a plan now for settling on where they'll vote, and asking for an absentee ballot from home may be the surest solution to being legit somewhere on Nov. 3rd. They need to be familiar with all the steps, including registering. Time is passing fast, finally.

Lynn Rudmin Chong
Sanbornton, N.H.

Lynn:

Speaking of voting and confusion, let's recall this, from InDepthNH.org, August 12th:

"The N.H. GOP postcard was sent to an unknown number of registered Democrats, and deceased Democrats in the state, though the complete recipient list for the mailer remains unknown. The mailer also incorrectly listed Durham as the town of residence for town clerks across the state.

"If any of the absentee ballot applications were submitted, they might be received by the Durham Town Clerk's office. If the mistake had not been caught, some New Hampshire voters

may have believed they submitted an absentee ballot request and never received their ballot.

"N.H. GOP Chairman Stephen Stepanek said in a statement on Monday that the error was due to a mistake at the printer."

Democratic Party officials took exception to this and complained to the Attorney General—for all the good that did.

"The state Democratic Party's legal counsel William Christie sent a letter to the Attorney General's Office critical of its response to absentee ballot applications with incorrect mailing information sent to New Hampshire voters by the state Republican Party.

"The letter obtained by *InDepthNH.org* calls both the investigation into the cause of the problem and the effort to mitigate its impact inadequate, something reflected in the ongoing confusion felt by some recipients of the mailer."

The Editor

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What Is There To Do?

To the Editor:

John Donne's poem could not be more prophetic than it is with the death of Ruth Bader Ginsberg—"ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee." Her death is a tragedy not only for the loss of a great person, but for the Republic she served so well.

While we grieve, we still have work to do. With apologies to Abraham Lincoln, "It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which [she]...so nobly advanced." We need to pay close attention to the next Supreme Court associate justice.

Trump already has announced his plans to nominate a replacement within the week. He has said he will nominate a woman. The two women most

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touted are Amy Coney Barrett and Barbara Lagoa, both with very strong conservative views—some would say very radical views. McConnell has said he will bring the Senate to a vote immediately. (It is good to see Mitch has finally decided to follow the Constitution, unlike his 2016 “rule.”)

It seems to me that there are a couple of scenarios that could play out in October. The Senate could vote completely on party lines and whomever is nominated will be the new associate justice. There are some questions about whether McConnell has the votes to pull it off. First, there is Mitt Romney, who so dislikes Trump that he may defect. Secondly, there are a number of GOP Senate candidates who are in close races that might want to distance themselves from Trump before the election e.g. Susan Collins or Joni Ernst.

If McConnell fails to get enough votes for the nominee then we have to wait until after the election. If Trump wins then the game is up. Trump will appoint the next associate justice. If Biden wins it seems most likely that Trump would make another nomination. Regardless of how the Senate elections go, the lame duck Senate would no longer have to worry about their own elections and would be most likely to vote along party lines to confirm the nomination.

It pains me to say that I think that the next associate justice of the Supreme Court will be a Trump appointee.

What is there to do? I think that the best we can do is to push every button available to get the least bad nominee and hope she (or he) turns out to be a Souter. Of the two women most talked about I think that Lagoa seems the least doctrinaire. If Trump nominates

a man (Would Donald ever renege on a promise?) it would be nice to see him nominate a sitting Senator as he suggested a couple of weeks ago. That at least would put another Senate seat in play.

Some have suggested that if Biden is elected he should “pack” the Court in an attempt to moderate the conservative majority. I think that this is not a good idea. FDR tried it early in his administration and it was a significant failure. Manipulation of the Supreme Court now could lead to a backlash and still would not eliminate the conservative majority.

I think that we must turn our attention to the legislative branch and to our State and local governance. We must look after ourselves and all our fellow citizens if we are to ensure that “government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth...”

Dan Mannschreck
Barrington, N.H.

Dan:

Unfortunately Romney has let you down already. We're betting Barbara Lagoa gets the nod—all those juicy Florida Electoral College votes.

Court packing would indeed be risky. We favor flag-packing. More stars! Welcome, the State of the District of Columbia! Hola, the State of Puerto Rico! The State of American Samoa! The States of North, South, and Central California!

The Editor

====

A Pro-Biden Republican Writes...

