

## The Fortnightly Rant

### Conservatives Flock to Socialist Hellhole, Worship Golden Effigy

The Conservative Political Action Conference [CPAC] for the Year of Our Lord 2021—we hope they appreciate that pious flourish—began yesterday in sunny, socialistic Orlando, Florida.

Say what? Socialistic?

Sure—what else would you call a place that requires everybody to wear a mask, just to keep the rest of its puny citizens alive?

Orlando is the Seat of Orange County, which is ruled—with an iron fist, of course; mustn't leave out that important detail—by an elected mayor and six commissars. They claim to be “commissioners,” but let's keep it real: only one of those seven is a Republican.

It's probably safe to assume that the true purpose of the County's mask mandate is to train the proletariat to obey the will of the commissars. They would claim otherwise, of course, perhaps citing some alarmist narrative in the liberal media as justification for their tyranny.

If so, the *New York Times* stands ready. It was claiming on Thursday that anyone in Orange County faced a “very high risk” of becoming infected with the virus some say is causing the alleged Covid-19 pandemic. ICU occupancy is above 74 percent; test positivity is also high. That suggests, according to the *Times*, that actual cases may be being undercounted.

The *Times* may be confusing Covid infection stats with 2020 Census figures on resident Hispanic non-citizens—those are *supposed* to be undercounted.

This annual Right Wing Festivus is billed as “The largest and most influential gathering of conservatives in the world.” In theory, that could be true; based on that ilk's record,

though, we wouldn't bet on it.

We're not sure these people are even conservatives. The Hyatt Regency, the site they chose for their convention, has a mask mandate of its own. Does that mean attendees will be forced to wear two masks, one for the County and one for the Hyatt? Didn't Dr. Anthony “The Little Fascist” Fauci just recommended two masks? Are we supposed to believe this is all just a coincidence? Sheesh—just march into the gulag, why don't ya?

[Sound effect of static crackling...] Woops—stand by.... This just in: we have a report that a golden calf has been sighted at the Hyatt.

Here's the video—two men are trundling something along a soulless corridor on a wheeled pallet... but that's no golden calf. That's a larger-than-life, gold-plated effigy of Donald Trump wearing flag-themed shorts and flip-flops.

We take it all back. They are conservatives. Or perhaps we should say, they're “Conservatives.”

Not so very long ago—back when the editor was still learning his letters—there was a Senator from Ohio named Robert Alphonso Taft, Sr. The son of the 27th President, who became a Chief Justice, Taft was often called “Mr. Republican.”

How in the ever-loving world, one has to wonder, did the GOP devolve from “taciturn and coldly intellectual” Bob Taft to Donald Trump?

Here's our version of the story:

Nixon demonstrated unequiv-



ocally that it's possible to be simultaneously a hard-core Republican and a crook.

More importantly, he proved that you could be a fairly unrepentant crook, and still be eventually rehabilitated.

After Ford fanned some of Nixon's stench away, Ronald Reagan came along and cleared a new path—or clearcut the forest. Citing the increase of viewing options made possible by cable TV, he nixed the Fairness Doctrine. His position on the matter was firmly sited in conservative doctrine; no one has any right to expect the state to promote fairness. Thomas Paine, of course, would be appalled. Such a position directly conflicted with everything he ever wrote.

Given free rein by Reagan, Rush

Limbaugh prepared the soil. Freed from the minimal constraint of giving equal time to opposing views—sane ones, for example—Limbaugh's employers lined their pockets by allowing him to vent his noxious spleen.

Limbaugh's audience—disgruntled people who were even then being cast aside by an economy that had no use for them—found his act intoxicating. They learned that they were not alone. They wanted someone to blame for their woes; Limbaugh offered them women and people of color. Hating innocent victims proved easier than figuring out that they, too, were victims of the system making Limbaugh rich.

Then along came Newt. In 1994, reaping a bountiful harvest of the now-chronically enraged, Gingrich converted their energy into support for his “Contract With America,” a package of policies designed to amplify the causes of their miseries. Contract On America would have

been more accurate.

After 40 years of Democratic control, the House flipped in a landslide. The freshmen class of Republicans made Limbaugh an Honorary Member of Congress.

Now, as the decedent himself was wont to say when a decent person expired, Rush Limbaugh “has assumed room temperature.” The GOP is charging ahead, though, on the path he blazed. Perhaps it's a coincidence, but the stage at CPAC is shaped like the Norse rune “odal,” which SS troops wore on the collars of their uniforms.

Dolt #45's closest allies are playing hookie from the House, citing “the ongoing public health emergency”—for which they won't wear masks. They're on the schedule in Orlando, though—can't be among the missing when it's time to bow to the golden effigy, up on the Nazi stage.



## The Alleged News®

### Well, That Mystery is Finally Solved...

It's about damn time. What has it been, now...57 years?

“Lee Harvey Oswald was a KGB associate who was personally instructed by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev to assassinate President Kennedy. Sometime shortly thereafter, the Soviets changed their minds, and Oswald was told to drop the plan. But Oswald, harboring a blinding love for all things USSR, refused.”

At least, so say the authors of *Operation Dragon: Inside the Kremlin's secret war against the United States*, according to a write-up about the book in Monday's *New York Post*.

“Well,” you may well say, “that assertion seems rather bold. What evidence do the authors have to back it up?”

The *Post* says that the “authors claim that all the evidence needed

to make their case is contained in the 26-volume Warren Commission Report, but that so much of it is ‘codified’ that no one understood its significance until now.

Clever fellows, these authors, to have deciphered that which so many others have failed for so long to perceive. Who might they be?

“Ambassador R. James Woolsey, who ran the CIA from 1993-1995 (and who, ironically, resigned abruptly during the scandal over Aldrich Ames, a CIA officer turned Russian double agent), and Lt. Gen. Ion Mihai Pacepa, a former acting chief of Communist Romania's espionage service and the ‘highest-ranking intelligence official from an enemy country ever granted political asylum in the United States’ (Pacepa died of COVID earlier this month).”

In our current political climate, some unknown percentage of the population already believes that The Former Guy might have taken marching orders from a murderous ex-FSB goon. Now one of our ex-spy chiefs would have us believe that JFK was bumped off by a KGB plot gone wrong.

Maybe it's good that it took so long for this book to come out. At this stage it can't do much harm.

We can't say we're convinced, though. In fact, it sounds more like Woolsey's ready for some rest. Does anyone have the number for Marla Grayson, Rosamund Pike's character from *I Care A Lot*?

What is genuinely intriguing about *Operation Dragon* is its reference to Lee Harvey Oswald having “a clandestine meeting in Mexico City with his Soviet case officer,

‘comrade Kostin.’”

The authors, according to the *Post*, write that “Comrade Kostin,” real name Valery Kostikov, “belongs to the KGB's Thirteenth Department for assassinations abroad.”

