

The Fortnightly Rant

Culture War Memorial Day

Memorial Day is coming pretty soon. It will be here in ten or eleven days, depending on whether you count the day itself. That's a point one could argue either way.

If we have learned anything since a Black man was elected President, it's that people can argue about anything, and come to blows over nothing.

Our seniority obliges us to keep posterity in mind when we write the news. We must imagine that some part of our readership is as yet unborn. That part comes easily enough; one might even say we were born for this.*

It's getting more and more difficult, though, to see how we'll ever get through these twin pandemics.

One, of course, is Covid, and it's bad enough. The virus has killed more than a million of us already. The other is the toxic array of beliefs which claims, among other things, that Covid is a hoax. Three of every ten of the dead, researchers say, would probably still be with us if they had just taken the vaccine which was, by then, available to them. But no, for them, the vaccine was just part of the hoax—the deadliest hoax in U.S. history.

Calling this paroxysm of bizarre behavior “crazy” would be too easy, and that term is too loaded. It stigmatizes unfortunate people experi-

encing something unpleasant that is beyond their control. We should all be able to relate to that.

What handy label, then, shall we use to sum up the *zeitgeist*? So many people reaching for their guns we can only call it “The Culture War.”

For the benefit, then, of our readers off in that distant future which may or may not ever come to exist, how shall we memorialize this Culture War, this latest stage in the U.S.A.'s never-ending effort to keep on getting stranger?

We cannot, of course, keep track of every instance of rampant lunacy that comes to our attention. We'd have to put out a paper twice this size, every fifteen minutes. In this blizzard of BS, we can't even narrow down our selections. What criteria could we choose? Most psychotic? Most gratuitously cruel? Least self-aware? Let's just grab a few anecdotes at random and see if a pattern develops.

According to a self-produced puff piece available online, “Paul Marik, MD recently testified before the New Hampshire legislature to support access to needed medications and to protect the doctor-patient relationship.” The medication under discussion was ivermectin, the MAGA mob's favorite horse-dewormer.

Marik, according to our old friend Wikipedia, has authored a paper on Covid treatments which was later retracted due to “a series of strong, unsupported claims based on studies with insufficient statistical significance.” Another paper of his was rejected for misreporting mortality figures.

The Senate, though, was undaunted. It passed HB 1022 by a party-line vote. Fourteen Republicans voted “Yay!” Ten spoil-sport Democrats voted “Neigh.”



Barring a veto, Granite Staters may soon join Tennesseans in signifying their fealty to Dolt #45 by consuming horse paste at their own discretion.

Perhaps the General Court will now follow Tennessee's lead and designate an Official State Firearm. Theirs is the Barrett Light .50 caliber semi-automatic sniper rifle. Ours could well be the Newington-made Sig Sauer P320, subject of myriad accidental-discharge lawsuits.

So far, so disheartening. Let's visit a particularly sunny laboratory of democracy and see if that will brighten the mood.

Ron DeSantis, the Governor of Florida, just appointed Cord Byrd to be the new Secretary of State. Not long ago, DeSantis appointed Esther Byrd, Cord's wife, to Florida's Board of Education. Clearly DeSantis is for the Byrds, who are, among other things, boating enthusiasts. When they participated in a MAGA boat parade, their vessel

flew a QAnon flag. Do they truly believe that Democrats consume adrenochrome harvested from children? Perhaps. Or perhaps they're just kidding.

Byrd will now oversee statewide elections, with help from the new \$3.7 million election police force DeSantis conjured up earlier this year. And you thought Katherine Harris was a threat to democracy when she held the office in 2000.

Byrd's official Florida House web page lists—today—under Military: “United States Air Force, former service.” Jacksonville's *Folio Weekly* looked into Byrd's “former service” in July of 2018. It found that “his service was limited to one freshman year of college at the Air Force Academy in Colorado almost 30 years ago.”

For more about Florida's lying, chickenhawk Secretary of State, visit FloridaGunLawyer.com: “Welcome to Florida Gun Lawyer. Cord Byrd is your Firearms Law Expert...

Gun Rights Restoration...Firearm Purchase Denials...Law Enforcement Refusal to Return Seized/Confiscated Firearms...Concealed Weapons Permit Issues...Relief from Injunctions Affecting Gun Rights...Right-To-Carry Cases...”

The Republic will almost surely survive through at least this pending Memorial Day. Hell, the editor delivered Portsmouth's Memorial Day address in 2016, and nothing terrible happened, did it? Oh, wait...

Moving right along, let's get to the point if we have one. When, if ever, will the U.S.A. be able to observe Culture War Memorial Day?

Officially designating a holiday implies a certain level of prior agreement. See New Hampshire's adoption of Martin Luther King Jr. Day for a recent example.

Despite all this, we're going to make a surprising prediction: we'll be commemorating the end of The Culture War no later than the second Tuesday of next week.

* The editor has been around for a good while now. His father Robert's first breath came just seven years after the Wright Flyer took to the air. “R.B.” was raised by Georgie Ann Fowle, who was seven years old when the South fired on Fort Sumter. She told him old family stories. One was about some relatives who had to leave town in a wagon because the British were burning Washington, D.C. Here's another: “There was a printer in the family, way back in the olden days. He printed something the authorities didn't like, so they threw him in jail.” Terse—just 26 words, one for each letter of the alphabet. Enough to lead, though, to the liberation of this newspaper.

The Alleged News®

Judge Proves That Justice Is, In Fact, Blind—and Dumb, Too

Superior Court Judge Andrew Schulman sentenced four climate activists on Friday, May 13th. The four had held up a train in Bow in December, 2019.

To be clear, there were no horses or six-shooters involved; no looting of passengers took place. The four guilty parties just stood on the tracks and, by doing so, delayed the arrival by four and a half hours of a trainload of coal at the Merrimack Generating Station.

Once it arrived, the coal was burned, generating electrical power in the process. That power was sold, generating a profit which, we presume, was distributed to shareholders—a very small fraction of the public at large.

Though stingy and elitist with its profits, the Bow power plant is generous and egalitarian in other ways.