Dear Editor,

I am a Republican who will be voting for Joe Biden. To all who are planning to vote for Donald Trump, including people that I know and love, please read on. You and I probably get our news from different sources and, as a result, we may have a different un-

derstanding of various issues. But the following are facts that I don't think you would dispute and I ask that you consider them.

Why do you suppose that five of the President's hand-picked advisers have

of publicly opposing the re-election of the President? (John Kelly, Retired Marine Corp General; Jim Mattis, Retired Marine Corp General; Colin Powell, retired General and former Secretary of State; John Brennan, former CIA Director; KT McFarland, former Deputy National Security Advisor.)

Why do you suppose that 300 members of the Bush administration or campaigns are publicly backing

long held in our government have been ignored since 2016? (No presidential tax returns, no medical records, no compliance with the Hatch Act, no regularly scheduled press conferences, no party platform.)

Why do you suppose that Bob Woodward, having written extensively about 9 presidents has, for the first time, felt compelled to express a personal opinion about this president? His conclusion: “Trump is the wrong man for the job.” (*Rage*, page 392)

Why do you suppose that prominent Republican and Conservative writers oppose the president? (Bill Kristol, George Will, David Frum, and the late Charles Krauthammer.) In October 2016 Mr. Krauthammer wrote: “This election is not just about placing the nuclear codes in Trump's hands. It's also about handing him the instruments of civilian coercion, such as the IRS, the FBI, the FCC, the SEC. Imagine giving over the vast power of the modern state to a man who says in advance that he will punish his critics and jail his opponent. It takes decades, centuries, to develop ingrained norms of political restraint and self-control. But they can be undone in short order by a demagogue feeding a vengeful populist.”

I'm guessing that the Republican Senators who have not asked these questions of themselves (Lindsay Graham comes to mind), were acting in their own self-interest. They didn't want the president to “primary” them; they want to keep their jobs. You have no such reason to not consider these facts. Please, in the privacy of your mind ask yourself, why?

Bess Mosley
Portsmouth, N.H.

Bess,

We've come to believe that politics in this country have become uncoupled from...well, from politics. Politics are, eventually, about governing, and Republicans these days aren't interested in governing. If one party in a duopoly forfeits, the other party can't play even if they try.

Rich Republicans are interested in

Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.

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*The United States of America is one of only two countries in the entire world that permit marketing prescription drugs directly to consumers.

—W.D. Ehrhart

been found guilty of crimes, some of whom are in prison as you read this? (Michael Cohen, Paul Manafort, Rick Gates, Michael Flynn, and Roger Stone.)

Why do you suppose that well respected military and intelligence leaders have taken the unprecedented step

Biden? Or that 100 former staff of McCain's congressional offices and campaigns also endorsed Biden for president.

Why do you suppose that Trump's cabinet has had more “acting secretaries” than any of his predecessors?

Why do you suppose that norms

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from page five

tax cuts—more tax cuts—so they can get even richer. They're monomaniacs, or, more accurately, moneymaniacs. For non-rich Republicans, politics is a sport—a sport you play by hating someone.

Rich Republicans bought exemption from that hate by literally spending billions on propaganda to divert the blame from themselves—they are the true culprits, of course, through the rigged game of capitalism—to the Democrats.

Rich, powerful Democrats? Poor, powerless Democrats? It doesn't matter. That's the beautiful thing about hate—from a certain perspective. Jack your victims' hate dials up to 11, and they can't think straight even if they try.

The Editor

====

Experiencing White Privilege

To the Editor:

I very much appreciated Curtis Springer's August 22nd [Portsmouth] Herald letter explaining how he would describe white privilege. A small example from my life is that I was at a yard gathering in Rye a number of weeks ago. I had evidently parked in a place on the road that wasn't designated as safe for oncoming traffic. Midway into the gathering, I saw the lights of a police car. I knew immediately what the problem was. I moved my car. Incident done.

Neither the policeman nor I was threatened by the other. I am a white, graying, middle class woman, and he was a youngish, white man. That's the ease and lack of racial stress brought to any situation when neither party is threatened by the other. I thought of this as being a perfect example of white privilege.