Actually, no. That Kostin/Kostakov link to the Thirteenth Department is a lie the CIA's James Jesus Angleton told to J. Edgar Hoover. It's been previously debunked, but apparently won't die. It sells too many books.

Speaking of books, Jefferson Morley's *Our Man in Mexico: Winston Scott and the Hidden History of the CIA* puts *Operation Dragon* in quite an interesting light.

Winston Scott was the long-time CIA station chief in Mexico City in 1963. Author Morley worked on the book with Scott's son Michael. Here's the short version: Morley

and Scott fils discovered plenty of evidence that James Jesus Angleton and David Atlee Phillips were running an operation in Mexico City, bypassing Scott, the station chief.

In the book's afterword, Morley quotes Angleton saying, of the assassination, “A mansion has many rooms and there were many things going on.... I am not privy to who struck John.” David Atlee Phillips—a prime suspect for many assassination researchers—is quoted saying, “My final take on the assassination is that there was a conspiracy, likely including American intelligence officers.”

To all of which we can only add, that's life for you—just one limited hangout after another.

**Approximately How Doomed Are We?**  
 We humans had some bracing climate news this fortnight. Species which can't read were spared, of course.

On Monday, *Gizmodo's* Molly Taft reported on the disturbing results of a subtle new study.

It has long been understood that fresh water streaming from the Greenland ice sheet into the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Current [AMOC] has the effect of slowing down the Gulf Stream. This has been understood for so long that Roland Emmerich made a ridiculous Hollywood blockbuster extrapolating on that premise back in 2004.

Taft points to a study, published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*—so, real journal, real scientists—which summarizes its findings thusly:

*"Ongoing greenhouse gas emissions put elements of the Earth system at risk for crossing critical thresholds (tipping points), leading to abrupt irreversible climate change. ... Here we show that increasing rates of change of ice melt*

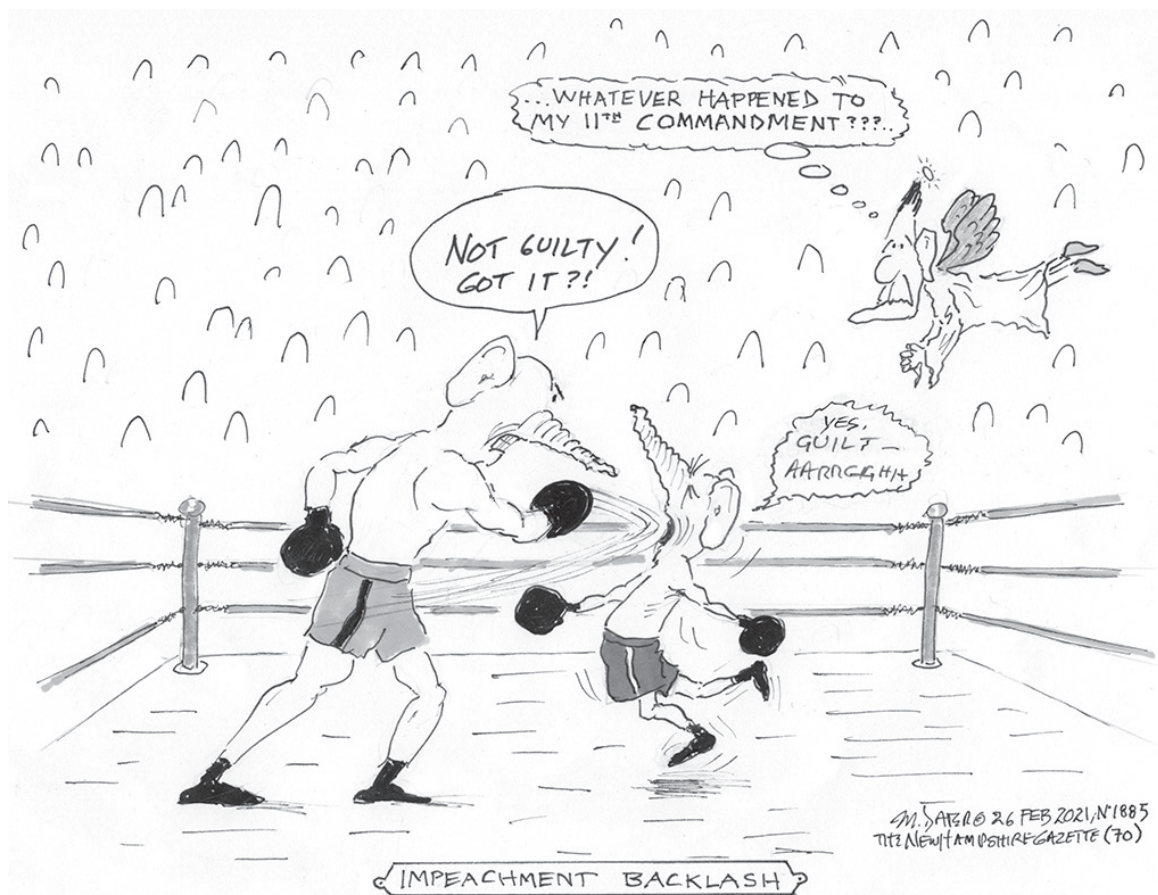
*can induce a collapse of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation in a global ocean model, while no critical threshold in ice melt is crossed and slower increases to the same level of ice melt do not induce tipping. Moreover, the chaotic dynamics of the climate make such a collapse hard to predict. This shows that the safe operating space of the Earth system might be smaller than previously thought."*

In short, people have been primarily concerned about the volume of fresh water being added. It looks like the speed at which it's being added matters, too—and maybe more.

So, that's the rather vague, abstract bad news. What else is going on at the Doomsday Desk?

Michael Mann, whose "hockey stick graph" caused the right wingers to flip their wigs, posted a Twitter thread about AMOC on Thursday. He cites another new study published in *Nature GeoScience* which has found that:

*"(AMOC)...redistributes heat on our planet and has a major impact on climate. Here, we compare a variety of*



*It took Chase Winovich about one day to find a rental apartment in Portsmouth. It didn't take much effort, either. He just went on Twitter and declared his love for the town. People went nuts trying to help. Apparently when you play defensive end for the New England Patriots, everyone wants to be your friend. To get similarly rapid results, less-celebrated people must generally resort to offering huge wads of cash. People new to the area must first overcome a case of sticker shock, though. Who would'a thunk this mini-mansion would be priced at \$1,800,000? It is, though—no foolin'.*

*published proxy records to reconstruct the evolution of the AMOC since about AD 400. A fairly consistent picture of the AMOC emerges: after a long and relatively stable period, there was an initial weakening starting in the nineteenth century, followed by a second, more rapid, decline in the mid-twentieth century, leading to the weakest state of the AMOC occurring in recent decades."*

Is it too late to become illiterate?