It bestows carbon dioxide, mercury, and god knows what else on anyone and everyone in its general vicinity. Even those far away are affected: Every ton of CO2 it releases has an incremental effect on the global climate.

Judge Schulman's rulings during the trial effectively blinded the jury. He allowed the railroads to pose as neutral victims. They were anything but.

In a statement at his sentencing, defendant Jonathan O'Hara made clear who the real criminals are.

“The jury has spoken. They have decided that I was trespassing in December 2019. That is the law. What remains for you to decide now is the matter of justice. The question before you now is whether I was acting in good conscience to intervene in a situation of injustice on behalf of my

community, the community of Bow, the ratepayers of New England, and indeed the community of all life on earth to prevent the further burning of coal at the Merrimack Generating Station. Or whether the injustice perpetrated in December 2019 was that the private property and profit rights of the aggrieved railroad were harmed by the trespassing and delay of their train for four and a half hours that day.

“In order for you to make that decision I want to give some additional context that I was not able to give during the trial. The prosecution at trial entered into evidence and made the argument in closing that the railroad has a statutory obligation to be a neutral carrier of whatever goods it is asked to carry. On the surface that is certainly true. But if you look under the hood there's a

different story, in fact it's a representative story of exactly how adequate progress addressing the climate crisis has been thwarted over the past three decades.

“The coal cars carried that day in December, while they were pulled and operated by Pan Am over the tracks in New Hampshire, were owned by and sent here from the mine by the railroad CSX. All of the cars on that train were labeled with the company's logo. In 2019 CSX earned \$2.1 billion dollars in coal revenue. Starting in the 1990s, when the international community, including the United States, began to take action on climate change, CSX began to, along with the three other largest railroads in the U.S., fund organizations whose intention was to stop climate action. As reported in *The Atlantic*, CSX and these other

railroads spent tens of millions of dollars on this effort, to ensure that they can continue to make billions of dollars shipping coal in the future, while the rest of us suffer. A railroad supported coalition spent \$13 million dollars in 1997 alone—the year I was a sophomore in High School—to dissuade the U.S. from supporting the international Kyoto Protocol climate treaty. That effort was successful in getting the U.S. to withdraw from that treaty. This is just the beginning of a pattern of disinformation and obfuscation of the truth funded by CSX that continued through the 2000s, effectively stopping action on climate change.

“So in fact, the railroads are not neutral carriers. They have spent

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from page one

tens of millions of dollars to confuse and outright deny the legitimacy of international scientific reports on climate change, and to shape the regulatory environment in ways that protect their bottom line, thwarting efforts to protect the health and security of the public. And now CSX has gained regulatory approval to purchase Pan Am railways, for a reported \$700 million dollars. All of this contrasts with what the prosecution teased out skillfully during trial: that I am part of a small little non-profit organization with a budget of around \$90,000 trying to do something constructive."

O'Hara refers to No Coal No Gas, online at nocoalnogas.org. In a statement, the organization noted that while Judge Schulman allowed the defendants to speak, he had arrived in court with his decision made and written out in detail.

Dana Dwinell-Yardley and Dan-

iel Flynn got four months in the county jail, no credit for time served, suspended for 3 years with good behavior.

Johnny Sanchez and Jonathan O'Hara got six months in the county jail, no credit for time served, all suspended for 5 years with good behavior.

Restitution to the PanAm Railways was set at \$6,215. Schulman ordered O'Hara and Sanchez to pay a larger portion of the restitution based on his perception of leadership in the action and for keeping the train stopped for longer, respectively.

Fines from the state were also imposed, totaling \$5,580.

"Good behavior" was defined as: No felony, misdemeanor, or major traffic violations; no collaboration, colluding, or soliciting of others to engage in acts resulting in felony, misdemeanor, or other "crimes;" and staying 100 feet away from the Merrimack Station. The restrictions apply to all jurisdictions, not only



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The second of two demonstrations in support of abortion rights on Saturday, May 14th. Somewhere in here there may be a sign saying "I can't believe we still have to protest this s...t." At least it was a pleasant day for turn out and demanding one's rights. Signs we know were there included: "Keep Your Rosaries Off My Ovaries;" "Women Also Have Heartbeats;" "Their Body, Their Choice;" "We Need To Talk About The Elephant In The Womb;" "I Dream One Day Women Will Have The Same Rights As Guns;" "Don't Like Abortion? Don't Get One;" "Impeach Alito;" "White Male Supremacy Is The Problem -Liberation & Justice Is The Solution;" and "My Uterus Shouldn't Be More Regulated Than Guns."

conduct in New Hampshire.

For those keeping score at home, that's 16 person/years of life without the protection of the First Amendment.

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**"A Shameful Distinction"
U.S. Ranked World's Biggest
Perpetrator of Financial Secrecy**

by Jake Johnson

A global index published Tuesday ranks the United States as the world's leading perpetrator of financial secrecy, citing the country's refusal to share key information with the tax authorities of other nations and its status as a generous tax haven for foreign oligarchs, rich executives, and other elites.

The ranking comes despite U.S. President Joe Biden's campaign-trail pledge to "bring transparency to the global financial system, go after illicit tax havens, seize stolen assets, and make it more difficult for leaders who steal from their people to hide behind anonymous front companies."

In December, following the leak of an enormous trove of tax documents that called additional at-

tention to the country's secretive financial system, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen conceded, "There's a good argument that, right now, the best place to hide and launder ill-gotten gains is actually the United States."

The latest edition of the *Financial Secrecy Index*, a project of the Tax Justice Network (TJN), echoes that assessment, faulting the U.S. for its weak corporate tax disclosure rules and overall lack of transparency. In fact, the index awarded the U.S. the highest secrecy score since 2009, when the ranking began.

"That isn't a prize the U.S. wants to claim for itself," Gary Kalman, the executive director of Transparency International U.S., said in a statement. "The combination of secrecy and size of our financial system puts the U.S. ahead of other notorious secrecy havens like the Cayman Islands and Switzerland. That's a shameful distinction."