White privilege is *not* only having the choice to ignore violent, overt actions such as we saw with lynchings in the South in the past or the clashes with police in northern streets now. Rather, it also is an attitude that all we white people grow up with. As Curtis Springer said, "If you are white, you can go about your life with not much concern about



the color of your skin and the prejudices of others."

Judy Ullman
Portsmouth, N.H.

Judy,

Operating, as we do, a newspaper that, for the first thirty years of its existence, was printed by the forced labor of an enslaved African man, we're inclined to agree that yes, white privilege is real.

Primus, we remember.
The Editor

====

Are We Great Again Yet?

To the Editor:

How is President Trump doing on his promise to Make America Great Again?

The 2020 Social Progress Index measures quality of life in countries around the world based on the research of Nobel-winning economists. The top 10 countries are: Norway, Denmark, Finland, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, Iceland, and the Netherlands. The U.S. ranks 28th. It ranks No. 1 in the quality of universities, but No. 91 in access to quality basic education. We lead the world in medical technology, but are No. 97 in access to quality health care. The U.S. has the most wealth, but the highest income inequality of the G7 nations.

In a Pew Research Center survey of 14 advanced economies, the U.S. is second to last, one point ahead of Britain in its handling of the Covid pandemic. America with 5 percent of the world's population has nearly 33 percent of Covid19 cases and over 20 percent of the deaths. They also found that other countries' confidence in Trump doing the right thing in world affairs ranges from a high of 23 percent in Australia to a low of 9 percent in Belgium.

The rest of the world feels sorry for us. America is isolated, pitied and scorned. We can't afford four more years of Trump "making America

great!"

Cynthia Muse
Rye, N.H.

Cynthia,

You can't deny that we're first in propaganda.

The Editor

====

Senator Susan Collins?

Dear Sir:

It was with great disappointment that Allan Kerr, a person I almost always agree with, has decided to continue to support Senator Susan Collins. In his September 20th opinion piece, Mr. Kerr seemed to overlook many of the times Sen. Collins has supported Donald Trump in ways that were contrary to the best interests of Maine and America. He gave a great deal of credit for supporting the Bath Iron Works (BIW) and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY). He also praised the Senator for her support of the Thresher Memorial. It took absolutely no political courage on her part, or cost her any political capital to support the BIA, PNSY or the Thresher Memorial. Any other person serving in her position would have done exactly the same thing for the obvious political, economic and patriotic reasons. The only person who I can think of that may not have supported the Thresher Memorial would be Donald Trump. After all, he considered those killed in service to the nation as "losers and suckers," and he might say that he preferred submarines that did not sink, like when he said that "I like people who weren't captured," in reference to former POW John McCain.

While Mr. Kerr does give Sen. Collins due credit for voting to hear from witnesses during the Trump Senate impeachment trial, he failed to mention that Sen. Collins voted to acquit Mr. Trump, even though she never heard from the witnesses she voted to hear testify. While

he did take exception to the Senator's support of the confirmation of Judge Kavanaugh, he seemed to dismiss this grievous action as a minor blemish on her record, when in fact, this may have been one of her worst actions as a Senator, especially considering the current vacancy on the Supreme Court created by the death of Judge Ginsburg.

Senator Collins has much too often spoken out of both sides of her mouth, and her actions do not always align with her words. I sincerely hope that the voters of Maine decide to send Sen. Collins to a retirement that she greatly deserves.

Rich DiPentima, LTC, USAF, Ret.

Portsmouth, N.H.

====

"He [Will Varner] was at once active and lazy; he did nothing at all (his son managed all the family business) and spent all his time at it, out of the house and gone before the son had come down to breakfast even, nobody knew where he rode might be seen anywhere within the surrounding ten miles at any time, and at least once every month during the spring and summer and early fall, the old white horse tethered to an adjacent fence post, he would be seen by someone sitting in a home-made chair on the jungle-choked lawn of the Old Frenchman's homesite. His blacksmith had made the chair for him by sawing an empty flour barrel half through the middle and trimming out the sides and nailing a seat into it and Varner would sit there chewing his tobacco or smoking his cob pipe, with a brusque word for passers cheerful enough but inviting no company, against his background of fallen baronial splendor. The people (those who saw him sitting there and those who were told about it) all believed that he sat there planning his next mortgage foreclosure in private, since it was only to an itinerant sewing-machine agent named Ratliff—a man less than half

his age—that he ever gave a reason: 'I like to sit here. I'm trying to find out what it must have felt like to be the fool that would need all this'—he did not move, he did not so much as indicate with his head the rise of old brick and tangled walks topped by the columned ruin behind him—just to eat and sleep in."