**Free State Reject Gets Tough Sentence**  
 We don't often see fit to run press releases from the U.S. Attorney, but this came through on Wednesday... "CONCORD—Christopher C. Cantwell, 40, of Keene, was sentenced to 41 months in federal prison after being convicted of extortion and threat charges by a federal jury in September, United States Attorney Scott W. Murray announced today."

Yes, this would be Christopher Cantwell, the famous "Crying Nazi." The wheels of justice grind slowly,

but they grind exceeding small.

"During four days of trial testimony, the jury was presented with evidence that Cantwell maintained an active online presence, including operating a website and an internet call-in program. Evidence at trial showed that Cantwell believed that members of an online group called the 'Bowl Patrol' had been harassing him online...."

Sadly, the work product of those wheels tends to be rather dull, too. Let's cut to the chase.

Cantwell earned the name "Crying Nazi" in August, 2017, after the deadly Charlottesville, N.C. "Unite the Right" rally. He told *Vice News* that day that the murder of Heather Heyer was "more than justified," but cried as he filmed a video of himself whining about his own legal problems. He also described, during the same video, making a desperate call for advice to a Keene police officer—a rather odd move for a self-described libertarian.

Perhaps it was that lack of com-

mitment to principle which caused him to get kicked out of the Free State Project in 2012.

"Cantwell was convicted of one count of transmitting extortionate communications and one count of threatening to injure property or reputation," the U.S. Attorney continued. "The jury found Cantwell not guilty of cyberstalking. Cantwell has been in custody since his arrest on January 23, 2020."

The worst thing about that press release is that it missed the best part altogether. Hilary Sargent has that covered, though. She has been following the Cantwell saga at Nick R. Martin's *TheInformant.news*.

"The 'Crying Nazi' cried during the hearing before U.S. District Judge Paul Barbadoro issued the sentence at an in-person hearing this morning in Concord, New Hampshire."

Of course he did. He also snatched on a whole mess of other Nazis, which ought to make his next 41 months...interesting.

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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

**“I Was A Slave, Even Here in New Hampshire”**

The Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire [BHTNH] has a challenging mission: reveal Black history that never was taught to a state whose citizens are 93 percent white.

Its latest presentation, “I was a slave, even here in New Hampshire”: The Concord Black Heritage Tour,” shows how well that can be done.

The 45-minute video presents sites and notable African Americans from Concord’s founding until recent times. It tells the story of the first meeting of the legislature in the new capital in 1782, at the Rev. Timothy Walker’s house and warehouse, where Governor, Governor’s Council, and legislature, were served by Prince, Violet, and Luce, enslaved in his household.

It includes stories of enslavement, emancipation, the underground railroad, abolitionism, and the visits of Frederick Douglass. In more recent times, the tour tells the story of renowned African American il-

lustrator, Mel Bolden, and concludes with an interview with Sen. Melanie Levesque. The tour is part of BHTNH’s mission to expand statewide, and the video will be a resource for teachers and for community learning and discussion.

BHTNH board member, tour co-host and writer Sen. David Watters remarked, “African American history is New Hampshire history, and this is especially true in the capital city, since actions by the legislature determined the course of racial relations from the beginning.”

BHTNH Director JerriAnne Boggis said, “By reintroducing these stories of New Hampshire’s early Black citizens, we create a space for dialogues around race, diversity, and inclusion. These corrective narratives make it possible to decrease barriers of misunderstanding and decrease people’s racial anxiety.”

The video can be accessed now at <https://youtu.be/WbNu6mWn4xI>. Soon there will be a guide to resources to accompany the video.

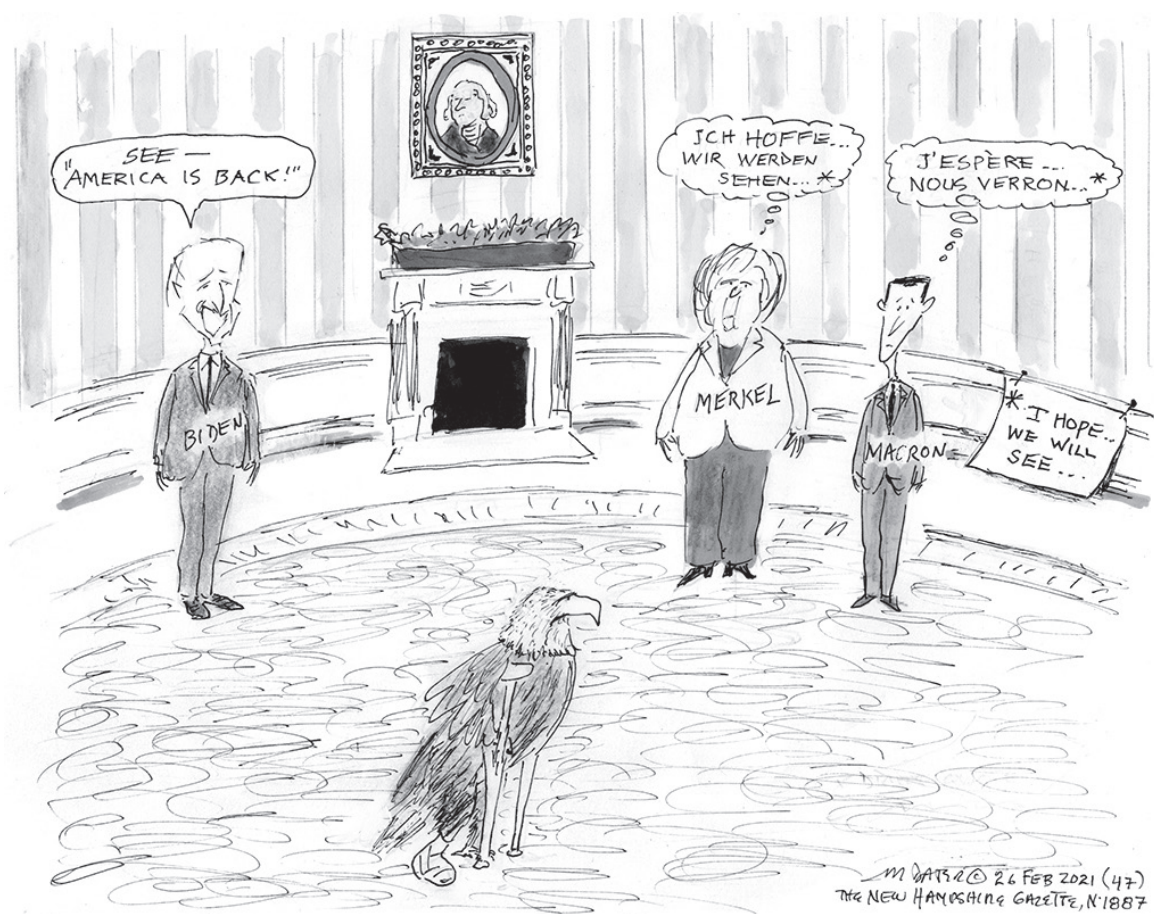


Photo courtesy of @Scentguru

The Flag Police were minding their own business—well, they were lurking on Twitter—and came across this shocking photo of a torn, tattered, ripped, and fouled flag, flying in blatant violation of 4 U.S.C. § 8, Respect for the Flag. It was posted by The Scent Guru [@Scentguru], and accompanied by this message: “When I was a kid, I was taught our flag had to be taken down & folded at the end of the day. On 2/23/20, I saw this torn & tired flag on a town property—for me, it was a symbol of how we were as a nation. I complained to the town & it was replaced. #LeadershipMatters #OurFlag.” Intrigued, naturally, the Flag Police made inquiries—and found a new friend. See “Meet The Scent Guru,” at right.