While noting that some progress has been made over the past year and a half—specifically Congress' passage of a ban on anonymous shell companies, entities often used

to hide illicit cash—TJN found that "the U.S. now fuels more global financial secrecy than Switzerland, Cayman, and Bermuda combined."

TJN also stressed that the shell company law enacted in January 2021 is riddled with loopholes such as "limited definitions of which legal

"This isn't a prize the U.S. wants to claim for itself... The combination of secrecy and size of our financial system puts the U.S. ahead of other notorious secrecy havens like the Cayman Islands and Switzerland." — Gary Kalman, Executive Director, Transparency International U.S.

entities and beneficial owners must register, 23 baked-in exemptions to registration, and an absence of requirements on all trusts."

To improve on its dismal ranking, TJN urged the U.S. to "reciprocally exchange information with other countries by adopting the Common Reporting Standard and become a party to amended Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters," steps that "would cut its supply of financial secrecy to the world by 40 percent."

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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.

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The U.S.-based Financial Accountability and Corporate Transparency (FACT) Coalition also outlined a number of actions the Biden administration and Congress should take, including “introducing consistent anti-money laundering due diligence and reporting requirements to the \$11 trillion U.S. private investment fund industry.”

“While the U.S. has committed to being a leader in cracking down on global corruption, these rankings show how corrupt actors are weaponizing our financial system against democracy here and abroad,” said Ian Gary, the FACT Coalition’s executive director.

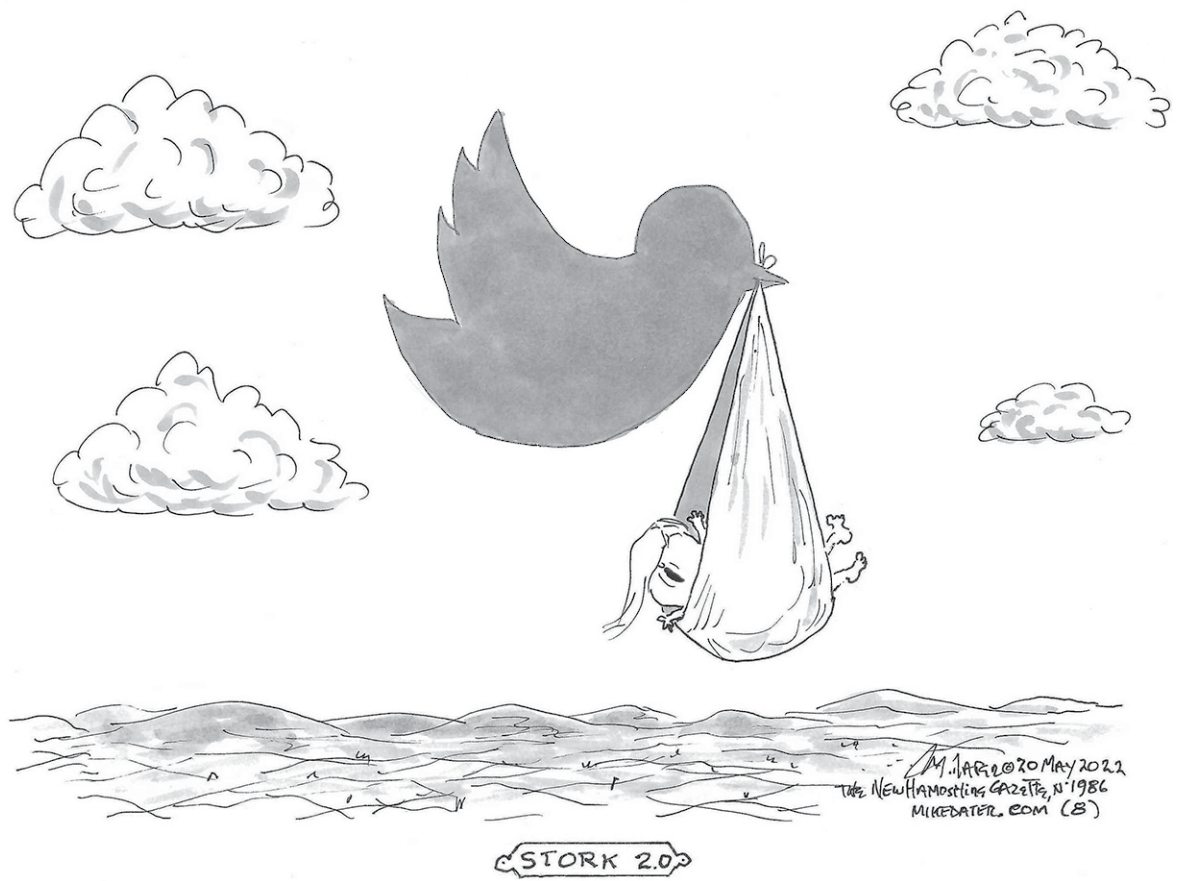
The updated index comes a day before G7 finance ministers are set to meet in Bonn, Germany to discuss aid to Ukraine and enforcement of the unprecedented Western sanctions targeting Russian oligarchs, political leaders, and the broader economy.

TJN argued Tuesday that despite “subversion” by G7 countries, global financial secrecy has continued

to shrink overall thanks to “more countries adopting or improving beneficial ownership registration laws—which require the identification and registration of the real individual, made of flesh and blood, who ultimately owns, controls, or benefits from a company or legal vehicle—and by more countries, particularly lower-income countries, improving international cooperation on anti-money laundering efforts, information exchange, treaties, and judicial cooperation.”

Alex Cobham, TJN’s chief executive, said in a statement that “globally, we’re starting to curb the financial secrecy used by Russian oligarchs, and also by tax evaders, corrupt politicians, and organized crime around the world to hide and launder ill-gotten wealth.”