—William Faulkner, *The Hamlet*

====

High Praise From an Expert

Generally we are not inclined to toot our own bosun's whistle. In this case, though, we'll make a happy exception.

Our Tidal Guide for September 21st included this item: "1989—The Chase Manhattan Bank accepts for deposit a check sent as a prank by *Spy Magazine*. Endorsed by 'short-fingered vulgarian' Donald J. Trump, it's for \$0.13."

On Wednesday, this showed up on Twitter:

"The 'this day in history' feature in the @NHGazette is the best I've ever seen—and not just because one of their events for yesterday was Donald Trump in 1989 becoming the only rich American of the dozens to whom *Spy* sent increasingly tiny fake 'refund' checks to cash them all." —@KBAndersen.

That would be Kurt Andersen, co-founder of *Spy Magazine*, and author of the current *New York Times* bestseller, *Evil Geniuses*. We responded, "Gonna print that out and put it in this cherished volume in our library."



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Study Shows 'Stakeholder Capitalism' Failing to Live Up to Promises as Corporations Continue Putting Profits Over People

by Kenny Stancil, *Common Dreams*

When the Business Roundtable issued a statement on corporate purpose and promised to “deliver value to all of...our stakeholders” in 2019, some applauded the attention paid to social and environmental concerns by 181 CEOs as a significant improvement from neoliberal economist Milton Friedman’s 1970 dictate that “the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits,” which marked the beginning of an era of shareholder primacy.

But a study published Tuesday by the Test of Corporate Purpose (TCP) initiative showed that amid 2020’s disastrous public health, economic, social, and environmental challenges—the coronavirus pandemic, massive unemployment and worsening inequality, persistent police violence and racial injustice, and intensified climate crisis—“stakeholder capitalism” has failed to follow through on its promises to do more to benefit workers and communities, continuing to “put profits ahead of people” instead.

Joshua Bolten, president of the Business Roundtable (BRT), told the *New York Times* that he thinks corporations “have done exceptionally well” in supporting employees during the unprecedented crisis set in motion by Covid-19.

But *Times* reporter Peter Goodman painted a different picture. When large technology company

Salesforce “celebrated more than \$5 billion in quarterly sales...in late August,” its chief executive, Marc Benioff—a self-styled “evangelist for stakeholder capitalism”—declared victory, explained Goodman. “The next day, in the midst of the pandemic, Salesforce informed 1,000 employees that their jobs were no longer needed.”

In March, Arne Sorenson—president and CEO of Marriott International and co-chairman of a BRT task force convened to address Covid-19—“announced that he was furloughing tens of thousands of employees, asserting that his hand had been forced by the swift deterioration of the business,” wrote Goodman. “Less than two weeks later, Marriott paid out \$160 million in dividends to shareholders.”

TCP’s study, which was conducted with KKS Advisors and supported by the Ford Foundation, summarized the “conundrum” this way: “The interests of stockholders and other stakeholders will not always align.”

The analysis showed that U.S. companies that signed the BRT statement “performed no better than their nonsignatory counterparts through the 2020 crises.”

Researchers pointed to stock buybacks, political spending, tax evasion, and unchecked pollution as additional examples of practices reflecting the continued prioritization of shareholder interests despite pledges to pursue “inclusive prosper-

ity” for all stakeholders.

In the words of the report’s authors, many companies still “campaign for one world while publicly proclaiming a vision of another.”

The report noted that only a handful of the signatories to the BRT statement even submitted it to their companies for approval, which is why some scholars have argued that the promises made by proponents of “stakeholder capitalism” are a public relations gimmick that will not improve social welfare.

On social media, commentators such as Krystal Ball and Bharat Ramamurti concurred. Ramamurti, the managing director of the Roosevelt Institute’s Corporate Power Program, wrote: “The way to change corporate behavior is with new laws. Press releases won’t cut it.”