**Meet Ruth, The Scent Guru**

Acting on behalf of the Flag Police, we requested permission from @Scentguru to reproduce the photo at left. Permission was promptly granted, and, what’s more, our faith in humanity is partially restored. @Scentguru wrote back:

“My name is Ruth Sutcliffe, and I live in Greenwich, Conn. I am a proud American with a lineage that goes back to the Revolutionary War (I’m a descendant of Miles Standish). When I was a child we were taught to take the flag in and fold it at the end of the day. (And remember the time when wearing or displaying the flag in the wrong way would create a scandal?)

“My ancestors fought for freedom of religion, speech and inclusion, so this past year has been terribly upsetting for me. When I saw this flag every day I took my walk, it just made me very sad. I contacted the Parks and Recreation Department more than once, and even offered

them a flag we have in our house that is still folded in its box. The flag was change a few weeks later.

“I am a scent designer, and after a long career developing fragrance for all kinds of end-uses, from soaps and detergents to celebrity perfumes, I decided to develop Essential Awakenings® Smell & Memory kits for seniors living with dementia and MindScent® a multi-sensory kit for children with development and speech communication impairments such as autism.

“Since COVID-19 I am now selling my kits for Smell Training to people who have anosmia from the virus or other illnesses.

“With Kind Regards,  
“Ruth”

Working with the vexillological arm of the law enforcement community has always been rewarding, but meeting Ruth has been special. Readers, here is her URL:

<https://thescentgurugroup.com>.

—==—

**Pining for the Newsprint, 265/12**

Once again we devote this space to a brief meditation on returning to our former physical presence on plain old newsprint.

Normally this practice is both soothing and invigorating. The way things have been going lately, though, we have to wonder: will there still be a Post Office to mail them?

We have been relying on the U.S. Post Office and its successors to deliver our newspaper to subscribers since Benjamin Franklin was still Postmaster and all those pretty French girls were just a twinkle in his roguish eye. Ol’ Ben has now had 74 successors. Never has there been one half so truculent as Louis DeJoy.

DeJoy has always seemed familiar, in a queasy-making kind of way. Today we realized why: he reminds us of M. Emmet Walsh playing Lorren Visser, in the Coen Brothers’ *Blood Simple*—all that’s lacking is the charm.

**Murph’s Fortnightly Quote**  
*“Hitler loved to describe any newspaper that exposed him for what he was as Luegenpresse, which is German for Fake News.”*  
 — Oliver Markus Malloy, author, comic

*“...I have a total irreverence for anything connected with society except that which makes the roads safer, the beer stronger, the food cheaper and the old men and old women warmer in the winter and happier in the summer.”*  
 — Brendan Behan (1923–1964), Irish rebel, poet, and playwright  
 john@wordpraxis.com

*“Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.”*  
 — Martin Luther King, Jr., *Strength to Love* (1963)  
 — Not-So-Random Thoughts from an Oregon Subscriber

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 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.

### Should New Hampshire Sheriffs Arrest Gun-Grabbing Feds?

To the Editor:

I agree with the conclusions made by the author of [an article at RedState.com, headlined "Wow—Missouri County Passes an Act Empowering Sheriffs to Arrest Feds Who Try to Confiscate Guns"] and add one thought.

If the other states follow this lead, and state law enforcement and/or other state resources, like their National Guard units, have to be used at any time to stop federal agents from restricting or taking people's "guns," [sic] there will be a real moral dilemma for the officers in the military.

Can those protecting their right to bear arms—John Q. citizen and their state civil servants—under laws like this, really be "enemies foreign and domestic," when the states have an obligation and right to protect that Constitutional right? The Second Amendment was written to keep all other rights in the Constitution enforceable.

Having arms—for the noncriminal citizens whose rights are inalienable—is the only way individuals can protect those rights if an oppressive entity attempts to take them. For the military passing on getting involved there is a recent precedent to say they should stay out of it:

The USSR air force would not support the Communist party leaders against Letsin [Yeltsin?] and his fight for liberty and freedoms when they were called up to do so. This ended the suppressive and dictatorial failed Marxist socialist "communist" single-party (Democrats wish) ruling central planning government that we are quickly approaching here in the good OLD USA.

Given the Democrats' evolved position toward firearms, I'd bet we're going to see other places following Newton's lead.

And personally, I don't think any of this is heartening. It indicates the level of polarization we're likely to face in the future. Many have said two Americas are forming, and that can't be helpful in a place called the United States.

But this is where we are, and Missouri's on the cutting edge. Or...the trigger.

Jeff Frost  
Alexandria, N.H.

Jeff:

*Thanks for writing; we are grateful for your letter, which we edited a bit for clarity. We apologize for any errors; please advise if we missed the mark. The topic you raised was too intriguing to pass over.*

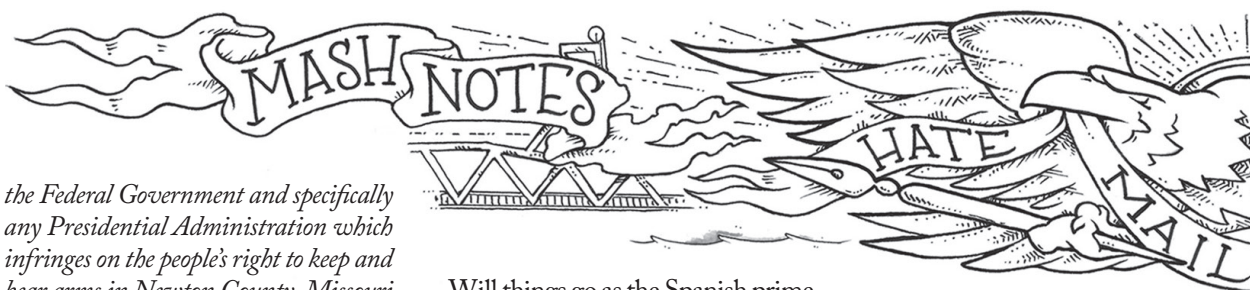
*RedState's editorial policies are, of course, in line with current Republican orthodoxy, i.e., the Constitution consists of the Second Amendment, plus a few other items which may be optional and extraneous. Your letter was a model of clarity, compared to its article. It did link, though, to its more coherent source: Ben Shapiro's DailyWire.com. While no less ideological than RedState, at least the DailyWire believes in grammar:*