“But the U.S., U.K., Germany, Italy, and Japan cut back that global progress by more than half, fueling financial secrecy instead of fighting it,” Cobham continued. “The G7 must make clear where they stand in the fight against financial secre-



The Department of Defense [DoD] has deviously privatized the distribution of photographs taken by its own personnel. Previously available directly from the DoD’s own website, copyright-free, they are now accessible only through a commercial service which adds on its own layer of restrictions. It’s a pity, too. We were dying to place a cutline under this photo by SSgt Jeremy Mosier which would have read, “An intergalactic traveler, left, emerged recently from the bomb-like object in the left foreground, saying to astonished crewmen at the New Boston [N.H.] Space Force Station, ‘Take me to your leader.’” Unfortunately, carrying out such a scheme would likely violate dvidshub.net’s terms of use and mire us in an expensive court case.

cy by committing to a global asset register.”

TJN researcher Moran Harari added that “once again, a small club of rich countries setting global rules on finance and tax are found to be the ones most responsible for facilitating financial secrecy and tax abuses.”

“For decades, rich G7 countries courted billionaires, oligarchs, and corporate giants with secrecy loopholes and eyes-wide-shut-regulations,” said Harari. “The regulations they imposed facilitated the robbing of billions from poorer countries’ public purses. And now those same regulations are making it nearly impossible for G7 countries themselves to track down the billions held offshore by sanctioned Russian oligarchs.”

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Capitalism At Work For You

Imagine for a moment that the U.S.A. was run like North Korea. Every morning in grade school, children would recite the following:

Teacher: “What makes America great?”

Pupils: “Capitalism.”

Teacher: “What makes Capitalism great?”

Pupils: “Competition.”

Here in the U.S.A., of course, we don’t recite such catechisms. Our dogma is so pervasive we simply absorb it through osmosis.

Skeptical as we are, we were shocked—really, we were shocked—to read a piece at *ProPublica* about two alleged competitors during the early days of the pandemic.

“As hundreds of meatpacking workers fell sick from the coronavirus that was spreading through their plants and into their communities in April 2020,” two-time Pulitzer finalist Michael Grabell writes, “the CEO of Tyson Foods reached out

to the head of another major meat-packer, Smithfield Foods, with a proposal.

“Smithfield’s pork plant in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, had been hit particularly hard, and state and local officials were pressuring the company to shut it down.

“Anything we can do to help?” Tyson CEO Noel White asked in an email.”

Turns out there was. Tyson lawyers drafted a regulation that suited the companies’ needs. The two “competitors” then collaborated with a compliant Trump administration. Then everyone lived happily ever after. Well, not exactly. The meat packing plants continued to make a profit, but a lot of their workers got sick and died: “by October 2020, community spread from the plants had generated 334,000 illnesses and 18,000 Covid-19-related deaths.”

<https://www.propublica.org/article/documents-covid-meatpacking-tyson-smithfield-trump>

Murph’s Fortnightly Quote
 “People who get up early in the morning cause war, death and famine.”
 — Banksy, English street artist, Banging Your Head Against A Brick Wall (2001)

“History is a pack of lies about events that never happened told by people who weren’t there.”
 — George Santayana
john@wordpraxis.com

“One of the things that I learned in the war is that we’re not the top species on the planet because we’re nice. We are a very aggressive species; it is in us. People talk a lot about how well the military turns kids into killing machines, and I’ll always argue that it’s just finishing school.”
 — Karl Marlantes
 — Not-So-Random Thoughts from an Oregon Subscriber

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Bug Off, Free Staters

To the Editor:

We would like to extend a sincere message to the Free Staters who tried to undermine public education in Croydon: You picked the wrong state for this experiment. The Croydon voters, though at fault for not showing up at the original school board budget vote meeting, rallied on Saturday, May 7, to stand up for the children of their community. The vote was 377-2 in favor of restoring the original \$1.7 million budget.

Bless those voters who can think beyond their own needs to those of others in their community. We don't have children in the public school system anymore, but our children received a well-rounded education in New Hampshire public schools, and we are both products of New England public schools. We regularly recall the sage observation: "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance." So, to all the Free Staters currently here in New Hampshire with the goal of dismantling our government, our school system, and our public safety measures, please take your self-centered, anti-American efforts elsewhere. We don't have any use for any of it.

Leslie S. MacGregor
Dalton Winslow
Grantham, N.H.
Leslie and Dalton:

We made a point of watching the live stream as Croydon voted on this matter. We had a feeling it would turn out well, judging from the obvious good will on display. We never would have guessed, though, that the outcome would be so decisive. Congratulations on having rescued your school system from this pernicious and idiotic ideology.

The Editor

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Is Scanlon Putting a Fox in the Hen House?

Dear *New Hampshire Gazette*,

Republican Secretary of State David Scanlon has announced a new commission to combat declining voter confidence. What a sham. The only decline in voter confidence in this country is due to the lies perpetrated by the Republican Party in fealty to their dear leader who lost the 2020

election by 7 million votes. If the Republicans were really interested in reinforcing voter confidence they would support an independent redistricting commission and find ways to expand voting opportunities rather than making it more difficult (particularly for students and others who tend to vote Democratic). Then to highlight their hypocrisy, conspiracy theorist Ken Eyring is nominated for the committee. Before seating Mr. Eyring ask him one question: Did Joe Biden win the 2020 election? If he equivocates or says "no" then he has no business serving in any position requiring the public's trust.

Michael Behrendt
Durham, N.H.

Michael:

Unfamiliar with Mr. Eyring, we put the Google on him. The man has no business being on that panel. For that matter, the panel itself has no business being in business. The effort to "build confidence" in our elections is part of the con.

The Editor

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Stomach-Turning Mitch McConnell

Dear Editor:

On NPR I Heard Mitch McConnell's dramatically indignant voice responding to a current topic. He began with, "Historically..." turning my stomach.

Historically, then Senate Majority Leader McConnell prevented President Obama from nominating Merrick Garland to our SCOTUS because "only" six months of Obama's term remained. Historically, when Trump was President and Ruth Bader Ginsberg's seat came open, hypocrite McConnell rammed through right-winger Amy Coney Barret in 22 days. Trump put into place ultra-conservatives Brett Kavanaugh, Neil Gorsuch, and Amy Coney Barrett in his one term. Mitch McConnell abetted that. Now we face loss of a nearly 50-year-old ruling protecting women's reproductive rights due to that packing-in of conservative justices.