According to Goodman, “The study enhances doubts that corporations can be depended upon to moderate their quest for profits to pursue solutions to challenges like climate change, racial injustice, and economic inequality.”

Proponents of a genuinely just and sustainable society like Marjorie Kelly, executive vice president of The Democracy Collaborative, have criticized the BRT statement while arguing that what’s known as the triple-bottom-line approach to business—people, planet, and prosperity—is a step in the right direction.

Kelly cautioned against viewing companies’ simultaneous pursuit of multiple interests as inherently

disingenuous, pointing to “national brands as diverse as Ben & Jerry’s, Amalgamated Bank, and King Arthur Baking” that govern themselves according to formal commitments giving “social and environmental benefits equal standing with profit goals.”

One key to differentiating between the mission-driven enterprises truly committed to the creation of an equitable and ecological economy from those corporations for whom social responsibility is a marketing ploy is to move from rhetoric to policy, Kelly argued.

The study noted: “Given the enormous influence major corporations have over the trajectory of policy and regulation, no analysis of corporate purpose and its alignment with a stakeholder primacy model would be complete without incorporating an evaluation of companies’ lobbying and political spending activities,” which often contradict the information coming from marketing departments.

Fidelity to progressive economic and environmental policies provides another clue. In addition to well-known instances of greenwashing and pinkwashing, political scientist Cedric Johnson has called attention to the ‘Blackwashing’ at play when, for example, Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos adamantly pledged his support for Black Lives Matter even though “the company fired Chris Smalls, a Black Amazon worker who led a walkout at the end of

March demanding more protective gear and hazard pay.”

Economists Emily Kawano, former director of the Center for Popular Economics, and Julie Matthaei, co-founder of the U.S. Solidarity Economy Network, argued that profit-maximization is intrinsic to capitalism and the privately owned corporations that characterize it, so even the “stakeholder” variety is incapable of balancing competing objectives like moneymaking with greater equality and sustainability.

According to Kawano, Matthaei, and other proponents of public goods and a cooperative model of social wealth-building, successfully prioritizing human and environmental well-being will require moving toward a non-capitalist economy based around democratic ownership.

Now “would be a great time to push for real reforms,” Chuck Collins, director of the Institute for Policy Studies’ Program on Inequality, told *Common Dreams*. “Why shouldn’t Amazon or any of the hundreds of companies that are benefiting from pandemic conditions share their ownership with employees?”

“Any talk of corporations being responsive to a broad spectrum of stakeholders is just that—talk—as long as stakeholders don’t have power,” said Kelly. “And power means ownership.”

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When the world’s on fire, what should we do?

by Jim Hightower

For millions of people around the globe—especially young people—the pressing issue of our time is this: The world is on fire! On fire with climate change, creating a new and intensifying norm of deadly weather extremes that make a dystopian future a distinct possibility—constant wildfires, rising seas, desertification, global crop failures,

widespread hunger, water shortages, &c.

Luckily, we are a sentient species with the scientific ability to know that the chief cause of this global destruction is not angry gods, but us—specifically humankind’s massive extraction and burning of oil, gas, coal, and other fossil fuels. So, there’s a rising chorus of people shouting “*Fire!*” And, sure enough, our national government is rushing

to the scene to put it out.

Unfortunately, our president and his crew of right-wing fire-breathers in Congress are not directing the government’s hoses at the corporate extractors, but at us, the people, scientists, environmentalists, and other activists who’ve dared to point to the flames and call for global action to stop the conflagration. They seem to think the problem will go away if they can make the protesters go

away.

Worse, they’re fanning the flames by turning the EPA into the PPA—the Polluters Protection Agency. They’re slashing dozens of public restraints on the polluters, while also opening up our oceans and wilderness areas to their polluting greed and stalling the rational shift to a green energy future.

The good news is that the people are revolting (in the very best sense

of that term!) against our corrupt leaders’ rush toward climate catastrophe. Our hope is not in “leaders,” but ourselves—as it has been throughout American history. From the Boston Tea Party forward, creative and gutsy public protest has been democracy’s best friend.

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Granite State Independent Living is looking to add caring and compassionate individuals who are interested in making a difference in people's lives as a Personal Care Attendant. Duties include: personal care, housekeeping, lifting, transfers, errand and grocery shopping. We offer a flexible schedule and paid training.