*"One Missouri County, concerned that the federal government might infringe on the Second Amendment rights of its citizens, passed an ordinance this month which would invalidate any such attempt by the federal government.*

*"The Second Amendment Preservation Act of Newton County, Missouri, states:*

*"Be it enacted by the Newton County Missouri Commission as follows: All federal acts, laws, orders, rules and regulations passed by the Federal government and specifically any Presidential Administration whether past, present or future, which infringe on the people's right to keep and bear arms as guaranteed by the Second Amendment to the United States and Article 1, Section 23 of the Missouri Constitution shall be invalid in the county, shall not be recognized by this county, and specifically rejected by this county, and shall be considered null and void and of no effect in this county.*

*"Such acts, laws, orders, rules and regulations include but are not limited to any tax levy, fee, or stamp imposed on firearms, firearm accessories, or ammunition not common to all other goods and services... any registration or tracking of firearms, firearm accessories or ammunition... any act ordering the confiscation of firearms, firearm accessories or ammunition... and finally, any act, whether past, present or future passed by the United States Congress and signed into law by*



*the Federal Government and specifically any Presidential Administration which infringes on the people's right to keep and bear arms in Newton County, Missouri shall be considered null and void by the county and not recognized by this county.*

*"The law adds: Any and all federal agents trying to enforce the regulations listed in Section (1) shall be subject to arrest by the Sheriff's department."*

*Needless to say that, in a country already overrun by so-called Sovereign Citizens espousing ever more fanciful theories about the inherent powers of sheriffs, this matter will peacefully sort itself out in no time.*

The Editor

### Catalonia And Spain At Loggerheads In The Catalan Elections

To the Editor:

On February 14th there will be elections to the Catalan Parliament. [Note: We received this letter on February 11th, too late for inclusion in our paper of the 12th. — The Ed.] These are not normal elections in a regional parliament but are yet another chapter in the confrontation between the Catalan independence movement and the Spanish state.

The European institutions are hoping that the Socialist Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez, will defuse the independence movement with some kind of negotiation. The problem is that Sánchez is very reluctant to negotiate, firstly, because his party is deeply Spanish nationalist and, secondly, because any concessions in Catalonia would be used against him by Spain's ultra-nationalist right-wing parties.

Sánchez would need to be the party with the most votes in the elections to force a pact that would allow him to expel the pro-independence supporters from the Catalan institutions and end the crisis. If he succeeds, he will be able to say in Europe that the Catalan problem is deflating and that there is no need to worry.

Will things go as the Spanish prime minister wishes? After three years of relentless repression, the grassroots independence movement remains determined and mobilised. Catalan pro-independence supporters see these elections as an opportunity to show that the Catalan problem has not gone away and will not go away as long as their demands are not heard.

Polls show a three-way tie between Junts, the pro-independence party of Carles Puigdemont, ERC, also pro-independence, and the PSC, the Catalan branch of the Spanish socialist party. The pro-independence parties could repeat the absolute majority and exceed 50 percent of the votes. Therefore, it seems unlikely that Sánchez's party will win enough seats to form a non-independence government.

Europe has so far been inclined not to interfere in the Catalan case, for fear of stirring up other separatist movements and to avoid angering Spain. However, if pro-independence supporters achieve a resounding victory on February 14th, Europe will have to accept that the Catalan problem will not be solved by looking the other way.

Maria M. Garayoa  
Barcelona, Catalonia

### Pro-Independence Parties Win The Catalan Elections

To the Editor:

For the third time in a row, the Catalan pro-independence movement wins with an absolute majority in the Catalan elections. It has won resoundingly with 74 seats, more than the 68 that establishes the majority (in the previous elections it had won with 70). This time also with 51.22% of the votes, making it the majority among the voters.

The elections were due next year, but they were brought forward because

the Spanish courts overthrew Catalan President Joaquim Torra for having disobeyed an electoral board that ordered him to take down a banner criticising the imprisonment of Catalan politicians. The President refused, citing freedom of expression, and the Spanish judiciary considered that the contempt was sufficient to force the removal of the President of the Parliament of Catalonia and cause the elections to be brought forward.

Furthermore, after consulting experts on the pandemic, the provisional Catalan executive decided to postpone the elections for five months until the third wave of Covid-19 had subsided. However, yet again, the Spanish judiciary interfered forcing the elections to be held on February 14th.

This is the same Spanish Justice that keeps nine Catalan politicians and activists in prison, that has issued search and arrest warrants against seven exiled Catalan politicians (which the German and Belgian courts rejected because they did not see the accusations as justified or because they understood that there were no guarantees of a fair trial in Spain). It is the same Spanish Justice that maintains the search and arrest warrant against a Majorcan musician—exiled in Belgium—for singing against the King of Spain and that is imminently going to imprison another Catalan musician, Pablo Hasel, for also having sung against the King.

In this context, and despite having the entire state apparatus and the Spanish press against them, independence has won again, and has done so obtaining a larger absolute majority than ever and with over 51% of the votes. In front of the pro-independence movement, we have the former Spanish socialist health minister

### Protest

To sin by silence, when we should protest,  
Makes cowards out of men. The human race  
Has climbed on protest. Had no voice been raised  
Against injustice, ignorance, and lust,  
The inquisition yet would serve the law,  
And guillotines decide our least disputes.  
The few who dare, must speak and speak again  
To right the wrongs of many. Speech, thank God,  
No vested power in this great day and land  
Can gag or throttle. Press and voice may cry  
Loud disapproval of existing ills;  
May criticise oppression and condemn  
The lawlessness of wealth-protecting laws  
That let the children and childbearers toil  
To purchase ease for idle millionaires.  
Therefore I do protest against the boast  
Of independence in this mighty land.  
Call no chain strong, which holds one rusted link.  
Call no land free, that holds one fettered slave.  
Until the manacled slim wrists of babes  
Are loosed to toss in childish sport and glee,  
Until the mother bears no burden, save  
The precious one beneath her heart, until  
God's soil is rescued from the clutch of greed  
And given back to labor, let no man  
Call this the land of freedom.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850–1919)

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during the pandemic, who has had the full support of the state, the press and unionism in general, and also the Spanish extreme-right of VOX, which has burst onto the Catalan Parliament with 11 seats.