Why not also be rid of OSHA, not mentioned in our Constitution? For only 53 years it's been an agency with its related laws: "to improve the health and safety of working condi-



tions." The oligarchs and corporatists and billionaires who like Republicans' pared-down democratic freedoms would like that. It'd cost less, if families who have too many children and need two or three jobs to survive would also not require safety at work. And maybe, because historically we had the system, indentured servitude could return. It started in the Jamestown colony in 1607 and ended with even cheaper slavery. All historic.

Vote out the toxic-to-our-democracy Republicans.

Lynn Rudmin Chong
Sanbornton, N.H.

Lynn:

We're tempted to say the only good Republican is an un-elected Republican. We won't, though, because it might be seen as uncivil.

The Editor

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Blind In One Eye, Can't See Out The Other

To the Editor:

Democrats who attack the democratically enacted Florida "Parental Rights" (falsely labelled "Don't say gay") and New Hampshire "Right to Freedom from Discrimination" laws misrepresent and slander them. The laws' speech restrictions that Democrats call Stalinist censorship are limited to certain work situations and minor compared with many employment restrictions.

The Democrat Party imposes much stricter censorship and punishment of people's (not just employee) speech they consider adequately objectionable wherever it happens. Such speech often gets people slandered, banned from social media (e.g., Trump), harassed and/or fired. Speakers with opposing views are shouted-down or cancelled. Information Democrats oppose is often misrepresented or completely censored (e.g., Hunter's laptop).

Florida's law (<https://tinyurl.com/2tbmrzdv>) identifies parental rights and control over their children's

education and health, and restricts presenting age-inappropriate information about sex and gender in school settings (even most Florida Democrats support it). Its critics don't explain which sex acts they want taught or shown to young (K-3rd grade) children and how these help young children. Nor do they explain how creating confusion about gender helps young (K-3rd), impressionable, and vulnerable children.

N.H.'s law doesn't restrict teaching slavery (as often falsely claimed), or any actual history of, mostly Democrat, oppression of blacks, e.g., Jim Crow Laws, the KKK, bad schools. The law (<https://tinyurl.com/32mx-7vpr>, Sections 354-A:29-A:34) says that people, including children, cannot be discriminated against, nor can they be identified as superior or inferior to others because of age, sex, race, gender, religion, or many other characteristics. Discrimination harms students and society. Democrats don't explain how creating disharmony and friction among races, genders, religions, etc. is good; they just want to do it.

When so many American schools inadequately educate many students, why do many Democrats demand adding instruction that causes confusion, disharmony, and harm without benefitting students' successful futures?

Don Ewing
Meredith, N.H.

Don:

We're short on time today, and long on room, so rather than attempt to edit down or counter this load of utter hogwash, we'll just append the following disclaimer.

Dear Reader: Mr. Ewing has an unbroken record of sounding like a broken record. To the best of our recollection, he's always been wrong about everything. Whatever he says, it's safe to assume that the opposite is true.

The Editor

The Major Wants His Strawberries

To the Editor:

No thank you Senator Hassan! I just watched her latest political commercial in stunned disbelief.

In the video she proposes giving us simple serfs a federal gas tax holiday, while concurrently emptying our strategic oil reserves.

Does she think that by taking these actions, the more than doubled gas prices she's given us, will temporarily be lowered until after the election?

Does she really believe that this transparent ploy will fool Granite Staters?

Does she really believe that we will forget the rampant inflation, rising interest rates and crime, out of control spending, weak foreign policy, open borders, and the general incompetence of this congress and this administration?

Let's dig a little deeper into her shamelessly political plan.

Our strategic oil reserves are to be used for national emergencies, like war or catastrophic natural disasters, not political bailouts.

Politicians gave us the federal gas tax, to supposedly help us maintain our infrastructure, it obviously didn't work.

We know this because congress just passed a 1.2 trillion dollar slush fund to repair our infrastructure, sound familiar?

It should, the 800 billion dollar American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, was supposed to do the very same thing, it didn't.

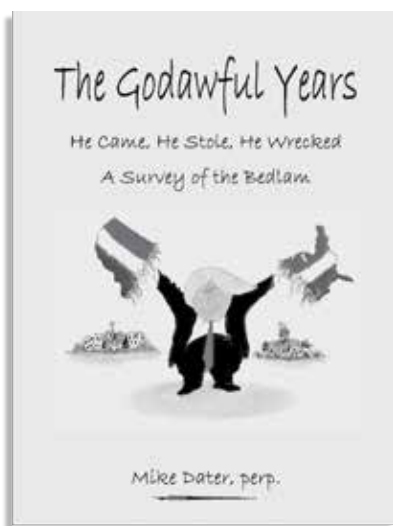
The common thread here is that the American taxpayer is paying for it all.

We pay the gas tax, we pay to fill the oil reserves, and we pay for every other bit of their wasteful spending.

Now she wants to give us, as Nancy likes to say, some "crumbs" back, using

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Our Tight-Lipped Postmaster

Dear Mr. Fowle,
I saw that you mentioned the [QAnon mailer] in your April 8th issue. I am interested in knowing who, or what, in fact, is behind this. Who paid for the postal permit?

The very day I received my very own copy of this postcard, I began researching, and found out that who paid for the postal permit is public information according to the USPS regulations. (The regulation makes no mention of the Freedom of Information act).

I received the vile and delusional screed on a Friday, and as soon as the Portsmouth Post Office opened on Saturday, the 2nd of April, I called with my question. I spoke to a clerk who stated I would need to speak to the postmaster, to call back Monday. I called Monday, April 4th, and spoke to the Portsmouth postmaster. He said, yes, he could tell me who paid for the permit, but I must put my request in writing. I immediately did as requested.

On April 14th I had not heard anything back, so I called the postmaster again. He said he had filed the paperwork with the request, but "there might be a fee." What? Is there a fee or not? And wouldn't that fee have to be paid at the time of filing? So was the paperwork filed or not? And what paperwork? Is this Freedom of Information paperwork? Could I have done this myself? Why does the postal regulation say I can find out who paid for the permit by inquiring at the originating post office (with no mention of fees or paperwork)?

I asked how much the fee was, and he said he thought \$30 or \$40. Again, what? It's an easy question—how much is the fee? I asked him to call me back when he could tell me exactly what the fee was. I have not heard back from him, almost a month later

now, and I have received no info in the mail answering my written request as to who paid for Portsmouth Postal Permit No. 4.

I'm writing to you to see if you have inquired and gotten anywhere, and to see, if perhaps your paper will have greater sway with the local postmaster.

Thanks for your help on the matter.
Barbara Schult
Goffstown, N.H.

Barbara:
Great to hear from you on this. Very interesting. We ran into something similar a while back. We'll re-open our inquiry, and include this, too.

The Editor

==~==

Can We Not Hold Israel Accountable?

To the Editor:

Representative Pappas, my wife and I are sick and tired of most U.S. Congresspeople turning their backs on the crimes committed by the Israeli occupying forces and Israeli police. The recent killing of a Palestinian-American Christian reporter is the latest outrage. Shireen Abu Akleh was an American citizen who most likely was killed by an Israeli sniper. Will President Biden hold Israel accountable? Will Congress that sends Israel \$3.8+ billion U.S. taxpayer dollars a year, hold Israel accountable? Will you, Congressman Pappas, remain silent thus adding to your long period of seeming complicity? Crimes against Palestinians have been continuing since the Nakba or "catastrophe" of 1948. This on-going Nakba intensified when Israel in 1967 took control of all of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem which is now being Judaized with illegal settlers.

What is happening in Ukraine is a horrific tragedy and should be addressed by the world community. However, the almost daily human rights violations of Palestinians have been on-going since 1948—74 years. During these 74 years, Israel knows it can act with impunity since it understands that the U.S. Congress, all

presidents and people as you, will not hold Israel accountable for violations of international law and for infringement of the human and civil rights of Palestinians.

The most recent indignity was an attack by Israeli forces against Palestinians who were following the coffin of the slain U.S. citizen, Shireen, as they tried to walk through Jerusalem to a church for a Christian funeral. Israel said stones were being thrown by Palestinians (by the people carrying the coffin?). The Israeli police used clubs to beat the mourners, including those who were carrying the coffin, which nearly hit the ground. Beyond despicable. Yet, some of us know that our corporate media and Israeli "leaders" will almost always refute any wrongdoing by Israel. Too many Americans believe that Palestinians are all "terrorists," are less than human, and see them as the "other." Israeli propaganda (*hasbara*) has accomplished its goal.

A few Congresspersons such as Senator Chris Murphy has said his team is "working to get answers about what happened here." Sorry to say but words are cheap. Then, Senator Van Hollen called for "immediate accountability for these attacks on people mourning Abu Akleh's death," although we would call it "murder." Again, these are words that will soon be forgotten. The U.S. Ambassador to the UN said she was "deeply distressed" by the images of the video of the funeral. We would much prefer her not vetoing any UN Security Council Resolutions that condemn Israel for its blatant violation of the human and civil rights of Palestinians.

Representative Rashida Tlaib, a Palestinian-American, said "for the Israeli apartheid government, Shireen's life didn't matter and her dehumanization continues after death."

Unfortunately, on previous occasions that we have written to you, Representative Pappas, we have not received any responses. My wife and I, as Veterans for Peace, will not forget that you and your N.H. colleagues, Senators Shaheen, Hassan and Kuster, have continued to support Israel unconditionally. What a deep disap-

pointment we have for not only the N.H. delegation but for nearly the entire U.S. Congress that appears captive to the pro-Israel lobby.

Will & Wendy Thomas
Auburn, N.H.
N.H. Veterans for Peace
Will & Wendy:

The U.S.'s continuing disregard for the rights of Palestinians is an ongoing disgrace.

Thank you for continuing to put this issue before our readers.

The Editor

==~==

Just Another Bloody American Weekend

Dear Editor:

Buried on page 12 of the Sunday *New York Times* was the story of an 18-year old white male shooting 14 mostly Black people, killing 10 in a predominantly Black neighborhood supermarket. The killer traveled over 200 miles from his home in Conklin, N.Y. to Buffalo to unleash his hate. This was among at least four other mass shootings that took place over the same weekend. In California, a gunman killed one and critically injured four at a church. In Austin, Texas, two were killed and three wounded in a shooting at a flea market. In North Carolina, seven people were shot in multiple shootings across the state. In Milwaukee, 17 people were shot and wounded. Just another deadly bloody weekend of gun violence in gun-crazed America.

While there were multiple motives and causes for this uncontrolled gun violence, the one thing they all have in common is the ability of almost anyone to own a gun, including the most deadly assault-style weapon. In every case it was not just that people who killed people, it was that people with guns were able to quickly shoot and kill multiple victims.

While every case of gun violence is a tragedy, the Buffalo hate crime case is of particular concern considering our current political environment. How does an 18-year old develop such pathological hate for immi-

Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c.

to page six

our own money!
Imagine paying a dishonest contractor, multiple times, to repave your driveway, but they never show up to do the work.

Would you continue to trust that contractor, and continue to pay them for doing nothing?

Why should we re-elect any of them to "repave" our country?

They've already spent more than 2 trillion dollars, and given us nothing in return.

Maybe it's time we start electing real people, not politicians.

People who will not serve themselves, people who will not serve foreign nationals, and people who will not serve their political party masters.

We need to elect real people, who understand that they are elected to serve the people of New Hampshire, period.

This November, we the people, should send a message to our so-called representatives.

This is our land, not yours, and we are not your serfs.

Sincerely,
Michael Petruzziello
Major, USMC (Ret)
Wolfeboro, N.H.

Major Mike:
If we might borrow your style...

Do you really believe Senator Hassan doubled gas prices?

Do you really believe she is more powerful than the Federal Reserve?

Do you really believe she controls both the budget and the borders?