Given this scenario, the Spanish state and the European Union cannot deny the right of self-determination of Catalan society, which must be expressed in a referendum with democratic guarantees, transparency and without foul play. All in all, democracy is about allowing citizens to decide at the ballot box, not about violating their will with the application of laws that should in fact serve to guarantee there is a framework that respects what societies want for themselves.

Jordi Oriola Folch  
Barcelona, Catalonia  
*Maria and Jordi:*  
*We don't know what we did to deserve it, but we're honored to be getting news from Catalonia. If we're ever forced into exile, it's on our short list.*  
*The Editor*

**Republicanism Is Morphing Into Fascism**  
To the Editor;

The election of Joe Biden engendered optimism among some Progressives that Trump's control over Republican legislators would diminish, facilitating a return to a more rational politics based on a respect for Constitutional principles and democratic processes. The hope was based on the assumption that most if not all Republicans continued to honor traditional Republican values such as a belief in small government, fiscal conservatism and a reverence for individual initiative. Recent events, however, have called this assumption into question.

The invasion of the Capitol revealed the extent of Trump's control over his

base who demonstrated their willingness to resort to violent insurrection at his instigation. A motley collection of fascists, white supremacists, neo-Nazis and deluded conspiracy theorists attempted to subvert a democratic election and threatened the lives of political opponents on the basis of Trump's lies aided by crackpot internet speculation.

Such an overt attack on the foundations of democracy should have been met with comprehensive condemnation. It largely was—except for many right wing Republicans, most of whom had actively participated in the wrongful effort to overthrow election results. During Trump's second impeachment, over 100 House Republicans continued to support his election lies and voted not to impeach him. Subsequently, only seven Republican senators voted to find him guilty of instigating an insurrection even in the face of overwhelming evidence.

Several state Republican Committees have censured the Senators who voted to convict Trump. Republican controlled state legislatures are currently engaged in crafting voter suppression legislation to preserve their control over state elections. House Republicans failed to censure Marjorie Taylor Greene, the harebrained Georgia Representative who has publicly supported the preposterous ramblings of QAnon and other bizarre conspiracy theories.

These events indicate that the Party of Lincoln has become the Party of Trump and is not likely to honor traditional values any time soon. They indicate that a fundamental social and economic divide now separates Republicans and Democrats and will continue to mark an era of political conflict. The Republican base is largely comprised of white, middle class

working people living in the heartland and rural areas of other states. This group has chafed at the loss of well-paying blue collar jobs to globalization and technology that has resulted in the stagnation of working class wages while educated elites in coastal cities have prospered. The relative economic decline has generated a deep disdain for global and coastal elites by the Trump base accompanied by a resentment that they have been betrayed by politicians in both parties.

The Republican base also consists of a large and vocal group of Protestant fundamentalists (such as Evangelical Christians) who see coastal elites as morally debased and Progressive politicians as a threat to their religious values. The abortion debate clearly indicates this divide.

Additionally, this rural white working class views the influx of brown and black immigrants as a threat to their cultural and ethnic identity. As they see the U.S. becoming a majority minority country, they see themselves and their birthright being displaced and their culture being eclipsed.

The convergence of economic, religious and cultural concerns among the white rural working class has provided Republican demagogues with an aggrieved political base with disturbing characteristics. It has produced a populist movement based on a racist nationalism that harkens back to an idealized historical period (e.g. MAGA). It has elevated an authoritarian demagogue to its leadership and demonstrates an emotional and often irrational attachment to him. The invasion of the Capitol has demonstrated that it will resort to violence in the effort to achieve the political ends defined by its leader. You do not have to be a political scientist to recognize these characteristics. They are a textbook definition of fascism. A large faction of the Republican Party led by Donald Trump has become a fascist

party. It should be recognized as such and seen as a threat to Constitutional, democratic governance.

Robert D. Russell, Ph.D.  
Harrisburg, Pa.

**Why No Mention Of Plutonium In Media Coverage Of Mars Rover?**  
To the Editor:

I am disheartened that the media shows little inclination to mention the words "plutonium" or "probabilities of accidental release" in their so-called reporting of the Mars rover arrival. You have to question who they work for.

A "1 in 960 chance of a deadly plutonium release" is a real concern—gamblers in Las Vegas would be happy with those odds.

We daily hear the excited anticipation of the nuclear industry as stories reveal the growing plans for hosts of launches of nuclear devices—more rovers on Mars, mining colonies on the moon, even nuclear reactors to power rockets bound for Mars. The nuclear industry is rolling the dice while people on Earth have their fingers crossed in the hope technology does not fail—as it often does.

But the media, while ignoring the Mars rover plutonium story, is also guilty of not reporting about the years of toxic contamination at the Department of Energy (DoE) nuclear labs where these space nuclear devices are produced. The Idaho Nuclear lab or Los Alamos Nuclear lab in New Mexico have long track records of worker and environmental contamination during this dirty space nuke fabrication process.

The public will need to do more than cross their fingers in hopes that nothing goes wrong. We need to speak out loudly so Congress, NASA and the DoE hear that we do not support the nuclearization of the heavens.

Go solar or better yet—stay home and use our tax dollars to take care of the legions of people without jobs, health care, housing, food, or heat.

Mars can wait.

For more, see: <http://space4peace.blogspot.com/2021/02/our-opposition-remains-dangers-of.html>

Bruce K. Gagnon, Coordinator,

Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space

PO Box 652  
Brunswick, ME 04011  
(207) 389-4606; <http://www.space4peace.org>; <http://space4peace.blogspot.com> (blog)

*"Thank God men cannot fly, and lay waste the sky as well as the earth."*

— Henry David Thoreau

*Bruce:*

*Thanks a lot. With our deadline looming, we just spent an hour surveying the history of radioactive satellites. Yoiks!*

*The Editor*

**Keep the Help Homeless**  
To the Editor,

The legislature is coming at New Hampshire with numerous Republican-sponsored bills that would "urbanize" the state faster than Joe Biden and Kamala Harris can revive Obama's AFFH.

These bills should be opposed because they reward developers with your tax money and promote the building of apartments everywhere. Single-family homeowners beware. Your taxes will go up, and your property values will go down. HB 586, HB 132, HB 189, HB 154, SB 86.

HB 288 is a bill that was submitted to repeal the Housing Appeals Board and should be supported. No 3-person state board should allow predatory developers to override your votes at town meeting.

For more information on these bills and what to do about them please see [bedfordresidents.com](http://bedfordresidents.com)'s newsletter for Feb 13, 2021

You might also ask the Governor what he is thinking by promoting this?

Jane Aitken  
Bedford, N.H.

*Jane:*

*Stalwartly protecting the sacred right of every Granite Stater to own a McMansion, the environs of which are unsullied by the homes of the sort of people who do the yardwork. Quelle surprise. We can't help but wonder where you stand on public transportation. Perhaps you just*

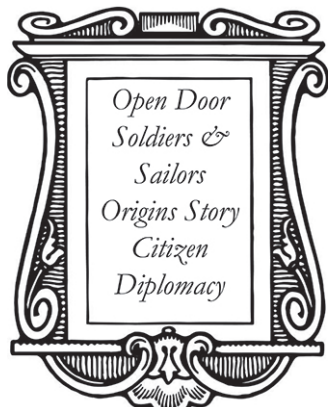
**Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.**

*to page six*

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## To Pave Way for DeJoy's Ouster, 80 House Democrats Urge Biden to Quickly Fill Postal Board Vacancies

by Jake Johnson, staff writer  
*Common Dreams*

Warning that the U.S. Postal Service will continue to be under threat as long as Postmaster General Louis DeJoy has “free rein” to impose his agenda, a group of 80 House Democrats is calling on President Joe Biden to quickly fill the vacancies on the mail agency’s board in order to stop DeJoy from inflicting further damage and set the stage for his removal.

Led by Reps. Alma Adams (D-N.C.), Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), and Gerry Connolly (D-Va.), the lawmakers argued in a letter to Biden on February 17th that “filling the vacant seats on the Postal Service’s Board of Governors with strong, passionate advocates for the institution will allow it to function in a nonpartisan manner, and will allow the board to seriously consider whether the current postmaster

general is suitable to continue in his role.”

Connolly, the chairman of the House Subcommittee on Government Operations—a panel with jurisdiction over the Postal Service—said in a statement that DeJoy’s tenure as former President Donald Trump’s “handpicked postmaster general has been one of deliberate sabotage, draconian service cuts, and craven partisanship.”

“The Postal Service cannot continue to operate without dedicated leadership who believe in its mission and will fight for its success,” said Connolly, who has been demanding DeJoy’s resignation since last August. “I urge President Biden to quickly fill the vacancies on the Board of Governors with individuals who respect this treasured American institution and who will work tirelessly to restore it for the use of generations to come.”

There are currently four vacancies

on the 11-member Postal Service board, including three Senate-confirmed governor spots. While Biden does not have the legal authority to remove DeJoy himself, filling the three open positions with Democrats would give the party a majority of board governors and the votes necessary to replace the postmaster general.

“We do not doubt that the Postal Service requires some thoughtful reforms in order to continue to provide excellent service to the American people in the years to come; however, there is a plethora of evidence that Postmaster General DeJoy is not equipped to meet the rigors of these challenges,” the House Democrats wrote.

The lawmakers’ letter came as DeJoy is preparing to unveil a new slate of policy changes that—if allowed to take effect—would further slow mail delivery and increase prices for consumers and businesses.

As the *Washington Post* reported earlier this month, DeJoy—a GOP megadonor to Trump—is considering a proposal that would “put all first-class mail onto a single delivery track...a move that would mean slower and more costly delivery for both consumers and commercial mailers.”

DeJoy’s new plan, which has yet to be finalized, would also prevent “First Class mail from being shipped by airplane...forcing all of it into trucks and a relay of distribution depots,” according to the *Post*.

Any additional delivery slowdowns would come on top of dramatic USPS performance declines that critics attributed to the operational changes DeJoy implemented soon after he took office last June.

Despite his complete lack of experience at the Postal Service, the USPS Board of Governors unanimously appointed DeJoy last May and has since defended his actions

amid widespread public backlash, leading several Democratic lawmakers to call on Biden to terminate every sitting postal governor.

In their letter on Wednesday, the 80 Democratic lawmakers noted that under DeJoy’s leadership, “the on-time delivery of flat mail has plunged drastically; veterans, who rely almost exclusively on the Postal Service to receive their medications through the VA, have faced life-threatening delays in receiving those parcels; and the public perception pertaining to the integrity of the 2020 general election was threatened by the impact of these delays on the timely delivery of mail-in ballots.”

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from page five

give the help castoff shoes.

Our readers will no doubt understand that we publish your letter only as an heuristic aide: you're against it? Duly noted. We'll review it, and probably support it.

The Editor

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### The Die is Cast

To the Editor:

The privileged class of Congress has spoken. What kind of America will we be?

Republican Senators voting to acquit ex-President Trump have steered our country toward rocky reefs of autocracy, where oaths of office mean nothing but the means to power. Their votes have proclaimed they no longer stand for values and principles encoded in the lives and writings of our Founding Fathers (and Mothers) in 1787, nor the brave women and men who have fought and died for America

throughout our history.

To the Republican wing of the Senate, facts and truth continue to be irrelevant. Democratic House managers provided America with a master class in democracy, attended by 50 Democratic Senators and seven Republican Senators. The enduring shame of it is that those 43 Republican Senators who voted acquittal were truant and skipped class; they failed spectacularly!

Those who voted to acquit revealed their true cynicism and disdain for our constitution when they rose and applauded the Congressional Gold Medal given to true hero and Capitol Police Officer, Eugene Goodman. Goodman represented the bravery and honor shown by his “blue” brothers and sisters who risked, and in one case gave, their lives in service of protecting those

same Republicans who have now stained themselves and our country. Stealing from President Lincoln: “The world...can never forget what they did here.”

How much more future hate, malevolence, and cowardice will America endure because the Senate and leader Mitch McConnell didn't do their jobs?

Herb Moyer  
Exeter, N.H.

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### PEN Condemns Anti-Semitism

To the Editor:

The N.H. Palestine Education Network (PEN) condemns anti-Semitism. We are shocked that some State Representatives have used social media to spread this prejudice. Representatives Spillane (R-Deerfield) and Dawn Johnson

(R-Laconia) have utilized social platforms that promote harm and discord.

Another State Representative, Terry Roy (R-Deerfield) has used “Gab,” which has been described as “the social media home for Neo-Nazis and white supremacists.” Roy, according to a tweet we have seen, is seeking “to implore Gab users around the country to flood the New Hampshire House remote sign-in sheets,” either opposing or supporting bills to their liking! Representative Roy on another tweet wrote: “I want these liberal commies to not know what hit them!” This is not only abhorrent but smacks of an unethical practice.

As citizens of New Hampshire, we want our state’s legislative members to welcome and appreciate the state’s diversity and different

perspectives. PEN unequivocally denounces anti-Semitism and prejudice and hatred directed against any human being.

We request that Governor Sununu and state leaders, Speaker Packard and Senate President Morse, call on these three Representatives and suggest to them that if they do not believe in full equality for all people who live in New Hampshire, then they should consider resigning.

Will Thomas, for N.H. PEN  
Auburn, N.H.