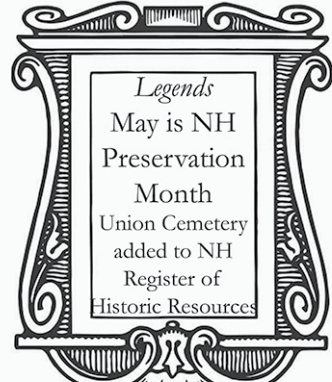
Do you really believe you can win an argument about general incompetence, after The Former Guy's administration?

Dear Readers: We would advise treating Major Mike's tirades as if they came from Don Ewing. Must be something in the water up there.

The Editor

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



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This Is Not the Culmination of the Right-Wing Legal Movement—It's the Dawn of It

The unelected hard-right faction now in power on the Court is poised to allow the most restrictive laws possible to be applied to women's bodies while ruling hands-off of regulating corporations whose products are harming our planet.

by Lisa Graves

The reactionary, right-wing legal movement powered by dark money appears to be on the brink of achieving a nearly 50-year goal of reversing *Roe v. Wade*.

The leaked draft opinion obtained by *Politico* confirms the worst fears of anyone who took the reactionary right at its word: It's simultaneously not a surprise and a punch to the gut.

The most partisan Supreme Court justices in a century are at the brink of using their power to attack the popular will.

The imminent reversal of *Roe* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, however, does not represent the culmination of the right-wing legal movement, but rather the dawn of it.

As the Federalist Society's Leonard Leo foreshadowed in 2019, "I think we stand at the threshold of an exciting moment in our republic, the revival of our structural constitution by the U.S. Supreme Court."

"I don't think this has really happened since...before the New Deal, which means, no one in this room has probably experienced the kind of transformation that I think we are beginning to see," he told members of the Council for National Policy at a closed-door meeting in 2019.

The Court now appears poised to step through that threshold and turn back the clock decades to the pre-New Deal era, which will have profound implications for both our democracy and our lives.

Everything from same-sex marriage and contraception to environmental protections and laws outlawing discrimination are now at grave risk.

For example, the Supreme Court will also hand down a decision this summer in *West Virginia v. EPA*, which revolves around the Obama administration's Clean Power Plan, a law that never has and never will go into effect, according to the Biden administration.

While the outcome of that case will likely have a monumental impact on future efforts to ward off the existential crisis posed by climate change, it could also have more far-reaching repercussions for how policy is enacted by federal agencies.

The Court's six Republican-appointed justices have already signaled they are open to challenging what's known as "Chevron deference," a long-established legal precedent where federal courts defer to federal agency's reasonable interpretations of how to administer statutes rather than their own.

With an increasingly broken Congress where the majority will can so easily be thwarted by an intransigent minority party beholden to powerful special interests, reversing *Chevron* would be a huge win for the fossil fuel industry and its fight against common sense regulations to mitigate climate change.

More simply put, the reactionary faction installed on the nation's

highest court could potentially kill much of the power federal agencies use to protect the public interest, essentially relegating them—and our ability to regulate corporations more broadly—to the dustbin of history.

Our only hope is that people rally together to reject this gross overreach and hold accountable those who have sought to use the Court to roll back our rights.

Because some very special interests hostile to women's reproductive rights and to corporate regulation are deeply tied to the packing and capture of the Supreme Court, America now faces extreme rulings by that judicial body, which is governed by no binding ethical restrictions.

The unelected hard-right faction now in power on the Court is poised to allow the most restrictive laws possible to be applied to women's bodies while ruling hands-off of regulating corporations whose products are harming our planet.

This juxtaposition where a woman's right to control her destiny is under assault while the Court protects the most powerful corporations from regulations that affect the des-

tiny of our planet demonstrates just how out of control that faction is.

Abortion is more popular than the current president and the past one. And most of the American people want our federal government to help mitigate climate change. But the most partisan Supreme Court justices in a century are at the brink of using their power to attack the popular will.

Our only hope is that people rally together to reject this gross overreach and hold accountable those who have sought to use the Court to roll back our rights. This regressive agenda has been bankrolled by some very wealthy and secretive individuals who do not have the courage to be honest with the American people about who they are, what interests they represent, and the future America they envision, where women's rights are nullified but the extremist agenda of a few of the richest is exalted.

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Mash Notes, Hate Mail, &c. from page five



grants and people of color? What were the social, family, media and other influences that this child was exposed to that led him to commit such violence? Unfortunately, much of the answer to that question lies in the 180-page manifesto supposedly written by the shooter. His manifesto "was riddled with racist, anti-immigrant views that claimed white Americans were at risk of being replaced by people of color, an ideology known as the "great replacement" theory," according to the *Times* article.

The killer's reference to the "great replacement" theory gives us a very

clear explanation as to what influences this child may have been exposed to that led him to commit such a hideous hate crime. It seems very possible that the killer's reference to the "great replacement" theory was instilled in him by outside influences. The "great replacement" theory has been used by FOX News host Tucker Carlson repeatedly, and variations of the theory are being used by a number of right-wing talk radio hosts as well as a number of Republican members of Congress. In fact, Rep. Liz Cheney wrote on Twitter Monday, "The House GOP

leadership has enabled white nationalism, white supremacy, and anti-semitism. History has taught us that what begins with words ends in far worse." The words from people like Tucker Carlson and others plant the seeds of hate in fertile minds like the Buffalo killer, and they continue to fertilize those seeds of hate with the horse manure spewed on their programs and in their words, ending in things far worse than their vile words.

Rich DiPentima, LTC. USAF. Ret. Portsmouth, N.H.

Rich:
The Venn diagram showing the overlap of racist hate-mongers with blood on their hands and the Party Formerly Associated With Lincoln looks more and more like a circle with each passing day.

The Editor

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"Napoleon's troops fought in bright fields, where every helmet caught some gleams of glory; but the British soldier conquered under the cool shade of aristocracy. No honours awaited his daring, no despatch gave his name to the applauses of his countrymen; his life of

danger and hardship was uncheered by hope, his death unnoticed."