Will:

*Resignation would certainly be the honorable thing... Please keep us posted on the work of the N.H. Palestine Education Network.*

The Editor

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*“One of my fave Wall Street expressions: ‘putting your money to work.’ No, you’re putting someone else to work to magnify your money!”*

– Doug Henwood



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# Is This the Beginning or the End?

by Jean Stimmell

I strive for idleness. My best ideas come to me not from hard work but from being unfocused, just lolling around. My creative life, such as it is, coincides with what Mark Taylor tells us in "Idleness Waiting Grace:" "Many of the most important thoughts are unintentional—they can be neither solicited nor cajoled but have a rhythm of their own, creeping up, arriving, and leaving when we least expect them."<sup>1</sup>

Certain seemingly inconsequential events stick in our minds. For me, one such thing is a TV commercial, from fifty years ago, about margarine: In the ad, Mother Nature, dressed in a gown of white and adorned in a crown of flowers, becomes enraged when she discovers that what she is eating is not real butter but margarine. She bellows, "It's not nice to fool mother nature," and proceeds to rain down thunder and lightning upon the evil perpetrators.

That old TV ad came back to mind recently after reading a quote by climate scientist Wally Broecker in *Atlantic Magazine*: "The climate system is an angry beast, and we are poking it with sticks."<sup>2</sup> It made me wonder, why aren't we paying attention to Wally's warning, speaking on Mother Nature's behalf.

We have no excuse: We all learned in 2006, if not before, that we were in deep trouble. That's when Al Gore released, "An Inconvenient Truth," educating us about the dangers of global warming. The documentary

was a huge hit, winning two Academy Awards and is still one of the highest-grossing documentaries of all time.

Back then, the threat, for some, might have been passed off as conjecture. But now climate change is no longer theoretical but a storm raging all around us, from wildfires to hurricanes to pandemics, of which covid-19 may only be only the first of more deadly plagues to come.<sup>3</sup>

Despite overwhelming evidence, now so clear to the naked eye, we have done little to change our ways. Part of the complacency is due to big businesses, like the fossil fuel industry, who have worked tirelessly to discredit the whole concept of climate warming because it adversely affects their bottom line. A good argument can be made, along these lines, that the root cause of this is capitalism itself.

However, I think a big part of our denial is hard-wired within us. We are not the higher-order rational beings, we think we are, but mere animals. And like all of our kind, we are driven foremost by our short-term emotions and appetites, not what is best for us in the long run.

To some extent, our short and long-term interests coincide. If we do not eat when we are hungry, we will soon die. If we all stop having sex, the human species will die. Craving material possessions, however, is a more complicated question. Perhaps, being well off provides some security, but our current shop-until-you-drop mentality



Morning vultures, Santa Cruz, Cal., Feb., 2021. — CC Jean Stimmell.

is beyond the pale, driving global warming, polluting the planet, and depleting scarce resources. My theory is that this shopping obsession is a perversion of a primal instinct left over from our hunter-gatherer days when we had to forage every day to survive.

Whatever the reason, our brains are hard-wired to satisfy these short-term desires. We are like a cunning, old buck who usually makes good decisions but loses his head during rutting season: With his nose glued to the ground, following the scent of a doe in heat, the buck gets crushed by a bus while crossing the road.

For us, the bus bearing down on us is climate change.

Many experts say the climate crisis will soon wipe us out. Eminent virologist Frank Fenner<sup>4</sup> predicts human extinction will happen next century. A few say this century. And that's not considering the deadly consequences of war and pestilence. However, most likely, a few of us will survive, living in small, isolated tribes.

Perhaps Mother Nature is orchestrating this scenario to protect her realm by transplanting our primal animal brain into a natural environment where it can thrive, rebooting us as nomadic hunter-gatherers. We will no longer have the means or the opportunity to cook the planet from our flagrant consumption or blow each other up with weapons of mass destruction.

A flock of new books suggests that the American way of life isn't the pinnacle of existence.<sup>5</sup> In his book *Affluence without Abundance*, James Suzman points out that contemporary indigenous people, like the Australian Bushmen, work only about 15 hours a week with an equal amount of time spent on domestic chores. The rest of the time, they can relax and focus on family, friends, and hobbies.

This atmosphere creates a very different sense of time, as ecologist David Abram tells us. For us, nature is merely a passive backdrop to our lives. But, for indigenous people, the present is all-encompassing: an

alive, vibrating "field of intelligence in which our actions participate."<sup>6</sup> While we take yoga or mindfulness classes to live in the present briefly, indigenous people live that way all the time. That's why some have called hunter-gatherers the happiest humans ever to inhabit the earth.

What a fantastic feeling, being totally alive in the moment without any craving to do or to have! That's what "idleness" means to me, not the derogative, modern meaning suggesting sloth. This spaciousness allows us to travel to places we have never been, as expressed so elegantly by Taylor: "Idleness allows time for the mind to wander to places never before imagined and to return transformed."<sup>7</sup>

Maybe, with that in mind, going back to our roots is not all bad.

—==—

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

2 <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/03/extreme-climate-change-history/617793/>

3 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/10/06/fa-reed-zakaria-lessons-post-pandemic-world/>

4 <https://www.sciencefocus.com/planet-earth/how-human-extinction-would-change-the-earth/amp/>

5 <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandanda/2017/10/01/551018759/are-hunter-gatherers-the-happiest-humans-to-inhabit-earth>

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

## A wealth of riches, a poverty of morals

by Jim Hightower

Let's say you're a millionaire. That's a lot of money, right? Now let's say you're a billionaire. That's a lot more money! But how much more?

Think of all those dollars as seconds on a clock. A million seconds would total 11 days—but a billion seconds equals nearly 32 years! Rich is nice, but billionaire-rich is over

the moon—and the wealth of billionaires is now zooming out of this world. There are only 2,200 of these über-rich dudes in the world, but the wealth stashed away by these elites hit a new record this summer, averaging more than \$4 billion each. They've even pocketed an extra half-billion bucks on average in the midst of the COVID-19 economic crash.

Bear in mind that these fortunate

few did nothing to earn this haul. They didn't work harder, didn't get one-digit smarter, didn't create some new breakthrough product to benefit humankind—they could just crank back in their gold-plated La-Z-Boys and let their money make money for them.

Then there are multimillionaire corporate chieftains who are cashing in on their own failure. Having closed stores throughout America,

fired thousands of workers, stiffed suppliers and creditors, taken bailout money from taxpayers, and even led their corporations into bankruptcy, the CEOs of such collapsing giants as Hertz, J.C. Penney, and Toys "R" Us have grabbed millions of dollars in—believe it or not—bonus payments! The typical employee at J.C. Penney for example, is held to part-time work, making under \$12,000 a year. Thousands of them are now

losing even that miserly income as the once-mighty retailer is shutting 154 stores. Yet, the CEO was paid a \$4.5 million cash bonus before the company filed for bankruptcy last year.

And still, the corporate establishment wonders why the people consider it a club of heartless, greedy bastards.

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