— Sir William Francis Patrick Napier (1785–1860), Irish soldier in the British Army and a military historian, *Peninsular War* (1810)

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— Emperor Norton (1818–1880), Imperial Decree August 12, 1869

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Woe Is Me!

by W.D. Ehrhart

Lately I have been struggling to find something worth writing about. What is the point? Nothing changes. I've written multiple essays about the madness of our uniquely U.S. gun culture; but Americans keep dying at the wrong end of firearms in record numbers, and in most states it's easier to acquire and carry a firearm than it was ten years ago.

I've written multiple essays about the need for the Democratic Party to get its collective head out of its ass and start functioning effectively to counter the insidious and pervasive evil that has become the Retrumplian Party, yet the Democrats keep bumbling along with the competence of the Keystone Kops while Retrumplians across the nation take control of state legislatures, town councils, local school boards, and even the levers of elections themselves.

And what am I to write about a Supreme Court whose radical conservative majority was appointed by presidents who failed to win a majority of votes, who are young enough to be around for decades to come, who believe that corporations are people, the 2nd Amendment is more immaculate than the Virgin Mary, women's bodies belong to the State, and conflicts of interest don't apply to them?

How does one explain a citizenry that doesn't seem to blink an eye at a president and a presidency that is so corrupt, so crude, so ignorant, so venal, so beyond the pale as to make

Rome's Nero look as benign as Captain Kangaroo, but cannot forgive a president for high gas prices in the midst of an international crisis caused by the ruthless dictator our previous president described as "a strong leader" and a "genius"?

And don't even get me started on global warming. The notion that the human race is collectively capable of altering our behavior soon enough and significantly enough to stave off what the entire scientific community tells us is now all-but-inevitable, leading to a Mad Max world on the way to complete extinction is the very definition of "chimerical."

How pathetic is it that the most upbeat essay I've been able to manage lately is one about how I've arranged a "green burial" for myself in the middle of a pine forest? How pathetic is it that I'm glad I won't be having grandchildren because I don't have to worry about the kind of world I'm leaving them? How pathetic is it that I'm glad most of my own life is already behind me and I won't have to be around to see how this Shit Show finally ends?

I actually shared some of this Doom & Gloom recently in an e-mail to our Alleged Editor. And then my wife and I spent a day in rural Adams County, Pennsylvania, with my dear friend and artist Jane Irish, and her partner, the philosopher Crispin Sartwell. It was a magnificent spring day, bright sky, warm enough to eat outside on the porch of their converted old schoolhouse, shade provided by a newly leafing maple tree.

Jane showed us her latest project, a series of paintings that, when fully assembled, will be 30 feet by 30 feet, though each panel can also be displayed as an independent work. She was very excited by what she is doing, and her enthusiasm and joy were infectious. Crispin gave me a copy of his latest book, *Beauty: A Quick Immersion*. He signed it, "To Bill and Anne—Beauty, emerging even from the darkness. Crispin 5-16-22."

As we made the two-hour drive home, I found myself thinking about the e-mail I'd sent our Alleged Editor only the night before. Okay, the world is a pretty screwed up place, and maybe my country and the rest of humanity are headed for a cosmic train wreck.

But I am one small man in a very, very, very big universe that—as I wrote in another essay not all that long ago—doesn't really care about me or humanity or Planet Earth. Whatever gave me the idea that what I think actually matters and what I write can actually change anything?

In the Twelve Step program I belong to, we're told that we can only take care of our own side of the street. What happens on the other side of the street is not in our control. We also recite the Serenity Prayer, which reminds us to accept what we cannot change. This doesn't mean docility or silence because we are also urged to find the courage to change what we can. But it does mean that we need to learn to accept and live with our limitations.



Somehow, despite everything, our neighbor here keeps on keeping on.

Moreover, if I think my little piece of the world is depressing, I really ought to remember what life is like these days for most people in Ukraine or Guatemala or Yemen. At least I've got food in my belly and a roof over my head, and nobody has shot at me lately.

My daughter and her partner just acquired a beehive. They're going to be beekeepers, and they're very happy about learning this new skill and in the process improving their immediate environment. My artist friend Jane has just landed a wonderful and unsolicited commission to do an installation for a prestigious

university. My wife—let's be completely honest here—my wife has stuck with me for 42 years, though God knows she's had more than enough reason more than enough times to show me the door.

So what have I got to feel sorry for? And who knows? Maybe I just could be wrong about where my country, the human race, and this planet are headed. Wouldn't that be nice?

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

Why Should We the People Respect a Court That Disrespects the People?

by Jim Hightower

Mitch McConnell, the perpetually sour old goose who heads the Senate Republican Caucus, had a hissy fit when the news leaked out that American women are about to have their most fundamental constitutional right taken from them by a cabal of Supreme Court judges.

What made Mitch twitch, of course, was not the bad news for

women...but the leak. He huffed that revealing the right-wing Court's scheme to the public was a "stunning breach," spewing that it's "an attack on the independence of the Supreme Court." Uh, Mitch... the so-called Supremes have been meeting behind closed doors specifically to plot an all-out attack on the independence of some 170 million women to control their own bodies. Why aren't you opposing the secrecy, rather than supporting the Court's

subversion of women's liberty?

Perversely, the entire Republican leadership is outraged by the leak, rather than the attack on women. Right-wing blowhard Ted Cruz, for example, yapped that informing the public "will do lasting damage to the integrity of the Court." Uh, Ted... you and your ideological ilk annihilated the Court's integrity—and its legitimacy—when you stacked it with a covey of corporate-coddling partisan hacks like Alito, Barrett,

Gorsuch, Kavanaugh, and Thomas.

Then came Sen. Mike Lee of Utah, a Trump acolyte, ludicrously blathering that the leak of the judicial plan is "despicable." Why? Well, he explained to us commoners, the Court "is not a political body." If ignorance is bliss, Mike must be ecstatic! The GOP majority on this court is so immersed in its own partisan biases that it is routinely ruling against workers, the environment, women, voting rights, local commu-

nities...and democracy itself.

No surprise then that public trust in the integrity of these "arbiters of justice" is crashing. If the Court won't respect our democratic ideals, the people won't respect the the Court.

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